

# EMBRACE THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY OF LIFE



## NORTHERN HEADLANDS & SURF COAST

[WildAtlanticWay.com](http://WildAtlanticWay.com)

[#WildAtlanticWay](https://www.instagram.com/WildAtlanticWay)



# WELCOME TO THE NORTHERN HEADLANDS & SURF COAST



## EMBRACE THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY OF LIFE



The Wild Atlantic Way, the longest defined coastal touring route in the world stretching 2,500km from Inishowen in Donegal to Kinsale in west Cork, leads you through one of the world's most dramatic landscapes.

*A frontier on the very edge of Europe, the Wild Atlantic Way is a place like no other, which in turn has given its people a unique outlook on life. Here you can immerse yourself in a different way of living. Here you can let your freer, spontaneous side breathe. Here you can embrace the Wild Atlantic Way of Life.*

*The most memorable holidays always have a touch of wildness about them, and the Wild Atlantic Way will not disappoint. With opportunities to view the raw, rugged beauty of the highest sea cliffs in Europe; experience Northern lights dancing in winter skies; journey by boat to many of the wonderful islands off our island; experience the coast on horseback; or take a splash and enjoy the many watersports available.*

*Stop often at the many small settlements and towns along the route. Every few miles there are places to stretch your legs and have a bite to eat, so be sure to allow enough time take it all in. For the foodies, you can indulge in some seaweed foraging with a local guide with a culinary experience so you can taste the fruits of your labours. As night falls enjoy the craic at traditional music sessions and even try a few steps of an Irish jig! It's out on these western extremities – drawn in by the constant rhythm of the ocean's roar and the consistent warmth of the people – that you'll find the Ireland you have always imagined.*

COVER IMAGE: CIONN FHÁNADA, CO DONEGAL







## WILD ATLANTIC WAY

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Our coastline is precious and home to a vast array of habitats and wildlife. These fragile organisms survive in harsh environments and are vulnerable to visitor impacts. Visitors to the Wild Atlantic Way have a responsibility to minimise their impact on the environment. Leave No Trace Ireland is helping to create an ethic of understanding, responsibility and care for Ireland's Wild Atlantic way. To learn more about how you can Leave No Trace, visit [www.leavenotraceireland.org](http://www.leavenotraceireland.org).

ERRIS HEAD, BELMULLET, CO MAYO

[WildAtlanticWay.com](http://WildAtlanticWay.com)

[#WildAtlanticWay](https://www.instagram.com/WildAtlanticWay)

Every care has been taken in the compilation of this guide in order to ensure accuracy at all times. The publishers cannot accept responsibility for printed errors or omissions, or for changes that occur after the guide has been printed.



# WILD ATLANTIC WAY DISCOVERY POINTS

To make it easier for you to discover the Wild Atlantic Way we have amplified six touring zones each with their own character and unique experiences. There are 188 Discovery Points dotted along these zones, and, of these, 15 are Signature Discovery Points. We will highlight five Signature Discovery Points in this guide.

Photo Points have been developed at each Discovery Point, designed to encourage you to capture great photographs that will remind you of your Wild Atlantic Way holiday long after you have gone home and maybe even encourage you to come back and visit again... Why not share your images on our Facebook page and Instagram? See back cover for a list of our social media channels.

Interpretation panels are also in place adjacent to each Photo Point telling the story, history and heritage of the area. Each panel features images and also a small map of the area identifying some other local points of interest. Go on...Discover More!







**FREE**  
Wild Atlantic Way  
maps available  
from Tourist Offices  
(see back for details)





# *A Passport to Paradise*

Planning a visit to the Wild Atlantic Way? Then you're in for a treat! This 2,500km stretch of glorious rugged coast along the west of Ireland is home to soaring mountains, jutting headlands, breath-taking cliff faces and lush green forests. Whether you're seeking an epic adventure or a remote, tranquil getaway, you'll find it here, on the world's longest defined coastal touring route.







Available  
at selected  
**POST OFFICES**  
and **TOURIST**  
**INFORMATION**  
**OFFICES!**



What's more, you can now pick up your very own Wild Atlantic Way passport; a unique souvenir of you or your family's completed journey along this exceptional route. Not only is it a genuine passport to paradise, it also gives you the chance to meet locals in the many towns and villages dotted along this winding coastline. A quick chat with a local and you'll soon have insider knowledge on incredible local hidden gems - not to mention where to stop for your next picnic or coastal panorama.

#### A STAMP FOR EVERY MEMORY

Your passport will serve as a life-long memento of your travels along this astonishing 2,500km length of coast, and also enables you to obtain your 'Wild Atlantic Way Certificate', the official record of your journey. Each beautifully designed passport has its own individual number, so it's completely unique to you and your visit. And as you make your way along this inspiring stretch of coast, you can get it stamped at a host of scenic spots.

There are 188 Discovery Points peppering the route, from the wild Donegal headlands in the north, right down to the picturesque peninsulas of Kerry and Cork, and each one has its own individual stamp. Simply call into the selected An Post (post offices) and Tourist Information Offices in the towns and villages adjacent to each Discovery Point, and staff there will be happy to stamp your passport.

#### A REWARDING ROUTE

And it gets better! The route is divided up into six zones, and once you've gathered your first 20 stamps you can call to any of the Tourist Information Offices listed to receive a special Wild Atlantic Way gift. If you've missed a stamp while in a zone you can call to the regional branch offices of An Post (Post Offices) and the Tourist Information Offices in the zone. And don't worry about trying to fit all 188 Discovery Points into your trip; you can keep adding stamps to your passport every time you visit.

#### SO GRAB YOUR PASSPORT & GET PLANNING!

Starting to put together your itinerary? Thrill-seekers should be sure to grab a surfboard at Mullaghmore, Co Sligo, where waves have been known to reach dizzying heights of 15m. Or perhaps you'd like to embrace the unrivalled Atlantic vistas from Malin Head, the country's most northerly point. In Kerry meanwhile, you can take a ferry across to the ancient Skelligs – so otherworldly are the remains of this early Christian monastery it featured in the latest Star Wars film.

There are plenty more amazing sites hidden off the beaten track too, and your passport is the perfect tool to help you discover them. From golden sandy beaches to charming fishing villages, secluded islands and more, it's all waiting for you.

Your Wild Atlantic Way Passport can be purchased at selected post offices along the Wild Atlantic Way; from selected Tourist Information Offices and also at key entry points. Cost: €10

See [www.wildatlanticway.com/passport](http://www.wildatlanticway.com/passport) for more information.





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# NORTHERN HEADLANDS

## JOURNEYS BEGIN

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### *Expand your mind, body and soul in Donegal*

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Untouched, off-radar and crying out for exploration, this rugged and remote region marks the north-western contour of the Wild Atlantic Way.

Nature is spectacular and bracing here, from the sheer granite walls of some of Europe's highest sea cliffs at Slieve League, to Northern Lights dancing in clear winter skies, to millions of seabirds gathering in great estuaries.

There's a vibrant sense of community in this sparsely populated region: Ireland's wildest shores are home to its largest Gaeltacht – where Irish is still the mother tongue and traditional culture thrives. In Donegal, a brilliant festival or night out could be followed by the rare sight of a basking shark... it's that kind of place.

Out on Ireland's northernmost headlands, eleven lighthouses shine across the sea, and journeys – physical and spiritual – begin. The sea air revives, minds and horizons expand, stories are told, adventures are shared, and spirits lift.





## SIGNATURE DISCOVERY POINT

### *Malin Head, Co Donegal*

Rugged, yet inviting, Malin Head, the most northerly outpost on the Wild Atlantic Way, is steeped in history and is an outdoor playground with an abundance of activities – walking, bird-watching, angling and swimming.

Here, north of Trawbreaga Bay, at low tide, you can spot the wreckage of the 'Twilight', which sank in 1889 while sailing to Derry.

For more history, follow the coast road. You'll pass the old radio station, built in 1910, and The Tower, a derelict signal station located on Banba's Crown, the most northerly point in Ireland. It's the perfect place to relax with a picnic, as the stunning panorama includes Inistrahull and Tory islands, as well as the Scottish hills on a clear day. Plus, you can work off any extra indulgences with a walk along the cliffs to Hell's Hole, a chasm where the tide rushes in with impressive force.

If treasure hunting is more your speed, head east to Ballyhillion beach, which dates back to the ice age and is known for its many semi-precious stones.





## SIGNATURE DISCOVERY POINT

# *Cionn Fhánada (Fanad Head), Co Donegal*

Fanad Head lies on a wild and rugged peninsula on the north coast of County Donegal between Lough Swilly and Mulroy Bay. Stretching bravely into the swirling Atlantic Ocean on the northern tip of Ireland, to reach the headland you should travel along the Knockalla Coast Road, a route with some seriously stunning panoramas. Along the way, you'll take in views of the Inishowen Peninsula and Atlantic Ocean, and as the road ascends, you'll look down upon Portsalon and Ballymastrocker Bay. From this vantage point, it's easy to see why the beach was once voted the second most beautiful in the world.

Still, it has more to offer than good looks, as it's also a haven for water-sports enthusiasts, walkers and golfers. If a visit to the lighthouse is on your agenda, don't forget to make some time for a leisurely stroll along the adjacent headland, where you'll see awe-inspiring waves and the Wild Atlantic Way's most rugged stretch of coastline. This is one place where you'll certainly want to have your camera ready.





## SIGNATURE DISCOVERY POINT

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# *Sliabh Liag (Slieve League), Co Donegal*

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Some of the highest and finest marine cliffs in Europe, Donegal's Sliabh Liag (Slieve League in English) are not to be missed. To make the most of your visit, it's best to leave your car in the car park and walk the few kilometres to the cliffs.

As you climb toward the top of Sliabh Liag (601m / 1972 feet) there are terrific views of the Atlantic Ocean, Donegal Bay and the Sligo Mountains.

Sliabh Liag was also the site of a Christian pilgrimage for more than 1,000 years, although it's believed to have been a sacred place long before the Christians arrived. Given the mountain's rich history, there is a lot you can learn at the visitor centre, where you'll also get a taste of the local food, culture and sense of humour. Experience the cliffs from the sea with boat trips from Teelin Harbour and you might even get to meet the local dolphins.





## Babbling Streams and Stepping Stones

Clonmany, Inishowen, Co Donegal

The spectacular Glenevin Waterfall is located between Straid and Crossconnel, 2km from the village of Clonmany. This waterfall, wedge-like in shape, cascades fresh mountain water out over black rock from an astounding height of 30ft. After rambling along the much-loved path up Glenevin Valley to the Glenevin Waterfall it's time to stop off at the Rose Tearoom in the late 18th century Glen House, where you'll relax over a cuppa, while enjoying the views towards the sea and getting a glimpse of the historically significant Malin Head in the distance. As well as cooling down with a locally produced Mullins ice cream, pick up a souvenir of your trip at the on-site cottage shop, where all of the crafts being sold are produced in the Inishowen area. There is no doubt you'll fall in love with Inishowen.

**T** +353 (0)74 9376745

**www.glenhouse.ie**

**E** info@glenhouse.ie

**GPS** 55.268071, -7.436317



## Go for a Gallop

Tullagh Bay, Clonmany, Inishowen, Co Donegal

Trekking around the magnificent scenery of Tullagh Bay is an adventurous and enjoyable activity the whole family can enjoy. This part of Inishowen in northeast Donegal remains truly unspoilt and is just a short distance from Malin Head, Ireland's most northerly point on the Wild Atlantic Way.

Explore the beauty of the beaches, bogs, mountains and surrounding countryside. Friendly, knowledgeable and experienced guides will make this an experience to be treasured.

**T** +353 (0)86 7204150

**www.tullaghbayequestrian.ie**

**E** info@tullaghbayequestrian.ie

**GPS** 55.281762, -7.456266



## Sunset with a Difference

Inch Levels, Burt, Inishowen, Co Donegal

Inch Wildfowl reserve is nestled in the shadow of Grianán of Ailleach. From October to April you can witness a wildlife spectacle here so enigmatic it feels it belongs to an ancient past. Just before sunset along the edge of the lake or tucked up in one of the bird hides, visitors can experience the sights and sounds of thousands of geese coming in to roost on the lake. Swirling flocks of greylag geese darken the skies and with a triumphant gaggling as they swoop down to the lake. These greylag geese are the ancestors of the domestic goose and the largest goose in Europe.

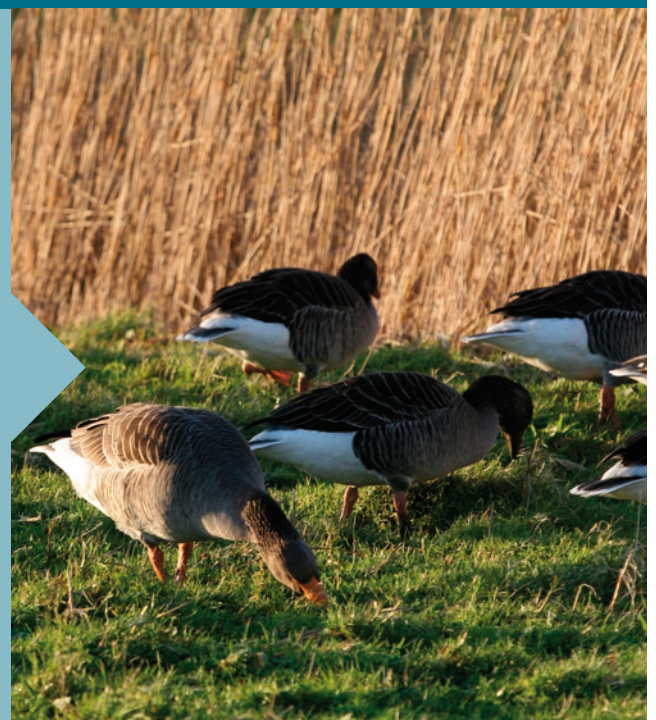
The pathways at the reserve cater for walks, runs, cycles or just experiencing the amazing coastal views of the Atlantic Ocean.

