



General FAQ's

We have tried to cover the most commonly asked questions in this FAQ. We have a separate FAQ specifically for Weddings – just let us know if you need that as well. Feel free to email us if you have any other specific questions and we will be happy to answer them at info@ballinacurra.com.

What Makes Ballinacurra House Different

Q: What would you say are the main differences between having an event at Ballinacurra compared to a hotel?

A: We like to say 'Privacy Makes the Difference'. An exclusive use property has a very different atmosphere. Your guests will immediately feel relaxed in a totally private environment and since they know everybody on the property is part of your group – they make more of an effort to socialise with everybody. And there are never any worries with 'the wrong type' of people ruining your event. Children are also very safe to roam and play as nobody from the public is ever allowed in. It feels like your own country estate for the weekend!

Q: What would you say are the main features of your property compared to other similar exclusive use properties or hotels?

A: There are many! But our key points of difference are:

- Location – location – location. We are only minutes from Kinsale, one of Ireland's premier tourist destinations and Heritage town. We offer seclusion – but not isolation – and many similar properties to ours are miles away from the nearest town. We are also only 20 minutes from Cork International Airport and 35 minutes from Cork Railway Station. Kinsale also offers a multitude of activities for your guests to enjoy – from fishing, sailing, horseriding, surfing – or merely wandering its streets with its many coffee shops, restaurants, bar and shops. So you don't have to worry about trying to keep them entertained.
- Our background is event management – we are not hoteliers. So we work with you in creating the event that YOU want and not restricted by packages.
- When you read our testimonials one of the key elements that stands out are our staff.
- Our reputation for our food is highlighted in the testimonials. We are flexible and try our best to meet your individual requirements. Our chef

previously worked at Chapter One (the Michelin star restaurant in Dublin) as well as other country house hotels.

- Privacy is key – we find that for corporates and businesses they appreciate the fact that they have no fear of the media or competitors overhearing their conversations. You can talk business anywhere, anytime throughout the property in total privacy.
- And in addition to the privacy, 5-star food and great staff – there's a little bit of the X factor thrown in. Just ask any of our past clients.

Pricing and Costs

Q : Are you in NAMA and if so what are the implications in terms of quality and service, as we have heard negatives about such venues?

A : Happy to say we are a successful family-owned operation and we are not in NAMA. However there is a major challenge in terms of pricing as NAMA Hotels are run by accountants and banks and therefore are focused entirely on the bottom-line. We are entirely focused on maintaining quality and standards in order to stand out the cluttered venue market.

Q : NAMA Hotels are much more flexible on price ?

A: Our view is you get what you pay for and we have already dropped our prices by 30% from the peak. We get most of our business by word of mouth and give 5-star quality at very competitive prices. We offer 'good value' – it is not about being cheap – it's about getting value for the money you are spending – however much that is.

Q : Is there any room for manoeuvre on the price ?

A: There have been sharp increases in fuel, utilities, staff costs, vat, F&B prices over the last couple of years and we have continued to absorb these without increasing prices or reducing quality. In fact we have already significantly reduced our prices. We also offer special rates depending on the season if you are not fixed on a peak date.

Q : Do you charge a venue hire charge like a lot of other Exclusive Use venues do ?

A : If you take the minimum number of bedrooms to guarantee exclusive use – there are no additional hire charges. This price starts at €2,820 up to €6,600 per night (which is equivalent to €100 – €150 per person per night depending on the date, number of rooms, etc.) You tell us how many people are staying, number of nights, sleeping configuration etc and we advise you on the price. You can't compare our per person rate with the price of a hotel room – what you are getting here is an entire private estate versus what you get in a hotel which is a bedroom and access to their public function areas. Also some venues are cutting out Breakfasts and VAT to make the room price seem cheaper and other subtle elements that you will not notice until it is too late. We believe in being very transparent in everything that we do and if you would like to get some sample budgets, just let us know.

Q : What extras do we have to pay for a meeting or conference?

