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TOP IRELAND EXPERIENCES 36



DISCOVER ALL ABOUT 10



GREAT IRELAND ROADTRIPS 32

Ireland Welcome

The perfect escape? The city break you've been dreaming of? The cliff-path walk you'll remember forever? Well, Ireland has you covered. This magical island is just waiting to thrill you with its stunning scenery along the Wild Atlantic Way, to capture you with its history from ancient sites such as Newgrange to the Edwardian-era Gobbins path, and to entice you with Ireland's Ancient East. The time is now.



FABULOUSLY FOODIE 22

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Picture *This*

It appears like a vision, this dramatic landscape that tumbles down to the sea. Here, on the edge of the North Atlantic, nature has outdone itself with a collection of 40,000 basalt columns knitted together to form a unique set of stepping stones. Surrounded by cliffs, pounded by waves and veiled with legend, the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Giant's Causeway will wow you with its scenery, and charm you with its stories. Don't miss it.

The Giant's Causeway, County Antrim



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Hallowe'en in Derry~Londonderry

Hallowe'en in Derry~Londonderry

The Banks of the Foyle Hallowe'en Carnival is the biggest Hallowe'en celebration in Europe. Party with the supernatural at the Gothic Ball (appropriately hosted in a 19th century church), get swept away by the dreamy spectacle of light and movement at the Awakening of the Walls, and dare to take a tour through a haunted house. One of the big highlights? The Carnival Parade through the city streets with music, theatrics and breathtaking performances. Guaranteed to blow those cobwebs away.



Ireland Escape

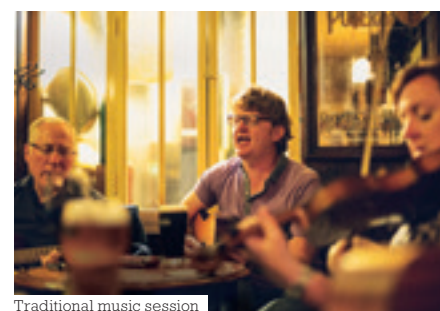
Fun at a céilí

Join a céilí

Whether it's the fluid movements of a céilí (folk dancing) or the more rigorous style of set dancing, Irish dance is energetic, informal and social. Don't know the steps? It doesn't matter. Just join in! The very musical Vaughan's Bar in the village of Kilfenora, County Clare, is the perfect place to dip your toes in. If you're keen to learn, there are set dancing classes happening in every corner of rural Ireland (check coisnabhna.ie for details). Or sit back and enjoy the show, with an Irish dancing performance at Brú Ború by the Rock of Cashel, County Tipperary.

DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT

The island of Ireland has a unique appeal, with incredible escapes and wonderful cultural events just waiting for you. Here are some to get you started



Traditional music session

Enjoy traditional music

Bodhráns drumming, accordions hopping, hands clapping: there's nothing like a traditional (trad) music session in an Irish pub. Sessions can start at any time and keep going all night. Try the traditional music heartland of County Clare, where the legendary fireside trad sessions will get you singing along. Or head for the House of McDonnell in Ballycastle, County Antrim, where Friday nights are packed with musicians – and locals – creating amazing tunes.

Experience Gaelic Games

Ireland's native games (Gaelic football, hurling and camogie, among others) are fast-paced, exhilarating and great fun to watch. Whether at a local match or an All Ireland final, the passion of the players and spectators makes these events special. Experience the fun for yourself at Casement Park in Belfast or discover the history of the games at the GAA Museum, Croke Park Stadium, Dublin. You can even pick up some techniques at Experience Gaelic Games in Dublin and Galway.



Hurling, Croke Park, Dublin



A puffin on Rathlin Island, County Antrim

Take a trip to an island

Ancient artifacts, unique locations, fascinating history: Ireland's islands are the ultimate secret hideaways. Explore the magnificent 370 million-year-old fossils on Valentia, County Kerry; flock to the bird haven of Rathlin, County Antrim; or relax on the lovely, white-sand beaches of Inishbofin, which was inhabited as far back as 8000BC. And for a real adventure, why not hop on Ireland's only cable car out to Dursey Island, County Cork, with wonderful views of the coastline. Bliss.

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Ireland Accommodation

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Shola Coach House, County Antrim

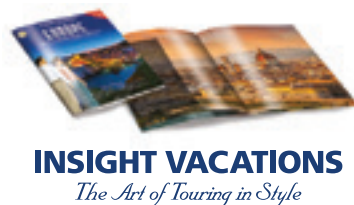
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STAY SOMEWHERE DIFFERENT

Accommodation in Ireland is more than just a place to lay your head – it's somewhere to connect with locals, somewhere to feel a sense of history, somewhere to really relax

When it comes to unique accommodation, Ireland certainly knows how to impress. If you like the sound of miniature castles, 19th century gate lodges and Gothic towers, then look to the National Trust and Irish Landmark Trust. With dramatic architecture, fascinating histories and incredible landscapes, you're guaranteed to find a memorable self-catering holiday, whether you're snuggling down in front of the fire or wandering your own estate.

Ireland's historic country houses make delightful places to stay with grand drawing rooms, gracious bedrooms and sumptuous gardens. Step into the luxurious Ard na Sidhe Country House in the surrounds of Killorglin, County Kerry. Enjoy a blend of eras at Castlecoote House, County Roscommon, which mixes parts of a 16th century castle with a Georgian mansion. And see how the Dean of Armagh Cathedral lived at Dean's Hill, built in 1772, in College Hill, Armagh.

It's hard to imagine a more perfect place to rest than an Irish castle hotel. You'll find interiors laden with antiques; landscaped gardens with archery, golf or tennis; and traditionally furnished bedrooms that evoke the spirit of a bygone age. Seek out a lakeside castle, such as Ashford Castle in County Mayo and Ballynahinch Castle in County Galway. Or try the modern-meets-traditional style of Ballygally Castle Hotel on a 17th century estate in County Antrim.

Reflecting the earthiness of the landscape, thatched cottages have provided the people of Ireland with characterful homes for centuries. And for rustic self-catering holidays, they're great. Try Renvyle Thatched Cottages located within the stunning surrounds of Connemara National Park, County Galway; Adare Irish Cottages in the quaint village of Adare, County Limerick; and Magherally Cottage in County Down.

Ireland is renowned for breathtaking coastal views and you can put yourself in the heart of the picture with a stay in a lighthouse. Cliff-edge locations, crashing waves and rugged landscapes make these places a cut above the rest. Savour the charm of the Galley Head Lightkeepers' Houses in County Cork, the Blackhead Lightkeepers' Houses in County Antrim and the boutique style of Clare Island Lighthouse in County Mayo.

While Ireland may be famous for its coastline, the interior of the island offers a complete contrast, with pastures and sleepy villages and canals, rivers and lakes. Experience the atmosphere of riverside hamlets with a cruising holiday on the Shannon-Erne Waterway. From traditional old barges to modern cruisers, discover Ireland at a different pace.

For more information on accommodation, visit: ireland.com

DISCOVER ALL ABOUT... IRELAND'S ISLANDS

Sprinkled around Ireland's coastline and lakelands are remote, romantic and fascinating islands. Their ancient history, close-knit communities and unspoiled beauty make them ideal for a great escape BY MARK FOLENS



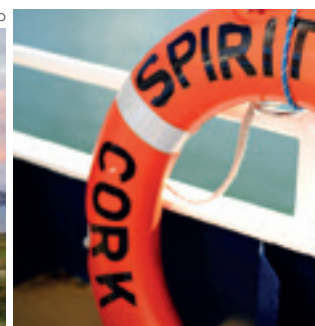
Clare Island Lighthouse, County Mayo

Into the wild

A trip to one of Ireland's islands often means getting up close to marine wildlife, with whales, dolphins, basking sharks, porpoises and seals all common off the Irish coast. There are flourishing seabird colonies on many islands, including the Skelligs in County Kerry and Rathlin and Sheep Island in County Antrim, which is home to special species of cormorant. And keep your eyes open for peregrine falcons, puffins, gannets and guillemots.



Achill Island, County Mayo



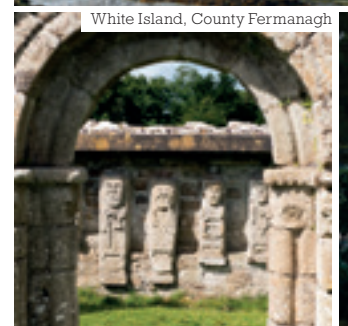
Basket Islands, County Kerry

Deserted islands

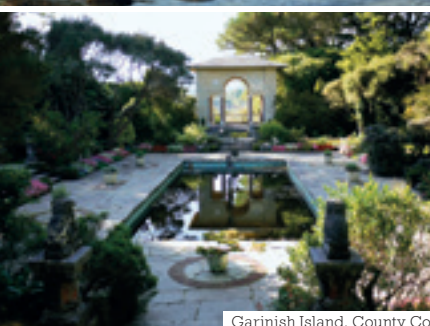
The Basket Islands are lands that time forgot. Situated off the Dingle Peninsula in County Kerry, the once-inhabited islands were evacuated in 1953 when the elements became too extreme. Thankfully, when weather permits, you can still visit them by ferry from tiny Dunquin Harbour. The abandoned stone buildings that remain here serve as a constant reminder to a previous way of life.



Rathlin Island, County Antrim



White Island, County Fermanagh



Garinish Island, County Cork



Aran Islands, County Galway



Dursey Island, County Cork

As old as time itself

Isolation has its benefits. It helps create serene havens sheltered from the hustle and bustle of modern life, and allows ancient structures and lost relics to lie intact and undisturbed for millennia. And the effect can be phenomenal. Take Devenish Island – one of the many lake islands in Lough Erne, County Fermanagh. Founded in the 6th century by St Molaise, today it is still home to the ruins of an Augustinian abbey, carved stone crosses and intact round tower.

Across the waters on the east shore is another island with a storied past. Like Devenish, White Island has a ruined church, but more interesting still are the archaic stone figures inside. There are eight in total, and though archaeologists place them between the 9th and 10th century, their origins continue to be debated.

But when it comes to history, Valentia in County Kerry really leads the way. It was here, about 370 million years ago, that tetrapods became the first animals to walk on land. You can trace these incredible fossils along the tetrapod trackway on the island's north coast.

Breathe out

A real sense of untouched beauty pervades these islands. Just look at Inishfree, off County Donegal. Described by Nobel Prize laureate W.B. Yeats as an idyllic paradise, the island is defined by its raw beauty and isolation. Garinish Island (also known as Garnish) in West Cork has been called Ireland's Garden of Eden. Its sheltered position, almost subtropical climate, ornamental gardens and abundance of plants make it a popular day trip from Glengarriff. Or try Inishbofin, off the coast of County Galway, with pristine sandy beaches and heritage sites.

A sense of adventure

For an unforgettable experience, head to Dursey Island. Separated by a narrow but treacherous reef at the tip of the Beara Peninsula in West Cork, the island connects to the mainland by Ireland's only cable car. There are looped walks, Napoleonic landmarks and stunning views of West Cork's rugged coastline.

Rathlin is Northern Ireland's largest offshore island. Shrouded in myth, the waters here are ringed with over 40 centuries-old shipwrecks. Today, it's a Special Area of Conservation, with tens of thousands of seabirds.

Southeast of Dursey and beyond Mizzen Head (Ireland's most southwesterly point on the Wild Atlantic Way) lie more inhabited County Cork islands, including Bere, Sherkin and Cape Clear. The tiny Heir Island is home to the Island Cottage Cookery School. It might just be the smallest cookery school in the world!

In keeping with tradition

Sitting pretty in Galway Bay are the Aran Islands – one of the last lands to the west before America. The criss-crossed stone walls, Aran jumpers and Irish-speaking communities (Gaeltacht areas) remain shining examples of traditional Irish life.

The Irish language also dominates windswept Achill Island, Ireland's largest offshore island on the County Mayo coast. Achill boasts one of Ireland's oldest music schools, where the harp, uilleann pipes and tin whistle are taught during summer months.

DON'T MISS

Every year, island communities host unique arts and culture festivals. **Cape Clear Island International Storytelling Festival** (September) has been regaling visitors with storytelling events – some on boats – for over two decades. There are intimate movie screenings at the **Clare Island Film Festival** (September/October) and traditional cookery demonstrations at **Bia Bó Finne** (Inishbofin, October). You can also take to the water at a sailing festival such as the **Achill Yawl Festival** (June-September), or enjoy traditional music with **Craiceann** – the Bodhrán Summerschool on Inis Oírr (June).



St George's Market, Belfast



Octopussy's, Howth, County Dublin



Trinity College, Dublin



Ha'penny Bridge, Dublin

CITY BREAKS

Ireland's cities have a deserved reputation for being packed with history, entertainment and culture. These are places that bristle with medieval atmosphere, thrum with vibrant nightlife and show their cultural side with galleries, studios and literary heritage. From the Georgian grace of Dublin to the buzzing foodie city of Belfast and the bohemian cool of Galway, here's a pick of the best things to see, do and enjoy



Fun in the rain at Powerscourt Townhouse Centre, Dublin

DUBLIN

The Fair City. This historic capital pulses with an inimitable energy, wears its beauty with pride and always has a wisecrack up its sleeve. Dublin is all about good times – no wonder it's one of Lonely Planet's Top Ten Cities for 2016. As well as a lively social scene, the city has an esteemed literary heritage, it's a place so connected to the written word that it's been named a UNESCO City of Literature. James Joyce, Oscar Wilde and Seamus Heaney have all called Dublin home, and you can explore their legacy at the Dublin Writers Museum.

Peel back the centuries and you'll uncover Dublin's ancient core, and the area where Vikings built forts. One of the oldest parts of the city lies where Dublin Castle now stands. Creep down into the Medieval Undercroft and you can see the foundations of the old city walls. Nearby is Christ Church Cathedral (1028), with one of the largest crypts in Ireland and Great Britain.

For all its enduring medieval charm, much of Dublin's architectural grace comes from the Georgian period, which saw the narrow streets of the Middle Ages widened and developed. From the striking beauty of the quayside Custom House and Four Courts, to the glitzy residential enclaves of Merrion Square, Fitzwilliam Square and North Great George's Street, the Georgian era gave the city a real sense of space and elegance.

Dublin's mix of lively districts gives it an ever-changing edge. There's Grand Canal Dock, where you can eat seafood at the Mourne Seafood Bar overlooking the rippling water. There's the Liberties, one of the city's oldest areas, with historic buildings, traditional pubs and the Teeling Whiskey Distillery. And there's Portobello, with red-brick Victorian houses, cafés, bakeries and canal walks.

Whatever you do in Dublin, the city will stay with you long after you leave.



Dame Lane, Dublin

DUBLIN FIVE TRADITIONAL PUBS

MULLIGAN'S *Poolbeg Street*
From tobacco-coloured walls to garrulous barmen, this delightful Dublin pub is pure charm. It's been here since 1782, so it must be doing something right.

THE PALACE BAR *Fleet Street*
Craft beers, specialist whiskeys and stained glass make this Fleet Street institution a favourite of writers past and present.

STAG'S HEAD *Dame Court*
Marble-tiled floors, a long mahogany bar and traditional food attract a never-ending stream of students, actors and Dublin characters to this Victorian star.

O'DONOGHUE'S *Baggot Street*
Bric-a-brac-laden interiors, walls lined with pictures and lively trad music keep O'Donoghue's at the centre of the city's pub scene.

KEHOE'S *South Anne Street*
There's a low counter in Kehoe's that whispers of its past as a "grocery-bar", and today this place still feels stopped in time with its snugs, dark wood and "sitting room" style bar upstairs.

Beyond the city

Take the Dart train to the northern coastal suburbs of Malahide and Howth, with cliff walks, castles and cafés. Or head south to the town of Dun Laoghaire for a walk on the pier. If you want to experience both the northern and southern suburbs, then jump on one of the Dublin Bay Cruises from Dun Laoghaire to Howth. The cruise lasts 90 minutes and takes in the stunning coastal landscapes of County Dublin.



Coliemore Harbour, Dalkey, County Dublin

Hidden Gems

Get to know the city with a walking tour: try the Le Cool Walking Experience for under-the-radar hotspots; Pat Liddy's Walking Tours for history and literary routes; or do it yourself with the Dublin Discovery Trails, which stretch from College Green to Kilmainham. Dublin's Creative Quarter is the place to go for cool interior shops, hip cafés, galleries and studios. Or relax in the leafy Iveagh Gardens park – perfect for picnics.