**T** +353 (0)87 9832045

**www.inchwildfowlreserve.ie**

**E** lee.mcdaid@ahg.gov.ie

**GPS** 55.055009, -7.459942





## Follow the Hops

Ballyraine, Letterkenny, Co Donegal

Named after the Kinnegar Beach just north of Rathmullan in County Donegal, Kinnegar Brewing maintains an age-old tradition paired with a contemporary sense of adventure to produce clean, crisp, full-flavoured farmhouse beers.

Beer enthusiasts can visit the brewery, where a complete overview of the brewing process will be shown, beginning in the malt loft and continuing through the brew house, the fermentation process, the conditioning cellar, and finally to packaging.

Book an afternoon with Kinnegar Brewing and follow the hops to tradition, talent and taste.

**T** +353 (0)74 9158874

**www.kinnegarbrewing.ie**

**E** info@kinnegarbrewing.ie

**GPS** 54.955252, -7.705632



## Get Your Motor Running

Breenagh, Letterkenny, Co Donegal

Hit the open road for a unique Wild Atlantic Way touring experience with True North Bike Tours. Experience stunning views of the wilderness of Ireland's western seaboard from the saddle of your very own motorcycle, or from one provided by hire from True North.

You'll follow lesser-known routes through glens and mountain passes and along coastlines, cliffs and beaches for an unspoilt, one-of-a-kind adventure. Enjoy the personal touch on a guided tour, or simply revel in the freedom of a self-guided ride, knowledgeably designed by motorcyclists, for motorcyclists to get the best out of your time on the route. All bookings provide B&B accommodation, a daily itinerary with route maps and local insights, a True North Bike Tour souvenir t-shirt, and 24-hour phone assistance so you can focus on simply enjoying this remarkable way to take on the Wild Atlantic Way.

**T** +353 (0)86 3820969

**www.truenorthbiketours.com**

**E** truenorthbiketours@gmail.com

**GPS** 54.9272871, -7.908491

## The Guiding Light

Rathmullan, Co Donegal

View the beautiful 19th century Fanad Lighthouse from aboard the Swilly Explorer with Rathmullan Charters. Located off the shores of the Fanad Peninsula, in the Wild Atlantic Way's Northern Headlands region, the granite lighthouse is one of fifteen Signature Discovery Points on the route, making this cruise out over the waves of Lough Swilly to spot it simply unmissable.

Take in the spectacular Knockalla Caves, marvel at the world-renowned beauty of Portsalon and its Blue Flag beach, snap postcard-worthy shots of the Great Arch of Doagh Beg, the old fort at Dunree, and of course, Fanad Lighthouse itself in all its timeless glory. With seabirds reeling in the air above or nestling among the cliffs, and the waters teeming with rich marine life from seals to maybe even dolphins and basking sharks, you'll feel like you've sailed away to a little piece of Wild Atlantic paradise.

**T** +353 (0)87 2480132

**www.rathmullancharters.com**

**E** rathmullancharters@eircom.net

**GPS** 55.0970737, -7.5385001





## Paddle Perfection

Fanad, Co Donegal

For a fun and exciting way to experience the Wild Atlantic Way, dip your oars in the water on a guided tour from Donegal Sea Kayaking, a dedicated kayaking company based on the Fanad Peninsula. The unique views you'll experience of the coastline will be your reward for putting in a little effort, though you'll barely notice the paddling as you marvel at local shipwrecks, explore caves and hidden beaches, and take in the beauty of the wide open sky. The wonderful natural resources of the islands of Mulroy Bay are yours to investigate, or why not wait until after sunset to get rowing, for unforgettable views of the Milky Way, or whatever else the night sky has to offer. Whether you prefer to be guided individually, or as a family or group, you'll be in good hands with your guide, who boasts over 30 years of sea, river and flat water kayaking experience. Tours operate year-round. Make the most of your Wild Atlantic Way visit to the Northern Headlands with Donegal Sea Kayaking.

**T** +353 (0)86 3130523

**www.donegalseakayaking.com**

**E** info@donegalseakayaking.com

**GPS** 55.227886, -7.655238



## Heavenly Smoked Salmon

Claggan, Carrigart, Co Donegal

At the Haven Smokehouse on the shores of beautiful Sheephaven Bay in the wild rugged landscape of Donegal, a true taste sensation awaits. Using the freshest organic salmon from the pristine waters of the North Atlantic, a unique blend of 10,000-year-old turf from the mountains of Donegal and a generous sprinkling of sweet beech wood, the Haven Smokehouse produces a truly bespoke cold-smoked salmon that has to be sampled to be believed.

Dried by the fresh Atlantic breezes and smoked over the same hand-cut turf which has been used to heat Irish homes for hundreds of years, this true taste of the Northern Headlands is a feast for all the senses. Try this much sought-after savoury delight for yourself in Claggan, just minutes from the iconic Fanad Lighthouse.

**T** +353 (0)86 4672737

**www.thehavensmokehouse.com**

**E** crusesue@hotmail.com

**GPS** 55.154271, -7.807101



## Weaving and Wild Atlantic Waves

Downings, Co Donegal

There's more to tweed than your grandfather's hunting jacket - learn all about this icon of traditional Irish outerwear with a captivating tour of McNutt Donegal Woollen Mill. Founded in the early 1950's, McNutt has a long history of weaving Donegal tweed - considered by many to be the quintessential Irish outdoors cloth. Still a working mill, today McNutt specialises in weaving beautiful blankets, cosy throws, and fabrics expertly crafted from pure wool as well as linen, cashmere, lamb's wool and even alpaca. Inspired by the local landscapes of the harbour and the nearby hills, each piece is a work of art in itself. Experience the yarns, warping, weaving, colours and sounds in a real mill setting on this one-of-a-kind guided tour. Once your curiosity has been piqued, stroll across to the Mill Shop to avail of a 10% discount before relaxing in the coffee shop with a warming cup and a tempting, home-baked treat, all while taking in the atmospheric coastal setting.

**T** +353 (0)74 9155662

**www.mcnuttofdonegal.com**

**E** lorraine@mcnutt.co

**GPS** 55.191051, -7.845086





## A Coastal Castle

Creeslough, Co Donegal

Perched on a secluded shoreline spot in beautiful Sheephaven Bay by the Atlantic Ocean, the 15th-century Doe Castle is an amazing place to visit any time of year. Once the stronghold of the MacSweeney Clan, a group of gallowglasses (professional fighters) from Scotland, the castle has witnessed more than 500 years of incredible history, including the dramatic rescue of the Spanish Armada sailors in 1588, becoming a British military garrison during the Plantation of Ulster, and the Gaelic Uprising of 1641. It was here that the young Red Hugh O'Donnell was fostered, and in the turbulent 17th century, it survived siege and cannon fire, eventually being restored and extended in the 19th century by General George Vaughan Hart. There is access to the grounds, excluding the tower house daily from 9am - 6pm all year round. Tours available Friday to Sunday during July and August. Surrounded by water on three sides, Doe Castle cuts a striking figure on the Wild Atlantic Way coastline, and history buffs as well as adventure lovers will find it truly enchanting.

**T** +353 (0)86 8437533

[www.heritageireland.ie/en/north-west/doecastle](http://www.heritageireland.ie/en/north-west/doecastle)

**E** [janetemciver@gmail.com](mailto:janetemciver@gmail.com)

**GPS** 55.133, -7.881



## Into the Woods

Ards Forest Park, Creeslough, Co Donegal

Tucked away on the sheltered western shore of glorious Sheephaven Bay in County Donegal, Ards Forest Park is the place to treat the whole family to total tranquillity. This coastal park is an expanse of more than 480ha (1200 acres), incorporating a salt-breezed sandy beach, an invigorating rocky shoreline and a fascinating diversity of habitats. Work up an appetite by tackling one of the many sign-posted trails in the picturesque park, and then head back to the sand dunes to find some utterly idyllic picnic spots and a playground for the little ones.

The Ards Coffee Tree opens daily in the summer and weekends thereafter. Before you tuck into your food though, cool down with a dip in the mighty Atlantic - if you dare!

**T** +353 (0)1 2011111

**GPS** 55.164517, -7.879258

[www.coillte.ie/site/ards-forest-park/](http://www.coillte.ie/site/ards-forest-park/)

## Green Thumbs and Good Cheer

Falcarragh, Co Donegal

Cluain na dTor Seaside Gardens & Art Studio is one of the Wild Atlantic Way's best-kept secrets. A horticulturist's dream, the gardens are 25 years in the making, and packed with tender rarities and exotic specimen plants from around the world, each carefully sourced by owner Séamus O'Donnell.

Located near the seaside village of Falcarragh on the northwest coast of Donegal, it's a true haven for local wildlife and an oasis of calm. A wander around Cluain na dTor (meaning 'Meadow of Shrubs') will inspire and delight with its array of plants, as well as its display of sculptures created by local artists nestled amongst the menagerie of plants. You can take a guided walk with the owner and enjoy refreshments before stepping into the art studio to marvel at the local creative works inspired by nature.

**T** +353 (0)87 6267599

[www.seasideplants.eu](http://www.seasideplants.eu)

**E** [seamus@seasideplants.eu](mailto:seamus@seasideplants.eu)

**GPS** 55.139787, -8.107579





## Real Heritage

### Gortahork, Co Donegal

This fascinating coach day-tour includes Glenveagh National Park and Castle. The castle, built in 1869, is set amongst beautifully maintained gardens, and offers magnificent mountain views, raised boglands, and tremendous lakes and woodlands across the 16,000 acres of national park.

Errigal Mountain, the highest in Donegal, stands at 2,464ft in a majestic position amongst the boglands, overlooking Dunlewey Lough and the mysterious Poison Glen, the Wild Atlantic Way and the Bloody Foreland. The coastal drive along the Bloody Foreland to Magheraroarty has many spectacular views, including views of Inishbofin and Tory Island and is a truly breath-taking journey.

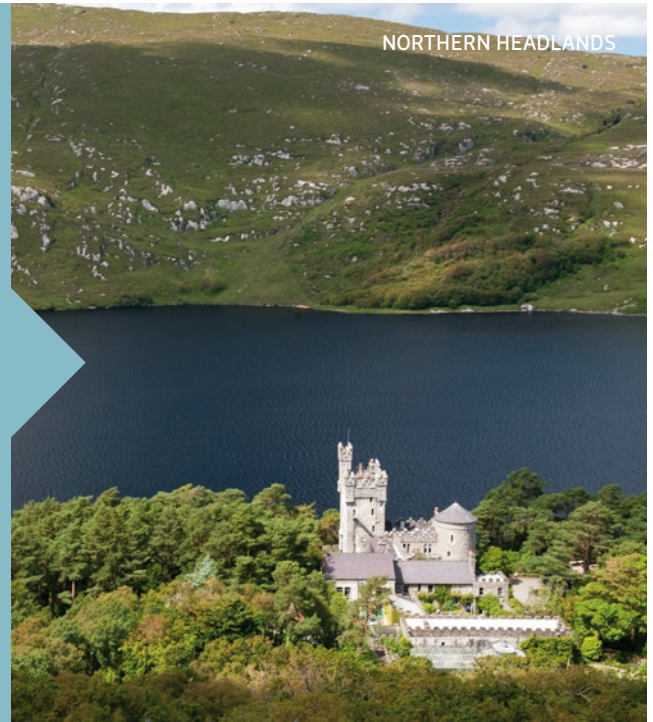
Dunfanaghy is a picturesque seaside village located at the head of Sheephaven Bay. The village is renowned for its lovely holiday atmosphere and the friendly 'buzz' during the summer months.

**T** +353 (0)74 9135460

**www.donegaltours.ie**

**E** info@donegaltours.ie

**GPS** 55.122612, -8.139716



## Sea Level Sensations

### Arranmore Island, Co Donegal

See the magnificent Wild Atlantic Way from sea level with Dive Arranmore Charters. Their exclusive Sea Safari and Maritime Heritage Tour will take you on an excursion of the marine history of the Northern Headlands dating all the way back to 1781.

Visit the 18th-century herring fishing station, a key attraction in the area. Led by your skipper Jim, you'll discover the fascinating history of the station whilst cruising through the islands' channels, listening to the cry of gulls as you pass by under an ever-changing sky.

Many other species of bird make their home here, too, along with unique marine life and flora and fauna found only in this temperate coastal environment. Witness the dramatic breaking of the Atlantic waves against the rugged cliff faces and behold the impressive sea stacks of the Wild Atlantic Way. The beauty of deserted islands and ruins, the rich history, and the teeming of life here at the edge of the world will stay with you long after your exhilarating trip has ended.

