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## IRELAND WELCOME

Think epic. Think exhilarating. Think enchanting. In Ireland you can expect the very best, with incredible landscapes, warm, friendly people and villages that are full of charm. Delve into Ireland's Ancient East, where compelling stories will captivate you; feel the ocean's blast and travel a coastline like no other on the Wild Atlantic Way; or see unforgettable sights along the Causeway Coastal Route. The time is right...

Jump into  
Ireland

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Copy and design:  
**Maxmedia Ireland Limited**  
Printing:  
**Wyndeham Group**



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## PICTURE THIS

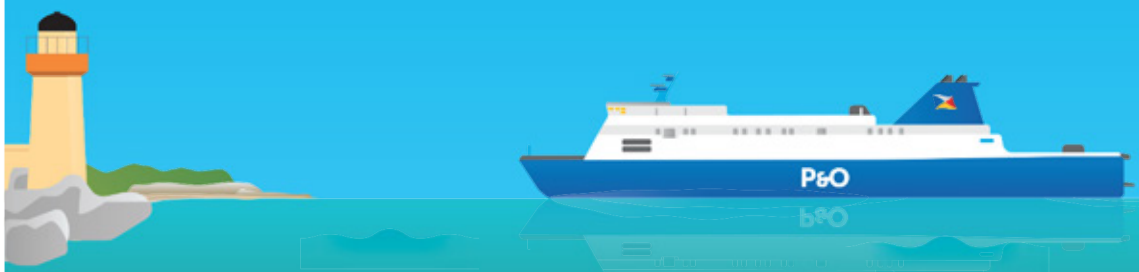
### DUNLUCE CASTLE

Rising theatrically from the rugged coastal cliffs of north County Antrim, Dunluce boasts one of the most dramatic castle scenes to be found anywhere in the world. These impressive ruins are perched 100ft/30 metres above the roaring ocean and are surrounded by tales of wailing banshees, smugglers and tragic love. It's a real showstopper along the Causeway Coastal Route, a place to pause and spend a while. Visit near sunset as the sun smoulders into the ocean and the castle walls turn to silhouettes and you'll be treated to a sight you'll never forget.

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## DO SOMETHING DIFFERENT

Take a trip beyond the ordinary – Ireland is bursting with amazing things to do, from fascinating Viking tours to swaying rope bridges

1 Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge, County Antrim A bridge was originally built here in 1755 by salmon fishermen. 2 Reginald's Tower, Waterford The first tower on this site was built by the Vikings after 914. 3 Dursey Island, County Cork Travel like a local on Ireland's only cable car. 4 Slemish Mountain, County Antrim Thought to be the site of St Patrick's conversion. 5 Hurling This Gaelic sport has a history stretching back 3,000 years.

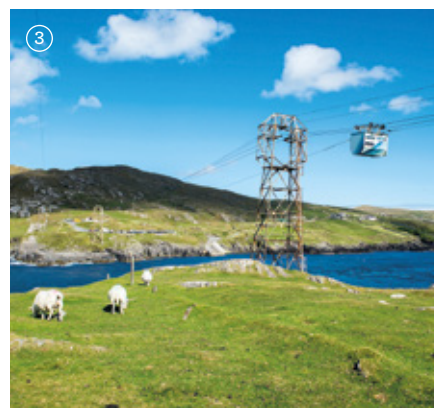
### Ⓐ CROSS A ROPE BRIDGE

It sways, it wobbles, it swings – crossing the Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge is a phenomenal experience and don't worry, despite the fact that it looks scary, it's all perfectly safe. Traditionally used by salmon fishermen, the bridge hovers above a chasm that divides the edge of the Causeway Coast and Carrick-a-Rede Island. While you're crossing, keep your eye out for swirling sea birds above; while below in the Atlantic, you might be lucky enough to spot a basking shark, dolphin or porpoise. Truly a one-of-a-kind experience.



### Ⓐ TAKE A VIKING TOUR

The Vikings landed in Ireland in the 800s and we haven't stopped talking about them since. Much of the island's Viking history is concentrated in Ireland's Ancient East and the cities and towns of Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, Cork and Limerick. Make your way to Waterford city, founded by the Vikings in 914, and take a guided walk with the Epic Tour of the Viking Triangle. Or jump on a replica Viking ship in Athlone with Viking Tours Ireland and sail to the monastic site of Clonmacnoise on the River Shannon. What a way to arrive!



### Ⓒ WALK WITH ST PATRICK

St Patrick's legacy looms large in Ireland, and one of the best ways of connecting with the saint is to walk in his footsteps. Head to Slemish Mountain in County Antrim, where St Patrick spent six years in slavery, tending sheep for a local chieftain. It's a steep hike to the top, but you'll be rewarded with outstanding views. To enjoy a longer experience, drive the St Patrick's Trail, which brings you from majestic cathedrals in the city of Armagh to fascinating ancient monastic sites and the saint's burial place in Downpatrick, County Down.



### Ⓐ TAKE A CABLE CAR

Islands around Ireland are unique with friendly locals, traditional culture and some of the wildest scenery around. And while these hidden gems are usually accessed by boat or ferry – there is one island where getting there is part of the adventure. Dursey Island, just off the tip of the Beara Peninsula in County Cork, has the only cable car ride in Ireland and crosses above the turbulent waters of Dursey Sound. With only six residents, the island offers a wealth of great outdoor experiences including bird, whale and dolphin watching. Beautiful.



### Ⓒ 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 something special. Get to grips with the history of Gaelic games at the GAA Museum at Croke Park stadium in Dublin, then walk the Skyline – an incredible panoramic tour of Dublin, 17 storeys up. You can even pick up some of the basic techniques at Experience Gaelic Games in Cork, Dublin and Galway. 🍀

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ROOMS WITH A VIEW

From cliff-edge hotels to beautiful B&Bs nestled into idyllic scenery, Ireland offers unique places to stay with some of the best views on the island...

1. EDENVALE HOUSE

Strangford Lough, the Mourne Mountains, gardens and pretty paddocks – the views from Edenvale in County Down are delightful. Located about a half-hour drive from Belfast, this historic B&B makes a great base for exploring the surrounding area with everything from horse riding to golf close by. And don't miss the Edenvale breakfast, made with their own eggs, homemade bread and local bacon. [edenvalehouse.com](http://edenvalehouse.com)

2. BLACKHEAD LIGHTKEEPER'S COTTAGES

Perched on the County Antrim coast in Northern Ireland, the Blackhead Lightkeeper's Cottages offer the chance to relax in a piece of maritime history. Just 20 miles/32km north of Belfast, these cliff-top self-catering properties are one of a kind with great views over Belfast Lough. Cosy and wild in winter, bright and beautiful in summer, they're a great all-year-round choice. [irishlandmark.com](http://irishlandmark.com)

3. THE CLIFF HOUSE HOTEL

Clinging to the edge of a cliff in County Waterford, the Cliff House Hotel is total glamour. Each room boasts views of tranquil Ardmore Bay, while the interior mixes rugged local textures with flashes of colour. This is a place of real escape in a part of Ireland's Ancient East that's filled with great restaurants, historic country houses and hidden coves. Treat yourself to a gourmet feast in the Michelin-starred House Restaurant, take a seaweed bath in the Outdoor Summer Spa or simply lie back and enjoy the views. [thec Cliffhousehotel.com](http://thec Cliffhousehotel.com)

4. AGHADOE HEIGHTS HOTEL

It's renowned for its warm Irish hospitality, impressive design and relaxed luxury, but it's the location of Aghadoe Heights that sets it apart. Rooms here overlook the famous Lakes of Killarney in County Kerry, with the lively town of Killarney right on your doorstep. Relax in the state-of-the-art spa, play a round of golf or sit back and enjoy a Guinness in the Terrace Bar, which offer stunning views across the lakes. [aghadoeheights.com](http://aghadoeheights.com)

5. MARKREE CASTLE

Ireland is famous for its castle hotels from Ashford Castle in County Mayo to Ballygally Castle Hotel in County Antrim. A hidden gem, though, is Markree Castle in County Sligo, with views over the formal gardens or quiet woodland. Home to the Cooper family for over 370 years, the castle ripples with old-world charm and offers great food, wine and tranquillity. [markreecastle.ie](http://markreecastle.ie)



"CLINGING TO THE EDGE OF A CLIFF IN COUNTY WATERFORD, THE CLIFF HOUSE HOTEL IS TOTAL GLAMOUR, WITH VIEWS OF TRANQUIL ARDMORE BAY"



1 Edenvale House, County Down Views reach out over the gardens of this elegant country house B&B. 2 Blackhead Lightkeeper's Cottages, County Antrim Panoramic views close to the Victorian town of Whitehead. 3 Cliff House Hotel, County Waterford Stunning views of Ardmore Bay make this a great choice. 4 Aghadoe Heights Hotel, County Kerry With stunning views of the famous Lakes of Killarney. 5 Markree Castle, County Sligo Set within 500 acres of secluded countryside.