Derry-Londonderry



Canty's pub, Cork



Rothe House, Kilkenny

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Titanic Belfast

BELFAST

Belfast has a dramatic setting on the shores of Belfast Lough. So dramatic, in fact, that the towering Cave Hill, overlooking the city, reputedly inspired writer Jonathan Swift to create Gulliver of Gulliver's Travels.

Drama, literature and history lurk round every corner of this great city. You'll find it on the cobbled streets of the Cathedral Quarter, in the façades of the commanding Victorian buildings and in the buzz of great marketplaces such as St George's Market. You can explore even more of Belfast's past at the Ulster Museum, City Hall, Belfast Castle and the Linen Hall Library, which has a history that dates back to 1788.

Genteel, verdant areas such as the Botanic Gardens in the University Quarter stand alongside great architectural edifices that speak of Belfast's prosperous shipbuilding heritage. In the cultural district of the Cathedral Quarter, you'll find galleries, studios, arts venues and cocktail bars. It's this incredible mix of old, new, cultural and creative that makes Belfast so exciting.

Near the city centre is Titanic Belfast, the world's largest Titanic-themed visitor attraction. To complete the Titanic experience, visit Titanic's Pump-House and Dock, where the luxury liner last rested on dry ground. Nearby you'll see H.M.S. Caroline, a World War I light cruiser and the last survivor of the Grand Fleet, with its own dramatic tales to tell of the infamous Battle of Jutland. Currently under restoration, the ship will open as a visitor attraction in 2016.

It's a compelling place, Belfast, a bit Victorian, a bit modern. Its story is enthralling, its people welcoming and friendly, and its contemporary culture utterly absorbing. This vibrant, exciting and historic city will undoubtedly cast its spell on you.

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Ireland City Breaks



City Hall, Belfast



Crown Liquor Saloon, Belfast

BELFAST FIVE TO SEE

TITANIC BELFAST
Inside this magnificent building, the story of the Titanic is explored from every angle. It's Belfast's big must-see.

CROWN LIQUOR SALOON
The Crown Liquor Saloon, on any list of the world's top bars, glories in Victorian splendour. Many of the fixtures and fittings were intended for the Titanic, but instead were used to pay bar bills by shipyard workers.

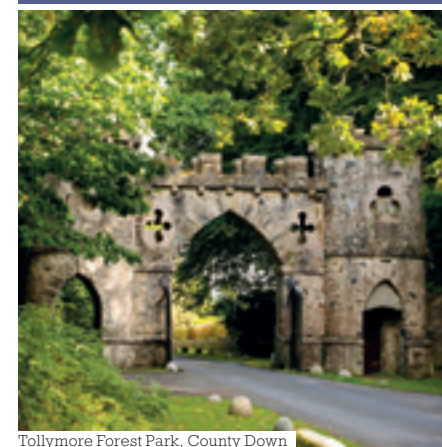
LINEN HALL LIBRARY
This unique institution (1788) houses one of the definitive collections of material on Irish politics and culture – not to mention an intoxicating smell of old leather chairs, polished wood and books.

S.S. NOMADIC
Beautifully restored and close to Titanic Belfast, this is the last remaining White Star Line ship in the world, and was used to ferry first- and second-class passengers to Titanic.

W5 INTERACTIVE DISCOVERY CENTRE
This interactive scientific discovery centre features some 250 different exhibits of scientific wizardry and discovery.

Beyond the city

As well as the Giant's Causeway, Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge and Dunluce Castle, there's so much to see beyond Belfast. Why not try the Game of Thrones™ tour around some of the major filming locations in Northern Ireland? Walk along the incredible Gobbins path (see page 38 for more), or head to the Tollymore Forest Park, with rare plants, follies and views of the Mourne Mountains.



Tollymore Forest Park, County Down

Foodie favourites

Belfast has a vibrant culinary scene and with 2016 being Northern Ireland's Year of Food & Drink, it's the perfect time to explore what the city has to offer. Start off with a visit to St George's Market, packed with the finest fresh produce from cheese to local delicacies. Ox, on the banks of the Lagan, is a critically acclaimed restaurant with views of the river. Or head to the Lisburn Road brasserie of Shu, which uses the best seasonal ingredients.



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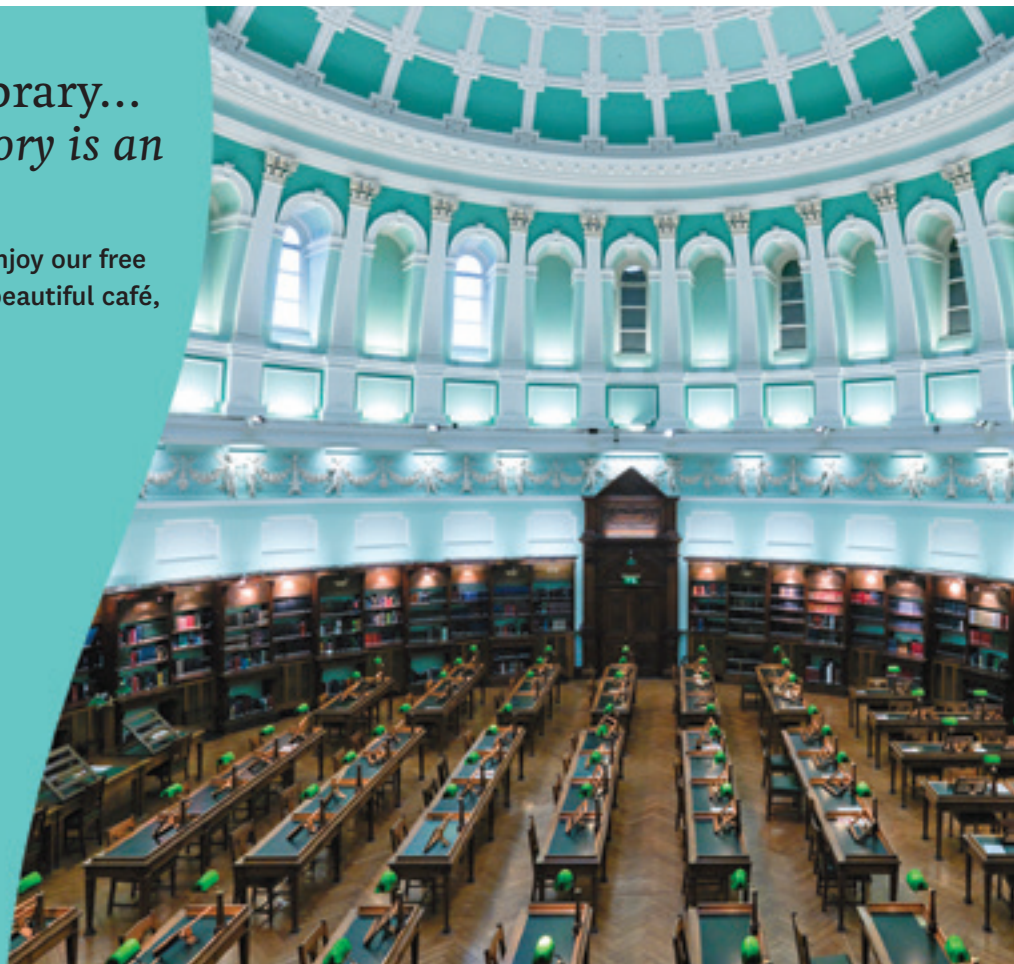
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Galway

GALWAY

A cool, bohemian city with a love of traditional music – Galway is hard to resist. Its glorious seaside setting, medieval architecture and critically acclaimed food scene add to its allure.

Famed for its artistic outlook (Galway is a UNESCO City of Film), friendly locals and up-tempo atmosphere, you might get the impression that Galway doesn't do downtime. Visit during one of its festivals and it genuinely feels like the city is one big party, but there are plenty of quiet moments to be cherished in this ancient beauty. Walk the promenade out to the seaside town of Salthill or stroll over one of the River Corrib's four bridges, and you'll experience Galway's gentle sway.

In the criss-cross of Shop, William, High and Quay Streets, Galway's energy fizzles and crackles with an army of buskers that keep the city moving to a musical beat. And in terms of food, Galway is one of the most exciting places on the island right now. Take your pick from the fresh creativity of Ard Bia, or the relaxed style of Cava Bodega. You can go casual with excellent fish and chips at McDonagh's or upscale with a culinary adventure at Michelin-starred Aniar.

Galway is the gateway to Connemara, the Aran Islands and the Burren. But while the city may be surrounded by epic landscapes and island escapes, it's definitely worth staying put for a few days. This delightful small-scale metropolis encapsulates the very best of the west of Ireland, and the region's traditional culture is distilled into shops selling Aran sweaters and Claddagh rings (traditional Irish wedding rings), pubs with traditional music sessions, and a love for the Irish language.

Catch some tunes at the Crane Bar, feel the salty air of the harbour or explore its compelling history. Either way, stay a while – you won't be sorry.



Ireland City Breaks

Galway Races



Galway Oyster Festival

GALWAY FIVE TO TRY

LIVE MUSIC SESSION

Galway has a reputation for the quality of its music scene, and on nearly every night of the week there's something going on. Keep an eye out for sessions in atmospheric pubs such as Monroe's, Taaffes and Tíg Cóilí, all in the city centre.

THE SPANISH ARCH

Built in 1584 on the banks of the River Corrib, the Spanish Arch was originally an extension to the city walls and is now home to the Galway City Museum.

FISH AND CHIPS AT MCDONAGH'S

No frills, just great fish and chips at this city-centre stalwart, which has been feeding locals for four generations.

TRADITIONAL JEWELLERY

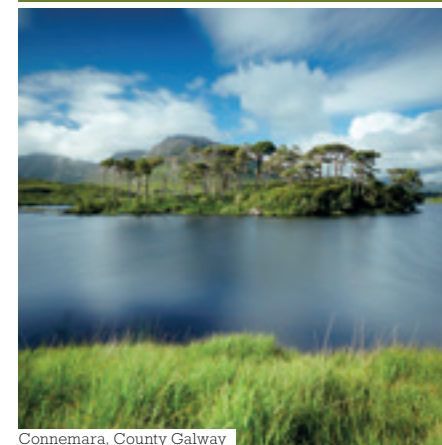
Thomas Dillon's Claddagh Gold is home of the Claddagh ring, Ireland's most famous traditional ring. Rings have been made at this shop in Quay Street since 1750.

GALWAY FARMERS' MARKET

This weekly food market takes place in Church Lane in front of St Nicholas's Collegiate Church, and showcases the best of local produce.

Beyond the city

Galway is right on the Wild Atlantic Way; head north and you'll reach the wilds of Connemara, head south and the Burren and the Cliffs of Moher will be within your reach. Inland, there's the quiet beauty of Lough Corrib or take an adventure out to visit the Aran Islands. The islands comprise Inis Mór, Inis Meáin and Inis Oírr, all with their own distinct character, and all holding fast to their traditions.



Connemara, County Galway

Galway festivals

The Galway Races in July boast thrills, racing, fashion and fun at the Ballybrit Racecourse for seven days. July is also a highlight for culture, with the Galway International Arts Festival and the Galway Film Fleadh. And if you're after an unbeatable food festival experience, visit the Galway International Oyster and Seafood Festival. It takes place on the last weekend of every September.



CITIES TO EXPLORE

Whether you're planning a quick city trip or a longer getaway, you'll find that the cities on the island of Ireland are as diverse as they are fascinating

Cork



CORK

Centred on the River Lee, Cork is a lively mix of quaint side streets, broad thoroughfares and artistic districts. You could easily lose several hours to the English Market, which dates back to 1788, as you sample local cheeses, lunch at the Farmgate Café and browse the many food stalls. But make sure to keep some time

for Cork's other attractions. Explore the history of Cork City Gaol, enjoy art at the Crawford Municipal Art Gallery or sample some craft beers at the Franciscan Well Brewery.



LIMERICK

Limerick is a place with culture at its heart. Overlooking the River Shannon, this charismatic medieval city is known for its festivals, galleries and museums. There's the faded Georgian elegance of the Newtown Pery district; the Hunt Museum with its collection of precious art and antiquities; and the Frank McCourt

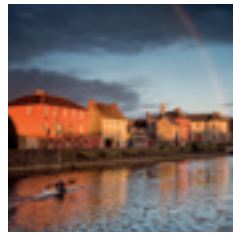
Museum, based in the author's old school. See rugby at Thomond Park; try local flavours at the Milk Market's Saturday market; or explore the fortifications of the 13th century King John's Castle.



WATERFORD

The atmosphere in Waterford is more small town than big city, but you'll find lots to do in this mini medieval metropolis in Ireland's Ancient East. Founded by the Vikings, Waterford's history is expertly covered in the Viking Triangle, which contains the excellent Medieval Museum, Bishop's Palace and

Reginald's Tower. Enjoy crystal at the House of Waterford Crystal; taste a "blaa" (bread roll) at the Granary Café; or visit the great food market at Merchant's Quay.



KILKENNY

It has a firm reputation as being a thoroughly enjoyable city in Ireland's Ancient East – a place that mixes nightlife, great food and culture – and Kilkenny doesn't disappoint. This city will wow you with medieval showpieces by day, and keep you entertained in traditional pubs by night. Walk the

Medieval Mile and be catapulted back centuries with Tudor inns, old merchant townhouses, alleys and historic big-hitters such as Kilkenny Castle and St Canice's Cathedral.



ARMAGH

Armagh has a close relationship with St Patrick. The saint is said to have founded his first church on the hilltop site of the Church of Ireland Cathedral in the 5th century, which faces the Roman Catholic Cathedral just a short distance away. The city has its own planetarium; boasts a delightful stretch of lawn called

the Mall, lined with terraced houses, a cricket pitch and pavilion; and has a great collection of restaurants including the Moody Boar and Uluru Bistro. Turn the clock back and enjoy.



LISBURN

In terms of heritage, Lisburn goes way back, as you'll discover when you wander down the 18th century streetscapes to the Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum. The city was once a large centre of linen production during the 19th century, but today it keeps things lively with a dynamic arts scene, great little

restaurants and excellent shops. It's also just a short drive from the city to Hillsborough Castle and Gardens, the official residence of Her Majesty the Queen in Northern Ireland.



NEWRY

Scratch the surface of this modern urban hub and you'll discover a history that stretches over 850 years. Bagenal's Castle, a 16th century fortified house with an adjoining 19th century warehouse, is a good place to start. It now houses the Newry and Mourne Museum, which trace's the city's story right back to

prehistory. Afterwards, walk or cycle along the Newry Canal Path – a towpath that was used by the horses pulling the canal boats – before you relax in its bars, clubs and restaurants.



DERRY~LONDONDERRY

Ancient city walls, great pubs and a rich cultural scene are making Derry~Londonderry one of the most exciting cities to visit on the island of Ireland. The gorgeous natural setting is complemented by structures that really set Derry~Londonderry apart: the Peace

Bridge, the fully intact city walls, and the Edwardian Guildhall. Also explore the Bogside murals, the award-winning Tower Museum and traditional pubs, such as Peadar O'Donnell's.

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Cliffs of Moher, Co. Clare



Rock of Cashel, County Tipperary



Glendalough, County Wicklow



Holy Cross Abbey, County Tipperary



Kilkenny Design Centre



Dunbrody Famine Ship, New Ross, County Wexford

IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST

Dramatic castles, Stone Age passage tombs, aristocratic mansions and lush, green landscapes... Ireland's Ancient East will keep you captivated as you wander through 5,000 years of history

LAND OF 5,000 DAWNS

History and myth collide in the counties of Cavan, Longford, Louth, Meath, Monaghan and Westmeath, where almost every village and townland is home to its own legend or ancient monument. This is a place of wonder, with megalithic dolmens, Iron Age trackways and Early Christian settlements.

Take **Newgrange** in County Meath. Sealed for millennia, this UNESCO-protected Neolithic passage tomb is older than the pyramids, and is a fascinating feat of Stone Age construction.

Move further north and you'll discover County Louth's **Cooley Peninsula**: a European Destination of Excellence, rich in attractions such as the Proleek Dolmen and the medieval town of Carlingford. In County Louth, you'll also find the monastic site of Monasterboice.

And it doesn't stop there. Uncover an incredible prehistoric landscape in the **Cavan Burren**, a remarkable limestone plateau that once nurtured Neolithic settlers; see the **Cathedral Church of St Mel** in Longford, with exquisite Harry Clarke stained glass windows; take

afternoon tea in the eccentric **Castle Leslie Hotel** in County Monaghan, home to the Leslie family since the 1600s; and delve into the intriguing stories that lurk within **Belvedere House**, County Westmeath.