**T** +353 (0)86 3300516

**www.divearranmore.com**

**E** jimmuldowney3@gmail.com

**GPS** 54.982241, -08.517058



## Coastal Adventures for all the Family

### Ionad an Mhachaire, Maghery, Dungloe, Co Donegal

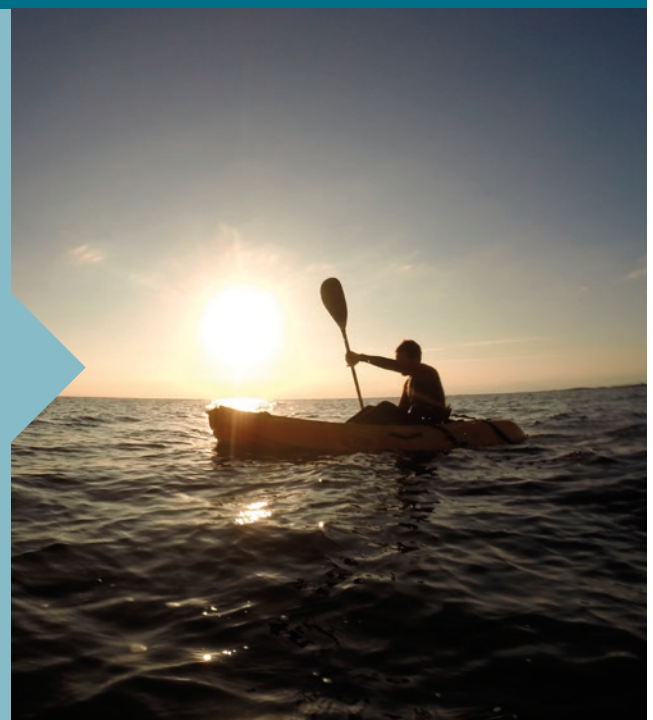
If you like to connect with nature while doing an enjoyable outdoor activity, then Maghery Coastal Adventures is perfect for you. We provide a range of sea and land activities, which are fun for couples, families and other groups. Whether you prefer kayaking or stand-up paddle-boarding, snorkelling or surfing, hill walking or cycling, we have an activity that will give you a sense of achievement. These activities are a super way of immersing yourself in the local environment, sea and hills. You can explore the unspoilt landscape with knowledgeable guides in small personal groups that are a mix of tourists and locals. There's plenty of wildlife around — in particular, a large seal population. A variety of aromas will arouse your senses: heather, seaweed and the salty sea. Coastal adventures are the ideal path to relaxation and peacefulness. So come along and relish the feeling of rejuvenation!

**T** +353 (0)87 3992651

**www.magherycoastaladventures.ie**

**E** info@magherycoastaladventures.ie

**GPS** 54.929172, -8.442508





## Burtonport Railway Walk

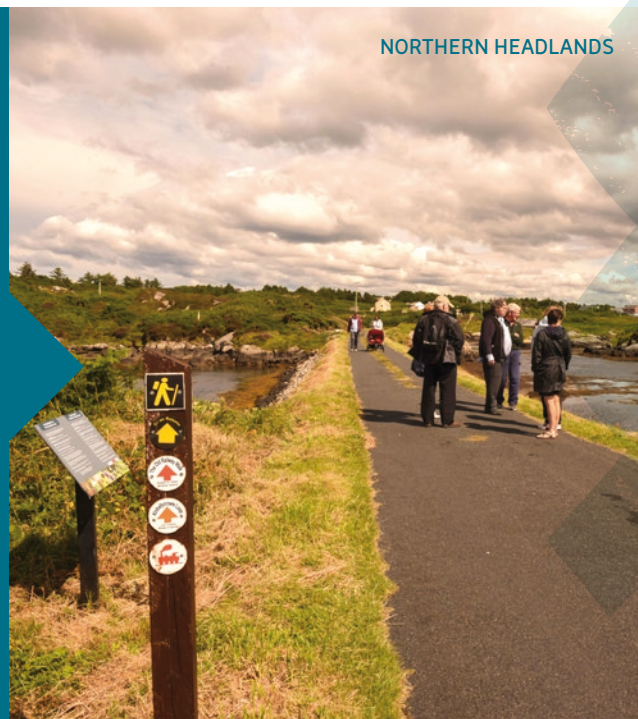
### Burtonport, Co Donegal

This beautiful, 5.5km linear walking trail (one way) offers spectacular scenery of the coast and woodlands of the Northern Headlands. Originally the route taken by the train which connected Burtonport to Letterkenny between 1903 and 1940, the trail is open to anyone with a desire for adventure, with helpful information points provided in the public carpark across from O'Donnell's Bar near the harbour area in Burtonport. Scenery along the trail is superb, with views overlooking Loch Waskal and taking in various coastal islands along the way. There are many features of the old railway remaining which you can explore along the way, including stations, gatehouses, accommodations, crossings, pillars, cuttings, embankments, a bridge, rusty gates and much, much more. The trail is generally flat and is suitable for prams, buggies and leisure bikes, and there are also many places to stop for a rest and a picnic along the way. In Burtonport - the start and finishing point - there is a lovely harbour area where you can enjoy a cup of tea or coffee at the Burtonport Welcome Centre. There's also a delightful array of locally-sourced crafts and a heritage collection of fishing and country life memorabilia. 'Go on, treat yourself!'

**T** +353 (0)86 3836546

**GPS** 54.982810, -8.441309

[www.irishtrails.ie/trail/Siuloid-an-Sean-Bhothar-Iarainn/631](http://www.irishtrails.ie/trail/Siuloid-an-Sean-Bhothar-Iarainn/631)



## Fabric of our Lives

### Ardara, Co Donegal

Immerse yourself in the centuries-old tradition of knitting by visiting John Molloy Woollen Mills in the picturesque village of Ardara, which is nestled in the hills of Donegal along the Wild Atlantic coast. Known for its traditional knitting, sheep farming, and fishing industries, this area of the Northern Headlands offers a true taste of rural Ireland. With five generations in the weaving trade, the Molloy's have a ton of experience to draw on, making a visit to their family-run shop and mills an experience you won't want to miss. Witness first-hand a demonstration of the evolution of the knitting. See the kinds of knitwear still made in the mills today and in high demand for export worldwide. From the traditional Irish Aran fisherman's sweater to contemporary fashion knitwear including hats, caps, scarves, ponchos, capes, mittens and gloves, as well as jackets, caps, and ties, the craftsmanship that goes into each and every piece is bar none. See - and feel - it for yourself at John Molloy Woollen Mills.

**T** +353 (0)87 6484748

[www.johnmolloy.com](http://www.johnmolloy.com)

**E** [info@johnmolloy.com](mailto:info@johnmolloy.com)

**GPS** 54.4525182, -8.257318

## Distilled and Distinguished

### Carrick, Co Donegal

Visit the one and only distillery in Donegal and the first in 175 years at Sliabh Liag Distillery's An Dúlámán Gin Palace. A family owned craft distillery making a unique Irish Maritime Gin in a handmade copper pot still using seaweed foraged locally; this working distillery is tapping into a nearly long-lost tradition to bring the best spirits from the region back into the 21st century with a bang.

Visitors to An Dúlámán will have the exclusive opportunity to see a working distillery and to marvel over the bigger plans for the future Sliabh Liag whiskey distillery. With a passion for Irish whiskey and authentic brands, the founders are bringing their vision for retelling the legends and folklore of the Donegal Gaeltacht in a modern and confident way with super premium spirits. Taste the purity of artisanal and botanical gins, which are making a splash on the spirits scene around the globe, and raise your glass to the future of expertly blended Irish whiskey.

**T** +353 (0)74 9739875

[www.sliabhliagdistillery.com](http://www.sliabhliagdistillery.com)

**E** [info@sliabhliagdistillery.com](mailto:info@sliabhliagdistillery.com)

**GPS** 54.654537, -8.633815





## From Shore to Shelf

Kilcar, Co Donegal

Though it might sound strange to our modern sensibilities, the nutritional and cosmetic benefits of seaweed have been known to seaside communities in Ireland and around the globe for thousands of years. Growing wild in abundance along almost every shoreline in the Northern Headlands region of the Irish west coast, this tender sea vegetable is bursting with vitamins, minerals, and compounds that your body simply loves, and the experts at AlgAran know just what to do with it to bring you its very best benefits. Situated in southwest Donegal, AlgAran organically hand harvests their seaweed locally with maximum respect and care for the marine environment. Rinsed directly on the shore and dried at low temperatures to preserve its rich nutritional content, the seaweed itself is crammed full of health and vitality. Experience a day with the seaweed savants and learn how the plants go from shore to shelf, transformed along the way into certified organic food products that are ready to eat, or chemical-free cosmetics that will have you glowing. Whether for gourmet or health reasons or just for curiosity, you'll be surprised how good for you a little seaweed can be.

**T** +353 (0)74 9738961

**www.seaweedproducts.ie**

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**GPS** 54.6490, -8.6033



NORTHERN HEADLANDS



## A Stroll around Historic Donegal Town

Donegal Town, Co Donegal

Donegal was founded in 1612, when Captain Basil Brooke was granted lands and agreed to build a town on the River Eske. The town's true history goes much deeper, however - as reflected in its name, Dún na nGall, meaning 'Fort of the Foreigners'. The foreigners in question were Vikings who arrived here in the 9th century. They were replaced by the legendary O'Donnell clan, who built their 12th-century castle here on the southern banks of the river. Featuring additions by Basil Brooke, the castle remains at the heart of the town today. Discover more about Donegal Town's fascinating history in the company of a professional guide during a leisurely stroll of this fascinating old market town. Learn about Magee's, founded in 1866, world-famous for their hand-woven tweeds and the 20-foot obelisk dedicated to the authors of the 17th-century 'Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland', which originated in Donegal's Old Abbey where Red Hugh O'Donnell is believed to be buried. Afterwards your guide will gladly direct you to the many eateries in this, the home of the Taste of Donegal Food Festival, to sample some of the food Donegal is famous for.

**T** +353 (0)86 6059220

**www.walkingireland.ie**

**E** info@walkingireland.ie

**GPS** 54.651972, -8.111843

## Serenity on the Sea

Creevy, Ballyshannon, Co Donegal

A wonderful watersports location, Creevy Pier on the Wild Atlantic coastline of Donegal is hugely popular for fishing, swimming and scuba diving. But it's the sea kayaking in the area that really takes the cake. Paddle off into the tranquil waters of Donegal Bay, following the scenic coastline from Rossnowlagh to Kildoney or even further afield.

With the hills of Donegal in the distance and the mouth of the mighty Erne merging with the sea, this easy float in the 'heavenly cove' is sure to be the best way to enjoy Ballyshannon. Take advantage of a fully guided tour or rent your own kayak at the pier and set off in solitude - how you take on this historic and rugged stretch of the Wild Atlantic Way is up to you. Suitable for beginners as well as old pros, sea kayaking at Creevy Pier is an unforgettable way to see the sights.

**T** +353 (0)71 9852896

**www.creevyexperience.com/**

**E** activity@creevyexperience.com

**seakayaking**

**GPS** 54.530226, -8.254905





# SURF COAST

## WIND AND WAVES OUT WEST

*The waters and the wild,  
from Donegal to Erris*

"I would that we were, my beloved, white birds on the foam of the sea!" So wrote W.B. Yeats, in 'The White Birds'. Little wonder... This stretch of the Wild Atlantic Way, leading from south Donegal through Leitrim and Sligo to far flung Erris, was the famous poet's 'Land of Heart's Desire' - the countryside in which he grew up and which inspired him well into old age. It's just as poetic today with the Erris Peninsula in Mayo, voted Ireland's 'Best Place to Go Wild', and coastal hubs like Bundoran, Mullaghmore, Enniscrone and Strandhill renowned for their surf - throwing up both beginner-friendly ripples and monster slabs that attract some of the world's top wave-riders.

But that's only the beginning. Ben Bulbin, the Lake Isle of Innisfree and Glencar Waterfall are all landscape highlights, towns like Sligo, Ballyshannon, Ballina and Belmullet are vibrant hubs, seaside cafes will slake any explorer's appetite, and you can enjoy a deep, oily soak in a hot seaweed bath (Ireland's only native spa therapy). There's a cultural richness along the Surf Coast too, from the Neolithic Céide Fields - a Stone Age monument of stone-walled fields, houses and tombs - to a lively festival scene. Who knows, it may inspire a poem of your own!



## SIGNATURE DISCOVERY POINT

# *Mullaghmore Head, Co Sligo*

Escape to the small fishing village of Mullaghmore which should be on any outdoor enthusiast's itinerary, especially for those chasing the next big wave. A host of international surfers visit Mullaghmore in search of big waves called 'proglers' – here the swells can reach up to 30m (approx. 100 feet) and experienced surfers are towed out by jet ski to meet the giant walls of water.

The sandy beach stretches as far as the eye can see and is ideal for a spot of swimming or windsurfing. You can also venture out on to the Atlantic for an excursion to the 6th century monastic island of Inishmurray or enjoy a sea angling trip. A wide range of activities from deep sea diving to whale watching are available in the area.

There's also plenty to do for those who prefer dry land. Go for a leisurely stroll and take in panoramic views of Sliabh Liag across the bay or watch the waves crash under Classiebawn Castle. The skilled big wave surfers are exciting to watch, but the waves tend to be best in the winter months, so you'll no doubt want to hurry back into a cosy pub where you can warm up by the fire.





## SIGNATURE DISCOVERY POINT

# *Downpatrick Head, Co Mayo*

Jutting out into the ocean and rising almost 40m (131 feet) above the waves, Downpatrick Head provides unparalleled views of the Atlantic and the unique collection of islands known as the Staggs of Broadhaven. This majestic heritage site is located at the Gateway to the Erris Peninsula, about 5km (3 miles) north of Ballycastle village and adjacent to the Dún Briste sea stack, with its myriad-coloured layers of rock and flocks of nesting sea birds.