For more information on accommodation, visit: [ireland.com](http://ireland.com)



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## DISCOVER ALL ABOUT.. CASTLES

*There's a reason why Ireland is famous for its castles: they're everywhere. Small villages, towns, cities and even the remotest parts of the countryside boast epic reminders of Ireland's past*

Arriving with the Anglo-Normans, many castles in Ireland began as earth and timber structures, but by the late 12<sup>th</sup> century, it was all about stone. Today, you'll find everything from crumbling tower houses to huge medieval hulks. Get to grips with tales of brutal sieges in Athlone Castle on the banks of the River Shannon or relax in the elegant surrounds of Ballygally Castle in County Antrim – whatever you're looking for, Ireland's castles will deliver.



1 One of Ireland's most famous castles, **Blarney Castle** in County Cork is a magnificent blend of history, beauty and fun. Kiss the famous Blarney Stone for the "gift of the gab", wander the gorgeous gardens and soak up the romantic atmosphere in the Rock Close, described by a writer in 1824 as "indeed a fairy scene".

2 Dating to the 13<sup>th</sup> century and seeming to grow out of the rock around it, **Cahir Castle** in County Tipperary is one of the biggest in Ireland. Over the years, it's been enlarged, rebuilt, besieged and has witnessed everything from treason to murder. It even starred in John Boorman's *Excalibur* – take it from us, this one's a star.

3 Built in the Scottish Baronial style, **Glenveagh Castle** sits within an area of wild beauty in Glenveagh National Park, County Donegal. The location is simply breathtaking, so it's no surprise that stars such as Marilyn Monroe, Clark Gable and Charlie Chaplin are rumoured to have holidayed here.

4 With a lovely location in the historic town of Enniskillen, County Fermanagh, **Enniskillen Castle** was built nearly 600 years ago by the ruling Gaelic Maguire family. Overlooking the River Erne, it traditionally guarded one of the few passes into Ulster and today houses the Fermanagh County Museum.


5 **Trim Castle** in County Meath has been many things: fortress, home, prison, even film set (Mel Gibson's *Braveheart* was filmed here). But throughout, it's retained its stern grandeur and height. Built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, it boasts a 20-sided tower overlooking the River Boyne.

6 The magnificent cliff-top **Dunluce Castle** in County Antrim is one of the island's most iconic sights. Teetering on the edge of a basalt outcrop, this structure looks like something out of a fantasy film with steep drops on either side – so steep, in fact, that one stormy night in 1639 the kitchen fell into the sea! 🍷

1 **Blarney, County Cork** Home to the famous Blarney Stone. 2 **Cahir, County Tipperary** Scene of countless sieges and bombardments. 3 **Glenveagh, County Donegal** Built to resemble a romantic highland retreat. 4 **Enniskillen, County Fermanagh** Originally built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. 5 **Trim, County Meath** Ireland's largest Norman castle. 6 **Dunluce, County Antrim** Did this place inspire Cair Paravel in CS Lewis's *The Chronicles of Narnia*?

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## FOOD IN IRELAND

*With great restaurants, gastropubs and fab farmers' markets, Ireland's food scene is on top form*

### TRADITIONAL TASTES

Ireland's food traditions are undergoing an exciting revival right now, and many restaurants are adding traditional flavours to their menus. Combining high-quality local ingredients with the latest techniques, the result is dishes that taste fresh, modern and delicious while still staying true to their heritage. If you're looking for a taste of authentic Ireland, then don't miss out on a bowl of **coddle** at The Woollen Mills in Dublin – a hearty dish of sausages, bacon and potatoes that's unique to the city. You can unearth Cork's food culture at The English Market, where you'll find Tom Durcan's acclaimed **spiced beef**. Try it for yourself with lunch at No 5 Fenn's Quay, where it makes a great sandwich served with cabbage pickle.

Irish stew is an enduring favourite thanks to its hearty, rustic combination of lamb, potatoes and carrots, and Gleeson's of Roscommon is reputed to serve one of the best. Popular all along the Wild Atlantic Way, **smoked fish platters** combine the best of the sea, and bring a modern edge to one of Ireland's oldest food traditions.

And that's not all – there's **black pudding** (blood sausage) from Clonakilty, freshly baked brown **soda bread**, and great potato pancakes called **boxty**. One dish definitely not to miss is an **Irish cooked breakfast**: Northern Ireland's speciality is the **Ulster Fry**, a traditional fried feast of bacon, black and white pudding, tomato and sausages served with a **potato farl** (potato bread) and soda bread.

### A NATURAL BOUNTY

Ireland excels at producing local artisan cheese – all with different styles and a distinctive creamy taste. Look out for Milleens, Kearney Blue, Cashel Blue, St Tola, Leggygowan and the first smoked brie in Europe, Ballyoak from Fivemiletown Creamery. Expect high-quality, grass-fed **beef** such as Glenarm Shorthorn Beef and herb-fed mountain **lamb** such as Comeragh Mountain Lamb. And from oysters to crab claws, mussels to lobster, Ireland's **seafood** is exceptional. Our advice? Go simple with Guinness and oysters or super-fresh fish and chips. It doesn't get better than that.

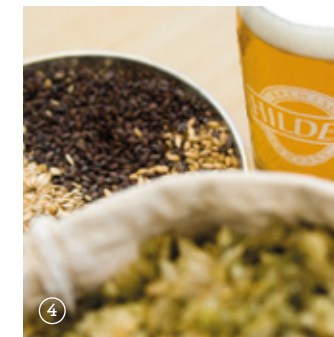
### THE BEST LOCAL DRINKS

Great food deserves great drinks to go with it. And Ireland certainly delivers. Irish whiskey ranges from the traditional flavours of Bushmills and Jameson to newer tastes of Teeling, Glendalough, Nephin and Blackwater. The craft-beer industry is flourishing, with Brú Brewery, Bo Bristle and Hilden to name just a few. Or try one of the new breeds of Irish artisan gins from small distilleries including **Dingle Distillery** in County Kerry and **ShortCross Gin** in County Down. Finally, don't miss the award-winning **AJ Apple Juice**, made from freshly pressed Armagh apples – simply delicious! 🍏

ireland.com



1 Hatch & Sons, Dublin A great place in the heart of the city for local, traditional dishes. 2 Established Coffee, Belfast Delicious breads, salads and apple pies in the charming Cathedral Quarter district. 3 The Woollen Mills, Dublin Serves up tasty interpretations of traditional Irish dishes. 4 Hilden Brewery, Lisburn Beer from the oldest independent brewery on the island of Ireland. 5 Stunning seafood at Ox, Belfast Michelin-starred dishes made with the best local ingredients.



### TOP TIP

Visit a farmers' market such as The English Market in Cork (pictured), St George's Market in Belfast and the Temple Bar Food Market in Dublin, as well as smaller local markets across the island.

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1



Ireland Music

2



3



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4

- 1 Festival fun Get into the swing of things at the Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann.
- 2 A session Traditional music sessions take place in pubs all over the island.
- 3 Crafting a bodhrán An ancient frame drum central to Irish traditional music.
- 4 Doolin, County Clare Irish towns and villages are filled with great places to listen to traditional music.
- 5 Ulster-Scots traditions Hear the beat of the mighty Lambeg drum at an Ulster-Scots festival or parade.



5

## 5 THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT... IRISH MUSIC

There's nothing like the atmosphere of a traditional music session in Ireland. Here, you can experience the raw beat of Ireland's native instruments, feel the pulse of the island's ancient heritage and join in a unique musical experience

### 1. THE FESTIVALS

Irish music festivals take the great atmosphere you find at a session and spread it over a few days or even weeks. Temple Bar TradFest in Dublin (January) uses eclectic venues for gigs and concerts, while local pubs keep the sounds going after dark. The world-famous festival of Fleadh Cheoil na hÉireann takes place every year in August. In 2017 the location is Ennis, County Clare, featuring sessions, competitive events and street music. Or get into the spirit of things at the Derry International Irish Music Festival (late January), as luminaries of the traditional music scene descend on this lively city for a week of great events.