THE HISTORIC HEARTLANDS

Go time travelling through the counties of Carlow, Kildare, Kilkenny, Laois, Offaly, Tipperary and east Limerick, and you'll discover grand houses, sacred valleys and a few surprises along the way. Here in the historic core of the island, verdant pasturelands meet stunning landscapes, while your imagination will soar as you walk through charming gardens, explore incredible monastic sites and see spectacular castles.

The tranquil setting of **Clonmacnoise**, on the banks of the River Shannon in County Offaly, is reason enough to visit, but this Early Christian site, founded by St Ciaran in the mid-6th century, has a captivating history, too. There's a cathedral, seven churches, round towers, high crosses, and tales of Viking attacks, plagues and celebrity monks.

It's hard not to be impressed by



Castletown House in County Kildare. The first and largest Palladian house in Ireland, Castletown was built in 1722 in an estate that stretched to 550 acres. The beautiful print room here is a real must-see.

In neighbouring County Laois, the **Rock of Dunamase** rises from the land on a steep crag of rock. Rich with history and boasting beautiful views of the valley below, the castle was once part of the dowry of Aoife, princess of Leinster, on her marriage to legendary Norman lord Strongbow in 1170.

There is fascination to be found in



Castletown House, County Kildare



Lough Gur, County Limerick

the most unlikely of places around here. Look at the **Brownshill Dolmen** in County Carlow. Sitting just off a road, surrounded by beautiful green fields, the capstone on this dolmen is thought to be the heaviest in Europe.

Kilkenny Castle offers history of a different kind. Sold to the people of the city in 1967 – for just £50 – this grand Norman castle sits like a medieval jewel in the heart of Kilkenny city.

Perched on a vast craggy outcrop, the **Rock of Cashel** doesn't just loom over Tipperary's Golden Vale, but over Ireland's

history, too. It's where St Patrick is said to have baptised Aengus, King of Munster.

Finally, in east Limerick, folklore and history combine at **Lough Gur**, where the ancient landscape is dotted with stone circles, hill forts and castles, and ripples with ghostly tales and marvellous myths.

CELTIC COAST

Heading south, seafaring stories and monastic ruins merge in the counties of Wicklow, Wexford, Waterford and east Cork. A sense of peace and tranquillity pervades the valley of **Glendalough** in County Wicklow, where St Kevin founded his 6th century monastic site. Walk the trails, explore the monastic village and gaze out at the stunning glassy lake.

Further south, Ireland's famine story is uniquely preserved in County Wexford onboard the **Dunbrody Famine Ship** in New Ross. This reproduction of an 1840s Famine ship details the experiences of 19th century Irish emigrants, with a guided tour, costumed performers and themed exhibitions.

Founded by Vikings in the 9th century, **Waterford** is one of the oldest cities on the island of Ireland. In its excellent museums, you'll find the world's oldest piece of Waterford glass, a relic of the Holy Cross, and the Cloth of Gold vestments, regarded as one of the greatest gems of medieval Europe.

From here, you can journey to the colourful town of **Cobh** in east Cork. This scenic spot was the last port of call for the Titanic and the story of the Ship of Dreams is told at the **Titanic Experience Cobh**, situated in the original White Star Line Offices. It's a dramatic end to an incredible journey.

PLACES TO STAY AND EAT IN IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST

COLLON HOUSE

Collon, County Louth

This beautifully restored country house was built in 1740, and retains all the charm of the era. It's perfectly placed for accessing the nearby sites of Newgrange, Monasterboice and Slane Castle.

WINEPORT LODGE

Glasson, Athlone, County Westmeath

This luxury lodge-style hotel overlooks the tranquil waters of Lough Ree and is surrounded by native woodland. As well as water-side rooms, there's a great restaurant and small spa.

MACNEAN HOUSE & RESTAURANT

Blacklion, County Cavan

This award-winning guesthouse, restaurant and cookery school offers excellent fine dining in a relaxed, warm environment.

THE HAPPY PEAR

Greystones, County Wicklow

With a focus on natural, ethical ingredients, this popular spot in the pretty coastal village of Greystones draws a loyal following to its busy daytime café and night-time restaurant.

THE TANNERY RESTAURANT

Dungarvan, County Waterford

The Michelin-starred **Cliff House Hotel** may be the stellar County Waterford place to eat, but the Tannery, with its restaurant, cookery school and guest rooms, is definitely worth a visit, too. Expect contemporary Irish cuisine, with classical base notes.

CAMPAGNE RESTAURANT

Kilkenny

With an elegant interior and refined Michelin-starred cuisine, Campagne has helped cement Kilkenny city's reputation as one of Ireland's food capitals. And for fine dining, the prices here are great, with lunch menus starting from €27 for two courses.



A taste of Ireland's seafood

FABULOUSLY FOODIE

Pure flavours, super-fresh ingredients and a vibrant restaurant scene have made the island of Ireland one of the top food destinations for 2016. Aoife Carrigy finds out why



1826 Adare, County Limerick



Kai, Galway



Loam, Galway



Babushka Kitchen Café, Portrush, County Antrim



Harry's Shack, County Londonderry



The Woollen Mills, Dublin

A glorious countryside of woodlands, lakelands and beautiful coastlines; famously friendly folk who love music and literature; and a history preserved in ancient texts, artefacts and amazing archaeological sites – there are many things that people come in search of when they visit Ireland. Even the famous Irish weather has its appeal, with the light of an ever-changing sky lending a mercurial quality to the land.

Recently, though, word of Ireland's gastronomic culture has been spreading, giving people a new and exciting reason to visit. The green pastures and wild waters that surround the island have been producing some of the best ingredients for many centuries. There's no doubt about it: the quality of the local produce here is second to none.

Food has fast become an integral part of contemporary culture on the island of Ireland, with young Irish folk gathering in restaurants, cafés and gastropubs. And more and more chefs and diners are celebrating that rediscovered natural resource: a true connection between place and plate.

The result is that Ireland has become one of the most exciting food destinations in Europe. And the sheer speed of that transformation has the place buzzing. New restaurants and eateries pop up at a dizzying pace in the island's major cities,

Did you know?

Famed for its oysters plucked fresh from local waters, artisan bacon from the likes of Fermanagh Black Bacon, great baking, flavoursome beef and an incredibly vibrant restaurant and café scene, Northern Ireland is fast gaining attention as a food destination. 2016 is Northern Ireland's Year of Food & Drink, so keep your eye out for an exciting calendar of events that will tempt your tastebuds.

and in some gorgeously unlikely locations: on remote windswept beaches or lunar-like coastlines, in quirky market cafés or as travelling food trucks.

One such newcomer, Harry's Shack on Portstewart Strand, County Londonderry, has been wowing people with its combination of gutsy authentic flavours and wild beachside setting. Chef Derek Creagh may have cooked with some of the biggest names in modern British food – The Fat Duck's Heston Blumenthal is a former employer – but today he's back home delivering masterful takes on local favourites. Try the excellent haddock, which comes fresh from nearby

Greencastle. It's cured in salt water and deep-fried in a buttermilk batter and is honestly the best fish and chips going.

The restaurateur behind Harry's Shack, Donal Doherty, believes that this is the best time ever for Irish food. "There is much more confidence in our own ingredients and customers have become more adventurous and trusting." Indeed, talk to various chefs and food writers about contemporary Irish food culture, and that word "confidence" comes up again and again.

Confident cooking

Food writer John McKenna agrees that "right now is the most exciting time in Irish food, ever". He and his wife Sally recently launched a series of McKennas' Guides apps to help visitors touring Ireland discover the best food the island has to offer. "Confidence amongst chefs and producers has never been higher, and an increasingly discerning audience means that good chefs and food producers get almost immediate attention for the things they do. It's a win-win, on both sides of the swing doors."

And while there is some serious fine dining to be found – from relative newcomers such as Belfast's Ox, Dublin's Forest Avenue and Galway's Loam, as well as the very reasonably priced Michelin-starred stalwarts – the rise in >



Graze, Belfast



Forest Avenue, Dublin

According to food writer John McKenna, “Craft bakers, craft brewers and artisan producers have revolutionised what we can expect of a bacon sandwich and a glass of beer”

culinary standards has trickled across the traditional pubs, gastropubs, cafés and eating houses.

Many of these more relaxed places to eat are standing out for the quality of their cooking. As Georgina Campbell of the Georgina Campbell Guide points out, these chefs are classically trained, but are creating “fine dining without the fuss”. The simple and refined cooking of Derek Creagh is a great example, but there is this style of cuisine to be found all over the island. Why not try the relaxed style of the Wild Honey Inn in County Clare; the thatched-roof restaurant, 1826 Adare, in the County Limerick village of Adare; and Delahunt in Dublin (in a beautiful Victorian building). Also very popular is Graze in Belfast, which works with local growers and purveyors, and features a different farmer every month.

But even without classical training, Ireland’s chefs and cooks are learning that it’s all about celebrating the great quality of Irish produce. As McKenna explains, “Craft bakers, craft brewers and artisan producers have revolutionised what we can expect of a bacon sandwich and a glass of beer.” Just look to the wave of gastropubs, such as Annie’s Gastropub in Cork and The Poacher’s Pocket in Lisbane, County Down.

Keeping it casual

Coffee has never been taken so seriously and there’s no shortage of local roasteries and cafés serving up a great brew, from creative ventures, such as Espresso Project in Celbridge, County Kildare, or Belfast’s



Lost and Found, County Londonderry



Shells Café, County Sligo

Established Coffee, to small spots, such as Babushka in Portrush. These now co-exist alongside traditional teahouses, serving lashings of tea and simple home-style baking – such as wholesome cakes, traditional soda breads and buttermilk scones. “The sort of thing that would always have been on a farmhouse tea table,” as Campbell puts it.

Dublin’s Pepper Pot Café in the Powerscourt Townhouse Centre takes pride in making feather-light scones by hand every morning. Indeed, all their >

Five great places to eat on the Wild Atlantic Way and along the Causeway Coast

Lost and Found, Coleraine, County Londonderry: As much a community space as a café, with great coffee, hearty hotpots, wholesome salads, traditional sandwiches and tasty treats such as salted caramel brownies.

Shells Cafe, Strandhill, County Sligo: This darling of the local surfing scene puts both style and substance into café cooking in a lovely space overlooking the sea.

An Port Mór, Westport, County Mayo: For a true taste of the Atlantic and with a particular emphasis on the fruits of the local waters, An Port Mór is the place to go. Expect excellent Irish ingredients with a creative twist.

Deasy’s Harbour Bar & Seafood Restaurant, Clonakilty, County Cork: A traditional pub perched by the prettiest of bays and recently put on the map by chef Caitlin Ruth’s cooking.

Red Door Tea Room, Ballintoy, County Antrim: Homemade traditional dishes and lovely surroundings elevate this pretty whitewashed cottage into something memorable.

PHOTO: GILLIAN HIGGINS

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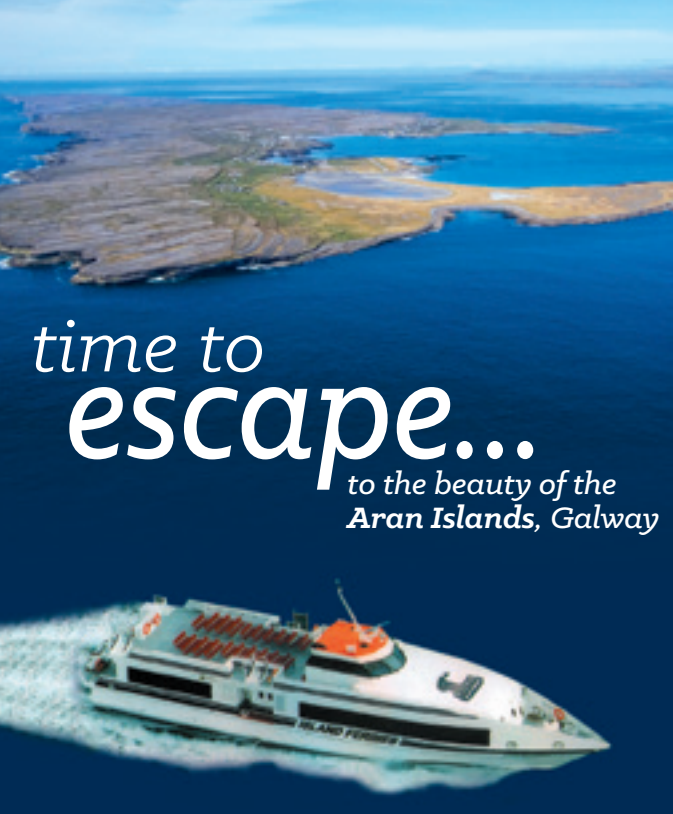
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Frank Hederman, English Market, Cork



Traditional Irish stew

Ireland Food

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

In Galway's Kai, chef Jess Murphy has been experimenting with seaweed. She uses it in baking, to boil potatoes and for simple summery broths of sea spaghetti, cockles and crab

bread is homemade, including their bagels, which are served with Burren Smokehouse organic smoked Irish salmon.

An abundance of ingredients
 Near-forgotten traditional foods such as seaweed have been making a comeback. In Galway's Kai, chef Jess Murphy has been experimenting with what she describes as this "beautiful natural resource". She uses it in baking ("our dillisk and carrot cake is going really well, and we put it in our brown soda bread and our cheese scones"), to boil potatoes and for simple summery broths of sea spaghetti, cockles and crab.

Even staple everyday products such as Irish butter are being enjoyed to the full. Many restaurants take pride in serving local farmhouse butter, such as County Down's Abernethy or Mayo's Cuinneog, or sometimes two types of butter, as you'll find at the delightful Ballymaloe House in County Cork.

Others, such as John Wyer of Dublin's Forest Avenue, celebrate this national treasure in creative, refined ways. If he's not drafting in one of the country's best artisan smokers to smoke a batch of butter to serve with his house-made potato brioche, Wyer is gathering and freezing the toasty solids from caramelised brown butter to grate over delicate salads.

"There's a great energy around food here now," says John Wyer. "We're recognising the potential that we have... We're saying, this is what we can bring to the table." And what a finely laid table it's proving to be.



Roberts fish shop, Dalkey, County Dublin

Fabulous food and drink experiences

Potato boxty: Head to Holohan's at the Barge in Belfast for this traditional potato cake served with dressed leaves.

Corned beef: Taste the real deal at the Farmgate Café in Cork's English Market. Here it's served with parsley sauce and green cabbage.

Irish stew: Try Gleeson's of Roscommon town for the best Irish stew, perfect for its simplicity and quality ingredients.

Smoked fish: Sample a selection of Burren Smokehouse mackerel and salmon at Hatch & Sons, Dublin.

Native oysters: Heaven is a half-dozen local oysters and a pint of the black stuff at the Mourne Seafood Bar, Dundrum, County Down.

NATURAL LARDER

The 40 shades of green for which Ireland is famed are more than just a pretty sight. High-quality grass-fed beef and lamb are the norm rather than the exception – while herb-fed mountain lamb, such as Comeragh Mountain Lamb in Waterford, Achill Mountain Lamb in Mayo and Connemara Hill Lamb in Galway appear on menus all over the island.

That green grass also gives some of the best dairy produce in the world. Ireland's milk was traditionally preserved as butter, but in recent decades, farmhouse cheeses have developed into a thriving artisan sector. Look out for Corleggy, Durrus, Knockdrinna, St Tola and Young Buck, a raw milk blue cheese from Newtownards in County Down.

Meanwhile, succulent cold-water seafood can be sampled from Dingle in the southwest as far as the northern coastline, while the east coast is famed for its Dublin Bay prawns. Chefs do indeed make the most of our seafood. Down in Vaughan's Anchor Inn in County Clare, they use the salt water to boil their crab and lobster and make a sourdough batter for their seriously tasty fish and chips.

Farmers' markets are great places to try local produce. Pick up some excellent picnic fare at Middleton Farmers' Market in Cork, Howth Farmers' Market in County Dublin and Newry Farmers' Market. Or else take it indoors with a fabulous covered market, such as the English Market in Cork city and the Victorian-era St George's Market in Belfast. So good you could stay the whole day!



Bantry House, County Cork

THE SCENE STEALERS

Cameras at the ready – these epic houses, castles and gardens have a picture-perfect beauty that will take your breath away. From world-famous gardens to craggy castles, here are some to try

BANTRY HOUSE County Cork

Stand at the top of the 100 stone steps in the gardens of Bantry House, and you are treated to a view that can only be described as magnificent. From here, it feels as if you are looking out at a painting, as your eyes sweep over this gracious 18th century house and formal gardens to the misty blue and green of Bantry Bay beyond.