The pyramidal Céide Fields Visitor Centre is visible to the west along this magnificent coastline and tells the story of the most extensive Stone Age monument in the world, consisting of field systems, dwelling areas and megalithic tombs almost 6,000 years old.

In addition to the natural scenery and wildlife, Downpatrick Head is home to the ruins of a church, holy well and stone cross, which together mark the site of an earlier church founded by St Patrick. Downpatrick Head was once a popular destination for pilgrims, who came here each year on the last Sunday of July, known as 'Garland Sunday'. Today that tradition lives on, and mass is still celebrated at Downpatrick Head on that same day.





## Ride On

Donegal Equestrian Centre, Finner Road, Bundoran, Co Donegal

There's perhaps nothing quite as majestic as watching horses glide over a golden strand, with the spray of the tide at their feet. But at the Donegal Equestrian Centre, you won't just be watching, you'll be part of the beautiful picture yourself.

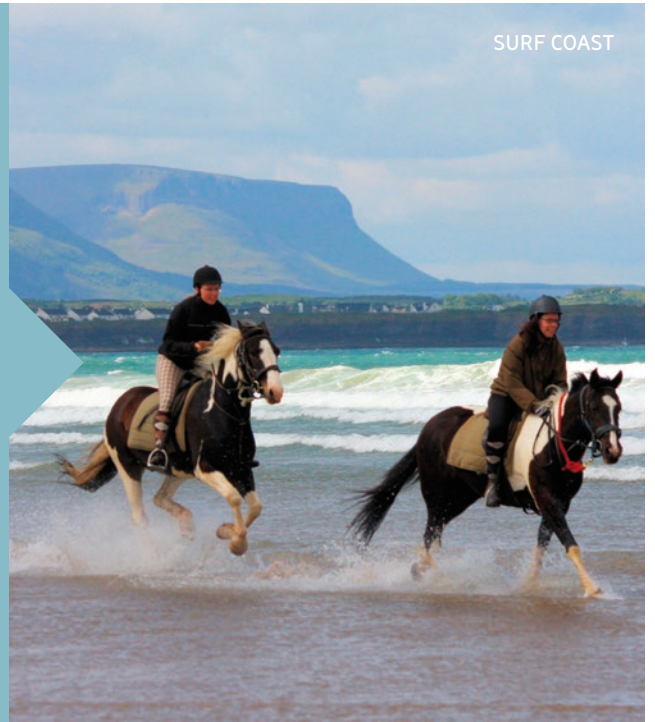
Take a ride along the dunes or down onto Tullan Strand, framed by a scenic back drop provided by the Sligo-Leitrim Mountains. Donegal and its neighbouring counties give the trail rider an insight into some of the most beautiful and untouched landscapes along the Wild Atlantic Way. Whether it's at a trot, a canter or gallop, your experience will be unforgettable.

**T** +353 (0)71 9841977

[www.donegalequestriancentre.com](http://www.donegalequestriancentre.com)

**E** [info@donegalequestriancentre.com](mailto:info@donegalequestriancentre.com)

**GPS** 54.489704, -8.250414



## Marine Miracle

Bundoran Seaweed Baths and Aqua Marine Treatment, Atlantic Way, Bundoran, Co Donegal

To some people, seaweed is a slimy clump that washes up on beaches. To others, it's a culinary delicacy and at Bundoran Seaweed Baths, it is part of an enriching and soothing experience for your skin and your soul.

Immerse yourself in an all-natural, salt water, truly organic experience that uses freshly harvested seaweed from the Wild Atlantic Way. The handpicked marine vegetable contains vital nutrients which release from the tough flesh of the plant during bathing. They revitalise, nourish and soothe tired and damaged skin. Seaweed also has anti-aging and anti-cellulite qualities, making a soak in these miracle algae an absolute must!

**T** +353 (0)71 9841172

[www.waterworldbundoran.com](http://www.waterworldbundoran.com)

**E** [info@waterworldbundoran.com](mailto:info@waterworldbundoran.com)

**GPS** 54.480166, -8.279704



## Marvel & Magic

Tullan Strand, Bundoran, Co Donegal

Make a wish on a magical wishing chair while looking out over the Atlantic Ocean, taking in the fine views of Bundoran and out across the expanse of Donegal Bay. Join many of the town's famous visitors over the years who have sat here, from poet William Allingham to golfer Christy O'Connor, Jr to Viscount Enniskillen to ten-time world champion surfer Kelly Slater. Don't forget to tap the seat twice as you rise to demonstrate that your wish is a genuine one. From this magical chair on the edge of the Atlantic, you can see the imposing sea cliffs of Sliabh Liag, located across the bay. At a height of 600 metres, these cliffs are reputed to be the highest in Europe. Walk along the cliff path, spying cliff arches which have been carved out by the Atlantic. Upon reaching the far end of the walk the panorama, including magnificent Tullan Strand, will stretch out below, inspiring the imagination and stirring the soul. Tullan Strand combines natural wonders with Irish folklore. The so-called 'fairy bridges' are actually blowholes created by the area's rock formations. If the tidal conditions are just right, you'll see water splash up through the openings, which were once said to be haunted by fairies.

**T** +353 (0)71 9841350

[www.discoverbundoran.com](http://www.discoverbundoran.com)

**E** [info@discoverbundoran.com](mailto:info@discoverbundoran.com)

**GPS** 54.477432, -8.281127



PHOTO: ALISON CRUMMY



## Take it to the Grave

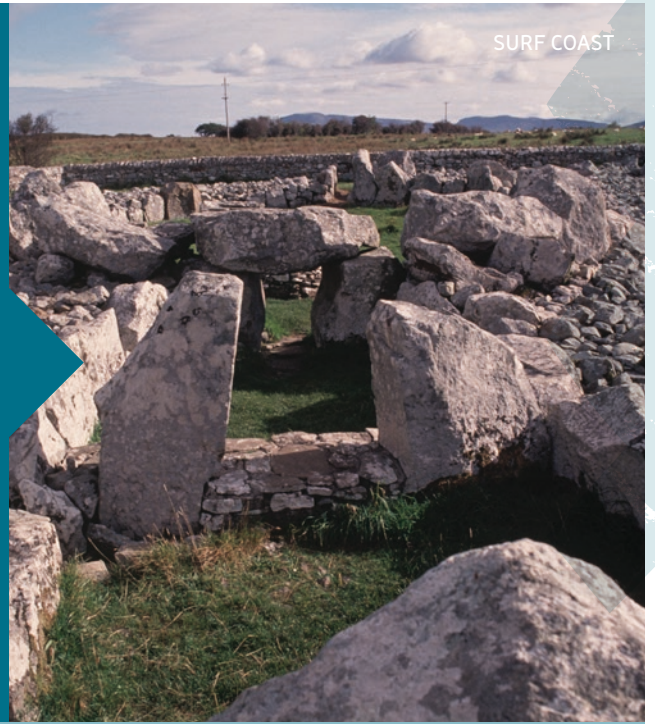
### Creevykeel Court Tomb, Cliffoney, Co Sligo

Hear whispers from the past at this Neolithic tomb, one of the finest examples of a full-court tomb in Ireland.

First excavated in 1935 and shortly thereafter restored, Creevykeel Court Tomb, which dates from between 4000 – 2500 BC was brimming with ancient treasures. The structure consists of a long, trapeze-shaped cairn enclosing an oval court where ceremonies were performed and a burial chamber of two compartments. Inside, decorated and undecorated Neolithic pottery, flint arrow heads, polished stone axes and other artefacts, including a chalk ball, have been found, along with evidence of four cremation burials. Step back in time to the Ireland of long ago, where rites and rituals reigned.

[www.archaeology.ie/monument-of-the-month/archive/creevykeel-court-tomb-co-sligo](http://www.archaeology.ie/monument-of-the-month/archive/creevykeel-court-tomb-co-sligo)

GPS 54.439175, -8.433637



## Woodland Oasis

### Glencar Waterfall, Glencar, Co Leitrim

We certainly live in a busy world, but there are still places in the world where you can find calm and contemplation. Glencar Waterfall is one of those spots. This 50-foot-high oasis of calm nestled in idyllic Glencar Lough, County Leitrim, is part of a scenic wooded walk.

The cascade of fresh mountain water is particularly impressive after a spell of rain. But wait for the sun to come out before sitting down to lunch in one of the perfect picnic spots. Here, you can drink in the mesmerising beauty that inspired poet WB Yeats in his poem, *The Stolen Child*. Steal some time for yourself and come to a place where time slows down and worries dissolve in the tumbling waters of Glencar.

GPS 54.338672, -8.369024

[www.wildatlanticway.com](http://www.wildatlanticway.com)

## “The Light of Evening, Lissadell”

### Lissadell House, Ballinfull, Co Sligo

The historic and literary associations of Lissadell and the wild dramatic natural beauty of its setting surrounded by mountains, sea and woodlands makes Lissadell House a must-visit heritage attraction in the northwest. Follow in the footsteps of the poet WB Yeats as you wander through this beautifully restored estate on the shores of the Atlantic. Childhood home of Constance and Eva Gore-Booth, built by Sir Robert Gore-Booth in 1830 and designed by Francis Goodwin, the house is now fully restored and open daily for guided tours with expert guides. Lissadell secured its place in the turbulent revolutionary history of 20th century Ireland through Constance (later, Countess) Markievicz, who turned her back on a life of privilege to become a 1916 Rising leader. Become a rebel yourself at *The March of a Nation* exhibition, where you can follow in the footsteps of the 1916 rebels through a series of movie-style sets. The refurbished stable block and Riding Centre feature the newly designed CaToCa Tearooms serving a high standard of cuisine in period surroundings. Visit the Alpine Garden, perched over the roaring Atlantic, or enjoy woodland trails and walks under the watchful eye of Ben Bulbin mountain.

T +353 (0)71 9163150

[www.lissadellhouse.com](http://www.lissadellhouse.com)

E [info@lissadellhouse.com](mailto:info@lissadellhouse.com)

GPS 54.346936, -8.580878





## A trail to tickle your taste buds

Various locations around Sligo

Sligo's premier location means you can indulge in the freshest local foods, from today's catch to tomorrow's breakfast eggs. Whatever your tastes, the Sligo Food Trail will surpass your expectations. From steak to lamb, Irish stew to seafood chowder, sushi to traditional potato cakes, homemade ice cream to cookies, fresh juices to craft beers and more, you'll be wowed by the variety, textures and flavours. Build up an appetite with an adventurous hike, cycle or historical tour before delving into the liveliness of the cafés, pubs and restaurants.

The real magic behind Sligo Food Trail is the passion of the people, always quick to share a smile, a bit of craic and wonderful insights into their cuisine.

E [dine@sligofoodtrail.ie](mailto:dine@sligofoodtrail.ie)

[www.sligofoodtrail.ie](http://www.sligofoodtrail.ie)

GPS 54.271310 -8.473041



## Walk on Water

John F Kennedy Parade, Abbeyquarter North, Sligo

Walking on water never seemed attainable, until now.

A day stand-up paddle-boarding with Northwest Adventure Tours in County Sligo will have you feeling like you can do anything.

Picture yourself gliding along the surface of the water, taking in the scenic beauty of Sligo. After learning the basics of how to stay on top of the board, you'll leave Sligo town and paddle up through Doorly Park towards the old Hazelwood Estate onto the picturesque Lough Gill, with stunning views of the Ox Mountains and the Dartry Mountain Range. As you mosey along the water, your dedicated instructors will share their knowledge of the local history and wildlife for an incredible adventure you'll be raving about.

T +353 (0)87 1259594

[www.northwestadventuretours.ie](http://www.northwestadventuretours.ie)

E [northwestadventuretours@gmail.com](mailto:northwestadventuretours@gmail.com)

GPS 54.271323, -8.467592

## Land of your Heart's Desire

Aughamore Near, Carraroe, Co Sligo

A meal in the evocative landscape that inspired some of the most beloved William Butler Yeats poetry undoubtedly has a little magic sprinkled in.

Surrounded by beautiful works of art and the stunning architecture of Broc House, learn all about the famous poet and his days in the area while you dine on a sumptuous meal made from ingredients sourced fresh from the garden. Suitably sated, take in the view from the terrace, where several locations mentioned in Yeats' work can be seen while owner of the house, Damien Brennan, tells you the inspiring story of this visionary writer and his beloved Land of Heart's Desire. You'll leave relaxed, inspired, and probably heading to the nearest bookshop to buy a book written by your new favourite poet.

T +353 (0)87 2320820

[www.yeatssligoireland.com](http://www.yeatssligoireland.com)

E [info@yeatssligoireland.com](mailto:info@yeatssligoireland.com)

GPS 54.241506, -8.445482





## Catch a Wave

iSurf Ireland, Strandhill, Co Sligo

Tune into your inner surfer dude or dudette at the stunning Strandhill Beach in County Sligo, an extremely popular surfing spot and an area of great natural beauty with panoramic views of Knocknarea and Benbulbin mountains.

Learn the basics of surfing on the shore before heading out into the waves to experience the thrill of catching your first ride. If you want to spend more time on a board before getting up on it, you can try your hand at bodyboarding, a popular, dynamic, accessible and fun activity that will have you confident to ride a wave in no time.