### 2. THE SESSION

The session (*seisiún*) is at the heart of Irish traditional music. Sessions are a bedrock of community life and take place in cities, towns and villages all over Ireland. From up-tempo tunes to mournful ballads (called *sean-nós* singing), toes are tapped, hands are clapped and the crowd is captivated. Looking for a great traditional music pub? Try The Locke Bar in Limerick, Kelly's Cellars in Belfast, the Crane Bar in Galway, Peadar O'Donnell's in Derry~Londonderry and An Spailpin Fánach in Cork.

### 3. THE INSTRUMENTS

Possibly the most famous of all Ireland's instruments, the *bodhrán* is a one-sided frame drum, played with a *cipín* (wooden stick). It creates a subtle, pulsating beat that quickly turns listeners into dancers. At a session, you're also likely to notice a tin whistle (a simple wind instrument) and the fiddle (basically a violin played in a different way). Keep your eyes out, too, for the uilleann pipes, often regarded as the most melodic pipes in the world.

### 4. WHERE TO GO

You can hear traditional music all over the island, from little gems such as the Fisherman's Thatched Inn in County Laois to the Crosskeys Inn in County Antrim. But two counties in Ireland stand out as being particularly famous for their sounds: County Clare and County Donegal. Try the lively villages of Doolin, Kilfenora and Ballyvaughan in County Clare, and Gweedore, Donegal town and Letterkenny in County Donegal.

### 5. ULSTER-SCOTS TRADITIONS

With a history stretching back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the Ulster-Scots community in Northern Ireland has a rich musical heritage that makes a very different sound to traditional Irish music. Fiddles, pipes and the Lambeg drum combine to create a unique tone that can be best heard at festivals such as the Donaghadee Ulster-Scots Festival in July, featuring music and dance performances alongside Ulster-Scots food and craft demonstrations.

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## DUBLIN

Backed by mountains and on the edge of the Irish Sea, Dublin is a place that makes the most of its striking location. Breezy and easy-going, the city is surrounded by gorgeous coastal villages that ooze charm and offer a bounty of cliff walks, castles, cool bars and *craic* (fun), while the Dublin Mountains are a walker's paradise.

All this right on the doorstep gives Dublin its edge, but if you're looking to discover the city's distinctive personality head straight to the centre. Creative, charismatic and cultural, Dublin buzzes with energy, from the lively cobbled streets of Temple Bar to the grand galleries of the Irish Museum of Modern Art, the Hugh Lane and the National Gallery of Ireland.

Walking the city is easy. Crossing over bridges, down small cobblestone alleys and past bustling pubs, you'll find everything from secret Harry Clarke stained-glass windows on Asdill's Row to boardwalks along the River Liffey. There's Christ Church Cathedral, dating to 1030; Dublin Castle, with a history that stretches back to the first Celtic settlement in the 1st century AD; and Kilmainham Gaol, one of the largest

unoccupied prisons in Europe, and a place with a key role in modern Irish history. Step inside Trinity College to see the famous 9th century illuminated manuscript, The Book of Kells; explore a dazzling collection of prehistoric gold jewellery at the National Museum of Ireland; and get the inside track on Ireland's most famous stout at the Guinness Storehouse, with panoramic views of Dublin from the Gravity Bar.

And if you're looking for great things to eat, there's no better place to be. Fast-paced and cutting-edge, Dublin's food scene makes the most of the island's natural bounty in a never-ending stream of hip cafés, street food and high-grade restaurants. Feast on fresh oysters at the Temple Bar Food Market on Saturdays, enjoy the five-course tasting menu at the acclaimed Forest Avenue, or grab a hearty seafood chowder at Catch 22 on South Anne Street.

With historic traditional pubs, like the Stag's Head, the Palace Bar and Kehoe's; lovely green spaces along the Grand Canal and Phoenix Park; and some of the friendliest locals in the world – Dublin is an adventure in itself.

## OUT AND ABOUT

**EAT** Located near the 17th century marketplace of Smithfield (where you'll find the Old Jameson Distillery), **Fish Shop** is a delight, with delicious fish dishes in casual surroundings. Downstairs in the **Winding Stair** on Lower Ormond Quay you'll find a bookstore, but head upstairs to its restaurant and you can enjoy tasty modern Irish dishes overlooking the River Liffey. Or go for critically acclaimed cooking in charming surroundings at **Delahunt** restaurant inside a Victorian building on Lower Camden Street, with lace curtains and a stylish interior. The charming cocktail bar on the first floor is an ideal spot for a pre-dinner drink.

**DRINK** Looking for traditional Irish music with an authentic local slant? Head to **The Cobblestone** pub in Smithfield, where the nightly music sessions are legendary. **The Long Hall** on South Great George's Street is something of an institution with a Victorian interior that has changed little since opening in the 1860s. Wood panelling and cosy little snugs (traditional booths) define the atmosphere at the small but charming **Toner's** on Lower Baggot Street. It opened in 1818 as a bar and grocery store, and today retains many of its original features.

**SLEEP** Redefining the term "hostel", the **Generator** in Smithfield offers quality accommodation at affordable prices in a modern environment, with private single, twin, double and shared rooms. Go for boutique glamour at **The Dean Dublin Hotel** near St Stephen's Green, with bars, a rooftop restaurant and design-focused rooms. Or opt for old-school glamour at **The Merrion Hotel**. Comprising four Georgian townhouses, it's Irish luxury at its finest.

**DO** Dublin boasts two great distilleries: the **Old Jameson Distillery** (re-opening following refurbishment in March 2017) and the newer **Teeling Distillery**. Both offer tours and tastings. Showcasing the journey of Irish people throughout the world, **EPIC Ireland** is a new visitor centre on Custom House Quay boasting state-of-the-art galleries and an Irish Family History Centre. Tucked away on St Stephen's Green is the **Little Museum of Dublin**, with an eccentric collection of Dublin artefacts and an exhibition on U2.

**EXPLORE** Dublin is the perfect place to mix culture with sea air. Why not go kayaking around **Dalkey Island**, walk the Victorian pier at **Dun Laoghaire**, enjoy a seafood lunch by the harbour at **Howth**, or explore historic **Malahide Castle**? You'll get the best coastal views with walks around the peninsula of **Howth Head** to the north or up **Killiney Hill** in south County Dublin.



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## GOOD TO KNOW

Ireland's national museums and galleries all have free entry.

Dublin is a UNESCO City of Literature – find out more at the Dublin Writers Museum on Parnell Square.

Dublin is small and walkable but Dublin Bus, the Luas tram and the DART (the railway that travels out to the north and south coasts) are great ways to get around.

**WHEN TO GO:** Dublin buzzes all year round. There's the St Patrick's Festival in March, great summer festivals in the city parks and on the docklands, and in autumn the Dublin Festival Season covers theatre, fashion, music and Halloween events. Come December and January, things don't go quiet, with the New Year's Festival and Temple Bar TradFest in January.

1 **River Liffey** Many bridges cross the River Liffey, which divides the city into north and south.  
2 **Trinity College Dublin** This historic university was founded in 1592.  
3 **Temple Bar** Mix it up with music, art, film and food in Dublin's cultural quarter.  
4 **Coliemore Harbour**, Dalkey, County Dublin.  
5 **Ha'penny Bridge** Dublin's iconic bridge was constructed in May 1816.



1

## OUT AND ABOUT

**EAT** At the **Mourne Seafood Bar**, you can enjoy fabulously fresh seafood that is brought in daily from the ports of Annalong and Kilkeel. Expect bowls of delicious mussels, oysters and seafood chowder – perfect with a glass of local stout. A stalwart of the restaurant scene, **James Street South** is ideal for fine dining with a touch of relaxed glamour. Its “Taste of Ulster Tasting Menu” is a good way to try out local flavours. Enjoy some of Northern Ireland’s famous beef at **Meat Locker**, which uses Hannan meats – matured in a Himalayan salt chamber and cooked over a charcoal grill. Delicious.

**DRINK** Step into a world of glorious Victoriana at the **Crown Liquor Saloon**. With beautifully carved ceilings, mahogany detailing and gas lamps, it’s a perfect place to relax with a glass of real ale or local cider. Lively traditional music kicks off on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday at **Kelly’s Cellars**, built in 1720, with musicians from all over Ireland joining sessions. And if you’re after an upscale cocktail surrounded by Belle Époque glamour, then check out **Aether & Echo** on Lower Garfield Street, with food, drink and music.