Set in an idyllic corner of West Cork, on the edge of Bantry town, Bantry House has been in the same family since the 1700s, and is owned by the eighth and ninth generations of the Shelswell-Whites. But it is the second Earl of Bantry who is to thank for the house's distinctive style. During the 1820s, the Earl embarked on a Grand Tour of Russia and Europe, bringing back the furniture, paintings, tapestries, carpets and artefacts that adorn Bantry House today.

As well as enjoying the elegant interior and uncovering its fascinating history, visitors can relax in the tea room, which serves great homemade local food, or take afternoon tea in the gracious surroundings of the library. After that, explore the beautiful garden, which is laid out in the Italian style and features seven delightful terraces. If it sounds perfect, that may be because it is.



Powerscourt, County Wicklow

POWERSCOURT HOUSE & GARDENS County Wicklow

It was the vision of the 1st Viscount Powerscourt that transformed the medieval castle at Powerscourt, County Wicklow, into an exceptional 68-room mansion, completed in 1741. Praised at the time for possessing the "massive dignity of a great Italian Renaissance villa", it is now a delightfully eclectic venue with an Avoca food and homewares store, café and an adorable Doll's Palace. But the crowning glory of this enchanting estate is the Italianate garden – a remarkable 19 hectares filled with hidden treasures and bordered by the haunting colours of the Sugar Loaf mountain.

Vast swathes of manicured grass slope down to the Triton Lake, majestically framed by a pair of life-size winged iron horses. Make no mistake, these gardens are lush, playful and enchanting. Hours can easily slip away wandering from the pretty Japanese garden to the wooded valleys and back to the quirky pet cemetery, which sits in a quiet part of the gardens surrounded by azaleas, rhododendrons and roses in the summer.

Make a memorable day out of it by including a visit to the nearby Powerscourt Waterfall. It's the highest waterfall in Ireland, and is located about 5km from the estate.



Powerscourt, County Wicklow



Mount Stewart, County Down

Beauty abounds in the formal sections at Mount Stewart, with Italianate influences, while there is real mastery at play in the wooded areas, with rare and beautiful plants from all over the world

MOUNT STEWART

County Down

Many of Ireland's most majestic stately homes are defined by the characters who lived in them. In the case of Mount Stewart, it is Edith, Lady Londonderry. An esteemed and respected society hostess with a circle of friends that included Winston Churchill, Edith was an intriguing character. As well as being a member of the suffragette movement, she served as Colonel-in-Chief of the Women's Volunteer Reserve, a group of women who replaced men that had been sent to the front lines during the First World War.

But it is in the gardens of Mount Stewart that Edith really made her mark. Here, beauty abounds in the formal sections, with Italianate influences, while there is real mastery at play in the wooded areas, with rare and beautiful plants from all over the world. Mount Stewart is a must-visit by any standards, and Edith's passion, personality and unique vision have combined to elevate this spot into something quite unique.

Once you've wandered the scenic grounds, head inside to enjoy the newly restored interior, which has brought the house back to its original glamour. Within this grand neoclassical property, you'll find portraits, silver collections and other family treasures on show.



Trim Castle, County Meath

TRIM CASTLE

County Meath

Drive into the town of Trim and you'll be confronted by a massive, 20-sided tower surrounded by high stone walls and bordered by the River Boyne. Built in the 12th century by Hugh de Lacy, Lord of Meath, this is Trim Castle, the largest Anglo-Norman castle in Ireland, and one of the most perfectly preserved in the British Isles.

Step into the towering central keep and you'll see the story of this building etched into the stone. Windows are thin slits in the thick walls, designed for defence not light, and the spiral staircases are incredibly narrow. On your tour,

you'll visit the tiny stone chapel, cross suspended walkways and stand in what archaeologists believe was the minstrel gallery of the Great Hall. In its heyday, Trim Castle was said to be the tallest building in Ireland (a medieval marvel at 21 metres) – continue up those steep stone steps to the roof and you can literally see for miles around.

Trim Castle has been many things in its history: fortress, home, prison, even film set (Mel Gibson's *Braveheart* was filmed here), but throughout it all, it has retained its stern grandeur and is a highlight of any tour of Ireland's Ancient East.



Glenarm Castle, County Antrim

GLENARM CASTLE

County Antrim

There is a formidable beauty to Glenarm Castle, which sits in the Antrim countryside just a 40-minute drive from Belfast. Ancestral home of the Earls of Antrim and current home of Viscount and Viscountess Dunluce, a castle has stood here since the 13th century.

Home to a wide variety of events in the summer months (from May to September), the castle is famous for its idyllic natural setting and superb gardens, including what happens to be one of the oldest walled gardens on the island of Ireland.

Wandering around here is a real joy as you lose yourself in the lovely historic circular yew hedge, amble through the herb garden and enjoy the bright pinks, reds and oranges of the herbaceous border. And after that, there's no better way to relax than with tea and cake in the charming tea room, overlooking the splendid garden.

CAHIR CASTLE

County Tipperary

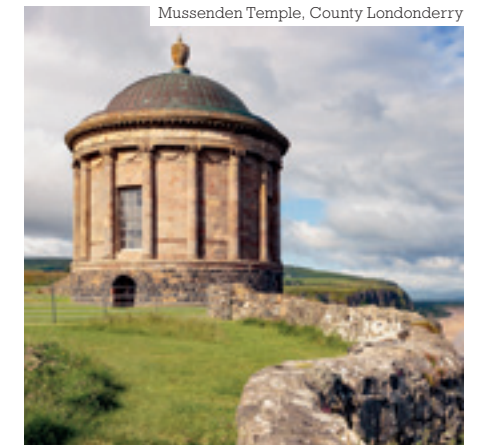
Pitched on a rocky island in the middle of the River Suir, County Tipperary, Cahir Castle has everything you'd expect from an Irish castle: it's big, dramatic and imposing. Built and rebuilt from the 13th to the 15th centuries, Cahir's incredible design reflects its main objective: defence. Having endured centuries of onslaught, this great hulk of rock is a paean to military architecture. Originally built on an older fortification named Cathair (meaning "Stone Fort" in Irish), the castle's history is told expansively with a great audio-visual show.

There's plenty of exploring to be done here, with narrow staircases and darkened niches that have plenty of medieval atmosphere. Don't be surprised if Cahir Castle looks familiar, either. In *Excalibur*, his retelling of the Arthurian legend, director John Boorman set major battle scenes in the building.

Behind the castle is a small but pretty park made lush by the River Suir's waters. It's a perfect spot to take some photos in the shadow of one of Ireland's finest castles.



Cahir Castle, County Tipperary



Mussenden Temple, County Londonderry

NINE TO TRY

BLARNEY CASTLE

County Cork

Kiss the famous Blarney Stone, explore 24 hectares of parkland and unearth the 600-year history of this iconic castle.

DUNLUCE CASTLE

County Antrim

Perched on the edge of a craggy cliff, this castle has a fairytale quality that's enhanced by its compelling history.

DUBLIN CASTLE

Dublin

Located in the very oldest part of the city, Dublin Castle was built in the 13th century and has served as a military fortress, a prison and a court of law.

KYLEMORE ABBEY

County Galway

Romance, legend and beauty intertwine at Kylemore, where a church and abbey overlook a beautiful Connemara lake.

MUSSENDEN TEMPLE

County Londonderry

Modelled on the Temple of Vesta near Rome, this striking cliff-edge temple is part of the 18th century Downhill Demesne.

MUCKROSS HOUSE

County Kerry

Set in the stunning Killarney National Park and on the shores of Muckross Lake, this 19th century house has a palpable charm.

ALTAMONT GARDENS

County Carlow

Located on a 40-hectare estate, Altamont is a tantalising mix of formal and informal gardens with mountain views and river walks.

ROWALLANE GARDEN

County Down

Created in the 19th century by Reverend John Moore, these pretty gardens mix formal and informal spaces, with a lovely little café to relax in.

MOUNT USHER

County Wicklow

A bounty of over 5,000 plants and shrubs grace the winding paths that arc either side of the River Vartry at this County Wicklow gem.

GREAT IRELAND ROADTRIPS

From charming coastal villages to spectacular natural wonders, taking to the road on the island of Ireland reveals surprises at every turn



Mount Errigal, County Donegal



Clew Bay, County Mayo



Slieve League Cliffs, County Donegal

THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

By Yvonne Gordon

We're standing at the summit of Croagh Patrick, Ireland's holiest mountain, warmed by the sun as we marvel at the scene before us. From a height of around 762 metres, we have a bird's-eye view over Clew Bay in County Mayo, with its vast scattering of islands. Across the bay, there's the Nephin Beg Range of mountains and Achill Island, while below us is the village of Murrisk, where we went horse riding on the beach earlier in the morning.

We're exploring the Wild Atlantic Way, a 2,500km fully defined coastal touring route through some of Ireland's most beautiful places, from wild and rugged Donegal in the northwest, down along a coastline that has been shaped and carved by the Atlantic, to the village of Kinsale in County Cork, famed for its delicious seafood.

As we admire the scenery, a cloud passes below, completely transforming the tones of the bay. As it clears, a double rainbow forms. This is what happens on the edge of western Europe – colours and scenes change dramatically as you explore the mountains, beaches, islands and heritage sites along the coast.

There's so much to do and see along this coastline. Even in just one area of County Mayo, we've swapped four wheels for two and cycled the 42km Great Western Greenway, an off-road trail set on an old railway line. We've driven the Atlantic Drive on Achill Island, Ireland's largest



📏 2,500km 🕒 Up to 20 days

island, and we've toured Westport House, an 18th century stately home.

We started our drive in County Donegal, exploring the dramatic Fanad Head peninsula before travelling south, stopping off at the Slieve League cliffs, which reach to 609 metres. We've had surfing lessons, visited the grave of poet W.B. Yeats, driven along a fjord and marvelled at ancient passage tombs.

We've had adventures all along the way and there will be lots more to come, as we drive south towards Dingle and the Ring of Kerry in County Kerry, feeling exhilarated and refreshed.



Liss Ard Estate, County Cork

Along the way

VISIT

Visit the award-winning Mizzen Head Signal Station on the Mizzen Peninsula, with a bridge that spans a stunning gorge. Watch the big-wave surfers at Mullaghmore in County Sligo or explore the mountains, lakes, forests and castle of Glenveagh National Park, County Donegal.

EAT

Taste smoked Atlantic salmon at the Burren Smokehouse in Lisdoonvarna, County Clare. Enjoy fresh Galway oysters, brown bread and creamy Guinness in a thatched cottage at Morans Oyster Cottage in Kilcolgan, County Galway. Or try the award-winning Kitchen restaurant in Sligo town, where traditional dishes are given a contemporary twist.

SLEEP

For five-star luxury with beautiful views, choose the award-winning Park Hotel Kenmare in County Kerry, or to hear the Atlantic waves rolling in, make your way to the The Sandhouse Hotel on Rosstown Beach in County Donegal. The delightful Liss Ard Estate in Skibereen, County Cork, makes an excellent choice for a contemporary take on traditional Georgian luxury in scenic surrounds.



Lough Tay, County Wicklow



Japanese Gardens, County Kildare



Dark Hedges, County Antrim



Ballintoy Harbour, County Antrim

THE GRAND TOUR

By David Fallon

I've come to a crossroads. Not metaphorically (well, not for now, at least), but literally. For miles around there is nothing but blanket bog, blue sky, russet mountains and the curve of a stream that will soon become the River Liffey. I'm at the Sally Gap in the Wicklow National Park and I've got a decision to make.

I'm following the Grand Tour of counties Wicklow and Kildare in Ireland's Ancient East. This is a route that takes in everything from stately homes to Early Christian heritage sites, with some gorgeous landscapes along the way.

Starting at the university town of Maynooth, I have explored a 13th century castle (Maynooth Castle), wandered through aristocratic estates (Castletown House and Russborough House), and kayaked on the Blessington Lakes.

Now, here I am, surrounded by intense quiet at a crossroads at the Sally Gap. Where next? Onwards...

Onwards, to picture-postcard villages such as Wicklow's Enniskerry; promenade strolls in Bray; gardens of sublime Robinsonian splendour (Mount Usher); and an eerie afternoon at the "glorious yet infamous" Wicklow Gaol.

Further, past Lough Tay (or Guinness Lake as it's known, thanks to the pale beach and dark, turf-coloured water) surrounded by scree-covered slopes and fed by a gushing waterfall. On to Glendalough, St Kevin's green and lush monastic site. In the 6th century, it was



Mount Usher, County Wicklow



Carton House Hotel, County Kildare

his retreat from the world. Today, it's Wicklow's don't-miss experience.

In the days ahead I will learn of British Army generals with a knack for choosing horses by their star signs, and amble serenely through an oriental garden mirroring the Life of Man (the National Stud and Japanese Gardens, Kildare). At the Newbridge Museum of Style Icons, I will marvel at dresses worn by Tippi Hedren, Grace Kelly and Marilyn Monroe, will have quiet moments at St Brigid's Well in the grounds of the Black Abbey.

From Hollywood glam to ancient history – only on the Grand Tour.



324km Up to 3 days

Along the way

VISIT Lullymore Heritage & Discovery Park, County Kildare, follows a 9,000-year-journey through Irish history. Stop off and watch the world-famous horse races at the Curragh in County Kildare. The grounds of Avondale House in County Wicklow, built in 1777, are a delight to explore, with trails that cover the estate's 202 hectares.

EAT A respect for the best ingredients makes the Ballymore Inn, County Kildare, a favourite among local foodies. Head for the popular coaching inn of Hunter's Hotel, just a short drive from the stunning Mount Usher gardens, for a lovely Sunday lunch. Avoca in Kilmacanogue, meanwhile, is the perfect hunting ground for picnic essentials.

SLEEP Carton House Hotel, County Kildare, offers an upscale choice with golf, a spa and fine dining. Rathallagh House has a peaceful location in Dunlavin, County Wicklow, and is a historic and comfortable country house. And The Manor bed and breakfast at the foot of Sally Gap is a great base for visiting nearby Russborough House.

THE CAUSEWAY COASTAL ROUTE

By Mal Rogers

I stared at Dunluce Castle for a long time. I always do. A castle has stood here on the north coast of Ireland since pre-Christian times. But it was the Normans who transformed it into what it is today – a spectacular stone fortification perched above the ocean. It is dramatic, beautiful and mesmerising – come to think of it, those are words that could probably sum up the entire Causeway Coastal Route.

My journey along this road, clinging to a rocky coastline from County Antrim to County Londonderry, begins further south in the city of Belfast. En route I pass through villages that read like a poem and look as if they've tumbled out of a fairytale – Glenarm, Carnlough, Waterfoot, Cushendall, Cushendun. And I visit a bridge that is every bit as wobbly as it sounds: the Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge sways between the coastline and the tiny Carrick Island 24 metres away.

My first stop, though, is picturesque Carnlough. In this little village, small pastel-coloured houses vie for space with neat little shops, cafés and cosy pubs.

I continue north, the beautiful Glens of Antrim on my left, the Irish Sea on my right. Soon I come to Ballintoy Harbour where I head down a steep, winding road, with plunging cliffs either side. The harbour and surrounding beach have been widely featured in Game of Thrones™, and it's easy to see why. Mighty cliffs enclose the bay, and the old stone harbour seems tailor-made for adventure.



Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge, County Antrim



Bushmills Inn, County Antrim



235km 1-3 days

Along the way

VISIT Wander around the medieval Carrickfergus Castle, or climb Slemish Mountain where St Patrick worked as a shepherd. In Bushmills, stop for a tour of the distillery, or explore the newly opened and dramatic Gobbins path, with a truly stunning cliff-side coastal location.

EAT Eat homemade pastries, cakes and sandwiches at Roark's Kitchen tea room, perched at the edge of Ballintoy Harbour. Try the lobster at Tartine Restaurant at the Distillers Arms in Bushmills; eat local home-cooked dishes at Dora's Tea Room in Portrush; or sample rustic cooking and fine wines at Bartali in Portballintrae.

SLEEP Bed, breakfast and stunning views are all part of the deal at award-winning Whitepark House, Ballintoy. Great views and old-world charm are provided at the Londonderry Arms Hotel, which overlooks Carnlough Harbour, while at the luxurious 17th century Bushmills Inn, you can relax in the library or one of the many nooks and crannies before dinner.