**T** +353 (0)87 6523351

**www.isurfireland.com**

**E** isurfirelandsurfschool@gmail.com

**GPS** 54.267183, -8.613360



## Shellfish by the Shore

Seatrails, Sligo IT, Ash Lane, Sligo

A takeaway with a twist is what's on offer with Seatrails in County Sligo. Spend a day exploring the stunning coastline of the Strandhill Peninsula, where you'll be accompanied by an experienced maritime archaeologist who will explain the landscape around you as you meander through golden dunes and across stunning Culleenamore Strand. Keep your eyes peeled and cameras at the ready as this part of the coast is a seal sanctuary. Walk along the bay, known for a number of prehistoric shell midden sites, working up a hearty appetite for the feast of freshly-harvested mussels that awaits.

Cooked for you right there on the rocks by expert chefs from local seafood restaurant, Trá Bán, it'll be a scrumptious experience to savour.

**T** +353 (0)87 2405071

**www.seatrails.ie**

**E** info@seatrails.ie

**GPS** 54.270090, -8.609690



## Sacred Steps

Killaspugbrone Loop Walk, Strandhill, Co Sligo

While you probably love the idea of walking in the footsteps of saints, be careful not to trip and lose a tooth! This story might sound strange, but it will all make sense on this walk along the stunning coast from the seaside village of Strandhill. The trail brings walkers through a variety of coastal habitats including sand dunes, salt marsh and pine woodland, with magnificent views of Benbulbin and Knocknarea mountains and out over Sligo Bay. It passes by Killaspugbrone Church, an early Christian site founded by Saint Patrick in the fifth century. According to local folklore, when Saint Patrick visited the site he tripped on rough ground and lost his tooth. The tooth was thence enshrined in the church, a relic that is still regarded with reverence to this day; documents show that at some stage during the 14th century, Thomas de Birmingham, Lord of Athenry, whose family owned property in Killaspugbrone, entombed it in a golden casket, which is now preserved in the National Museum of Ireland. Enjoy the scenery, the fresh air and history, but watch your step.

**GPS** 54.270547, -8.609143

**www.sligowalks.ie**





## The Drama Unfolds

The Jackie Clarke Collection, Pearse Street, Ballina, Co Mayo

Bring the drama of the 1916 Rising to life by checking out the extensive collection of rare books, manuscripts, newspapers and photographs, as well as other events in Ireland's history that helped shape the country it is today.

Hear the stories of the heroes of the rebellion through artefacts such as rare books, proclamations, posters, political cartoons, pamphlets, and handbills, as well as letters from Michael Collins, Douglas Hyde, Michael Davitt and O'Donovan Rossa. Considered the most important private collection of Irish historical material in public hands, it comprises over 100,000 items spanning 400 years. Having educated yourself on Ireland's exciting history, it's time for a stroll round the walled garden to let it all soak in.

**T** +353 (0)96 73508

**www.clarkecollection.ie**

**E** clarkecollection@mayococo.ie

**GPS** 54.114726, -9.153458



## A Tasty Tradition

Clarke's Salmon Smokery, O'Rahilly Street, Ballina, Co Mayo

Since time immemorial smoked salmon has been served as a mouth-watering hors d'oeuvre at parties and special occasions. A visit to Clarke's Salmon Smokery will stand out as a special occasion too, with the wonderful range of smoked salmon on offer for you to sample.

On the tour of the smokery, you'll hear stories about fishing on the river Moy and the history of smoking salmon and witness a demonstration of how it's done. Start by sampling their award-winning oak smoked Irish wild salmon, made using the original recipe handed down from Jackie Clarke himself, before moving on to the extended range, created by Clarke's sons to include organic and flavoured smoked salmon, too. Armed with all the knowledge you need about smoking quality fish - as well as a few items from the gift shop - you'll have no excuse not to serve it at your next party.

**T** +353 (0)96 21022

**www.clarkes.ie**

**E** info@clarkes.ie

**GPS** 54.112942, -9.155768

## Find Your Passion

Rachel's Irish Adventures, Quay Road, Ballina, Co Mayo

The great outdoors opens out in front of you along the rugged coastline of County Mayo. Choose from at least 20 adventure activities and many more cultural ones in this stunning part of the world, with Rachel's Irish Adventures. Activities include hiking, mountain climbing and trail running, as well as road biking, cookery classes and whiskey and wine appreciation sessions.

It sounds like a lot of choice, but don't be overwhelmed; Rachel creates bespoke adventures for you and your friends or family to explore anywhere throughout Galway, Mayo, Sligo, Donegal and beyond, so you can start wherever you wish. Rachel will welcome you into the heart of her native North Mayo before taking you with her on an exhilarating experience through the wonderful landscapes of the Wild Atlantic Way.

**T** +353 (0)85 1108969

**www.rachelsirishadventures.com**

**E** info@rachelsirishadventures.com

**GPS** 54.131292, -9.137071





## Water of Life

Connacht Distillery, Beleek, Ballina, Co Mayo

Greta Garbo said it best when she uttered her first words in the 1930 movie, Anna Christie: "Gimme a whiskey, ginger ale on the side and don't be stingy, baby." Like Garbo, the team at the Connacht Whiskey Company doesn't do things by halves. The result of a dream shared by three Americans and one Irishman, Connacht Whiskey is bringing pure pot still Irish whiskey back to the West of Ireland after an absence of over 100 years.

These folks share bonds of family and friendship, and they truly enjoy sharing their love of Irish whiskey with visitors. The guided distillery tour will bring you through the process of how whiskey is made. As you go through the tour, you'll see why they are so passionate about single pot still Irish whiskey. The Gaelic word for whiskey translates as 'water of life', so choose life; choose this tour.

T +353 (0)96 74902  
+353 (0)96 74598

E [hello@connachtwhiskey.com](mailto:hello@connachtwhiskey.com)

[www.connachtwhiskey.com](http://www.connachtwhiskey.com)

GPS 54.122131, -9.143779



SURF COAST



## Forage for your Supper

Wild Atlantic Cultural Tours, Ballybrooney, Killala, Co Mayo

There are few things more liberating than feeling mud between your toes and foraging for your very own supper. Spend an afternoon with Denis Quinn of Wild Atlantic Cultural Tours in County Mayo, where you'll get as close to nature as humanly possible out along the shoreline under the huge skies of north Mayo.

As the wild Atlantic booms and seabirds swirl and swoop, Denis will guide you expertly across Killala Bay, crossing mudflats, scrambling over rocks, gathering edible seaweeds, rooting around in rock pools and spooning cockles, mussels, clams and winkles from the vast expanse of soft sand uncovered at low tide. Come and experience life along the coast and feed your inner wild child.

T +353 (0)87 2814350

E [wildatlanticculturaltours@outlook.com](mailto:wildatlanticculturaltours@outlook.com)

[www.wildatlanticculturaltours.com](http://www.wildatlanticculturaltours.com)

GPS 54.213414, -9.219458

## Refresh Your Perspective

Céide Fields, Ballycastle, Co Mayo

When we think of Ireland many of us picture green fields, patterned by stone walls. Céide Fields in County Mayo is home to the world's oldest known stone walls, dating back nearly 6,000 years, as well as the most extensive Stone Age monument in the world, consisting of field systems, dwelling areas and megalithic tombs.

It's not just the ancient sites that attract visitors to these fields; it's also the thousands of acres of wild, natural bog that blanket them. The colour of the bog land, its unique vegetation and wildlife make for a visually arresting tableau. Discover how this landscape has changed from forest to farmland to boglands on a guided walking tour of the area, before putting it all into context at the visitor centre, where you can explore the archaeology and botany of the region and learn about Neolithic life. With your head full of satisfied curiosity, pay a visit to the viewing platform. Positioned on the edge of a 110m high cliff, it commands views as far away as Sligo and Donegal.

T +353 (0)96 43325

E [ceidefields@opw.ie](mailto:ceidefields@opw.ie)

[www.heritageireland.ie/en/west/ceidefields](http://www.heritageireland.ie/en/west/ceidefields)

GPS 54.305, -9.456944



NORTHERN HEADLANDS & SURF COAST

25



## Feel the High

Wavesweeper Sea Adventures, Belmullet, Co Mayo

Don't let the names of some of the jumps while coasteering with Wavesweeper Sea Adventures in County Mayo put you off; spend your time climbing cliffs, plunging into the pristine Atlantic Ocean, riding the swell across the rocks and exploring nearby caves.

Climb 'Jacob's Ladder', take a plunge into the ocean, and enter 'Davy Jones' Locker' - a deep cave with a hidden cavern behind it. Using the power of the Atlantic swell thrust yourself across the rocks to 'Rowley's Wall of Death' before making your way back to the highest jump 'The Widow Maker'. While your nerves might be tested the feeling of accomplishment and adrenaline will make it all worthwhile.

**T** +353 (0)87 3459551  
+353 (0)87 2312989

[www.wavesweeperseaadventures.com](http://www.wavesweeperseaadventures.com)

**GPS** 54.224042, -9.985237

**E** [info@wavesweeperseaadventures.com](mailto:info@wavesweeperseaadventures.com)



## Walk the Light Fantastic

Wild Atlantic Tours, Drom Ard, Belmullet, Co Mayo

The west of Ireland is already considered remote, but Carrowteige in County Mayo is truly one of the most secluded and isolated corners of the west, making a visit to this area a true escape.

Step out along spectacular cliffs on the very western edge of Europe, taking in superb coastal views of the Wild Atlantic Way as you go. With waves crashing against the ancient rocky cliffs, peer out over the edge of a deep natural inlet and marvel at the wide expanse of ancient bog land and mountain scenery. Along the way, your guide Agatha Hurst will point out native birds, seals and, if you're lucky, whales. The area will be brought to life with stories and legends from the area, of St Patrick and the Children of Lír, all set to the lyrical melody of spoken Irish in one of the few remaining Gaeltacht areas in the west.

**T** +353 (0)87 6482793

[www.facebook.com/wildatlantictours](http://www.facebook.com/wildatlantictours)

**E** [agathahurst@hotmail.com](mailto:agathahurst@hotmail.com)

**GPS** 54.219160, -9.983726

## Window to the Past

Ionad Deirbhile Heritage Centre, Eachleim, Blacksod, Co Mayo

There is no better way to understand a country than to explore its past Mayo's history of emigration and the harsh life faced by those forced to leave their homeland shaped the people and the place forever.

The Ionad Deirbhile Heritage Centre provides fascinating insights into the difficult life its 19th-century residents faced. Learn about James Hack Tuke's assisted emigration scheme, which in 1883 helped more than 3,300 people to depart Blacksod Bay on steamships bound for America and Canada. The centre's accounts of local history, folklore and archaeology, and its commemorative garden will transport you back in time, and who knows? You might even find the name of one of your ancestors.

**T** +353 (0)97 85727

[www.ionaddeirbhile.ie](http://www.ionaddeirbhile.ie)

**E** [eolas@ionaddeirbhile.ie](mailto:eolas@ionaddeirbhile.ie)

**GPS** 54.120777, -10.100855







# AN GAELTACHT

The term 'Gaeltacht' is given to those areas of Ireland where the Irish language (Gaeilge) is still spoken daily as a community language, and where culture and traditions are very much alive and thriving. These Irish-speaking communities are scattered over seven counties and all four provinces. Donegal is home to Ireland's largest Gaeltacht.

Along the Wild Atlantic Way, extensive areas of counties Donegal, Mayo, Galway, Kerry and Cork, and many of the populated off shore islands, are designated Gaeltacht areas. These regions offer many varied and interesting holiday locations, each possessing an environment rich in heritage, folklore, culture and tradition, with a strong sense of its own identity and uniqueness. Here, within, lies the 'true Ireland'!

As you travel along the Wild Atlantic Way and through the Gaeltacht areas you'll notice the road signs are in Irish and, when you stop off, you'll hear the locals converse 'as Gaeilge' (through Irish). The 'cúpla focal' (couple of words) opposite might be useful if you do want to exchange a few words.

It will take you to its heart...

For exact Gaeltacht locations please visit [www.udaras.ie](http://www.udaras.ie)

**Hello**  
Dia dhuit  
👂 *Dee ya gw-itch*

**Thank you**  
Go raibh maith agat  
👂 *Guh rev moh a gut*

**Bye for now**  
Slán go fóill  
👂 *Slawn guh foal*

**Cheers!**  
Sláinte!  
👂 *Slawn cha!*



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# OFFSHORE ISLANDS OF THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

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Experience the awesome power, beauty and wonder of the Wild Atlantic Way up close and personal with a visit to some of the hundreds of islands scattered off the West Coast. White sandy beaches, towering cliff faces, turquoise seas, history, heritage and culture all abound along the Wild Atlantic Way and nowhere more so than on the islands. The isolation of island life fosters a unique way of life with the environment having its own impact on its people, landscape, culture and tradition. On each island you'll experience unique characteristics, as if each is an individual nation.

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## INIS BÓ FINNE (INISHBOFIN), CO DONEGAL

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Located 3km from Machaire Rabhartaigh (Magheroarty) this small island is a sanctuary for bird life such as the endangered corncrake, migratory Arctic terns, peregrine falcons, barnacle geese and choughs; and makes a spectacular retreat for bird-watchers. A small cluster of village houses on the south-east of the Island was last home to a permanent island community in the 1970s. Nowadays, only a few hardy souls spend all year on the island. From March to October, however, many of the former inhabitants return to fish for lobster, crab and Atlantic salmon, or to gather shellfish and pick edible seaweeds such as cairrigin (carrageen) and creathnach (dulse) from the rocks.