**SLEEP** Right in the middle of the Cathedral Quarter, the **Merchant Hotel** is

set within an old 1860s bank, and boasts an opulent interior. Located adjacent to the Grand Opera House, the **Europa Hotel** is an excellent central choice, or try the **Old Rectory Guesthouse** in south Belfast – a charming B&B in an old church rectory that serves award-winning breakfasts.

**DO** With a beautiful Palm House and Tropical Ravine, Belfast’s **Botanic Gardens** are a 19<sup>th</sup> century horticultural wonderland and are located beside the **Queen’s University** campus, which counts Liam Neeson and Stephen Rea among its alumni. Take a tour of **City Hall**, which opened its doors during a time of real prosperity in Belfast back in 1906. The **Ulster Museum**, meanwhile, covers the art, history and natural science of Northern Ireland.

**EXPLORE** Stroll up the slopes of Cave Hill for spectacular views from the **Belfast Castle Estate** and **Cave Hill Visitor Centre**. Great walking trails will take you past caves, an ancient fort and Belfast Castle. Around 30 minutes outside the city on the shores of Belfast Lough is **Carrickfergus Castle**. Built in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, the castle has been besieged by the Scots, Irish, English and French over the years, and is one of the best preserved medieval castles on the island of Ireland. Further on at Islandmagee is **The Gobbins**, a majestic cliff path originally opened in 1902 and restored with exhilarating bridges and tunnels.



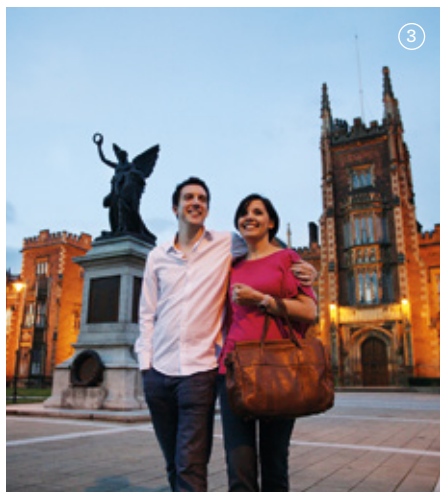
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# BELFAST

With its critically acclaimed modern restaurants, Titanic sightseeing and engaging cultural scene, it’s easy to see why Belfast is one of Europe’s most up-and-coming city-break destinations. Located on the island’s northeast coast, this is a place that feels cosmopolitan and international, but retains its individuality thanks to the friendly locals, atmospheric pubs and sightseeing tours with a twist.

You don’t have to dig deep to uncover Belfast’s charms. From red-bricked Victorian architecture to the green open spaces of Belfast Castle Estate, there’s always somewhere different to discover. Wander along the River Lagan and you’ll get a taste of what Belfast must have been like in its shipbuilding heyday when the world’s biggest ocean liner, Titanic, was built here.

At the Titanic Quarter, Belfast’s maritime history can be enjoyed in all its glory with the SS Nomadic (the world’s last surviving White Star Line ship) and HMS Caroline, a WWI light cruiser. But it’s Titanic Belfast that’s really the star of the show. Step inside this shimmering titanium giant and you’ll find absorbing

interactive displays and compelling exhibitions.

At the heart of Belfast’s social and cultural action, the Cathedral Quarter is the place to go for an afternoon of galleries and an evening of socialising. Visit The MAC Belfast for changing exhibitions, before partaking in culture of a different sort in traditional pubs such as the John Hewitt or the Duke of York.

Hip, innovative and accessible, Belfast’s food scene is a flourishing mix of outstanding local ingredients and acclaimed chefs. To get a feel for all things foodie, visit the St George’s Market on a Friday or Saturday and you’ll find local producers selling everything from cheese to chocolate. Call into George’s of the Market while you’re here – it’s famed for serving an excellent Ulster Fry, Northern Ireland’s legendary cooked breakfast.

After that, get into the Belfast culinary swing of things at the Michelin-starred restaurants of Ox and Eipic, as well as more relaxed eateries including Stix & Stones and The Muddlers Club. It’s this great mix of culture, tradition, food and entertainment that makes Belfast such a memorable place to visit.



## GOOD TO KNOW

Belfast’s national museums and galleries all have free entry, but Titanic Belfast charges an entry fee. It’s a good idea to book ahead at busy times.

In terms of currency, Belfast, along with the rest of Northern Ireland, uses pound sterling.

Belfast is very accessible from Dublin. Driving between the two cities will take around two hours. Dublin and Belfast are also connected by rail. Journey time is around two-and-a-half hours.

**WHEN TO GO:** Any time is a great time to visit Belfast, but in the autumn, in particular, you can enjoy the Belfast International Arts Festival, which runs from October through to November.

1 Belfast City Hall Public guided tours of the building’s finest rooms are available. 2 HMS Caroline The last surviving ship from the Battle of Jutland in 1916. 3 Queen’s University A red-bricked beauty dating back to 1849. 4 St George’s Market Victorian covered market built between 1890 and 1896. 5 Titanic Belfast The world’s biggest Titanic visitor attraction.



## CORK

Is Cork the best place in the world? The locals certainly think so. One thing you'll notice about this captivating city on Ireland's coast is that it inspires a devotion in those who live here that no other place can rival.

Sitting proudly on an island in the middle of the River Lee in southwest Ireland, Cork is a bustling collection of atmospheric coffee shops, vibrant art

## OUT AND ABOUT

**EAT** Sage Restaurant has been garnering rave reviews for its food, which is sourced from within 12 miles/19km of its door. It's a little outside the city itself in the nearby town of Midleton. In town, try the vibrant and fresh flavours of Orso with an Irish take on Mediterranean fare, or nip into The Fish Wife for great fish and chips – they're best enjoyed alfresco along the scenic quays of the River Lee.

**DRINK** You can mix great craft beer with a bite to eat at the Franciscan Well Brewery, built on the site of an old Franciscan monastery. Crane Lane is a good option if you're after a bit of music, offering tunes seven nights a week, or step into the higgledy-piggledy Sin É, which is big on atmosphere and feels like the quintessential "Irish pub".

1 Elizabeth Fort Built in 1601 on a rocky outcrop overlooking the city. 2 Blackrock Castle Observatory Enjoy science and the cosmos in a 16th century castle. 3 English Market Described by Rick Stein as the "best covered market in the UK and Ireland". 4 Hayfield Manor Five-star luxury hotel just outside the city centre. 5 Cobh A pretty town near Cork city with Titanic connections.

galleries, enthralling museums and great pubs. Despite being a city, there's a decidedly towny feel – life is laid-back, nothing is too much hassle and the city centre is easily walkable.

A good place to start is the Crawford Art Gallery, where Irish artists such as Paul Henry, Jack B Yeats and Dorothy Cross share space with the original 5th century Athenian discus-thrower, Discobolus. The Triskel Arts Centre takes culture to the next level with everything from arthouse films to intimate gigs within a beautiful converted church, while the quirky Butter Museum offers a surprisingly interesting take on one of Cork's historic industries. And if you're looking for a uniquely Cork experience, ring church bells at St Anne's Church, take in the eerie 19th century history of the Cork City Gaol, or float under the city's bridges on an urban kayaking tour.

Foodies will discover that Cork is something of a mecca. Walk around the historic English Market and you'll find artisan cheese, smoked fish and creamy chocolate among the buzzing food stalls. Flavour, quality and innovation drive the city's vibrant restaurant scene, with favourites such as Café Paradiso and the Farmgate Café sitting alongside new hotspots such as Electric, Salt, Miyazaki and Elbow Lane. When it comes to drinks, you can expect the same level of quality that fires up the food scene. Cork's local brews are big right now – Eight Degrees Brewing, Rising Sons and Elbow Lane are among those to look out for; not forgetting Cork's native stout, Murphy's.

Small, tasty, creative... once you've sampled Cork, you'll probably start agreeing with the locals.

**SLEEP** Just outside the city, the award-winning Hayfield Manor is a haven of elegance, calm and five-star luxury. The Clarion overlooks the River Lee and is a good, modern choice that boasts a swimming pool and spa or try the Maldron Hotel's spacious and comfortable rooms in a central location.

