



Wexford & Waterford

Produced by Lonely Planet for



Tourism Ireland



 Copper Coast, County Waterford

Wexford & Waterford

Picturesque fishing villages, elegant seaside towns and dramatic windswept peninsulas grace the southeast. The region's history is suitably swashbuckling with some of the country's most impressive fortresses and castles.

- 1 Enniscorthy**
Attractive hilly town on the banks of the River Slaney.
- 2 Kilmore Quay**
Fishing village straight out of a postcard.
- 3 Tintern Abbey**
Moody ruins of a once-powerful Cistercian abbey.
- 4 Arthurstown**
Remarkable ruins and a renowned cookery school.
- 5 Waterford City**
Ireland's oldest city and home to Waterford Crystal.
- 6 Dungarvan**
Bustling port town with colourful houses and an excellent foodie scene.
- 7 Ardmore**
Sleepy seaside village and one of the southeast's loveliest spots.



Trip at a Glance

 Duration

5 Days

219km/136 miles

 Best Time to Go

Apr–Sep

For long days and the best weather.

 Essential Photo

Ardmore

Look down on lovely Ardmore from St Declan's Church.

 Best for Culture

Enniscorthy

Learn about Irish history at the National 1798 Rebellion Centre.



Kilmore Quay, County Wexford

1 Enniscorthy

Enniscorthy's warren of steep streets descends from Augustus Pugin's cathedral to a riverside Norman castle. But the town is most famous for some of the fiercest fighting of the 1798 uprising against British rule, when rebels captured the town and set up camp at nearby Vinegar Hill. Before climbing the hill, acquaint yourself with the story of the rebellion on a visit to the National 1798 Rebellion Centre, where exhibits cover the French and American Revolutions that sparked Wexford's abortive revolt.

Trip Highlight

2 Kilmore Quay

Straight out of a postcard, peaceful Kilmore Quay is a small village on the eastern side of Ballyteige Bay, noted for its lobsters and deep-sea fishing. Lining the attractive main street up from the harbour is a series of pretty whitewashed, thatched cottages. The harbour is the jumping-off point for the Saltee Islands, home to Ireland's largest bird sanctuary, clearly visible out to sea. The four-day Seafood Festival in the second week of July involves all types of seafood tastings, music and dancing.

Detour: Saltee Islands



Just 4km offshore and accessible from Kilmore Quay via local boat (depending on the weather), the Saltee Islands constitute one of Europe's most important bird sanctuaries, home to more than 220 recorded species, principally the gannet, guillemot, cormorant, kittiwake, puffin and the Manx shearwater. The islands are also where you'll find some of the oldest rocks in Europe, dating back 2000 million years or more; and findings suggest that the islands were inhabited by the pre-Celts as long ago as 3500 to 2000 BC. The best time to visit is the spring and early-summer nesting season.



Tintern Abbey, County Wexford

3

Trip Highlight Tintern Abbey

In better structural condition than its Welsh counterpart, from where its first monks hailed, Ireland's Tintern Abbey is secluded amid 40 hectares of woodland. William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, founded the Cistercian abbey in the early 13th century after he nearly perished at sea and swore to establish a church if he made it

ashore. The abbey is 1.5km from the town of Saltmills, and set amid wooded trails, lakes and idyllic streams. The grounds are always open, and a walk here is worth the trip at any time.

4 Arthurstown

Chef Kevin Dundon is a familiar face on Irish TV, and is the best-selling author of cookbooks including *Full On Irish* and *Great Family Food*.

His spa hotel Dunbrody Country House, set in a period-decorated 1830s Georgian manor on 120-hectare grounds, is the stuff of foodies' fantasies, with a gourmet restaurant and cookery school.

Some 6km north of Dundon's pile, the ruined Dunbrody Abbey is a remarkably intact Cistercian abbey founded by Strongbow in 1170 and completed in 1220.

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 Waterford City

5 Waterford City

Inhabited since AD 914, Waterford (Port Láirge) is Ireland's oldest city, and much of the centre's street plan has retained its medieval feel. Waterford's 1000-year history is told in wonderful fashion in a trio of museums collectively known as the Waterford Museum of Treasures. These include Reginald's Tower, the oldest complete building in Ireland; the Bishop's Palace, home to a superb interactive museum; and the Medieval Museum, incorporating the 13th-century Choristers' Hall and the 15th-century Mayor's Wine Vault, which tells the story of Waterford life before 1700.

Since 1783 the city has been famous for its production of high-quality crystal. The factory closed in 2009 but there's a showroom at the House of Waterford Crystal, where you can see some pieces of crystal being blown.

Trip Highlight

6 Dungarvan

It's not enough that Dungarvan has the looks: pastel-coloured houses

huddled around a boat-filled port at the mouth of the River Colligan make it one of the southeast's prettiest towns. It now has the charm too, in the form of a foodie reputation that makes it a must-stop destination for anyone looking to get the best of Irish cuisine.

At the heart of the town is the Norman castle, which is slowly being restored to its once impregnable glory. But the real draws are culinary: Paul Flynn's Tannery Cookery School, adjoining a fruit, veg and herb garden, is one of Ireland's best. The annual West Waterford Festival of Food in mid-April celebrates the area's abundant fresh produce.

7 Ardmore

This enticing seaside village may look quiet these days, but it's claimed that St Declan set up shop here between 350 and 420, which would make Ardmore the first Christian bastion in Ireland – long before St Patrick landed. The village's 12th-century round tower, one of the best examples of these

structures in Ireland, is the town's most distinctive architectural feature. You should also check out the ruins of St Declan's Church. If you're looking for a bit of beautiful seclusion, you'll find it on Ballyquin beach, which is home to tide pools, fascinating rocks and sheltered sand.



 Waterford Crystal



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