### GETTING THERE

Ferries sail seasonally from Magheroarty [www.donegalislands.com](http://www.donegalislands.com)

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## TORAIGH (TORY), CO DONEGAL

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An island of mystery and antiquity, whose remoteness has led to the preservation of the way of life of its resilient and independent people. Many of Toraigh's ancient customs still survive, including the appointment of the island king or Rí Thoraí, while the music, dance, song and stories of the island are living expressions of an ancient Gaelic culture. Interesting historical sites include a round tower that once protected monks from Viking raids, the ruins of St Colmcille's 6th century monastery. The island also boasts an abundance of rare bird life and wild flower species as well as a rich submarine landscape that can be explored through the local dive centre.



#### GETTING THERE

Turasmara Teo sails from Bunbeg and Magheroarty all year round.  
T +353 (0)74 9531320 / 9135061  
[www.toryislandferry.com](http://www.toryislandferry.com)  
[www.oileanthorai.com](http://www.oileanthorai.com)

### OILEÁIN GABHLA (GOLA), CO DONEGAL

Gola, less than 2km from the mainland at Gaoh Dobhair (Gweedore), has been uninhabited since the 1960's. Evidence of the Island's heritage remains, though, in the form of stone cottages of families who have long since moved to the mainland. The ferry service and growing interest in ecology and cliff climbing is bringing life back to the island, now a haven for artists, birdwatchers, photographers, walkers and rock climbers. Gola can be explored in a few hours over easy walking terrain. Once on the Island it is difficult to comprehend that you are just a short distance from mainland Donegal, one feels a world away.

#### GETTING THERE

From Magheragallan (Machaire Gathlan)  
Co Donegal  
Gola Island Ferry Service - The Cricket:  
T +353 (0)87 2245881  
[www.donegalislands.com](http://www.donegalislands.com)

### ÁRAINN MHÓR (ARRANMORE / ARAN), CO DONEGAL

Árainn Mhór has been inhabited since prehistoric times and the promontory fort at Uilinn, which dates from about 800BC, still stands on its cliff top perch. Today, the island is a wonderfully peaceful place with a way marked trail leading from sandy beaches to the island's rocky summit, providing spectacular views of the glittering sea, the cliffs, rock arches and the majestic mainland mountains; from Glen Head to Tory Island. Crystal clear waters provide great dive sites and sea angling, while the island's freshwater lakes are home to brown and rainbow trout.

#### GETTING THERE

Daily Sailings from Burtonport (Ailt an Chorráin)  
Co Donegal.

Arranmore Car & Passenger Ferry:  
T +353 (0)74 9542233  
[www.arranmoreferry.com](http://www.arranmoreferry.com)

Arranmore Island Fast Ferry:  
T +353 (0)87 3171810  
[www.arranmorefastferry.com](http://www.arranmorefastferry.com)

[www.arranmoreco-op.com](http://www.arranmoreco-op.com)

### INIS FRAOIGH (INISFREE), CO DONEGAL

Just 5km from the mainland Inis Fraoigh offers an opportunity to step back to a simpler time, a time without cars or technology, and to experience the raw natural beauty of this special place. In Early Christian times the island was controlled by Niall of the Nine Hostages, a local chieftain who became High King of Ireland. By the early 20th century it was home to a tight-knit community of 36 Irish speaking families though in the mid 1970s, tough economic circumstances saw the exodus of the islanders to the mainland. Gradually, since 1991, former islanders, descendants and some mainlanders are moving back, keen to live closer to nature. Sea angling, boating, cultural workshops and diving are all available.

#### GETTING THERE

A number of operators sail from Ailt an Chorráin, seasonal by booking, max. 10 passengers.  
T +353 (0)74 9532571  
[www.donegalislands.com](http://www.donegalislands.com)

### INISHMURRAY ISLAND, CO SLIGO

This unique island is famous for its excellent example of an early Christian settlement; the secluded monastery founded by St Molaise in the 6th century has remained a pilgrimage destination until recent times. The last of the islanders moved to the mainland in 1957 and today Inishmurray is a wildlife sanctuary of national importance for both breeding and

wintering birds including the arctic tern, common tern, shag, herring gull, great black-backed gull and eider duck who make the island their home as do numerous pairs of black guillemot, barnacle geese, storm petrels, common gull, lesser black backed gull and fulmar.

#### GETTING THERE

Boat trips available from Mullaghmore and Rosses Point.  
[www.inishmurrayislandtrips.com](http://www.inishmurrayislandtrips.com)  
[www.sligoboatcharters.com](http://www.sligoboatcharters.com)

### CONEY ISLAND, CO SLIGO

Accessible by land at low tide from the Strandhill Road R292. It is believed locally that it's more famous namesake in New York was named after the Irish island by a Sligo sea captain. The mud flats provide water feeding grounds for the Brent goose, as well as wild duck and waders.

### INISHKEA ISLANDS, CO MAYO

The deserted Inis Gé islands are steeped in history, the scenery is unspoilt and they have a wealth of archaeological remains. Located 5km off the Mullet Peninsula there are two main islands: Inishkea North and Inishkea South, accessible by boat during the summer months. Inishkea North is best known for its early Christian monastery from the 6th to 10th centuries AD. These still remains the ruins of a small church, dedicated to St Columba and built around 540. Archaeologists have found the ruins of a number of beehive huts, used by monks in the Early Christian period and traces of dye production - it is thought the shells of dog whelks were being ground to produce a purple dye. The islands are also a unique habitat for the many species of flora and fauna and a haven for wildlife.

#### GETTING THERE

Chartered boat trips are available with Geraghty Charters  
T + 353 (0)97 85741  
[www.bruchlannlir.com](http://www.bruchlannlir.com)



# WILD ATLANTIC WAY BEACHES

Ireland's beaches bring together all the ingredients for an unforgettable holiday. Whether you're looking for a quiet sandy spot or a famous surf break, the Wild Atlantic Way is the perfect place to experience the diversity of our coastline. Many beaches around the country have been awarded Blue Flag or Clean Coast / Green Coast awards, attesting to their water quality, safety and environmental status. With such a long stretch of coastline, whether you want a panoramic view or the small inlet cove, you're never too far from a beach.

The Blue Flag is one of the world's most recognised eco-labels. Beaches that achieve this accolade must comply with a specific set of criteria relating to water quality, information provision, environmental education, safety and beach management. For more information please visit [www.blueflagireland.org](http://www.blueflagireland.org)

## NORTHERN HEADLANDS BLUE FLAG BEACHES 2017

Stroove, Co Donegal  
Culdaff, Co Donegal  
Portsalon, Co Donegal  
Downings, Co Donegal  
Marblehill, Co Donegal  
Killahoey, Co Donegal  
Carrickfinn, Co Donegal  
Portnoo/ Naran, Co Donegal  
Fintra, Co Donegal  
Murvagh, Co Donegal  
Rossnowlagh, Co Donegal

## SURF COAST BLUE FLAG BEACHES 2017

Bundoran, Co Donegal  
Rosses Point, Co Sligo  
Ross (Killala), Co Mayo  
Elly Bay, Co Mayo  
Mullaghroe, Co Mayo



The Clean Coasts programme works to engage local communities in the protection of Ireland's beaches, seas and marine life through beach clean-ups, beach monitoring, environmental awareness campaigns and the Clean Coast Award programme ensuring that even more of our wonderful beaches are clean and protected – ready for use.

There are over 500 Clean Coast Community Groups working around Ireland's coast. For a full list please visit [www.cleancoasts.org](http://www.cleancoasts.org)





# WILD ATLANTIC WAY LIGHTHOUSES

The rugged coastline of Northern Headlands and Surf Coast has numerous operational lighthouses guiding seafarers to safety on the wild Atlantic Ocean, an ocean which has shaped this resilient country over centuries. While many of these provide the visitor with a great photo opportunity the following offer a particular Wild Atlantic Way experience. For more information visit [www.greatlighthouses.com](http://www.greatlighthouses.com)

## FANAD LIGHTHOUSE, CO DONEGAL

Fanad Head Lighthouse is situated on the northern coast of the Fanad Peninsula in north Donegal. The Lighthouse is a Signature Discovery Point on the Wild Atlantic Way and has self-catering accommodation available in the former lighthouse keeper cottages - a truly unique holiday! Guided tours of the lighthouse are also available.

[www.fanadlighthouse.com](http://www.fanadlighthouse.com)

## ST. JOHN'S POINT, CO DONEGAL

St. Johns Point Light-keeper's Cottages are located on the longest peninsula in Ireland, near Dunkineely in Donegal. Enjoy comfortable and characterful self-catering accommodation in either of the two former lighthouse keepers cottages.

[www.irishlandmark.com](http://www.irishlandmark.com)



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## GLENVEAGH NATIONAL PARK, CO DONEGAL

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Just 10km (6.2 miles) from the Wild Atlantic Way in the wilds of Donegal, Glenveagh National Park is an impressive 16,000ha of picturesque lakes, glens and woods in the heart of the Derryveagh Mountains. At this former private deer forest which gained National Park status in 1975, visitors can explore stunning rich bog and woodland, and observe animals such as majestic red deer, wild hare, golden eagles, the red throated diver and peregrine falcons.

The historic Glenveagh Castle is an alluring late 19th century castellated mansion, surrounded by the renowned Glenveagh Gardens. The castle's construction in the remote mountain setting was inspired by the Victorians' love of romantic highland retreats. The famous Castle tearoom is situated in the courtyard of the castle serving home baking from the castle kitchens. Glenveagh National Park Castle & Gardens are open all year round. Additional facilities include car park, picnic area, bike hire, toilets, baby changing facilities and restaurant. Most areas are wheelchair accessible.

[www.glenveaghnationalpark.ie](http://www.glenveaghnationalpark.ie)

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## BALLYCROY NATIONAL PARK, CO MAYO

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Located on Ireland's western seaboard, breath-taking Ballycroy National Park offers vast and varied uninhabited terrain spanning 11,000ha. Visitors can traverse Owenduff blanket bog, one of the last intact active blanket bog systems in Ireland and western Europe, and admire the landscape of the imposing Nephin Beg mountain range.

The park provides habitats for and protects species such as Greenland white-fronted geese, golden plover, red grouse and otter, and is part of the Owenduff / Nephin Complex Special Area of Conservation and Special Protection Area.

The Ballycroy National Park Visitor Centre, located on the Wild Atlantic Way in Ballycroy village, houses an interpretative exhibition of the landscape, habitats and species found in the park, as well as information on the surrounding area.

Additional facilities include toilets, a coach car park, outdoor picnic areas and a coffee shop. Disabled access is available at the visitor centre.

[www.ballycroynationalpark.ie](http://www.ballycroynationalpark.ie)

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# WILD ATLANTIC WAY NATIONAL PARKS

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# NORTHERN HEADLANDS & SURF COAST 5-DAY ITINERARY

Part of what makes the Wild Atlantic Way so compelling is the year-round sights, sounds and experiences. Hugging the robust coastline, this journey boasts sheltered bays, sandy beaches, hidden coves and gorgeous inlets. Along the way you'll encounter pretty seaside villages that play host to traditional local music, while clifftop walks offer breath-taking views of ice-age landscapes. On your journey you'll find yourself effortlessly unwinding and relaxing into the Wild Atlantic Way of life.

## DAY 1: INISHOWEN PENINSULA → MALIN HEAD → BUNCRANA

### STAGE 1: INISHOWEN PENINSULA

63.4KM VIA R241 AND R238

The first leg of this extensive five-day itinerary will be spent exploring the wild and unspoilt Inishowen Peninsula (1hr 34mins). The country's most northerly headland stretches out into the Atlantic, and as well as offering fantastic views, is home to a host of local artists, continuously inspired by the area's raw beauty. See some of this art for yourself at Movice Pottery, a gallery that's been manufacturing fine hand-thrown stoneware for over 38 years.

From Movice, be sure to stop at Inishowen Head Discovery Point for a photo, while the Inishowen Maritime Centre and Planetarium houses an extensive collection of artefacts, exhibitions and memorabilia. Continue to wind your way right up to the tip of the peninsula where you'll find Malin Head. A walk around Banba's Crown (named after a legendary Irish queen), is simply thrilling. Wild and windswept, it's an area of both incredible scenery and ecological importance.

### STAGE 2: MALIN TO BUNCRANA

39.3KM VIA R238

When you've finished exploring this untamed corner of the world, make your way back towards Buncrana via the coast road. There's a lot to see on the way – Fort Dunree Military Museum is just one highlight; from its scenic setting on the peninsula, this museum offers a glimpse into the region's rich military history.

You'll also be particularly struck by Gríanán of Áileach. Rising 250m above sea level, this impressive monument is thought to date back to the Iron Age, and from its top you'll be afforded unbelievable views of the entire peninsula. Finally, continue into Buncrana, an idyllic seaside resort always bustling with activity. Settle down for a tasty dinner, enjoy the town's friendly pubs, and finally bed down for the night in a local hotel or B&B.







DOWNINGS, CO DONEGAL



GLENGESH, CO DONEGAL



HORN HEAD, CO DONEGAL

## DAY 2: BUNCRANA → FANAD HEAD → DOWNINGS

### STAGE 1: BUNCRANA TO FANAD

99.7KM VIA N13

Next morning, set off towards another delightful Donegal headland, Fanad. A ferry runs daily during summer months between Bunrana to Rathmullan, taking you across Lough Swilly onto the Fanad Peninsula. As you breathe in the fresh sea air, you'll be afforded fantastic views of both headlands, as well as the untamed North Atlantic. Alternatively follow the coast road (R238 to Letterkenny, then R245 and R247). In the seaside town of Rathmullan take a Heritage Walking tour to learn about the Flight of the Earls or enjoy the some traditional fish and chips followed by a leisurely stroll on this beautiful sandy beach.