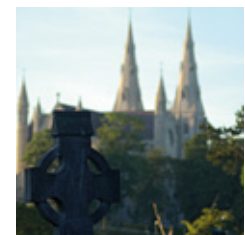
**DO** The compelling tour of early 17th century Elizabeth Fort off Barrack Street – it's been used as an army barracks, female prison and a police station over the centuries. Just 1.2 miles/2km from the centre you'll find Blackrock Castle Observatory on the banks of the River Lee, or get an art fix at the elegant Lewis Glucksman Gallery in University College Cork.

**EXPLORE** One of the most popular day trips from Cork is to Cobh, a beautiful seaport town and the Titanic's last port of call – find out more at the Titanic Experience Cobh. Visit the seafood town of Kinsale, or head out to Spike Island. Known as "Ireland's Alcatraz", it was used to house convicts before penal transportation.



## 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



### ARMAGH

Ireland's ecclesiastical capital? Welcome to Armagh, proud possessor of two cathedrals, both dedicated to St Patrick. A compact city, Armagh is perfect for exploring on foot. Wander through the gracious tree-lined Georgian Mall (once a rather scandalous racecourse); watch out for the 22 quirky bronze gargoyles and angels hidden around the city; or try stargazing at the planetarium. With a great collection of restaurants including the Moody Boar and Uluru Bistro, Armagh is a city to be savoured.



### DERRY~LONDONDERY

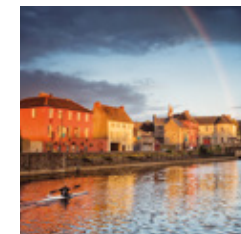
Ancient city walls, great pubs and a rich cultural scene are making Derry~Londonderry one of the most exciting cities to visit on the island of Ireland. The gorgeous natural setting is complemented by structures that really set Derry~Londonderry apart: the Peace

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.



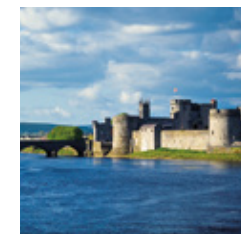
### GALWAY

The spirit of Ireland's west coast is very much present in this vibrant seaside city. Galway is never far from a festival (arts, film, horse racing and oysters are all celebrated in quick succession during the summer months). This, combined with its compact streets and colourful shop fronts, gives the feeling of a rolling street party. The super Galway City Museum, thriving food scene (Galway has two Michelin-starred restaurants, Aniar and Loam) and scenic coastal suburb of Salthill seal the deal.



### KILKENNY

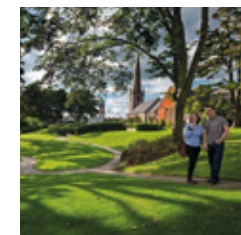
Located in Ireland's Ancient East, Kilkenny mixes nightlife, great food and culture to perfection. This city will wow you with medieval showpieces by day, and keep you entertained in traditional pubs by night. Walk the Medieval Mile and be catapulted back centuries with Tudor inns, old merchant townhouses, hidden alleys and historic big hitters such as Kilkenny Castle and St Canice's Cathedral. The city also boasts great craft shops, design studios and the Smithwick's Experience Kilkenny.



### 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

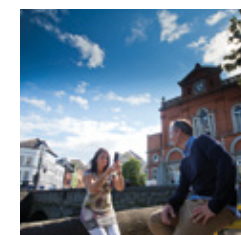
Museum, based in the author's old school. See rugby at Thomond Park, try local food at the Milk Market's weekend market and explore the fortifications of the 13th century King John's Castle.



### 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 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 traces the city's story back to prehistory.

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



### 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 covered in the Viking Triangle of museums, which contains the Medieval Museum, Bishop's Palace

and Reginald's Tower. See beautiful cut glass at the House of Waterford Crystal, taste a freshly baked "blaa" (bread roll) at the Granary Café or take a walk along the historic quays.

# TOP IRELAND EXPERIENCES

The island of Ireland is packed with incredible things to see and do, from epic landscapes to fabulous festivals. Get inspired with some of the best...

1



2

## THE CLIFFS OF MOHER AND THE BURREN

County Clare

1|2. Soaring to 702ft/214 metres, the Cliffs of Moher bring a real wow factor to the Wild Atlantic Way. This is the kind of place that makes the heart beat faster – sea birds swirl above, waves surge below and viewing platforms boast vast panoramas. Just north of the Cliffs of Moher, you'll find one of Ireland's most unusual geological landscapes, known as the Burren. This vast, moon-like karst limestone plateau spreads down to the ocean, with delicate arctic-alpine plants, orchids and patches of grassland. Take a walking trail, explore the history and relax in one of the wonderful surrounding towns and villages, such as pretty Ballyvaughan, musical Doolin and laid-back Lahinch.



3

## GIANT'S CAUSEWAY

County Antrim

3. It's a moment of pure fantasy, the Giant's Causeway – the kind of place you can't quite believe exists. Here, 60-million-year-old volcanic activity and the pounding of the ocean have created 40,000 hexagonal basalt columns that tumble down to the water. Now a UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Giant's Causeway is perched on the edge of the famous Causeway Coastal Route and is a place where the facts about its formation are as compelling as the legends that surround it. Walk the coastal paths, enjoy the views from the surrounding cliffs and step inside the award-winning visitor centre to find out more about the fascinating geology and myths that surround this place. For a view with a difference, take to the water with Portrush Sea Tours.

## INISHOWEN PENINSULA

County Donegal

4. The Inishowen Peninsula is as far north as you can get in Ireland. Next stop: the Arctic Circle. Here, on the largest peninsula in Ireland, Atlantic views go on for miles, and sometimes in technicolour, as the Northern Lights (Aurora Borealis) shine down from time to time in the winter months. Roads wind their way into fishing villages such as Moville, Shrove and Muff. Amid all the wild beauty, Inishowen also provides solace, with moments of real peace to be found at Kinnagoe Bay, quiet Leenan Bay and the stunning fjord of Lough Swilly. After enjoying quiet downtime, reach back to 1700BC at the stone fort of Grianán of Aileach, on a hill overlooking Loughs Foyle and Swilly.



4

## BEARA PENINSULA

County Cork

5. In Ireland, the further west you go, the more rugged the landscape becomes. And nowhere is this more evident than on the Beara Peninsula, which juts out into the Atlantic Ocean and feels about as wild as the island can get. This is a landscape of isolated forests, of vibrant island communities, of dramatic sea cliffs overlooking the Atlantic Ocean. Drive the circular 85 miles/137km Beara Way route, or take to two wheels on the Beara Cycling Route, and you'll discover everything from the colourful villages of Allihies and Eyeries to an incredible island garden called Garinish – filled with lush, exotic plants. Hidden inland is the Healy Pass, a winding mountain road that will take your breath away.



5

6

## THE GOBBINS

County Antrim

6. Ancient cliffs, sparkling sea and a walk full of excitement: this is The Gobbins, a 100-year-old revitalised cliff path in County Antrim. 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 on the island of Ireland. Designed in 1902 by railway engineer Berkeley Deane-Wise, The Gobbins closed to the public in 1954, but was restored and rebooted in 2015 to great acclaim. Strap on a helmet and join the guided tour and you'll be taken over dramatic bridges, down steps that snake around the edges of cliffs and through smugglers' caves. It's a perfect introduction to the glories that lie ahead on the Causeway Coastal Route.





### SKELLIG MICHAEL

County Kerry

7. There are few words to describe the sheer magnificence of Skellig Michael, lying 7 miles/11.7km off the coast of County Kerry. It was here, between the 6th and 8th centuries, that devout Christian monks sought extreme isolation, and they certainly found it. This is an extraordinary place, described by writer George Bernard Shaw as “part of our dream world”. Walk up 600 stone steps and you’ll encounter a small monastery, made up of six dry-stone beehive huts and two oratories. More recently, Skellig Michael hit the big screen with a starring role in Star Wars: The Force Awakens. Numbers allowed on the island are limited so book ahead, or opt for a boat trip around the island instead. Either way, it’s an unforgettable experience.

7

### CONNEMARA

County Galway

8. Oscar Wilde was certainly onto something when he called Connemara “a savage beauty”. Tobacco-coloured hills, navy lakes, and towns and villages that thrum with traditional music – this is Ireland unplugged. Famous for its raw, untamed landscapes and glorious white-sand beaches, Connemara has been a chosen destination for artists, poets and thinkers through the ages. Covering parts of Galway and edging into Mayo, this unique area covers everything from the breathtaking Killary Fjord to the ancient bogs around Roundstone. Ride a Connemara pony, walk one of the Connemara National Park trails, enjoy a pint in a traditional pub or take a boat trip to the island of Inishbofin.