TOP IRELAND EXPERIENCES

The island of Ireland is bursting with incredible things to see and do, from epic landscapes to compelling visitor attractions. Get inspired with ten of the best

CONNEMARA County Galway

At times austere, at times resplendent, Connemara is a place of legend, folklore and beauty. Writer and cartographer Tim Robinson speaks of the landscape's "huge, luminous spaces", so it's no surprise that it's a favourite destination of artists and photographers. The region offers endless panoramas with rust-coloured bogs dotted with grey-blue lakes, dry-stone walls threaded with grassy fields, and coves, bays, and sandy beaches. Connemara is not just about the great outdoors, though – it's about the Irish language, it's about charming villages of Leenane and Roundstone, and towns like Clifden. It's about native ponies, traditional music and the pure flavours of the local food. It's about as good as it gets!

CAUSEWAY COAST County Antrim

Spectacular sights hang like pearls on a necklace along the Causeway Coast. There are dramatic geological formations, crumbling cliff-top castles, vast sandy beaches, such as White Park Bay, and championship golf courses. You'll find great restaurants, beautiful hotels, old whiskey distilleries, and magnificent castles. Some highlights? How about crossing the Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge, swaying 30 metres above a chasm? Or hopping over ancient basalt columns at the Giant's Causeway? You can weave through the stunning green Glens of Antrim, walk the century-old Gobbins path, visit the offshore island of Rathlin, or take a waterfall walk at Glenariff Forest Park.

White Park Bay, County Antrim



Newgrange, County Meath

NEWGRANGE County Meath

In a quiet part of Ireland, in the county of Meath close to the River Boyne, is one of the most important prehistoric landscapes in the world, where human activity can be traced back 5,000 years. The passage tomb of Newgrange is older than the Egyptian Pyramids of Giza, and even from the outside, it looks impressive – an 80-metre grassy mound with spiral-engraved kerbstones and white Wicklow quartzite. Creep down the narrow passageway, and you'll find yourself in a cool, dark chamber which gets illuminated every year on the winter solstice. The Boyne Valley (Brú na Bóinne) also includes the passage tombs of Knowth and Dowth, making it the largest assemblage of megalithic art in Europe. Unmissable.

GUINNESS STOREHOUSE Dublin

Walk up to the Guinness Storehouse and you'll pass through one of the oldest parts of Dublin. St James's Gate was once the medieval entrance to the city, but the smell of hops in the air speaks of a more recent history: Guinness. In 1759, Arthur Guinness signed a 9,000-year lease on a disused brewery here. Over 240 years later, the Guinness Storehouse opened and has since become one of Ireland's top visitor attractions. The journey takes you through brewing secrets, iconic advertising, and how to pour the perfect pint. Taste some Guinness-inspired cookery before finishing up with a pint of the "black stuff" in the 360-degree Gravity Bar, with incredible views over Dublin.



Guinness Storehouse, Dublin

THE BURREN County Clare

It's certainly an arresting sight, this huge sheet of limestone rock that creeps across County Clare. Reaching down to the Atlantic Ocean, this is a strange and unusual habitat, and is one of the "finest Glacio-Karst landscapes in the world". The best way to appreciate the Burren's charms is to walk it. This lunar-like surface surprises at every turn – Arctic-Alpine plants peek through cracks in the rock, orchids burst with colour, and the deep blue ocean beckons in the background. With traditional music villages, such as Kilfenora and Doolin; sandy beaches such as Fanore; and attractions such as the Aillwee Cave and the megalithic Poulgabrone portal tomb, exploring this part of Ireland is a joy.



The Burren, County Clare



Mourne Mountains, County Down

MOURNE MOUNTAINS County Down

Crowned by craggy granite tors, the Mourne Mountains boast the highest peak in Northern Ireland, Slieve Donard. Beauty comes thick and fast here with crystalline lakes, pale grasses, huge rocks and expansive views. Take any of the walking trails that weave through the mountains, and you'll enter a world that inspired The Chronicles of Narnia author C.S. Lewis to create Narnia itself. You'll find awesome sights, such as the dramatic Mourne Wall, which took over 18 years to build; you can enjoy walking festivals, such as the Mourne International Walking Festival (June); or follow the "Brandy Pad", a trail used by 18th and 19th century smugglers. Fantasy made real.



Cliffs of Moher, County Clare

CLIFFS OF MOHER County Clare

Jutting out into the Atlantic and soaring 214 metres at their highest point, the Cliffs of Moher deserve all the accolades they get. These huge craggy precipices are truly magnificent, offering vast views of the coastline as it weaves north to the village of Doolin and south to Liscannor. On a clear day, you can see as far as the Aran Islands and Galway Bay, over to the Twelve Bens Mountains in Connemara, and south to distant Loop Head in County Clare. Bring your camera, bring a head for heights and bring your walking shoes – one of the best ways of getting to the cliffs is from Doolin via the Cliffs of Moher Cliff Path (8km). Stunning, in every way.

THE GOBBINS County Antrim

Waves crash against ancient cliffs, seabirds wheel and cry, hearts pound with excitement. This is The Gobbins, a dramatic cliff-face walk over spectacular bridges and through tunnels hewn out of solid rock. The trail clings to the edge of Islandmagee – a small peninsula just a short drive north of Belfast – and it's about as close to walking on water as you can get in Ireland. This triumph of Edwardian engineering lay crumbling for decades, lashed by the elements and almost forgotten, but the path has been restored to its former glory. The guided tour will take you over bridges, down steps that snake around the edges of cliffs, through caves and past unique rock formations. It's a perfect introduction to the glories that lie ahead on the Causeway Coastal Route.



The Gobbins, County Antrim



Titanic Belfast

TITANIC BELFAST Belfast

Much has been made of the beauty of Titanic Belfast's shimmering titanium exterior, and it certainly doesn't disappoint. Overlooking the slipway where the Titanic was launched on 31 May 1911, the vast prow-like shape of the building opens up to reveal an exhibition that has been described by Titanic director James Cameron, as "one of the most well thought-out Titanic museums in the world". The main galleries are remarkable, and allow you to explore everything from the shipyard history of Belfast to footage from the wreck. Hologram, multimedia, special effects, animation and simple storytelling combine to make this an unbeatable experience. It's one that you won't forget.



Coumeenole Beach, County Kerry

DINGLE PENINSULA County Kerry

It would be easy to arrive on the Dingle Peninsula and not leave the town of Dingle itself. Bohemian, artistic and with some of the best pubs on the island, this is a place that prides itself on its great music scene, excellent food and friendly locals. But it's only half the story. Push out beyond the town and you're heading into 6,000 years of history, and some of the most beautiful scenery on the island. There's Gallarus Oratory, thought to be an Early Christian church overlooking Smerwick Harbour; there's Coumeenole Beach, on the Sleah Head Drive, with its views of the deserted Blasket Islands; and there's the Conor Pass, the highest mountain road in Ireland. Exceptional is everyday here.



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Images courtesy
Dept of Arts, Heritage & the Gaeltacht

Visit Ireland's Heritage Sites



Newgrange Megalithic Tomb, County Meath



Carrowmore Megalithic Cemetery, County Sligo



Céide Fields Visitor Centre, County Mayo



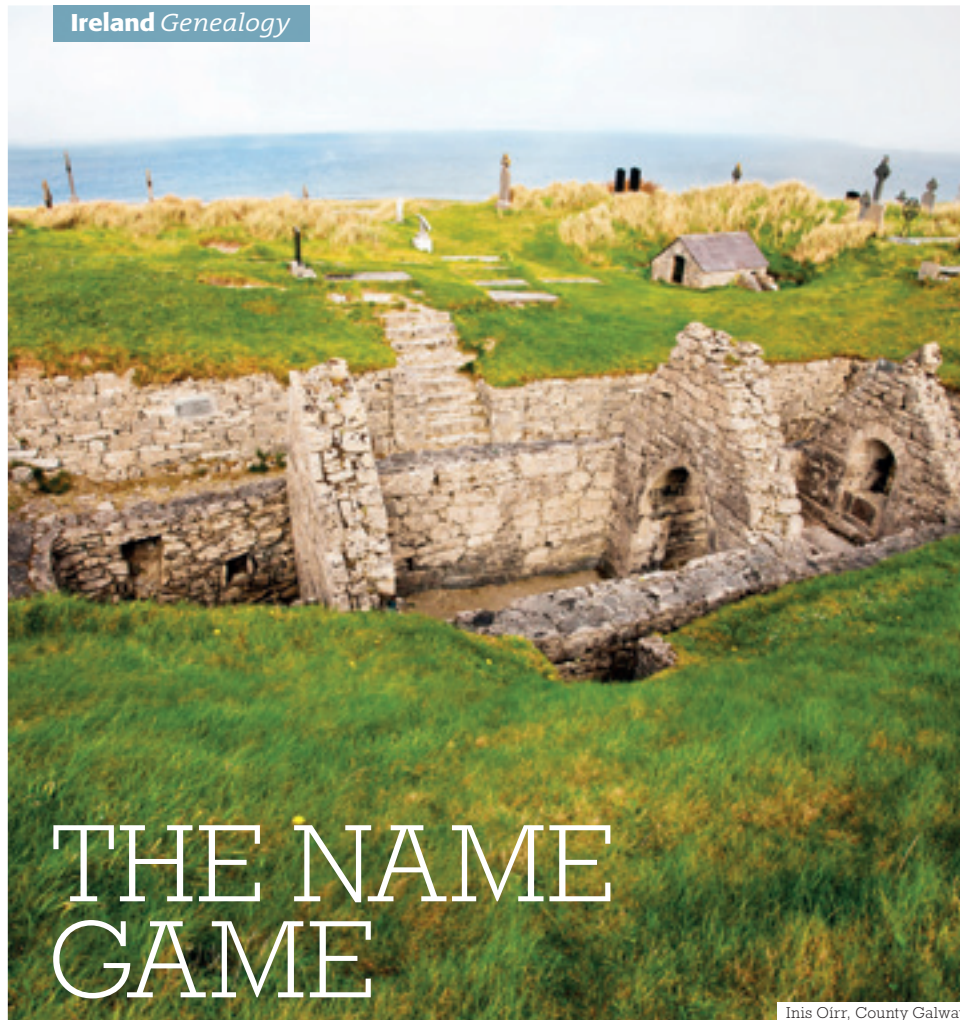
Teach an Phiarsaigh, County Galway



Ross Castle, County Kerry



St Mary's Church, County Kilkenny



Inis Oírr, County Galway

THE NAME GAME

What's in a name? If your ancestry leads to Ireland, the answer is simple: lots. David Fallon meets the experts, as well as the people who have traced their ancestry, and finds out what it means to directly connect with your forebears in the land they left behind...

Ask any genealogist how to go about unearthing your Ireland ancestry and the answer will be the same: start at the beginning. Those legendary anecdotes about great-uncle Michael, those wedding photos of your great-grandparents and, should you be lucky enough, that box of jumbled records, can one day be the key to solving your family mystery.

It's a search that can start with the simplest of motivations: a desire to find out who we are and where we come from. For keen genealogist Stuart McGee (who cites being welcomed at the door of a County Meath household with the words "I'm pleased to welcome you as a cousin" as a "memorable highlight" of his ancestral search), the question was fundamental to his journey.

"My wife and I don't have any children," he explains, "but we have nine nephews and nieces between us, and I felt I wanted to know who I was and where I had come from." It's an emotion echoed by many who start on this journey.



Linen Hall Library, Belfast



Glasnevin Cemetery, Dublin



Annie Moore Statue, Cobh, County Cork

Annie Moore was the first immigrant to the United States to pass through the Ellis Island facility in New York Harbor. She departed from Cobh, County Cork, accompanied by her brothers Philip and Anthony, aboard the steamship Nevada on 1 January 1892, her 15th birthday.

A good place to start

For many of us, the first place to turn is the internet. As Irish-American blogger and author Gerry Britt remembers, "My Irish-born grandparents all died early. My father had done some research when I was little, but I never had a chance to discuss it with him later, or see the records. I only remembered that we were from County Tipperary, near Thurles. The internet took me from there."

Excellent websites such as the Irish government-sponsored Irishgenealogy.ie are a great place to look for official records. Ancestry.com allows you to build a family tree that you can keep private or share, a benefit of which is that faraway cousins can add to it. And Myheritage.com is cheap and easy to use – you can print out book reports of a family tree and invite others to help.

"I did almost all of my research online – countless late nights, eating cereal and clicking on link after link," Gerry recalls. "It's addictive."



Dunbrody Famine Ship, New Ross, County Wexford

The next step

The internet can only take you so far, though. The next step is a trip to Ireland itself. Here you can access free advice from trained staff in places such as the National Library, National Archives and General Register Office in Dublin; and the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland in Belfast.

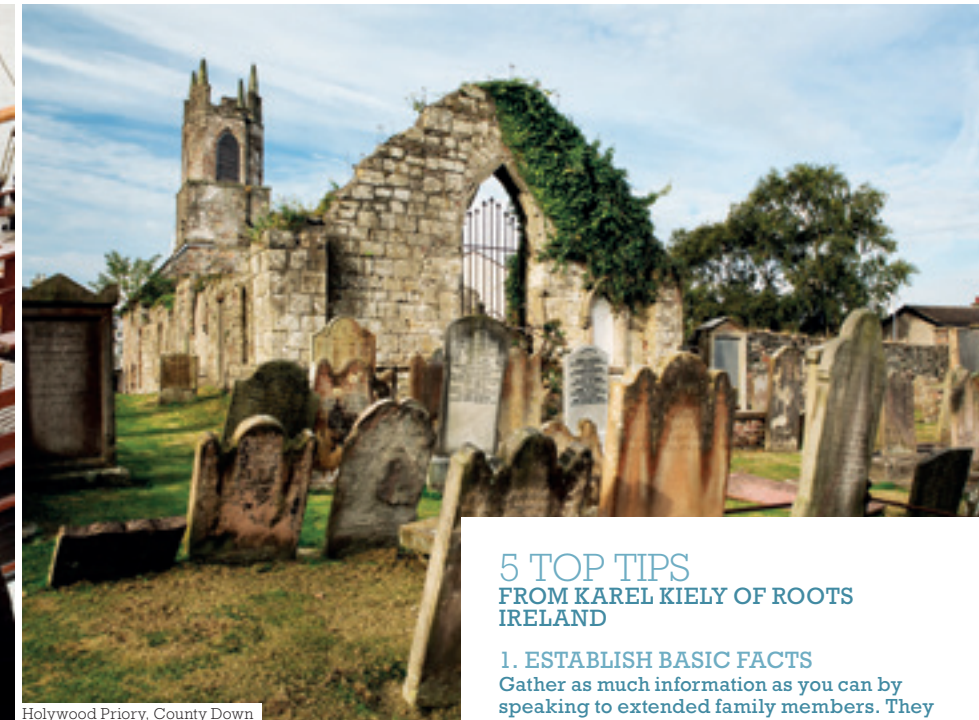
For Australian Robert Lawler, it was a pivotal point in his search. During a visit to Ireland in 2013, Robert was referred by a librarian in Naas, County Kildare, to Karel Kiely and colleagues at Kildare Collections and Research Services in Newbridge.

"All three, after listening to my story, were very helpful and giving of their time, expertise and resources," Robert explains. "They corrected some errors about our Irish ancestors that had been passed down by some members of our family at home, things such as the religion of individuals and dates and places of birth, baptisms and marriage."

Delighted though he was with the information, and with this trip to Ireland, Robert (whose family left Ireland in 1848) found himself "shocked by gaining a fuller understanding of the tragedies faced by Irish people in the 19th century."

Visiting the places that shaped your history

Thanks to the assistance from the folks in Kildare, Robert visited locations in his family's history. "I spent a day in Ballymore, where my great-great-grandfather and great-great-grandmother were married," Robert remembers, "and visited Rathasker Road in Naas, which was



Hollywood Priory, County Down

5 TOP TIPS FROM KAREL KIELY OF ROOTS IRELAND

1. ESTABLISH BASIC FACTS

Gather as much information as you can by speaking to extended family members. They may have documents such as letters, birth, marriage or death certificates, or memorial cards. Or they may know where family graves are located. Compiling this information before you start gives you the best possible chance of locating your ancestors.

2. FIND A STARTING POINT

It is easier to focus on one or two individuals. Start your research where you know the ancestor spent the last years of their lives. Where did they raise their family? Where did they die? Do they appear in ships' passenger lists, newspapers, naturalisation or census records in their adopted country? Are there other Irish families in the same town/neighbourhood?

If you start in your ancestor's home county or country and retrace the ancestor's footsteps, you'll be able to pinpoint places where you need to search. If your ancestor emigrated from Ireland, don't start your research in Ireland – names and details may have changed since they left. Working back from the known to the unknown, generation by generation, is the only way to be sure.