Continue north towards the top of the peninsula, where you'll find the famous Fanad Head lighthouse. If you're feeling adventurous, you can rent a bike from Grassroutes (they'll deliver it to wherever you are in Donegal) and enjoy a leisurely cycle around this incredibly tranquil place. At the lighthouse, you can opt for a guided tour, where you'll step back in time to find out about the area's rich maritime history.

### STAGE 2: FANAD TO DOWNINGS

18.2KM VIA R248

Continue your journey to Downings (20 mins) across the impressive Harry Blaney Bridge, which links the Fanad and Rosguill peninsulas, and offers incredible views of Mulroy Bay. There's a range of thrilling water-sports on offer, while a stroll across gorgeous Trá na Rossan beach is guaranteed to soothe the soul. Enjoy some well-earned rest at one of Downings' accommodation options.

## DAY 3: DOWNINGS → SLIABH LIAG → DONEGAL

### STAGE 1: DOWNINGS TO SLIABH LIAG

172KM VIA N56

Day three is all about an incredible drive (a little under four hours from start to finish!) with plenty of memorable highlights along the way. Stop off at the 16th century-era Doe Castle, before heading on to Ards Forest Park. Sitting between Creeslough and Dunfanaghy, the park is a true evergreen treat, boasting a rich abundance of plant and wildlife. As you continue on your drive, you'll encounter some of the Wild Atlantic Way's most impressive Discovery Points, including Horn Head, Cnoc Fola, Narin/Portnoo Strand and Glengesh Pass, all of which offer amazing sights.

The brightest gem of the day is found at Sliabh Liag, however. Stand tall some 600m high and enjoy terrific views of Donegal Bay, the Atlantic Ocean and the Sligo Mountains.

There's plenty to discover at the dedicated visitor centre too, where you'll get a feel for the local food, culture and charming sense of humour.

### STAGE 2: SLIABH LIAG TO DONEGAL TOWN

48.7KM VIA R263 AND N56

Next, an hour's drive takes you to lively Donegal Town where you'll meet the people who bring real Irish conviction and tradition to the region. Donegal Craft Village is an excellent showcase of Irish contemporary art, and a thriving environment where artists craft their work with glass, bronze, textiles, wood and precious metals. Bed down for the night in one of the town's many accommodation options before gearing up for day four...



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**DAY 4: DONEGAL → MULLAGHMORE → DRUMCLIFF → SLIGO**

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**STAGE 1: DONEGAL TOWN TO MULLAGHMORE HEAD**  
53.4KM VIA N15

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As you travel south on a 52-minute drive, take a break at Rosstown Beach and marvel at the wonderful sea views before moving on to Ballyshannon, believed to be the oldest town in all of Ireland. The surfing mecca of Bundoran, meanwhile, is home to the so-called 'Fairy Bridges' – blowholes created by the area's rock formations once said to be haunted by mystical fairies! Next, discover the majesty of Mullaghmore Head, a legendary surfing spot that attracts adventurous souls from all around the globe. Affectionately known as the 'Big One', its impressive waves have been known to reach up to 30 metres!

Finally, enjoy a well-earned rest locally.

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**STAGE 2: MULLAGHMORE HEAD TO DRUMCLIFFE**  
26.3K VIA N15

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Moving through the Dartry mountain range, drive to the Benwisken Centre and onwards to the Gleniff Horseshoe; a 10-kilometre loop along quiet roads that serves up spectacular views of the mountains. Back on the N15, the nearby Streedagh Beach marks a unique historical site – three Spanish Armada ships were wrecked here in 1588. Situated on the shores of Sligo Bay is the historic Lissadell House & Gardens. The historic and literary associations of Lissadell and the wild dramatic natural beauty of its setting surrounded by mountains, sea and woodlands makes this a must-visit. Drumcliffe, a significant monastic site, meanwhile, hosts individual beauty all its own, including the final resting place of legendary writer WB Yeats and the remnants of a 10th century high cross and round tower. You'll find another inspirational source for Yeats at the nearby Glencar Waterfall, which features in his haunting poem, 'The Stolen Child'. If peckish after all that exploring, get a bite to eat amidst friendly atmosphere at the Drumcliffe Tea House and Craft Shop or the TeaShed, Glencar.

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**STAGE 3: DRUMCLIFFE TO SLIGO**  
9.2KM VIA R286

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Onto the city of Sligo next, with the stunning Benbulbin mountain for company along the 12-minute journey. Drive around Lough Gill, home to Yeats' Lake Isle of Innisfree, and enjoy a stroll through the Hazelwood Sculpture Trail. Sligo is a bustling cosmopolitan haunt with an old-world feel, its mix of friendly nightlife and ancient wonder the perfect blend of Irish culture. Foodies will be instantly enamoured by the town once they discover the delicious Sligo Food Trail! Hikers meanwhile can

avail of great looped walks in the area, while history buffs will feel right at home among its many archaeological sites, and revellers in search of a festival vibe won't have to look too far. Get a good night's sleep before you set off on the final leg of your tour...

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**DAY 5: SLIGO → STRANDHILL → EASKEY PIER → BALLINA**

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**STAGE 1: SLIGO TO EASKEY PIER**  
53.6KM VIA R292 AND N59

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It's just shy of an hour from Sligo to lovely Easkey Pier. First though, stop off at Strandhill, a fantastic spot for surfing, and home to a number of revitalising walks, from Strandhill beach to Culleenamore Strand and Killaspugbrone. Stay on the coast road in order to reach Easkey, where you'll find O'Dowd's Castle, built in 1207 and another grand location to stretch the legs. There are some gentle cycle routes around this charming area too, with bike hire available in the village. You can even throw your own pot at friendly Rosie's Pottery!

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**STAGE 2: EASKEY PIER TO BELMULLET**  
103KM VIA R297 AND R314

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On your final stage of this epic journey, head to the seaside splendour of Enniscrone, where five kilometres of sandy beach, a 27-hole golf links course and world-renowned seaweed baths make up this enchanting playground. Don't miss the 'Black Pig' statue and its accompanying tale of a wild boar said to have magical powers! And then it's on to Ballina, home of the famous River Moy and Ridge Pool. From Ballina travel north through Killala and on to Downpatrick Head, a wonderfully evocative location with views of the Atlantic, the Staggs of Broadhaven and the high cliffs west along the coast. Travelling westward consider a stop at Céide Fields with its pyramidal exhibition centre perched on an exposed cliff top, numerous Neolithic sites and, for the brave, a viewing platform that allows visitors to experience the sensation of standing on the very edge of the cliffs. Onward to Belmullet (Béal an Mhuirthead - Irish for "mouth of the Mullet"), a Gaeltacht town on the Mullet Peninsula in the Barony of Erris. Belmullet has two bays, Blacksod Bay and Broadhaven Bay both well worth a visit. John Millington Synge's play 'The Playboy of the Western World' was based on his experiences here; an area popular for fishing, water sports or all kinds, golf and it's three picturesque lighthouses.

That's just one of our many Wild Atlantic Way itineraries; you'll find more on [www.wildatlanticway.com](http://www.wildatlanticway.com) or on the FREE app covering all six zones with lots of diverse activities and interests.

BLACKSOD LIGHTHOUSE, CO MAYO





# WILD ATLANTIC WAY FOOD TRAILS & TOURS



Ireland's west coast boasts a bountiful variety of food trails and tours - whether wild, foraged, organic or gourmet – and its fair share of artisan whiskey distilleries and craft breweries, influenced by the purity of our waters, the superior quality of our grains and the abundance of our wild berries and herbs. Whether you want to follow a food journey from maker to plate, or take time out to meet the producers, our food and drink trails and tours provide the perfect inspiration to whet your appetite to savour the real flavours of the Wild Atlantic Way.

**THE FOOD COAST EXPERIENCES**  
Each year food businesses in County Donegal are invited to create events which have Donegal Food at their core, offering visitors and locals a unique of Donegal food and the producers. They produce a calendar of events under the banner of The Food Coast Experiences. To find out more visit [www.donegalfoodcoast.ie](http://www.donegalfoodcoast.ie)

## FOOD TRAILS

### TASTE THE ATLANTIC:

#### A SEAFOOD JOURNEY

A dedicated seafood trail, an adventure dotted with suggestions ranging from restaurants and cafés to farms, fishing ports and smokehouses. It's a route you can dip into or do in its entirety, an opportunity to explore Ireland's pristine oceans, to sample its food story, to enjoy an unforgettable taste of place on a plate. Seafood is where the Wild Atlantic Way meets Ireland's unique culture. Download the brochure from [www.wildatlanticway.com](http://www.wildatlanticway.com) and start planning your journey! [www.wildatlanticway.com/stories/food/seafood-itinerary](http://www.wildatlanticway.com/stories/food/seafood-itinerary)

### IRISH SEAWEED KITCHEN

E [info@irishseaweedkitchen.ie](mailto:info@irishseaweedkitchen.ie)  
[www.irishseaweedkitchen.ie](http://www.irishseaweedkitchen.ie)

### IRISH FOOD TOURS

T +353 (0) 86 6632079  
T +353 (0) 87 6547061  
[www.irishfoodtours.ie](http://www.irishfoodtours.ie)

### SLIGO FOOD TRAIL

T +353 (0) 87 9028845  
[www.sligofoodtrail.ie](http://www.sligofoodtrail.ie)

## BREWING & DISTILLING EXPERIENCES

No longer home to just the black stuff, there are now dozens of distilleries and artisan breweries producing wonderful spirits and delicious craft beers, ales and ciders in stunning locations along the Wild Atlantic Way, including the following in Northern Headlands and Surf Coast:

**KINNEGAR BREWERY**  
T +353 (0)74 9158874  
E [info@kinnegarbrewing.ie](mailto:info@kinnegarbrewing.ie)  
[www.kinnegarbrewing.ie](http://www.kinnegarbrewing.ie)

**DONEGAL BREWING CO**  
T +353 (0)71 9851371  
E [info@donegalbrewingcompany.com](mailto:info@donegalbrewingcompany.com)  
[www.donegalbrewingcompany.com](http://www.donegalbrewingcompany.com)

**SLIABH LIAG DISTILLERY**  
T +353 (0)74 9739875  
E [info@sliabhliagdistillery.com](mailto:info@sliabhliagdistillery.com)  
[www.sliabhliagdistillery.com](http://www.sliabhliagdistillery.com)

**LOUGH GILL BREWING COMPANY**  
T +353 (0)87 2108159  
E [info@loughgillbrewery.com](mailto:info@loughgillbrewery.com)  
[www.loughgillbrewery.com](http://www.loughgillbrewery.com)

**THE CONNACHT WHISKEY COMPANY**  
T +353 (0)96 74902 / 74598  
E [hello@connachtwhiskey.com](mailto:hello@connachtwhiskey.com)  
[www.connachtwhiskey.com](http://www.connachtwhiskey.com)

In some cases, tours of breweries and distilleries are by appointment only. In order to avoid disappointment please be sure to make contact and book in advance!



# FOOD FESTIVALS TO SAVOUR

Ireland, an island on the edge of Europe, has long been recognised for the beauty of its landscapes and seascapes, the buzz of its cities, and the spirited warmth of its people. But now visitors are coming for the food and drink too. Thanks to our mild climate, clean seas, fertile soil ... and yes, the rain too ... you will have the opportunity to taste some of the best raw ingredients in the world.

But what makes it unique and continuously surprises our visitors? Put very simply – it's fresh, natural, local, rugged, uncomplicated and above all, unpretentious. Here in Ireland, we let the ingredients speak for themselves!

On the Wild Atlantic Way it's about the freshest seafood plucked straight from the purest waters. But it's also about the men and women who mix tradition with 21st century techniques to bring it from tide to table, to serve it just a few miles (or in some cases, just a few feet) from where it's been caught. Whether it's a steaming bowl of chowder on a wind-whipped winter day or a Guinness and oysters treat on a sun-lit summer terrace, the Wild Atlantic Way is fast becoming a culinary road trip of a lifetime.

Ireland has seen an explosion of food festivals over the past few years, ensuring foodies can now celebrate their love of food with local produce at some of the best Wild Atlantic Way Food Festivals.

## JULY

**BALLINA SALMON FESTIVAL**  
Ballina, Co Mayo  
E [info@ballinasalmonfestival.ie](mailto:info@ballinasalmonfestival.ie)  
[www.ballinasalmonfestival.ie](http://www.ballinasalmonfestival.ie)

**OFF THE STREET FOOD FESTIVAL**  
Letterkenny, Co Donegal  
E [offthestreetlk@hotmail.com](mailto:offthestreetlk@hotmail.com)  
[www.offthestreetfoodfest.com](http://www.offthestreetfoodfest.com)

## AUGUST

**A TASTE OF DONEGAL**  
Donegal Town, Co Donegal  
E [development@donegaltown.ie](mailto:development@donegaltown.ie)  
[www.atasteofdonegal.com](http://www.atasteofdonegal.com)

**FOOD FLEADH BALLINA**  
Ballina, Co Mayo  
E [mayonorth@moyvalley.ie](mailto:mayonorth@moyvalley.ie)

## OCTOBER

**STRANDHILL FOOD FESTIVAL**  
Strandhill Airport, Strandhill, Co Sligo  
[www.facebook.com/  
events/2020143858208744/](https://www.facebook.com/events/2020143858208744/)





# FIND A PASSION FOR FANTASTIC FESTIVALS

All year round, people come together along the Wild Atlantic Way to celebrate and showcase all that is rugged and real about this Atlantic coastal landscape, and how it inspires those who live here. Here you can immerse yourself in raucous festivals that celebrate the best in Irish traditional music, literature, food and crafts, sports, legends and more.