8



9

### ST PATRICK’S DAY

9. Get the party started: St Patrick’s Day in Ireland is one of the highlights of the festival calendar, with a fantastic array of events taking place all over the island. In Dublin, the big day is a great excuse for a four-day festival (16-19 March 2017) with everything from street theatre to céilís (traditional dances); and Derry~Londonderry’s St Patrick’s Day Spring Carnival is a cheerful celebration with events throughout the city. There are also parades in Downpatrick and Armagh, while what’s thought to be the oldest St Patrick’s Day parade in Ireland takes place in Wexford town. Wherever you go, expect a flurry of green, as well as traditional song, dance, and that great celebratory atmosphere Ireland is famous for.

### WALLED CITY OF DERRY~LONDONDERRY

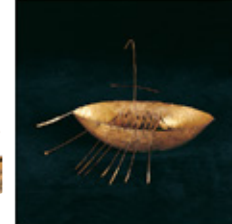
10. There is a lot that makes Derry~Londonderry a fascinating city to visit: the vibrant cultural life, great restaurants and fabulous music pubs for starters. But one of the city’s biggest draws is the 17th century walls that fully enclose it. Derry~Londonderry is one of the finest examples of a walled city in Europe, and these huge barricades, built between 1613 and 1618, form a historic walkway of around 0.9 mile/1.5km. Look out for the cannons, too – Derry~Londonderry boasts Europe’s largest collection of cannons, which played a starring role during two 17th century sieges. Find out more about these, as well as other aspects of the city’s history, within the award-winning Tower Museum, with its open-air viewing platform.

10

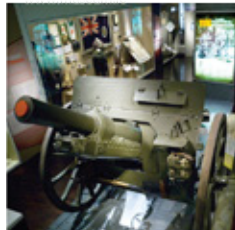


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# IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST

Stunning scenery, vivid tales and adventure with the ancients, discover the power of the past on a trip around this incredible part of the island of Ireland



1

Prehistoric passage tombs haunted by the past; stunning monastic sites that once drew scholars from all over Europe; dramatic castles rocked by bloody sieges. This is Ireland's Ancient East, a vast playground of fascinating history, compelling characters and beautiful green pastures. Comprising 17 counties east of the River Shannon and tracing 5,000 years, here the past comes alive with every step you take, from gracious mansions set in lush valleys to bogs that harbour secrets of Iron Age Ireland. Trace Ireland's maritime history along a coastline with Titanic connections, walk with the Vikings through one of Ireland's oldest cities and encounter the world of Stone Age man. A trip around Ireland's Ancient East brings history to life. It's time to peel back the centuries...



2



3



4



5

## GETTING GOING

With so much at your fingertips in Ireland's Ancient East, it can be hard to know where to start. But there is one thing that links these amazing places, from the medieval city of Kilkenny to the mystical Hill of Tara, and that's the stories... Discover the tales behind these landmarks and you'll unearth the hopes and dreams that fuelled the lives of high kings and heroes, saints and scholars. Here are some ideas to get you going.

## ANCIENT IRELAND

History inhabits almost every corner of County Meath, an apt place to kickstart your journey. Here, over 5,000 years ago, Neolithic people cultivated land and created farms, but what they left behind are among the world's most astonishing monuments: curving softly from the green fields of the Boyne Valley is the passage tomb of Newgrange, dating back to 3200BC. Enter the Brú na Boinne Visitor Centre and it's your key to 5,000-year-old ingenuity at Newgrange – a UNESCO World Heritage Site – the passage tomb erected to line up with the first rays of sunlight on the winter solstice, and the equally fascinating burial mounds of Knowth and Dowth. County Meath also boasts the Loughcrew Cairns (4000BC), which according to legend were made when a witch dropped an apronful of rocks as she leapt across mountains. Its 30 or so tombs make up what's said to be the world's oldest cemetery.

## HIGH KINGS AND HEROES

Everyone loves a good story, and in Ireland's Ancient East you can delve into some of the most fascinating around. Ireland's ancient kings ruled the landscape 2,000 years ago, and keeping the gods happy was a driving force in their lives, with sacrificial deaths a way of appeasing their deities. The history of these kings is wrapped in fabulous legends, such as the story of King Laoghaire who was buried upright on the Hill of Tara, the ancient capital of Ireland, with a sword in hand to keep his enemies at bay – even in death. Around 142 kings reigned at Tara, crowned on a coronation stone called the Lia Fáil, which is still standing today.

## SACRED IRELAND

The longest Viking ship ever recorded was built from oak beams from Glendalough in 1042, but this idyllic



6

1 Rock of Cashel, County Tipperary This glorious site is also known as St Patrick's Rock. 2 Ardmore Cathedral, County Waterford Founded by St Declan in the 5th century. 3 River Barrow, County Carlow A picturesque spot along the quiet riverbank. 4 Clonmacnoise, County Offaly This monastic site was established by St Ciarán in 544. 5 Newgrange, County Meath An ancient burial mound. 6 Jerpoint Park, County Kilkenny A great example of a 12<sup>th</sup> century medieval town.

Wicklow valley of the two lakes is best known for its early medieval monastic site. Although raided by marauding Norsemen at times, the remarkable cathedral, round tower and stone huts testify to the life of worship enjoyed here since the 6<sup>th</sup> century, when St Kevin founded the site. Similar serenity can be found at Jerpoint Abbey, a 12<sup>th</sup> century church that was once the spiritual heart of a now vanished Irish province, the Kingdom of Osraige. In a time of saints and scholars in Ireland, women made their mark in County Kildare at the religious settlement now occupied by St Brigid's Cathedral. The resident abbess held so much sway that even the bishop of the region used to bow to her will when visiting.

## ANCIENT HIGHWAY

In a similarly sacred setting, this time on the banks of the mighty River Shannon in Offaly, is Clonmacnoise. Complete with round towers, churches, cathedral and high crosses, this Early Christian site was once one of Europe's most important centres of learning and religion. >



7 Glendalough, County Wicklow Situated within the wilds of Wicklow National Park. 8 Kilkenny Castle, Kilkenny city With a majestic location at the entrance to the city.

Part of Clonmacnoise's importance lies in its strategic position – at the heart of the island's ancient crossroads on the Shannon, a watery highway that has been used as far back as the Iron Age. Today, it's all about pleasure, stunning unspoilt waters, boating and watersports, as well as the great towns and villages along the banks.

### TRACING THE VIKINGS

Bearing down on an unsuspecting Ireland from Scandinavia, hordes of Vikings first arrived in the 8<sup>th</sup> century. They looted Ireland's monasteries, battled kings and established cities that still exist today. Waterford, which dates back to 914, is one of the oldest cities in Ireland, and one of the most important for Viking history. Take a walking tour of the Viking triangle and step inside the trio of museums called Waterford Treasures to discover all about the Vikings' effect on the city.

### CASTLES AND CONQUESTS

Castles don't come more fairytale than the spellbinding Rock of Cashel in County Tipperary. Traditionally the seat of the Kings of Munster and visited by St Patrick in the 5<sup>th</sup> century, this remarkable place has one of the most impressive collections of medieval architecture and Celtic art in Europe. Over at the Rock of Dunamase in County Laois, you'll find another storybook sight. If it looks like an unlikely wedding present, that's because it is. History tells of how in 1170, the castle of Dunamase once formed part of the dowry of Aoife Rua, daughter of the King of Leinster. Equally impressive is Kilkenny Castle, the pride of the Medieval Mile and an ode to the glory days of epic architecture. As you stand in the beautifully kept grounds and look up at the castle, it's hard to imagine that it was nearly brought to its knees during a siege in 1922.

### BIG HOUSES AND HARD TIMES

Hidden within quiet valleys are some of the island's most spectacular reminders of indulgent aristocratic life, including Russborough House in County Wicklow, Beaulieu House in County Louth, and Curraghmore House in County Waterford. One of the most beautiful, though, is Castletown House in County Kildare – a Palladian Manor built by William Conolly, once the wealthiest commoner in Ireland. While in County Westmeath, seek out

the scars of a spiteful family feud amid the tranquil surrounds of Belvedere House. In stark contrast, life was very different for poverty-stricken locals. You can find out more about their experiences at the Dunbrody Famine Ship and Irish Emigrant Experience in New Ross, County Wexford.