3. TRY TO ESTABLISH THESE FACTS:

Names (and variants of names); year of birth, marriage or death; occupation; religion; parents' names; spouse's name; associates; other family members; when they left Ireland. And keep meticulous notes.

4. DO NOT SKIP GENERATIONS

This may sound obvious, but so many things can change in the course of a generation that you'll lose track if you decide to skip one!

5. IF YOU HAVE LIMITED INFORMATION, DON'T GIVE UP

Online databases of Ireland's records and local researchers could help to find a starting point if you don't know a place of origin. It can be possible for people to locate their ancestor because of an unusual first name, or because a combination of a husband's and a wife's name reduces the likely possibilities.

perhaps the birthplace of my great-great-grandfather."

Robert was to uncover, too, that his great-grandfather Edmund Egan attended Trinity College some time in the late 1840s. No surprise then that the university's Long Room, along with "Kilmainham Gaol, the Cliffs of Moher, a lovely little pub in Kilfenora, and the Aran Islands" topped Robert's list of favourite places on the island.

Family reunions do happen

For those who make the journey to Ireland to connect with their family history, the experience is unforgettable. And while many think an emotional reunion with

"I did almost all of my research online," recalls Irish American blogger Gerry Britt. "Countless late nights, eating cereal and clicking on link after link. It's addictive"

long lost relatives is a far-flung dream, they do actually happen. Just ask Irish-American Mary Whack.

After "inheriting family papers and a photo album with intriguing place names like 'Limavady,'" Mary began her search based on the surname of her great-great-grandfather: McCloskey. Via online message boards, Mary's research connected her with local researchers in County Londonderry and the Ulster Historical Foundation (ancestryireland.com) – an educational non-profit organisation >



Ulster American Folk Park, County Tyrone

known as UHF, which Mary cites as being instrumental in her successes.

It was from the UHF that Mary sourced the Ordnance Survey Memoirs. “Dry reading” though they were, it was here that Mary discovered “that my great-great-great-grandfather was not only interviewed by the Survey officers in 1835, but actually quoted verbatim, it was like hearing an ancestral voice from beyond the grave.”

Another standout moment from her search occurred at the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (Belfast) where Mary “opened a property tax book, fragrant with the scent of a peat fire” and discovered how her great-grandmother (who had lost her mother at age seven) moved from their farm when she was just nine.

“The whole farm life I had imagined for her as she grew up, based on a memoir written by her sister describing the

Mary Whack sourced Ordnance Survey Memoirs in which her great-great-great-grandfather was quoted verbatim: “it was like hearing an ancestral voice from beyond the grave”

farm ten years earlier, was just a myth.” Similar breakthroughs in the city’s Linen Hall Library helped Mary on her way, and, eventually, towards a very special gathering.

“Given that my great-grandmother was the last of her family to emigrate in 1881, I hardly dared hope that I would find living relations,” she says. Mary, in fact, found three: two second-cousins and a distant cousin on the Campbell side. Taken by her distant cousin to a 19th century family farmhouse, she was introduced to

Epic Ireland

Opening in May 2016, this new diaspora centre is located in the vaults of the CHQ Building on the quays of the River Liffey in Dublin. The state-of-the-art visitor experience will tell the story of the dispersal of the people of Ireland throughout the world. With 21 galleries and using cutting-edge technologies, the exhibition is a fascinating illustration of the resilience, innovation and influence of the people of Ireland.



Basket Islands, County Kerry

the Campbell brothers, Barney (96) and his brother Joe (94). Over tea, scones and pancakes, Mary listened to the stories of Joe’s youth: the first radio he ever saw, the flax harvest, the wildlife teeming in the fields, bogs and streams...

It was a moment that anyone with Ireland ancestry must dream of. But finding your ancestry in Ireland needn’t be fantasy. The right resource, the right help, and a visit to the right island, could turn dreams into reality.

Now’s the time to get started...



National Famine Memorial, County Mayo

NEED TO KNOW INFORMATION

IRELAND FAMILY HISTORY ON FACEBOOK

This page holds expert sessions and enables you to connect with a valuable community. [Facebook.com/IrelandFamilyHistory](https://www.facebook.com/IrelandFamilyHistory)

GLASNEVIN CEMETERY

This cemetery holds the burial records for 1.5 million people. Its award-winning museum tells their story, and includes a Genealogy Research Centre. The daily tours are highly recommended for an insight into key figures from Ireland’s past. glasnevintrust.ie

NATIONAL LIBRARY AND NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Both have excellent, free walk-in advisory services, while you can search census records of 1901 and 1911 online at the National Archives website. nli.ie and census.nationalarchives.ie

THE IRISH TIMES

The last name search on this website is a gem of a resource. irishtimes.com/ancestor

PUBLIC RECORD OFFICE OF NORTHERN IRELAND (PRONI) AND GENERAL REGISTER OFFICE FOR NORTHERN IRELAND (GRONI)

All public records from Northern Ireland are stored at PRONI. There’s a huge range of material including records of historical, social and cultural importance that can be accessed for free. GRONI registers all births, deaths, marriages and adoptions in Northern Ireland. proni.gov.uk and geni.nidirect.gov.uk

ULSTER HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

This family history research foundation has been helping people trace their Scots-Irish and Irish roots for more than 50 years. There are family records, as well as a free Ulster-Scots app. ancestryireland.com

MILITARY ARCHIVES

A diverse body of information for the Republic of Ireland is held on this site. militaryarchives.ie

COUNTY GENEALOGY CENTRES

Many counties in Ireland boast their own county genealogy centres and the level of local knowledge there can be quite useful. You’ll find a list on rootsireland.ie



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IRELAND GENERAL INFORMATION & KEY TRAVEL FACTS

PASSPORT/VISA REQUIREMENTS

Australia and New Zealand citizens are simply required to show a valid passport. If you wish to work in Ireland, you may apply for an authorisation permit to do so. However, there are certain criteria you will need to meet for a permit to be considered and strict rules apply. Working permits must be gained prior to arrival in Ireland.

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

Embassy of Ireland – Australia

20 Arkana Street, Yarralumla, ACT 2600

Tel: (02) 6214 0000

Email: canberraembassy@dfa.ie

The Consulate General of Ireland – Sydney

Level 26, 1 Market Street, Sydney NSW 2000

Tel: (02) 9264 9635; Fax: (02) 9264 9740

Email: sydneycongen@dfa.ie

The British High Commission – Australia

Commonwealth Avenue, Yarralumla, ACT 2600

Tel: (02) 6270 6666

gov.uk/government/world/australia

Consulate General of Ireland – New Zealand

Level 3, Tower One, 205 Queen Street, Auckland City 1140

Tel: (09) 919 7450

Email: consul@ireland.co.nz

ireland.co.nz

The British High Commission – New Zealand

44 Hill Street, Thorndon, Wellington 6011

Tel: (04) 924 2888

gov.uk/government/world/new-zealand

VISITORS WITH DISABILITIES

Ireland extends a warm welcome to visitors with disabilities. Australian & New Zealand Disability Parking Permits can be used in Ireland and allow parking in areas reserved for people with disabilities, or longer parking periods or exemption from charges. Many public places and visitor attractions are accessible to wheelchair users, and an increasing number of hotels and restaurants are well equipped to accommodate guests who have any kind of disability.

Useful contacts include:

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

National Disability Authority

Tel: +353 1 608 0400; nda.ie

NORTHERN IRELAND

Disability Action

Tel: +44 28 9029 7880; disabilityaction.org

CURRENCY

The euro is the currency of the Republic of Ireland. One euro (€) consists of 100 cent. In Northern Ireland, the currency is pound sterling (£). There are 100 pence to each pound sterling.

ELECTRIC CURRENT

The standard electricity supply on the island of Ireland is 230 volts AC, the same as in the UK. Visitors from elsewhere may require a transformer and plug adaptor (to convert 2-pin plugs to the standard 3-pin plugs), which can be bought at airports or electrical suppliers.



PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2016

| | |
|--|---------|
| New Year’s Day Holiday | 1 Jan |
| St Patrick’s Day Holiday | 17 Mar |
| Good Friday (NI only) | 25 Mar |
| Easter Monday | 28 Mar |
| May Bank Holiday | 2 May |
| Spring Bank Holiday (NI only) | 30 May |
| June Bank Holiday (ROI only) | 6 June |
| July Holiday (NI only) | 12 July |
| August Bank Holiday (ROI only) | 1 Aug |
| August Bank Holiday (NI only) | 29 Aug |
| Oct Bank Holiday (ROI only) | 31 Oct |
| Christmas Day | 27 Dec |
| St Stephen’s Day (ROI)/Boxing Day (NI) | 26 Dec |

Good Friday is not an official public holiday in the Republic of Ireland, although most shops and businesses, and all pubs, are closed.



TRAVELLING TO IRELAND BY AIR

AIRPORTS

The island of Ireland is easily accessible by air, with over 30 airlines flying routes from more than 70 destinations to Ireland's international and regional airports. Both Emirates and Etihad offer one-stop services with direct access to Ireland from Australia, via the Middle East (Emirates offering two-stop services from New Zealand). Both airlines also operate codeshare partnerships with Emirates/Qantas and Etihad Airways with Virgin Australia and a number of other partners, offering a wide choice of one-stop services from Australia (and two-stops from New Zealand). A large number of airlines offer fares to Dublin as a continuation of their one-stop services to the UK and continental Europe. "Open-jaw" airfares are also commonly available (i.e. fly into London and out of Dublin or vice versa, or fly into Paris and out of Dublin or vice versa). From Auckland, travellers can fly to Dublin via San Francisco with Air New Zealand and Aer Lingus.

AIRLINE CONTACT DETAILS

AUSTRALIA

| AIRLINE | TELEPHONE | WEBSITE |
|----------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| Aer Lingus | 1300 304 016 | aerlingus.com |
| Air France | 1300 390 190 | airfrance.com/au |
| Austrian Airlines | 1300 655 727 | austrian.com |
| British Airways | 1300 767 177 | britishairways.com.au |
| Cathay Pacific | 131 747 | cathayairways.com.au |
| Emirates | 1300 303 777 | emirates.com |
| Etihad Airways | 1300 532 215 | etihadairways.com |
| Finnair | 1300 132 944 | finnair.com/au |
| Japan Airlines | 1800 802 228 | au.jal.com |
| KLM Royal Dutch Airlines | 1300 392 192 | klm.com.au |
| Lufthansa | 1300 655 727 | lufthansa.com |
| Malaysia Airlines | 132 627 | malaysiaairlines.com.au |
| Qantas Airways | 131 313 | qantas.com.au |
| Scandinavian Airlines | 1300 727 707 | flysas.com |
| Singapore Airlines | 131 011 | singaporeair.com.au |
| Thai Airways International | 1300 651 960 | thaiairways.com |
| Virgin Australia | 136 789 | virginaustralia.com.au |

NEW ZEALAND

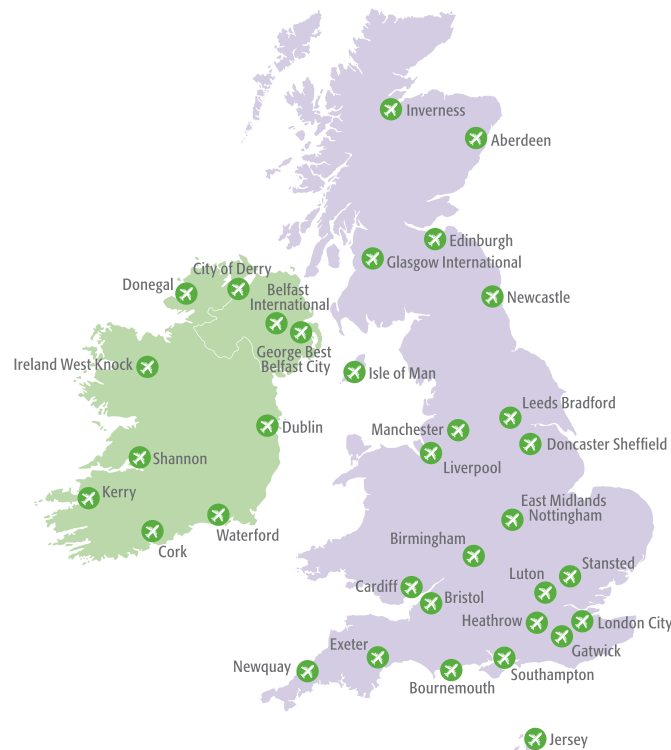
| AIRLINE | TELEPHONE | WEBSITE |
|----------------------------|---------------|-------------------------|
| Aer Lingus | (09) 308 3351 | aerlingus.com |
| Air France KLM | (09) 921 6040 | klm.com/home/nz/en |
| Air New Zealand | 0800 737 000 | airnewzealand.co.nz |
| Austrian Airlines | 0800 945 220 | austrian.com |
| British Airways | (09) 966 9777 | ba.com |
| Cathay Pacific | (09) 379 0833 | cathayairways.com |
| Ethiopian Airlines | (09) 300 4514 | ethiopianairlines.com |
| Emirates | 0508 352 436 | emirates.com/nz |
| Etihad Airways | (09) 977 2207 | etihadairways.com |
| Finnair | (09) 969 7603 | finnair.com |
| Lufthansa & Swiss | 0800 945 220 | lufthansa.com/swiss.com |
| Malaysia Airlines | 0800 777 747 | malaysiaairlines.com |
| Qantas Airways | 0800 808 767 | qantas.co.nz |
| Scandinavian Airlines | (09) 977 2214 | flysas.com |
| Singapore Airlines | 0800 808 909 | singaporeair.com |
| Thai Airways International | 0800 100 992 | thaiairways.com |
| Virgin Australia | 0800 670 000 | virginaustralia.com |

REGIONAL AIRPORTS

The following internal flights are available within Ireland:

| DEPART | ARRIVE | AIRLINE | TELEPHONE | WEBSITE |
|--------|---------|----------------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Dublin | Donegal | Aer Lingus Regional* | +44 0333 004 5000 | aerlingus.com |
| | Kerry | Aer Lingus Regional* | +44 0333 004 5000 | aerlingus.com |

*operated by Stobart Air



EUROPEAN

| AIRLINE | TELEPHONE | WEBSITE |
|-----------------|------------------|--------------------|
| Aer Lingus | +44 871 718 5000 | aerlingus.com |
| British Airways | +44 844 493 0787 | britishairways.com |
| CityJet | +44 871 666 5050 | cityjet.com |
| Citywing | +44 871 200 0440 | citywing.com |
| easyJet | +44 843 104 5454 | easyjet.com |
| Finnair | +358 600 140 140 | finnair.com |
| Flybe | +44 139 268 3152 | flybe.com |
| Fly VLM | +44 845 528 0678 | flyvml.com |
| Ryanair | +44 871 246 0002 | ryanair.com |

TRAVELLING FROM DUBLIN AND BELFAST AIRPORTS INTO CITY CENTRES

DUBLIN

On arrival in Dublin Airport, you can take a bus or a taxi into Dublin city centre. Buses and taxis are located just outside the arrivals hall. Dublin Airport is north of the city so a taxi to the north side will normally be cheaper than one to the south side. Dublin Bus Airlink operates direct buses to the city centre, bus and train stations; €6* single and €10* return. Children travel half price.

BELFAST

Belfast International Airport

Belfast city centre is just 29km from the airport and can be accessed by

bus and taxi. Airport Express 300 now operates a 24-hour service between the airport and the city centre with buses departing regularly throughout the day; £7.50* single and £10.50* return. The bus leaves from the bus stop located opposite the terminal exit. A taxi fare to the city centre is approximately £30*. **George Best Belfast City Airport** Airport Express 600 into the city centre runs on the hour (every 20 minutes during peak time); £2.60* single and £3.80* return. Taxi fare to the city is approximately £10*. Trains run from adjacent Sydenham station to Belfast and beyond.

*Prices are subject to change.