Here, visitors celebrate the diversity of the Wild Atlantic Way, with festival programmes designed to enlighten and entertain. From Irish music and dance, to sports, the natural outdoors – inspired by the salty sea air and its rugged landscape, to events showcasing local food and drink heritage and artisan farming, this programme of events truly immerses visitors in the Wild Atlantic Way of life.

The Northern Headlands and Surf Coast boast a magnificent supply of festivals and events

to whet all appetites and there are cultural gems to savour throughout Donegal, Leitrim, Sligo and Mayo. From the Rory Gallagher International Festival in Ballyshannon, where one of the world's greatest guitarists was born, to the ever popular surf and music festival, Sea Sessions, in Bundoran, Co Donegal, there's a huge selection of events covering all the arts.

And it's not just the arts - there are events and festivals of all hues throughout the year. How

about one of the region's great agricultural shows, like that at Clonmany, Co Donegal – The Clonmany Agricultural Show, which has been running since 1967 or the infamous Annual Warrior Run, in Sligo, a gruelling 15km course that takes in a 700-foot climb on fabled Knocknarea, and has attracted runners of all abilities for 33 years.

Others will appeal to history buffs, not least the 'Celtic Fringe Festival' at Grange, Co Sligo, which retells the intriguing story of the ill-fated Spanish Armada voyage of 1588,

and food lovers will enjoy the hugely popular Ballina Salmon Festival.

And then there are festivals so established on the annual calendar, they are now internationally famous: Earagail Arts Festival for two weeks of music, theatre, visual arts, film, literature, circus & carnival on Ireland's north-west Atlantic seaboard. It's the perfect way to experience the warmth and vibrancy of the people of the Wild Atlantic Way.





## WHAT'S ON: NORTHERN HEADLANDS

### APRIL/MAY

Cup of Tae Festival  
Ardara, Co Donegal  
[www.ardara.ie](http://www.ardara.ie)

### JUNE

DONEGAL INTERNATIONAL RALLY  
Letterkenny & Co Donegal  
[www.donegalmotorclub.com](http://www.donegalmotorclub.com)

EXTREME NORTH – ROCK N  
ROLLIN ULTRA MARATHON  
Moville, Co Donegal  
[www.extremenorthevents.com](http://www.extremenorthevents.com)

DONEGAL TOWN SUMMER  
FESTIVAL  
Donegal Town, Co Donegal  
[www.donegalgathering.com](http://www.donegalgathering.com)

### JULY

EARAGAIL ARTS FESTIVAL  
Letterkenny & Co Donegal  
[www.eaf.ie](http://www.eaf.ie)

CEOL NA COILLE SUMMER  
SCHOOL  
Letterkenny, Co Donegal  
[www.ceolnacoille.com](http://www.ceolnacoille.com)

MACGILL SUMMER SCHOOL  
& ARTS WEEK  
Glenties, Co Donegal  
[www.macgillsummerschool.com](http://www.macgillsummerschool.com)

SWELL MUSIC & ARTS FESTIVAL  
Arranmore Island, Co Donegal  
[www.swellfest.com](http://www.swellfest.com)

OFF THE STREET FOOD FESTIVAL  
Letterkenny, Co Donegal  
E offthestreetlk@hotmail.com  
[www.offthestreetfoodfest.com](http://www.offthestreetfoodfest.com)

BURTONPORT FESTIVAL  
Burtonport, Co Donegal  
[www.therosses.ie/burtonport-festival.html](http://www.therosses.ie/burtonport-festival.html)

MARY FROM DUNGLOE  
INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL  
Dungloe, Co Donegal  
[www.maryfromdungloefestival.com](http://www.maryfromdungloefestival.com)

### AUGUST

CLONMANY FESTIVAL  
Clonmany, Co Donegal  
[www.clonmanyfestival.com](http://www.clonmanyfestival.com)

FLEADH CHEOIL CHILL CHARTHA  
Kilcar, Co Donegal  
[www.kilcarfestivals.com](http://www.kilcarfestivals.com)

A TASTE OF DONEGAL FOOD  
FESTIVAL  
Donegal Town, Co Donegal  
[www.atasteofdonegal.com](http://www.atasteofdonegal.com)

### SEPTEMBER

GLENTIES FAIR DAY  
Glenties, Co Donegal  
[www.facebook.com/Glenties/](http://www.facebook.com/Glenties/)

JOHNNY DOHERTY MUSIC &  
DANCING FESTIVAL  
Ardara, Co Donegal  
[www.johnnydohertyfestival.com](http://www.johnnydohertyfestival.com)

### OCTOBER

CRANAFEST  
Buncrana, Co Donegal  
[www.cranafest.ie](http://www.cranafest.ie)

### NOVEMBER

ARDARA MATCH MAKING  
FESTIVAL  
Ardara, Co Donegal  
[www.ardara.ie](http://www.ardara.ie)

DONEGAL LAPLAND  
Doagh Island, Inishowen,  
Co Donegal  
[www.doaghfaminevillage.com](http://www.doaghfaminevillage.com)

### DECEMBER

CELTIC FEAST  
Burt, Co Donegal  
[www.angriananhotel.com](http://www.angriananhotel.com)

SCOIL GHEIMHRIDH  
Gweedore Co Donegal  
[www.scoilgheimhridh.com](http://www.scoilgheimhridh.com)

## WHAT'S ON: SURF COAST

### MARCH

CARA BUNDORAN CHALLENGE  
Bundoran, Co Donegal  
[www.carabundoranrun.com](http://www.carabundoranrun.com)

### JUNE

RORY GALLAGHER  
INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL  
Ballyshannon, Co Donegal  
[www.rorygallagherfestival.com](http://www.rorygallagherfestival.com)

SLIGO COUNTY FLEADH  
Sligo Town, Co Sligo  
[www.comhaltas.ie](http://www.comhaltas.ie)

RIVERSTOWN ANNUAL  
VINTAGE DAY  
Sligo Folk Park, Riverstown,  
Co Sligo  
[www.sligofolkpark.com](http://www.sligofolkpark.com)

YEATS DAY  
Sligo Town, Co Sligo  
[www.yeatssociety.com](http://www.yeatssociety.com)

WILD ATLANTIC SHANTY  
FESTIVAL  
Rosses Point, Co Sligo  
[www.wildatlanticshanty.ie](http://www.wildatlanticshanty.ie)

GLOHEALTH MULLAGHMORE  
SPRINT TRIATHLON  
Mullaghmore, Co Sligo  
[www.triathlonireland.com](http://www.triathlonireland.com)

SEA SESSIONS  
Bundoran, Co Donegal  
[www.seasessions.com](http://www.seasessions.com)

### JULY

SLIGO STAGES RALLY  
Sligo, Co Sligo  
[www.connachtmotorclub.com](http://www.connachtmotorclub.com)

TREAD SOFTLY  
Sligo Town, Co Sligo  
[www.treadsoftly.ie](http://www.treadsoftly.ie)

YEATS INTERNATIONAL  
SUMMER SCHOOL  
Sligo Town, Co Sligo  
[www.yeatssociety.com](http://www.yeatssociety.com)

SLIGO JAZZ PROJECT &  
INTERNATIONAL SUMMER  
SCHOOL FESTIVAL  
Sligo Town, Co Sligo  
[www.sligojazz.ie](http://www.sligojazz.ie)

### AUGUST

BALLYSHANNON FOLK FESTIVAL  
Ballyshannon, Co Donegal  
[www.ballyshannonfolkfestival.com](http://www.ballyshannonfolkfestival.com)

MAYO MANCHESTER TRADFEST  
Ballina, Co Mayo  
[www.mayomanchester.com](http://www.mayomanchester.com)

### SEPTEMBER

CELTIC FRINGE FESTIVAL  
Streedagh, Grange, Co Sligo  
[www.celticfringefest.com](http://www.celticfringefest.com)

### OCTOBER

SLIGO FESTIVAL OF BAROQUE  
MUSIC  
The Model, Sligo Town, Co Sligo  
[www.sligobaroquefestival.com](http://www.sligobaroquefestival.com)

SLIGO LIVE  
Sligo Town, Co Sligo  
[www.sligolive.ie](http://www.sligolive.ie)

SAMHAIN ABHAINN  
Ballina, Co Mayo  
[www.facebook.com/SamhainAbhainnBallina/](http://www.facebook.com/SamhainAbhainnBallina/)

FIDDLER OF DOONEY  
Sligo Town, Co Sligo  
[www.sligolive.ie](http://www.sligolive.ie)

ANNUAL WARRIORS RUN  
Strandhill, Co Sligo  
[www.warriorsfestival.com](http://www.warriorsfestival.com)

### NOVEMBER

ALLINGHAM ARTS FESTIVAL  
Ballyshannon, Co Donegal  
[www.allinghamfestival.com](http://www.allinghamfestival.com)

SLIGO INTERNATIONAL CHORAL  
FESTIVAL  
Sligo Town, Co Sligo  
[www.sligochoralfest.com](http://www.sligochoralfest.com)

There are numerous other shows, sporting events and festivals taking place throughout the Northern Headlands & Surf Coast. For more information, call to any of the Tourist Information Offices listed on the back cover or visit [www.wildatlanticway.com](http://www.wildatlanticway.com)





# WILD ATLANTIC WAY

SLÍ AN ATLANTAIGH FHIÁIN

## NORTHERN HEADLANDS

### Letterkenny Tourist Office

Neil T. Blaney Road, Letterkenny, Co Donegal

T +353 (0)74 9121160

### Dungloe Community Tourist Office

Ionad Tempeall Chroine, Chapel Road,  
Dungloe, Co Donegal

T +353 (0)74 9522198

### Donegal Discover Ireland Centre

The Quay, Donegal Town, Co Donegal

T +353 (0)74 9721148

### Bundoran Community Tourist Office

The Bridge, Bundoran, Co Donegal

T +353 (0)71 9841350

## SURF COAST

### Sligo Tourist Office ♦

O'Connell Street, Sligo Town, Co Sligo

T +353 (0)71 9161201

### Ballina Community Tourist Office

44 Pearse Street, Ballina, Co Mayo

T +353 (0)96 72800

### Belmullet Community Tourist Office

Main Street, Belmullet, Co Mayo

T +353 (0)97 20494

## BAY COAST

### Newport Community Tourist Office\*

Georges Street, Newport, Co Mayo

T +353 (0)98 41895

### Westport Discover Ireland Centre

Bridge Street, Westport, Co Mayo

T +353 (0)98 25711

### Clifden Tourist Office\*

Galway Road, Clifden, Co Galway

T +353 (0)95 21163

### Aran Tourist Office

Kilronan, Inis Mór, Co Galway

T +353 (0)99 61263

### Galway Discover Ireland Centre ♦

Aras Failte, Forster Street, Galway City,  
Co Galway

T +353 (0)91 537700

## CLIFF COAST

### Ennis Tourist Office

Arthur's Row, Ennis, Co Clare

T +353 (0)65 6828366

### Limerick Tourist Office

20 O'Connell Street, Limerick City,  
Co Limerick

T +353 (0)61 317522

### Listowel Community Tourist Office\*

Kerry Literary & Cultural Centre, Listowel,  
Co Kerry

T +353 (0)68 22212

### Tralee Tourist Office

Denny Street, Tralee, Co Kerry

T +353 (0)66 7121288

## SOUTHERN PENINSULAS

### Dingle Tourist Office ♦

The Quay, Dingle, Co Kerry

T +353 (0)66 9151188

### Killarney Discover Ireland Centre

Beech Road, Killarney, Co Kerry

T +353 (0)64 6631633

### Valentia Island Community Tourist Office

No 2 Watch House Cottages, Knightstown,  
Valentia Island, Co Kerry

T +353 (0)66 9476985

### Kenmare Tourist Office\*

Heritage Centre, Kenmare, Co Kerry

T +353 (0)64 6641233

### Bantry Community Tourist Office\*

The Square, Bantry, Co Cork

T +353 (0)27 50229

## HAVEN COAST

### Skibbereen Community Tourist Office\*

North Street, Skibbereen, Co Kerry

T +353 (0)28 21489

### Clonakilty Tourist Office

Ashe Street, Clonakilty, Co Cork

T +353 (0)23 8833226

### Kinsale Tourist Office

Pier Road, Kinsale, Co Cork

T +353 (0)21 4772234

### Cork Tourist Office

Grand Parade, Cork City, Co Cork

T +353 (0)21 4255100

\* seasonal office

♦ Wild Atlantic Way Passport on sale here

Call to any  
of the tourist  
offices listed and  
pick up your **FREE**  
Wild Atlantic Way  
**MAPS!**

[WildAtlanticWay.com](http://WildAtlanticWay.com)

[#WildAtlanticWay](https://www.instagram.com/WildAtlanticWay)

[E waw@failteireland.ie](mailto:waw@failteireland.ie)

[www.facebook.com/irelandswaw](https://www.facebook.com/irelandswaw)

[Instagram: Wild Atlantic Way](https://www.instagram.com/WildAtlanticWay)

[www.youtube.com/wildatlanticway](https://www.youtube.com/wildatlanticway)



**Fáilte Ireland**

National Tourism Development Authority