### MARITIME GATEWAY

Ireland's relationship with the sea stretches back millennia. At the pretty port town of Cobh in County Cork, you'll find rows of multicoloured houses and the heartbreaking stories of emigrants. It's thought that over 2.5 million people departed from here between 1848 and 1950. Cobh was also the last port of call for the Titanic. Take a ticket in the name of a real-life passenger at the Titanic Experience to see how you would have fared on that tragic night.

### SPORT OF KINGS

From 3<sup>rd</sup> century kings racing their chariots to the lush landscapes ready for a countryside canter or a race for the finish line, nowhere is our love affair with the steed more clearly seen than County Kildare. Witness the spectacle of long lines of thoroughbreds training across miles of flat, rich plains at the Curragh, or visit the Curragh Military Museum and see how these grounds, in their time, were used for the Jacobites and their war horses in 1686, as well as British soldiers during WWI. Simply incredible. 🐾

#### ALONG THE WAY

**TAKE A TOUR:** One of the best ways to experience Ireland's Ancient East is with a tour guide. You'll find excellent tour guides with great stories everywhere from heritage towns such as Birr in County Offaly to mansions like Curraghmore, County Waterford.

**EXPERIENCE:** Ireland's Ancient East offers fantastic festivals from beach horse racing at Laytown (Sept) to the entertaining Waterford Spraoi International Street Arts Festival (July).

**ENJOY:** Sample a sup of ale at the Smithwick's Experience Kilkenny, shop for great bargains at Kildare Village Designer Outlet and discover craft from Waterford Crystal to Nicholas Mosse Pottery.



### 10 GREAT EXPERIENCES

#### HOOK LIGHTHOUSE

This County Wexford lighthouse boasts stunning views and is the oldest operational lighthouse in the world.

#### CAVAN BUREN PARK

Walk through the world of prehistoric man in County Cavan – it's one of Ireland's most unusual landscapes.

#### CORLEA TRACKWAY

Step back to 148BC with this Iron Age bog road in County Longford – the biggest of any found in Europe.

#### ATHLONE CASTLE

Take a journey into the history of this riverside town in County Westmeath, where a brutal siege raged in 1691.

#### LOUGH GUR

At Lough Gur in Limerick, a hoard of Viking spoils awaits. Iron knives, jet bracelets, spindle whorls and a store of Danish silver reward the visitor at this tranquil lake, along with the silent stone forts of Carraig Aille.

#### ST PETER'S CHURCH DROGHEDA

After its owner was hung, drawn and quartered in 1681, St Oliver Plunkett's head now sits in a vast gilded shrine in St Peter's Church, County Louth.

#### BATTLE OF THE BOYNE

Head to County Meath to see where 60,000 troops fought in one of Ireland's most defining battles in 1690.

#### CARRICKMACROSS FAMINE WORKHOUSE

Built in the 1840s, this County Monaghan Famine workhouse is one of only a few left in Ireland.

#### KENNEDY HOMESTEAD

The visitor centre in County Wexford showcases an exhibit examining the legacy of five generations of the famous Kennedy family.

#### CARLINGFORD

Take a medieval walking tour of this pretty County Louth town, with its castle, friary and 15<sup>th</sup> century mint.

For more information on ways to explore Ireland's Ancient East, visit [ireland.com](http://ireland.com)



For further information please contact

Visitor Services, OPW, Unit 20, Lakeside Retail Park, Claremorris, Co. Mayo, Ireland  
Tel: +353 1 6476000  
email: [info@heritageireland.ie](mailto:info@heritageireland.ie)



For further information on the OPW Heritage Card please contact

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email: [heritagecard@opw.ie](mailto:heritagecard@opw.ie)

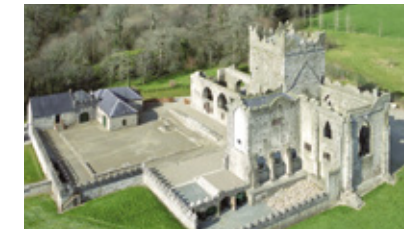
## Visit Ireland's Heritage Sites



Ross Castle, Killarney, County Kerry



Céide Fields Visitor Centre, Ballycastle, County Mayo



Tintern Abbey, Saltmills, New Ross, County Wexford



Newgrange Megalithic Tomb, County Meath



Athenry Castle, Athenry, County Galway



The Main Guard, Clonmel, County Tipperary

Full details [www.heritageireland.ie](http://www.heritageireland.ie)



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# 3 GREAT NORTHERN IRELAND ROAD TRIPS

Northern Ireland is blessed with inspirational driving routes through fantasy landscapes and along one of the most dramatic coastlines in Europe



PHOTO: CASARADEBEN (@STORYTRAVELERS)



## NEED TO KNOW

### CAUSEWAY COASTAL ROUTE

**DISTANCE**  
195 miles/314 km.

**TIME**  
You could drive it all in a day, but give yourself at least 2-3 days, if not longer.

**PUBLIC TRANSPORT**  
Yes, there are buses and trains along the way. Find out more at: [translink.co.uk](http://translink.co.uk) or [journeyplanner.transportforireland.ie](http://journeyplanner.transportforireland.ie)

**NEAREST AIRPORT**  
Belfast International Airport; George Best Belfast City; City of Derry Airport.

**IMPORTANT INFO**  
Distances are in miles in Northern Ireland; speed limits range from 30mph/48km in built up areas to 70mph/112km on motorways.



## CAUSEWAY COASTAL ROUTE

Dramatic cliff-top castles, vast white-sand beaches, charming little villages – the Causeway Coastal Route delivers an incredible amount of beauty within just 195 miles/314km. Starting in the vibrant city of Belfast and finishing in Derry-Londonderry (or the other way around if you prefer), the route is all about taking your time and savouring the sights, sounds and flavours of this spellbinding coastline. See show-stopping panoramas from the craggy heights of Torr Head, experience the warmth of local people in the villages of the Glens of Antrim, and feel the joy of sipping a whiskey in The Bushmills Inn after a day of outdoor adventure. If you're looking for memorable experiences, you're certainly going to get them here.

Frequently cited as one of the best touring routes in the world, it's no surprise that the Causeway Coastal Route is a genuine joy to drive. Each weave and turn of the car brings another gorgeous view, with the road hugging the coastline so closely at times you can taste the sea salt in the air. And it's not just the views that impress, either. Part of this route's allure is that so many great places are packed into a relatively short stretch of coastline. There's Carrickfergus, with its 12<sup>th</sup> century castle; there's The Gobbins, a restored 100-year-old cliff path that brings you through tunnels and over bridges; there's Glenarm Castle, home to the Earls of Antrim for around 400 years; and there's the fairytale beauty of Glenariff Forest Park.

But nothing can quite compare with the Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge. A bridge has been here since 1755 and was used by salmon fishermen to get



from the mainland to Carrick-a-Rede Island. Crossing is an exhilarating experience with the bridge bouncing with every step you take and the waves of the Atlantic crashing against the shore below.

If you're expecting downtime after that, think again. Next up is the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Giant's Causeway, just a short distance away. From the Visitor Centre perched at the top of a hill, a winding road leads down to the main attraction: 40,000 hexagonal stone columns that blanket the landscape and disappear into the ocean like stepping stones to a lost world. According to science, intense volcanic activity 60 million years ago created this whimsical landscape, but the local legend of warring giants is a lot more fun.

It's typical of the Causeway Coastal Route that just when you think you've seen it all more keeps coming. Take it slow, savour it all and recharge your batteries in Bushmills village. Small, quaint and friendly, the village boasts lovely restaurants, such as The French Rooms, as well as the famous Old Bushmills whiskey distillery.

As you head along the coast, Dunluce Castle keeps drama high on the agenda. Like something out of a film, this dramatic ruined 14<sup>th</sup> century castle sits on a stark, rocky headland. And if it looks like it's about to topple into the sea, that may be because part of it already has. According to local tales, on a dark and stormy night in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, bits of the kitchen actually collapsed into the Atlantic pounding the shore below.

After all the cliff-edge cragginess, it's time to relax on the long, wide sands of Portstewart Strand. You'll find towering dunes behind the beach – some of the tallest in Ireland – with the waters of the North Atlantic lapping at the shore. More beauty awaits at Downhill Beach – but make sure to look up: on the edge of a cliff here sits Mussenden Temple built in 1785, a replica of the Temple of Vesta in Rome. As views go, it doesn't get much better – a lasting memory of what truly is one of the world's great road trips.