A : We include a basic setup with the equipment that we have in-house – free of charge. We have a projector screen, laptop projector, 2 flipcharts etc. If you need anything else we can hire it and charge the normal rental charges. We also will do the setup in the layout that your group needs. The main extras are F&B, service charge and any additional activities or suppliers that we organise on your behalf. You can have breakout sessions, meetings etc anywhere in the house – there's no additional hire charges.

Q: Is it possible to not take all the rooms?

A : As you know we are offering exclusive use. We understand that for a lot of groups you do not need to use all 22 bedrooms. So we have prepared special single, twin and triple rates which you can work out based on the numbers in your group. However, there are minimums involved. These are outlined in our Group Brochure and Business Brochure.

Q : Do we have to book for 2 nights, or is one night an option?

A : Yes one night is an option from Sunday – Thursday or where we have a 1-day weekend date available.

Q : What is the situation with the Booking Confirmation Payment?

A : This payment secures the date and starts the planning process. The deposit is non-refundable. The amount we require varies depending on the size of the booking.

Q : What happens if I need to cancel?

A : If you need to cancel once this Booking Confirmation Payment has been paid, unfortunately we cannot return this payment. This money is forfeited as we have turned business away for the dates that you have secured. However, if you want to postpone the event due to unforeseen circumstances, then let us know and hopefully we can find a mutually suitable alternative date. In this case, we will transfer the payment to the new date. You will need to give us six months notice in writing if this is the case as we will need time to re-sell the initial date.

Food & Beverages

Q: When do we have to guarantee numbers for the rooms and food?

A: Basically, when you book our property, all we ask is that you guarantee to pay the Exclusive Use Property Price that we agree with you based on your numbers. At that stage you give us your best guess on the number of people for the various meals. We then work with you based on these numbers for budgeting etc. **Two weeks before your event, you give us your guaranteed number.** This is then the number that you guarantee to pay for even if you have last minute drop outs. We can't be fairer than that!

Q : Do you offer Corkage ?

A: Not normally as we have an excellent wine list of special selected wines at excellent prices. Our House Selection wines start at €22 per bottle. It is a lot of work to stocktake, empty out all our wine, stock yours, serve, re-stocktake and pack up your left over wine etc.

Q : What do we do about feeding the children?

A: We have children's menus priced attractively at only €15 per child. You decide if the children are sitting with the adults at dinner or fed separately and then maybe have some babysitters keep them company so the parents can relax and enjoy their own dinner. Either way – we don't mind. Just be aware that 2 and 3 year olds don't tend to enjoy sitting quietly for 2-3 hours whilst adults eat and talk!

Q : Do you offer Food tastings ?

A: Given our exclusive use style of operation rather than a hotel – we do not offer Food tastings. We would have to close the whole property down for a day in order to do this. Our food is specially prepared by award winning chefs and we can send testimonials from our many satisfied clients – which also includes rock stars and royalty that have enjoyed our a la carte standards. Our Head Chef has run chef cookery schools, worked at Chapter One (the Michelin star restaurant in Dublin) and numerous country house hotels. Let us know if you would like a Food Consultation with David.

Q: Are there vegetarian options?

A : Yes we can accommodate most vegetarian, allergy and other dietary requirements with advance notice.

Q: Why do you charge a 12.5% service charge?

A : Most venues (hotels as well as other exclusive use) charge some form of service charge. The rates can vary. This is a charge to cover our staff time as we provide a lot of personalised service. Additional gratuities are discretionary. Just read our testimonials to appreciate the level of service that we offer!

Planning and Organisation

Q : What event planning services do you provide?

A: We offer the full range – see our Business or Group brochure. We charge a nominal price to cover our time. Also given the amount of events we do and our past event experience – we do know best how an event works here.

Bedrooms

Q : Are the different types of bedrooms available ?

A : The special aspects of what we are offering as well as privacy and 5-star F&B is that all our rooms are themed – which make all of your guest feel individual and special. They are all ensuite and the rooms of all sizes and specs to suit all the individual needs of a flexible group. We have double, twin, triple and quad rooms available. And if we have to squeeze a few small children in, we have some children's beds available as well.

