

## The Greenan Maze

I had ,for along time planned a visit to the Greenan Maze, but I wondered if it would be a suitable venue for those like myself who are moving up the age ladder.

In the first week in August the decision was taken out of my hands entirely when the planning department of our house tour group decreed that we were all going on a trip to Greenan and that we would bring a picnic.

Trip morning came , the picnic and treats were ready, and all 5 of us piled aboard the people carrier. There were some protestations from the junior wing of the party when child seats had to be moved about to accommodate the elders travelling for the day.

In the interest of health and safety masks had to be worn in the and this caused concern to our 6 -year old, but after several stories about keeping the bad bug away we were finally on our way , just 20 minutes after our appointed time for departure.

We proceeded through Arklow and on to picturesque Avoca and beyond only to be confronted by a detour sign diverting us around by Aughrim and the bye ways of beautiful Ballinaclesh until we arrived in heavenly, peaceful Greenan ,turned left and up a long narrow road until we finally saw the very welcoming sign pronouncing that we were at our destination. Yes ,we were at the Greenan Maze.

We paid our entry fee, parked the car and our two juniors were ready for the off after their extra period of enforced confinement in the car.

We started off with the coffee stop in their very neat café ,followed by the obligatory toilet stop . Our juniors then had to be left off the leash and so we headed for the farm animals tour.

They were enthralled by the two draft horses named Neddy and Ernie which they petted and stroked.

Next we went to visit the bronzed turkeys, the geese ,the absolutely wonderful “Hen Hotel”, The goats ,and finally an ancient breed of Scottish cows.

We were delighted when the proud peacocks put their colourful plumage on display for us. Pride of place went to the piglet department when we saw 6 newly born bronze piglets all demanding mother’s attention at the same time. Junior was most worried and wanted mama to give them his bottle, but such requests were denied.

Next stop were the museums displaying a wonderful array of old farm machinery which made me rather nostalgic remembering my youth at my granny’s farm in Tralee.

There was a very well restored farmhouse. It was stated that this was a safe house for the rebels of 1798 including Michael Dwyer, of legendary Wicklow fame.

Having wrapped myself in history it was now time for the great outdoors and a blast of pure Wicklow mountain air, and so we headed for the wild nature walk . This was a real gem, so well laid out and very well signposted and information boards and viewing platforms in abundance. There are some lovely areas to take photos here with well ordered paths and boardwalks displaying the area at its best.

And now, drum roll, we head for the thrill of the day , the piece de resistance , namely, The Greenan Maze .This should be no problem to us after the maze of roads we travelled to get here.

This `hedge maze ‘set on half an acre was great fun for all ,even if a little scary at times ,and we thoroughly enjoyed it darting in and out of dead ends until we hit the centre and then struggling to find the exit. This exercise was repeated a few times until juniors got tired and hungry.

Then it was back to the picnic area to gorge on our sandwiches and treats for the day. We had just finished when the good lord above shed a few tears on us in the form of soft Wicklow rain and so we headed for the shop and final treat of the day with magnums and ice pops being the preferred choices.

We then headed back to the car with a slight diversion to view the Solstice Maze and wind up a great day in the peace and tranquillity of the Wicklow mountains.

As I was coming out, I met the owner ,whom I had encountered a few times during the day .On each occasion he was looking down at the ground . I thanked him for providing such an excellent facility .He graciously accepted my gratitude but said 'Where did you get your shoes, You are the second man I have seen wearing' Meindl' walking boots today" He was looking to buy a new pair of comfortable walking shoes because of all the walking around the site he did every day . We spoke about the quality and comfort of shoes and suppliers. We finally waved goodbye and started our trail home via the main roads of Rathdrum and Glenealy and joined the motorway to Gorey.

I can recommend this venue as there is something there for all ages to enjoy and relax and unwind for a 3 to 4 hour period on a sunny day in the lovely Wicklow hills.