

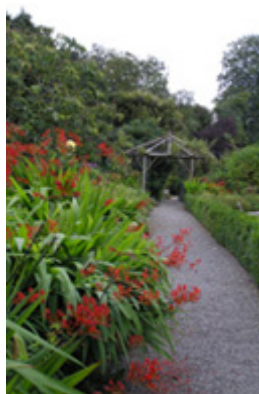
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**Rathsallagh House**



**Rathsallagh House** in **Dunlavin, County Wicklow, Ireland** is what dreams of **Ireland** are all about; a top rated golf course, a beautiful old stone house covered with green and red tinged ivy, an excellent chef in the kitchen, and genuine Irish hospitality.



Situated on 530-acres, and boasting one of the top golf courses in Ireland (its ranked at 30 out of 415 golf courses), Rathsallagh House is a charming countryside house with a very interesting history. Built between 1702 and 1704, the original house was burned in a fire in the 1798 rebellion, and with it the family fortunes along with the horses. Lacking funds to rebuild, the owners moved into the stables, which is now Rathsallagh House. The O'Flynn family purchased Rathsallagh House in 1979 and opened it as a Country House in 1988.



Edward F. Nesta and I stayed at Rathsallagh House in September 2007, and felt like we were staying at a friend's estate rather than at a hotel, which is the aim of the O'Flynn family. With a mere 29 rooms and suites, Rathsallagh House is small enough to be intimate and affords guests with the opportunity for the utmost in pampering. They thrive on creating luxury packages for their guests, and with its proximity to the major stud farms including the Irish National Stud, the Curragh, home of the Irish Classics, and only one hour from Dublin, they have much to offer their guests.



Canadian Head Chef John Kostuik deftly combines new and old world cuisine that changes daily in their

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award-winning restaurant. He never knows what the day's menu will be until the fish arrives, and the menu is never printed before 5:00 pm each day. Chef John also has the luxury of having his own herb and vegetable gardens, as well as orchards, which he incorporates into the daily menu. The kitchen is up any challenge and as it was Edward's birthday during our stay, Chef John and his kitchen staff surprised him with a beautiful chocolate cake.



The dining room is attractive with fresh bouquets of flowers cut from the Rathsallagh House gardens gracing the tables, and the cuisine is innovative without being trendy. In a word, it works. A few of the selections we enjoyed during our stay included Szechuan Barbecued Spatchcock of Quail with Asian Coleslaw and Ginger Syrup; Citrus and Fennel Roasted Cod Fillet with Sautéed Samphire and Lebanese Couscous; and Garden Black Currant Parfait with Chocolate Jelly.



We also took the opportunity to take golf lessons at the [Brendan McDaid Golf Academy](#) at [Rathsallagh Golf Club](#) to improve our game during our stay, and learned that a few minor adjustments from Golf Pro and European Tour Coach Brendan McDaid and one of his PGA Assistants really helped our overall game.



Our suite overlooked horses grazing in the paddock making us feel very "to the manor born," and featured a king bed with a blue and white striped upholstered headboard, blue and white decorative toile pillows on a cream Matelasse coverlet, matching floor to ceiling fabric framing the windows, there was toile wallpaper, and round bedside tables on either side of the bed dressed with blue and white stripe fabric. A comfortable sitting area consisted of a blue love seat and two comfortable club chairs flanking a wood coffee table that held an assortment of fruit.

There was a vanity/desk on the wall opposite the bed adorned with pretty mixed flowers arranged in a teacup. Thoughtful details included the history of Rathsallagh House, information on local attractions, as well as postcards, and stationery.

Other amenities included a radio, DVD/CD/Cassette player, television, coffee maker with Bewley's coffee for a taste of Ireland, and in-room complimentary Internet access, as well WIFI accessibility in the bar. Ample closets held slippers, iron and ironing board, and a safe. The spacious light-filled blue bathroom featured a heated white tile floor, which was lovely on cool autumn nights, a large walk-in shower, a separate soaking tub, toilet, double pedestal sinks, vanity mirror, hairdryer, robes at the ready, and Gilcrest

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& Soames amenities.



The hotel has several inviting sitting rooms where we began our evenings by sampling Irish whiskey from their extensive whiskey menu. We also enjoyed sitting by the roaring fire in the bar with our laptop to use the WIFI Internet access, and comparing notes with the genial bartender.

It seemed that everyday was a surprise during our stay at Rathsallagh House, and returning one evening we found an immense hot air balloon on the lawn with



three typically Irish adorable children, Tomas, Niall, and Ciana, with their red hair, blue eyes, and freckles, waiting with their mother, Carol Ferris-Meldon, for their father to take-off. With the hot air balloon sailing away, smoke wafting from the stone chimneys, and the late afternoon sun shining, the scene was so postcard perfect that it seemed almost magical. Although after our stay at Rathsallagh House, I knew not to be surprised by anything.

Read other articles on **Rathsallagh House** in the **Restaurants** and **Chefs' Recipes** sections where Head Chef John Kostuik shares a few of his favorite recipes, and in the **Adventures** section where Golf Pro Brendan McDaid helps us to improve our golf game.



*Rathsallagh House*

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For information on **Ireland**, please visit the website: [Discover Ireland, www.DiscoverIreland.com](http://www.DiscoverIreland.com) or call them at +1-800-223-6470. For driving directions in **Ireland**, visit [www.AAIreland.com](http://www.AAIreland.com).

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