AIR ROUTES

| DEPART | ARRIVE | AIRLINE |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Aberdeen | Dublin | Aer Lingus Regional |
| | George Best Belfast City | Flybe |
| Birmingham | Belfast International | easyJet |
| | Cork | Aer Lingus Regional |
| | Dublin | Aer Lingus, Ryanair |
| | George Best Belfast City | Flybe |
| | Ireland West Airport Knock | Flybe |
| | Shannon | Aer Lingus Regional |
| | Waterford | Fly VLM |
| Bournemouth | Dublin | Flybe |
| | George Best Belfast City | |
| Bristol | Belfast International | easyJet |
| | Cork | Aer Lingus Regional |
| | Dublin | Aer Lingus Regional, Ryanair |
| | Ireland West Airport Knock | Ryanair |
| Cardiff | Dublin | Aer Lingus Regional, Flybe |
| | Cork | Flybe |
| | George Best Belfast City | Flybe |
| Doncaster Sheffield | Dublin | Aer Lingus Regional |
| East Midlands Nottingham | Dublin | Aer Lingus Regional, Ryanair |
| | George Best Belfast City | Flybe |
| | Ireland West Airport Knock | Ryanair |
| Edinburgh | Belfast International | easyJet |
| | Cork | Aer Lingus Regional |
| | Dublin | Aer Lingus Regional, Flybe |
| | George Best Belfast City | Flybe |
| | Ireland West Airport Knock | Ryanair |
| Exeter | Dublin | Flybe |
| | George Best Belfast City | Flybe |
| Glasgow International | Belfast International | easyJet |
| | City of Derry | Ryanair |
| | Cork | Aer Lingus Regional |
| | Donegal | Aer Lingus Regional |
| | Dublin | Aer Lingus Regional, Flybe, Ryanair |
| | George Best Belfast City | Flybe |
| | Shannon | Flybe |
| Inverness | Dublin | Flybe |
| | George Best Belfast City | Flybe |
| Isle of Man | Dublin | Aer Lingus Regional |
| | George Best Belfast City | Citywing |
| Jersey | Belfast International | easyJet |
| | Cork | Aer Lingus Regional |
| | Dublin | Aer Lingus Regional |
| | George Best Belfast City | Flybe |
| Leeds Bradford | Dublin | Aer Lingus Regional, Ryanair |
| | George Best Belfast City | Flybe |
| Liverpool | Belfast International | easyJet |
| | City of Derry | Ryanair |
| | Cork | Ryanair |
| | Dublin | Aer Lingus Regional, Ryanair |
| | Ireland West Airport Knock | Ryanair |



| | | |
|-----------------|----------------------------|------------------------------|
| London City | Belfast | Flybe |
| | Dublin | British Airways, CityJet |
| London Gatwick | Belfast International | easyJet |
| | Cork | Ryanair |
| | Dublin | Aer Lingus, Ryanair |
| | George Best Belfast City | Aer Lingus |
| | Ireland West Airport Knock | Aer Lingus |
| | Shannon | Ryanair |
| London Heathrow | Cork | Aer Lingus |
| | Dublin | Aer Lingus, British Airways |
| | George Best Belfast City | Aer Lingus, British Airways |
| | Shannon | Aer Lingus |
| London Luton | Belfast International | easyJet |
| | Dublin | Ryanair |
| | Ireland West Airport Knock | Ryanair |
| | Kerry | Ryanair |
| | Waterford | Fly VLM |
| London Stansted | Belfast International | easyJet |
| | City of Derry | Ryanair |
| | Cork | Ryanair |
| | Dublin | Ryanair |
| | Ireland West Airport Knock | Ryanair |
| | Kerry | Ryanair |
| | Shannon | Ryanair |
| Manchester | Belfast International | easyJet |
| | Cork | Aer Lingus Regional |
| | Dublin | Aer Lingus, Ryanair |
| | George Best Belfast City | Flybe |
| | Ireland West Airport Knock | Flybe |
| | Shannon | Ryanair |
| Newcastle | Belfast International | easyJet |
| | Cork | Aer Lingus Regional |
| | Dublin | Aer Lingus Regional, Ryanair |
| | George Best Belfast City | Flybe |
| Newquay | Dublin | Aer Lingus Regional |
| | George Best Belfast City | Flybe |
| Southampton | Dublin | Flybe |
| | George Best Belfast City | Flybe |

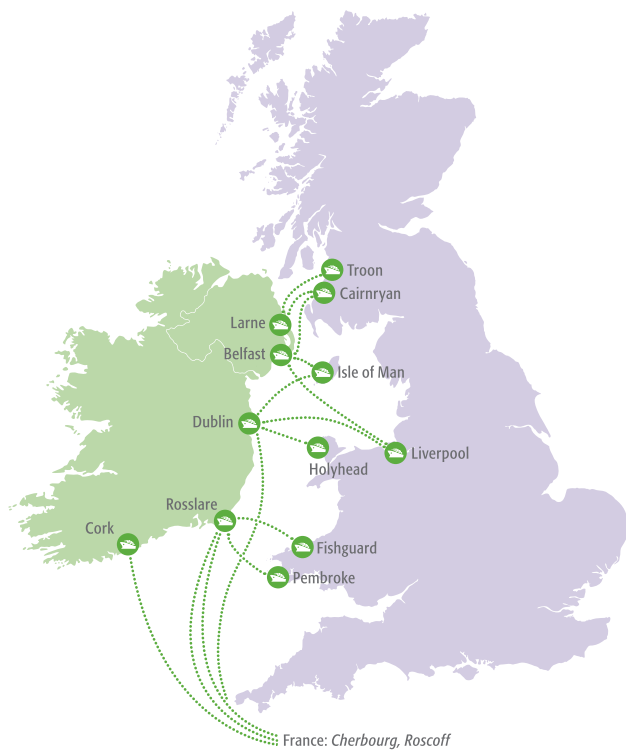
All direct routes/information correct at time of going to press but may be subject to future operator changes. Airlines may also operate connecting/change codesharing and operator franchise agreements. Please see websites for details as routes may be subject to change. Calls to airlines may incur local or national call charges.



TRAVELLING TO IRELAND BY SEA

FERRY PORTS

The island of Ireland has 5 main ferry ports – Belfast, Cork, Dublin, Larne and Rosslare.



SEA ROUTES

| DEPART | ARRIVE | CARRIER | VESSEL | DURATION |
|------------------------|----------|----------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Cairnryan | Larne | P&O Ferries | Express | 1hr |
| | | | Superferry | 1hr 45mins |
| | Belfast | Stena Line | Superfast VII/ VIII | 2hrs 15mins |
| | | | Fishguard | Rosslare |
| Holyhead | Dublin | Irish Ferries | Cruise Ferry | 3hrs 15mins |
| | | | Dublin Swift | 1hr 49mins |
| | | | Stena Line Superferry | 3hrs 15mins |
| Isle of Man | Belfast | Steam Packet Company | Fastcraft | 2hrs 55mins |
| | | | Dublin | Fastcraft |
| Liverpool | Dublin | P&O Ferries | Irish Sea Ferry | 7hrs 30mins |
| Liverpool (Birkenhead) | Belfast | Stena Line | Stena Lagan | 8hrs |
| | | | Stena Mersey | 8hrs |
| Pembroke | Rosslare | Irish Ferries | Cruise Ferry | 3hrs 45mins |
| Troon* | Larne | P&O Ferries | Fastcraft | 1hr 49mins |

* Mar-Sept

FERRY AND COACH OPERATORS CONTACT DETAILS

| FERRY COMPANY | TELEPHONE | WEBSITE |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Irish Ferries | +44 871 730 0400 | irishferries.com |
| P&O Ferries | +44 871 702 3477 | poferries.com |
| Steam Packet Company | +44 872 299 2992 | steam-packet.com |
| Stena Line | +44 844 770 7070 | stenaline.co.uk |
| Eurolines | +44 871 781 8181 | eurolines.co.uk |

* All direct routes/information correct at time of going to press but may be subject to future operator changes. Please see websites for details. Calls to operators may incur local or national call charges.

WATERFORD

Where Ireland Begins

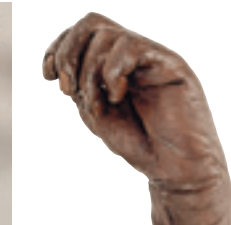
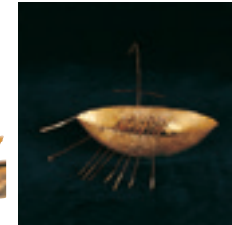


WWW.VISITWATERFORD.COM



Free admission to the greatest collections of Irish heritage, culture and history in the world.

Free Exhibitions
Guided Tours
Museum Shops
& Cafes



Open:
Tuesday to Saturday
10am to 5pm.
Sunday 2pm to 5pm.
Closed:
Mondays including
Bank Holidays

MIZEN HEAD SIGNAL STATION

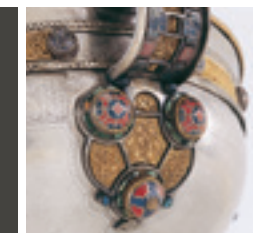
Ireland's most south westerly point! www.mizenhead.ie A Wild Atlantic Way Signature Experience

museum

National Museum of Ireland
Ard-Mhúsaem na hÉireann

Archaeology
Natural History
Decorative Arts & History
Country Life

Family programmes
& events for people
of all ages.
For information visit:
www.museum.ie
Tel: 01 6777 444



AUSTRALIA TOUR OPERATORS

| COMPANY | TELEPHONE | WEBSITE | B&B | Car hire | Coach/rail tours | Cruising | Cycling | Entertainment | Equestrian | Ferries | Fishing | Golfing | Hostels | Hotels | Luxury travel | Rail/bus passes | Self-catering | Special interest | Walking | Motor homes | Dublin pass |
|---------------------------------|----------------|--|-----|----------|------------------|----------|---------|---------------|------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|--------|---------------|-----------------|---------------|------------------|---------|-------------|-------------|
| Access Ireland Holidays | 1800 336 676 | accessirelandholidays.com | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| Avis International | 136 333 | avis.com.au | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Backroads Touring Company | 1300 100 410 | backroadstouring.com | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | • | | |
| Budget Car Rental | 1300 362 848 | budget.com | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Busabout | 1300 287 226 | shamrockadventures.com | | | • | | | | | | | | | | • | | | | | | |
| Celtic Travel | (02) 8243 2600 | travellerschoice.com.au/agent-details/celtic-travel-services | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| Compass Car Rentals | 1300 132 835 | compasscarrental.com.au | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Contiki Holidays | 1300 266 845 | contiki.com.au | | | • | | | | | | | | • | • | | | | | | | |
| Creative Holidays | 1300 747 400 | creativeholidays.com | • | • | | • | | | • | | | | | • | • | | • | | | | |
| DQ International Travel Service | (03) 9614 4588 | email: travel@dqinternational.com.au | | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| DriveAway Holidays | 1300 723 972 | driveaway.com.au | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |
| Drive Travel | (03) 8781 1120 | drivetour.com | | • | • | | | | | | | | | | • | | | | | | • |
| Emerald Travel | (03) 96709696 | emeraldtravel.com.au | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| Eurovillas | (03) 9593 2170 | eurovillas.com.au | • | • | | | | | | | | | | • | • | | • | | | | |
| Globus Family | 1300 130 134 | globusfamily.com.au | | | • | | | | | | | | | • | • | | | | | | |
| Golf Explorer | (08) 8376 4495 | golfexplorer.com.au | | | | | | | | | | • | | | | | | | | | |
| Golf Holidays International | - | golfholidaysinternational.com.au | | | | | | | | | | • | | | | | | | | | |
| Handpicked Holidays | 1300 308 516 | handpickedholidays.com.au | • | • | • | | | | | | | | | • | • | | | | | | • |
| Hertz Australia | 13 30 39 | hertz.com.au | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Holiday Autos | (08) 6365 4248 | holidayautos.com.au | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Holidays on Location | 1300 651 065 | holidaysonlocation.com | • | • | • | | • | | | | • | | | • | • | | • | | | | • |
| Insight Vacations | 1300 302 957 | insightvacations.com.au | | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |
| Ireland Journeys | 0417 206 932 | irelandjourneys.com.au | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |
| Outdoor Travel | 1800 331 582 | outdoortravel.com.au | | | | • | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |
| Qantas Holidays | 1300 443 485 | qantasholidays.com.au | • | • | • | | | • | | • | | | | • | | | | | | | • |
| Rail Plus | 1300 555 003 | railplus.com.au | | | • | | | | | • | | | | | • | | | | | | |
| Renaissance Tours | 1300 727 095 | renaisancetours.com.au | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |
| Scenic Tours | 1300 136 001 | scenic tours.com.au | | | • | | | | | | | | | • | | | | | | | |
| Shamrock Travel | (03) 9819 6674 | shamrocktravel.com.au | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| Shamrock Adventures | 1300 287 226 | shamrockadventures.com | | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Singapore Airlines Holidays | 1300 728 998 | siaholidays.com.au | | | • | | | | | | | | | • | | | | | | | • |
| Teed Up Golf Tours | (02) 8458 9000 | teedupgolftours.com | | | | | | | | | | • | | | | | | | | | |
| Tempo Holidays | 1300 558 987 | tempoholidays.com | • | • | • | | | | | | | | | • | | | • | | | | |
| The Wayfarers | (02) 9428 4222 | thewayfarers.com | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |
| Top Deck Tours | 1300 886 332 | topdeck.travel | • | • | | | | | | | | | | • | | | | | | | |
| Trafalgar Tours | 1300 663 043 | trafalgartours.com.au | | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Utracks | 1300 303 368 | utracks.com | | | | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |
| World Drive Holidays | 1300 653 270 | worlddriveholidays.com.au | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Youth Hostel Association | (02) 9261 1111 | yha.com.au | | | | | | | | | | | • | | | | | | | | |

All information correct at time of going to press but may be subject to future operator changes.



NEW ZEALAND TOUR OPERATORS

| COMPANY | TELEPHONE | WEBSITE | B&B | Car hire | Coach/rail tours | Cruising | Cycling | Entertainment | Equestrian | Ferries | Golfing | Sports | Hotels | Rail | Self-catering | Special interest | Walking | Motor homes | Other | Dublin pass |
|---|---------------|--|-----|----------|------------------|----------|---------|---------------|------------|---------|---------|--------|--------|------|---------------|------------------|---------|-------------|-------|-------------|
| A Walker's World & Cycling Europe | (09) 486 7473 | walkersworld.co.nz & cycling-europe.com | • | • | | | • | | | | | | | | | • | • | | | • |
| Air New Zealand Holidays | 0800 737 767 | airnz.co.nz/holidays-stores | • | • | • | | | | | | | • | • | | | • | | | | • |
| Avis Rent-A-Car | 0800 655 111 | avis.co.nz | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Budget Rent-A-Car | 0800 283 438 | budget.com | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Contiki Holidays NZ | 0508 266 8454 | contiki.com | | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Creative Holidays | 0800 652 441 | creativeholidays.com | • | • | • | | • | | | | | | • | • | | • | | | | • |
| Drive Away Holidays | 0800 885 590 | driveaway.co.nz | | • | | | | | | • | | | | | | | | | | • |
| Eurolynx Travel Ltd | (09) 361 3661 | eurolynx.co.nz | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| Europcar | 0800 800 115 | europcar.com | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| First Travel Group | 0800 432 737 | first-travel-group.co.nz/our-members.aspx | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| Flight Centre | 0800 243 544 | flightcentre.co.nz | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| Flora Tours | 0800 356 728 | floratours.co.nz and pilgrimagetours.co.nz | | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Globus Family | (09) 379 5375 | globusfamily.co.nz | | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |
| Harvey World Travel | 0800 758 7 87 | harveyworld.co.nz | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| Hertz New Zealand | 0800 654 321 | hertz.com | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| House of Travel | 0800 367 468 | houseoftravel.co.nz | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| Insight Vacations | (09) 300 1580 | insightvacations.com | | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |
| Mondo | 0800 955 655 | mondotravel.co.nz | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| PaRn.z. Corporate Events & Golfing Holidays | (09) 486 1077 | parnz.co.nz | | | • | | | | | | | | • | | | | | | | • |
| Rail Plus | (09) 377 5415 | railplus.co.nz | | | | | | | | | | | | • | | | | | | |
| Supreme Tours (for the mature traveller) | 0800 809 300 | supremetoursandtravel.com | • | • | • | | • | | • | • | | | • | • | | • | • | • | • | • |
| Tempo Holidays | - | tempoholidays.co.nz | • | • | • | | | | • | | | | | • | | | | | | • |
| Trafalgar Tours (NZ) Ltd | 0800 484 333 | trafalgartours.co.nz | | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |
| Travel Managers | (09) 921 5070 | travelmanagers.co.nz | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| United Travel - Nearest Store | 0800 730 830 | unitedtravel.co.nz | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • | • |
| UK-Europe Self Catering | (09) 536 4200 | uk-europe.co.nz | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Walk the West of Ireland | (03) 545 1071 | walkthewestofireland.com | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |
| Williment Sports Travel | (04) 380 2500 | williment.co.nz | | | • | | | | • | | • | • | | | | | | | | • |
| WP Maher Tours | 0800 500 518 | mahertours.co.nz | | | • | | • | | | | | | | | | | | | | • |

All information correct at time of going to press but may be subject to future operator changes.