Q : What is the largest room capacity ?

A : The largest room can take 4 adults. Also because it is a private estate – people are more relaxed about sharing compared to a hotel.

Q : What size are the beds?

A : They are all different. Most of our 'doubles' are Queen Size or larger. Many of the doubles are zip-and-link which means that they are 6 feet wide or can change into 2 x 3 foot singles. A couple of the smaller rooms have standard double beds – but we can talk you through the configuration.

Q: Do all the rooms come with baths?

A : The majority of our rooms have stand alone walk-in showers as well as baths. Due to the unique style and shape of many of our rooms and bathrooms, a small number may only have a shower.

Q. Can we book a non-smoking bedroom?

A : All buildings including bedrooms are non-smoking. We do have ample covered areas outside for those who wish to smoke.

Q: Do you have hairdryers in the bedrooms?

A : Yes

Q : Do you have toiletries in the bathrooms?

A : Yes, we supply shower gel, soap, shampoo and conditioner in all bathrooms. If you need anything extra, we may have toiletry supplies through reception.

Q : Can we get breakfast delivered to our bedroom?

A : Due to the unique nature of many of our bedrooms, paintwork and furniture, we don't allow food to be taken to the rooms.

Q : How can you cater for disabled guests?

A : The house was built in 1770 and although it was fully renovated, there are certain issues with regards to disabled access. We have however attempted to meet the needs of these guests as best we can. We have a downstairs bedroom with a full wet room and grab rails for the WC and basin. All power points are lowered and the bedroom allows good floor clearance. This room

is also interconnecting with another bedroom so if you wish to have a carer or family member close by to help, then it is possible. We have ramps into our Garden Room and a disabled WC in the Bar area. We have portable ramps which can be moved around by either a staff member or family member to help in the other areas. We have had numerous guests use these facilities.

General House Questions

Q : Do you have WIFI ?

A : There is complimentary wifi service through-out the whole property.

Q : Are high chairs and cots available and what is the charge?

A : We have a number of cots and high chairs available – and they free of charge to use.

Q : How much parking space is there?

A : There is adequate available for guests list up to 150 people and also large buses.

Q : Can we get clothes ironed or dry cleaned?

A : We have a limited number of irons available for use so we usually set them up in one of the communal areas for everybody to use. If you need dry cleaning, we can check with the local dry cleaner in Kinsale, but if you have a tight lead time, it might not be possible.

Q : What are the standard check-in and check-out times?

A : The standard check-in time is 2:00 pm and check-out is at 11:00 am.

Q : Is it possible to check-in earlier or check-out later?

A : It is sometimes possible, however, this depends on availability and cannot be guaranteed. Additional charges may apply.

Q : What credit and debit cards do you accept?

A : We accept all types of credit card but charges apply – 3% Amex and 2 % all others. Cheques, Bank Transfers and cash works better of course.

Q : How do my guests checkout?

A : We setup a checkout desk on the morning of departure. You will have provided us with the list of guests and the amount we are to collect from them on departure, the total of which will come off the guaranteed Exclusive Use Property Rate that you agreed to pay on booking. You only pay the difference – if any.

Q :Do you have a pet policy?

A : We can discuss this on a case by case basis as we have our own dogs on the property.

Kinsale

Q : What are the directions to Ballinacurra House ?

A : See our website for a downloadable map. We are only ever private, there is no road signage and people know they are coming here. So make sure your guests bring the map.

Q : Is it possible to play golf while I am in Kinsale ?

A : Yes there are 5 courses including the world renowned Old Head Golf Course.

Q : What activities are available in Kinsale ?

A : There are many wonderful activities in Kinsale including world class sailing golf, horse riding etc. Look at www.kinsale.ie for a more detailed list or we can send you our Activity brochure.

We are happy to answer your questions –

Email us at info@ballinacurra.com

or see our website www.ballinacurra.com.

And don't forget to check out our Pinterest site for loads of photographs of the property and also our Facebook page. You can go to these pages through our website.