



THE IRISH TIMES

CHECK-IN

Jo Linehan & Joan Scales

A CRISP BREAK

Combining a trip to a castle with a stop off at a theme park, a relaxing overnight stay within a stone's throw of the city, and all reached by bus? Yes, you've heard correctly. We recently discovered you don't need a car to escape from the hustle and bustle of city life. Dunboyne Castle Hotel and Spa and Tayto Park have teamed up this summer to offer relaxing breaks tinged with a crunch of excitement.

But when we found ourselves without a car, we hopped on the number 70 in the city centre, which brought us through the historic Meath countryside to within walking distance of the hotel (and for just €3.30). Of course, you can always make it to Dunboyne village via Irish Rail, or a quick drive out on the Navan Road.

Tayto Park packages give you the chance to spend the night at Dunboyne Castle Hotel – a luxurious four-star hotel that is also a great base from which to explore the nearby sites of Trim Castle, the Hill of Tara or Newgrange and the Brú na Bóinne Unesco world heritage site.

The family package, starting from €219, includes B&B for two adults and up to two children under 12 and entrance into Tayto Park for the family. For couples, another package includes access to the hotel's Seoid Spa and Thermal Suite with its hydrotherapy pool and entrance to Tayto Park. An overnight stay for two adults with park tickets starts from €148 per couple.

We loved the Cú Chulainn Coaster, Europe's largest wooden rollercoaster, plus there are zip lines, a small zoo and a 5D cinema too. And you'll probably find a few bags of Tayto along the way too.

Eamon Donoghue