TRAVELLING AROUND IRELAND

BUS AND RAIL

The island of Ireland has a comprehensive bus and rail system that links towns and cities, as well as ferry ports and airports. A selection of private coach services also operate between the main airports and cities all over the island.

DART:

The Dart (Dublin Area Rapid Transit) rail line runs along the Dublin coast; from Howth and Malahide in north County Dublin to Greystones in County Wicklow, via the city centre and Dun Laoghaire.

LUAS:

The Luas light rail services the south and west of Dublin city, including the city centre.

There are various discount tickets available, giving unlimited travel on bus and rail services, which offer good value for travellers. The Leap Visitor card offers 72 hours unlimited travel on Airlink, Dublin Bus, Luas, DART and Commuter Rail services. It is available for purchase at Dublin Airport only, and costs €19.50 for 72 hours. For more details on getting around the island of Ireland, visit ireland.com

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Irish Rail – Iarnród Éireann

Tel: +353 1 836 6222; irishrail.ie

Irish Bus – Bus Éireann

Tel: +353 1 836 6111; buseireann.ie

Dublin Bus – Bus Átha Cliath

Tel: +353 1 873 4222; dublinbus.ie

NORTHERN IRELAND

Translink (Northern Ireland Railways, Ulsterbus, Metro – Belfast's bus service)

Tel: +44 28 9066 6630; translink.co.uk

BIKE

If you are travelling around Dublin, the Dublin Bike Sharing Scheme is a good option. dublinbikes.ie Cork, Galway, Limerick (bikeshare.ie) and Belfast (belfastbikes.co.uk) also have bike schemes.

INLAND FERRIES AND ISLAND BOAT SERVICES

Whether you're visiting the offshore islands or travelling around the island, the ferry is a fun way to get around. Just make sure you check out timetables in advance, and again before travelling, since changes in the weather can affect services. Ferries are operated by different providers; for more details log onto ireland.com

DRIVING

If you're planning to drive in Ireland, bring a valid national driving licence with you. You are legally required to carry your driving licence with you at all times when driving in the Republic of Ireland.

Driving in Ireland is on the left and seatbelts must be worn at all times, in the front and back of the vehicle. Motorcyclists and their passengers must wear helmets. There are very strict laws on drinking and driving and the

best advice is simply "don't drink and drive". There is barrier-free tolling on certain motorways in the Republic of Ireland – visit eflow.ie for more information.

SPEED LIMITS

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Speed limits are in kilometres per hour km/h.

Towns and cities: 50

Regional/country roads (displayed by white signs): 80

National roads (displayed by green signs): 100

Motorways (displayed by blue signs): 120

Special speed limits: 30 and 60

NORTHERN IRELAND

Speed limits are in miles per hour mph.

Towns and cities: 30

Regional/country roads: 60

Motorways: 70

Don't forget the change in driving laws when you cross the border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

RENTING A CAR

You'll find car hire companies in airports, ferry ports, and sometimes in train and bus terminals. In many cases, the car hire company will have a city-centre base. Most rental cars are standard shift but automatic cars are available for an additional charge, if you book them in advance. Child seats should also be booked in advance.

For insurance reasons you should advise the car rental company if you intend travelling between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

It is also recommended that you check the detailed terms and conditions of your rental booking in advance. Even if you book through a third party (broker, agent, tour operator), you will be required to sign a rental agreement with the car rental company, so spend some time in advance selecting the various insurances, waivers and other options appropriate to your needs and understanding the costs involved.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

Car Rental Council

carrentalcouncil.ie

NORTHERN IRELAND

British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association

bvrla.co.uk

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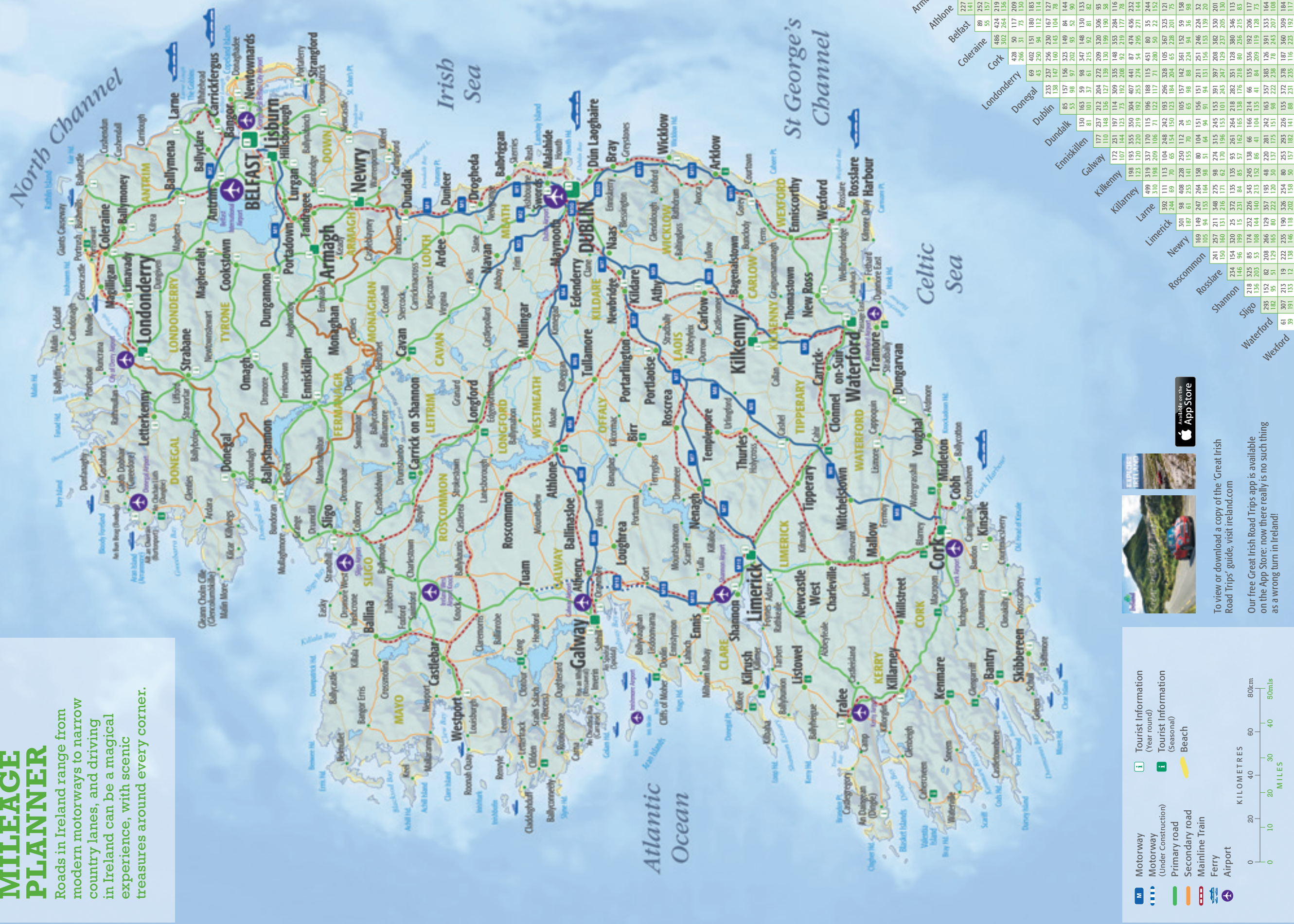


GLASSES UP TO DRINKING RESPONSIBLY

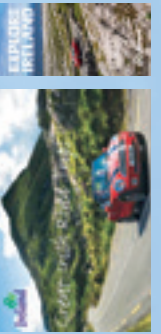
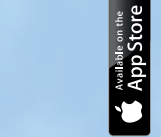


MAP & ROUTE MILEAGE PLANNER

Roads in Ireland range from modern motorways to narrow country lanes, and driving in Ireland can be a magical experience, with scenic treasures around every corner.

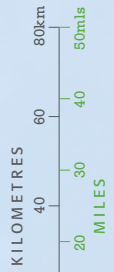


- Motorway
- Motorway (Under construction)
- Primary road
- Secondary road
- Mainline Train
- Ferry
- Airport



To view or download a copy of the 'Great Irish Road Trips' guide, visit ireland.com

Our free Great Irish Road Trips app is available on the App Store - now there really is no such thing as a wrong turn in Ireland!



| | |
|------------|-----|
| Armagh | 165 |
| Athlone | 96 |
| Belfast | 227 |
| Coleraine | 141 |
| Cork | 89 |
| Londonerry | 252 |
| Donegal | 99 |
| Dublin | 62 |
| Dundalk | 486 |
| Emiskillen | 224 |
| Galway | 219 |
| Kilkenny | 390 |
| Killarney | 156 |
| Larne | 242 |
| Limerick | 428 |
| Newry | 50 |
| Roscommon | 117 |
| Rosslare | 209 |
| Shannon | 113 |
| Sligo | 180 |
| Waterford | 183 |
| Wexford | 128 |
| Armagh | 85 |
| Athlone | 157 |
| Belfast | 325 |
| Coleraine | 149 |
| Cork | 84 |
| Londonerry | 233 |
| Donegal | 43 |
| Dublin | 250 |
| Dundalk | 94 |
| Emiskillen | 112 |
| Galway | 114 |
| Kilkenny | 79 |
| Killarney | 237 |
| Larne | 236 |
| Limerick | 138 |
| Newry | 147 |
| Roscommon | 160 |
| Rosslare | 143 |
| Shannon | 104 |
| Sligo | 78 |
| Waterford | 84 |
| Wexford | 84 |
| Armagh | 85 |
| Athlone | 157 |
| Belfast | 347 |
| Coleraine | 148 |
| Cork | 130 |
| Londonerry | 133 |
| Donegal | 81 |
| Dublin | 215 |
| Dundalk | 92 |
| Emiskillen | 81 |
| Galway | 177 |
| Kilkenny | 227 |
| Killarney | 212 |
| Larne | 204 |
| Limerick | 110 |
| Newry | 148 |
| Roscommon | 136 |
| Rosslare | 127 |
| Shannon | 130 |
| Sligo | 189 |
| Waterford | 190 |
| Wexford | 88 |
| Armagh | 172 |
| Athlone | 251 |
| Belfast | 197 |
| Coleraine | 114 |
| Cork | 336 |
| Londonerry | 148 |
| Donegal | 116 |
| Dublin | 257 |
| Dundalk | 100 |
| Emiskillen | 144 |
| Galway | 123 |
| Kilkenny | 73 |
| Killarney | 192 |
| Larne | 208 |
| Limerick | 92 |
| Newry | 219 |
| Roscommon | 177 |
| Rosslare | 181 |
| Shannon | 171 |
| Sligo | 178 |
| Waterford | 160 |
| Wexford | 160 |
| Armagh | 130 |
| Athlone | 163 |
| Belfast | 59 |
| Coleraine | 98 |
| Cork | 347 |
| Londonerry | 148 |
| Donegal | 130 |
| Dublin | 133 |
| Dundalk | 85 |
| Emiskillen | 81 |
| Galway | 101 |
| Kilkenny | 37 |
| Killarney | 61 |
| Larne | 215 |
| Limerick | 92 |
| Newry | 81 |
| Roscommon | 82 |
| Rosslare | 52 |
| Shannon | 90 |
| Sligo | 33 |
| Waterford | 177 |
| Wexford | 227 |
| Armagh | 110 |
| Athlone | 148 |
| Belfast | 136 |
| Coleraine | 127 |
| Cork | 130 |
| Londonerry | 139 |
| Donegal | 189 |
| Dublin | 190 |
| Dundalk | 88 |
| Emiskillen | 88 |
| Galway | 172 |
| Kilkenny | 251 |
| Killarney | 197 |
| Larne | 114 |
| Limerick | 309 |
| Newry | 336 |
| Roscommon | 148 |
| Rosslare | 116 |
| Shannon | 257 |
| Sligo | 176 |
| Waterford | 208 |
| Wexford | 92 |
| Armagh | 174 |
| Athlone | 436 |
| Belfast | 232 |
| Coleraine | 277 |
| Cork | 274 |
| Londonerry | 54 |
| Donegal | 295 |
| Dublin | 271 |
| Dundalk | 244 |
| Emiskillen | 202 |
| Galway | 102 |
| Kilkenny | 64 |
| Killarney | 392 |
| Larne | 113 |
| Limerick | 104 |
| Newry | 248 |
| Roscommon | 242 |
| Rosslare | 193 |
| Shannon | 296 |
| Sligo | 328 |
| Waterford | 105 |
| Wexford | 367 |
| Armagh | 323 |
| Athlone | 121 |
| Belfast | 270 |
| Coleraine | 270 |
| Cork | 65 |
| Londonerry | 154 |
| Donegal | 150 |
| Dublin | 123 |
| Dundalk | 184 |
| Emiskillen | 204 |
| Galway | 65 |
| Kilkenny | 228 |
| Killarney | 207 |
| Larne | 75 |
| Limerick | 168 |
| Newry | 156 |
| Roscommon | 139 |
| Rosslare | 201 |
| Shannon | 98 |
| Sligo | 178 |
| Waterford | 187 |
| Wexford | 187 |
| Armagh | 241 |
| Athlone | 150 |
| Belfast | 160 |
| Coleraine | 131 |
| Cork | 62 |
| Londonerry | 170 |
| Donegal | 196 |
| Dublin | 153 |
| Dundalk | 101 |
| Emiskillen | 243 |
| Galway | 247 |
| Kilkenny | 292 |
| Killarney | 205 |
| Larne | 130 |
| Limerick | 178 |
| Newry | 180 |
| Roscommon | 178 |
| Rosslare | 201 |
| Shannon | 201 |
| Sligo | 98 |
| Waterford | 286 |
| Wexford | 86 |
| Armagh | 234 |
| Athlone | 154 |
| Belfast | 320 |
| Coleraine | 25 |
| Cork | 372 |
| Londonerry | 135 |
| Donegal | 93 |
| Dublin | 261 |
| Dundalk | 218 |
| Emiskillen | 282 |
| Galway | 351 |
| Kilkenny | 128 |
| Killarney | 380 |
| Larne | 546 |
| Limerick | 113 |
| Newry | 283 |
| Roscommon | 166 |
| Rosslare | 214 |
| Shannon | 66 |
| Sligo | 135 |
| Waterford | 336 |
| Wexford | 192 |
| Armagh | 206 |
| Athlone | 145 |
| Belfast | 285 |
| Coleraine | 152 |
| Cork | 82 |
| Londonerry | 208 |
| Donegal | 266 |
| Dublin | 129 |
| Dundalk | 357 |
| Emiskillen | 193 |
| Galway | 48 |
| Kilkenny | 220 |
| Killarney | 281 |
| Larne | 242 |
| Limerick | 163 |
| Newry | 357 |
| Roscommon | 357 |
| Rosslare | 126 |
| Shannon | 391 |
| Sligo | 333 |
| Waterford | 164 |
| Wexford | 301 |
| Armagh | 182 |
| Athlone | 95 |
| Belfast | 51 |
| Coleraine | 129 |
| Cork | 165 |
| Londonerry | 80 |
| Donegal | 137 |
| Dublin | 175 |
| Dundalk | 151 |
| Emiskillen | 98 |
| Galway | 222 |
| Kilkenny | 238 |
| Killarney | 78 |
| Larne | 243 |
| Limerick | 207 |
| Newry | 108 |
| Roscommon | 187 |
| Rosslare | 372 |
| Shannon | 378 |
| Sligo | 187 |
| Waterford | 560 |
| Wexford | 309 |
| Armagh | 184 |
| Athlone | 264 |
| Belfast | 171 |
| Coleraine | 125 |
| Cork | 192 |
| Londonerry | 171 |
| Donegal | 188 |
| Dublin | 141 |
| Dundalk | 88 |
| Emiskillen | 231 |
| Galway | 235 |
| Kilkenny | 192 |
| Killarney | 171 |
| Larne | 162 |
| Limerick | 141 |
| Newry | 158 |
| Roscommon | 29 |
| Rosslare | 98 |
| Shannon | 18 |
| Sligo | 18 |
| Waterford | 29 |
| Wexford | 18 |

KILOMETRES MILES

Whilst every care has been taken to ensure accuracy in this compilation of this map, Tourism Ireland cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions. Due to the small scale of this map, not all holiday centres can be shown. The information on this map is correct at time of going to press. © 2016 Tourism Ireland. Map creation by Michael Schmeling, www.maps.andocean.com | Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, CC BY-SA



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