## HIDDEN GEMS ALONG THE WAY

**ENJOY THE ELEGANT SURROUNDINGS AT...**  
**Ballygally Castle Hotel, Ballygally**  
A stunning 17<sup>th</sup> century castle overlooking the golden sands of Ballygally Bay with uninterrupted views towards Scotland.

**LISTEN TO MUSIC AT...**  
**The House of McDonnell, Ballycastle**  
Park up the car and settle in for a Friday night of great traditional Irish music in this lovely old pub, founded in 1766.

**ENJOY SOME IRISH STEW AT...**  
**The Red Door Tea Room, Ballintoy**  
This traditional Irish cottage tearoom in the charming village of Ballintoy is a proper delight. As well as Irish stew, you'll find fish chowder and local mackerel.

**TAKE TO THE WATER AT...**  
**Portrush**  
Portrush Sea Tours offers everything from one-hour journeys to full-day boat charters to some of the big sights and tiny islands of the Causeway Coast.

**ENJOY ONE OF THE WORLD'S GREAT TRAIN JOURNEYS FROM...**  
**Coleraine to Derry-Londonderry**  
Described by travel journalist Michael Palin as "one of the most beautiful train journeys in the world".

1 Ballintoy Harbour, County Antrim A small shallow harbour that opens into the Atlantic. 2 Portstewart Strand, County Antrim Enjoy miles of golden sand on this stunning beach. 3 Mussenden Temple, County Londonderry Dramatic temple overlooking Downhill Beach. 4 Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge, County Antrim Fishermen first used a bridge here in 1755. 5 Glenariff, County Antrim Bluebells in spring. 6 Giant's Causeway, County Antrim UNESCO World Heritage Site. 7 Ballygally Castle Hotel, County Antrim 17th century castle that is now a hotel.





## THE MOURNE COASTAL DRIVE

8

Backed by the Mourne Mountains and weaving along Carlingford Lough and the Irish Sea, the Mourne Coastal Drive has all you could want from a road trip: scenery, adventure and charm.

Starting off in Newry, the route weaves through Warrenpoint, along the northern shore of pretty Carlingford Lough. This glacial fjord has seen a lot over the years, including Viking invasions and Norman conquests. It's also an outdoor wonderland, with everything from golf at the Warrenpoint Golf Club to scenic boat tours.

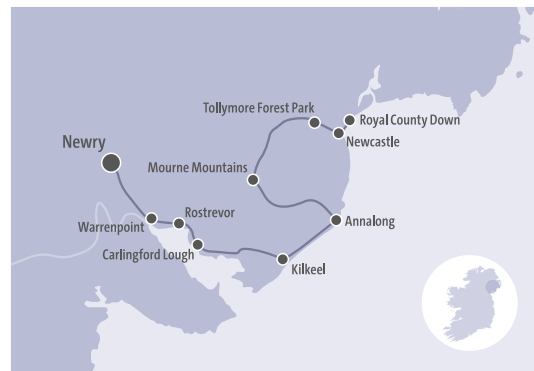
Tracking the road along the shore, you'll reach the village of Rostrevor at the foot of Slieve Martin Mountain. Stunning walking trails suitable for all abilities run through Kilbroney Park and Rostrevor Forest, while Rostrevor is also considered the best place for mountain biking on the island of Ireland.

If perfecting culinary skills is more up your street, head along to the Mourne Seafood Cookery School in Kilkeel. Overlooking the water, the cookery school specialises in local dishes.

Heading through the harbour village of Annalong, the scenery revs up with the moody blue tones of the Mourne Mountains. The Mournes were an inspiration for author CS Lewis's Narnia – see them in winter and you'll realise why.

Onwards to the scenic seaside town of Newcastle where the route draws to a close. It's a great place to finish up, with beach walks, mountain trails or a round of golf at the world-famous Royal County Down course.

**EAT** Enjoy delicious locally sourced produce at **Maisons** in Rostrevor. **SLEEP** **Slieve Donard Resort** in Newcastle makes a great base for exploring the area. **ENJOY** Take a **Bay and Harbour Cruise** or a **Castle Cruise** of Carlingford Lough with Carlingford Lough Cruises.



“As you pass through the harbour village of Annalong, the scenery revs up with the moody blue tones of the Mourne Mountains”



10



11

8 Mourne Mountains, County Down Dramatic peaks, gentle slopes and crystalline lakes. 9 The Dark Hedges, County Antrim An enchanting 18th century avenue of beech trees, which starred in Game of Thrones. 10 Inch Abbey, County Down Atmospheric monastic site. 11 Quintin Castle, County Down Built by John de Courcy in 1184.



## GAME OF THRONES® LOCATIONS

9

If you're looking for fantasy landscapes, mysterious woodlands and beautiful harbours, you're in the right place. Northern Ireland is Game of Thrones® territory. Welcome to real-world Westeros.

The journey begins at Tollymore Forest Park in County Down, better known as the Haunted Forest, a beautiful woodland of follies, grottos and caves, all overlooked by the Mourne Mountains. Still in Down, you might recognise 800-year-old Inch Abbey as the backdrop for some compelling moments from the series, and stunning Castle Ward on the shores of Strangford Lough. Game of Thrones® spent eight weeks here, building the set of Winterfell and today Winterfell Tours offers a Game of Thrones® experience: medieval banquets, face-to-face meetings with direwolves and a location tour.

Instantly recognisable as the Kingsroad from Game of Thrones® is the atmospheric Dark Hedges in County Antrim. It's a beautiful drive to get there through Belfast and with a detour through the Shillanavogy Valley (the Dothraki Grasslands). Turn off the quiet country road and there it is – a magical avenue of beech trees. Pictures taken, it's back on the road to Ballintoy Harbour, near the Giant's Causeway. You may recognise this stone harbour as Lordsport Harbour in Pyke, one of the Iron Islands.

Joining up with the Causeway Coastal Route is Larrybane, AKA the Stormlands, with views out towards Sheep Island. Dragonstone is next – or rather Downhill Beach. This golden stretch of sand is a suitably dramatic ending to your journey.

**EAT** Try **Upstairs@Joes** in Cushendall for great local food. It's just above McCollam's Bar, which is well known for its traditional music sessions. **SLEEP** Bed, breakfast and stunning views are all part of the deal at award-winning **Whitepark House**, Ballintoy.

**ENJOY** Explore the huge sand dunes of **Portstewart Strand**, which featured as the coast of Dorne in season five.

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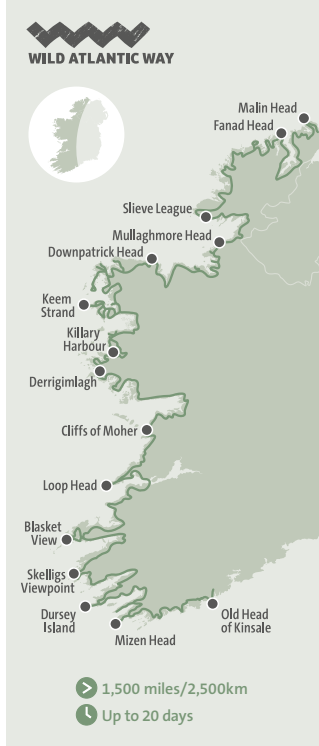
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## 6 WAYS TO EXPLORE THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

Welcome to one of the world's most captivating coastlines – the Wild Atlantic Way. Travel writer Pól Ó Conghaile looks at six ways to travel this magnificent coastal highway

Stretching 1,500 miles/2,500km along the coast of western Ireland from Malin Head in County Donegal to Kinsale, County Cork, the Wild Atlantic Way is a sensational journey of soaring cliffs and buzzing towns, of traditional culture and epic bays. It's a route that can be driven end to end or dipped in to as the mood strikes. And did we mention that it's the longest defined coastal driving route in the world? At that length, driving the Wild Atlantic Way would take about 20 days. But you can also take it in smaller sections highlighted here, each of which offers majestic sights and charming villages where you can listen to traditional music, eat seafood fresh from the boats and relax on deserted beaches.



### NORTHERN HEADLANDS

Malin Head ➤ Donegal town

The northwest is one of the island's most unexplored areas, a rugged and remote coastline way off the beaten track. County Donegal is home to some of Europe's highest sea cliffs at Slieve League and one of Ireland's most spectacular lighthouses at Fanad Head. You might see a basking shark, learn a few words of Irish in the Gaeltacht, or even get to witness a dazzling display of the Northern Lights. Make no mistake, this is Ireland's Northern Star!

#### TASTE THIS

Treat yourself to the acclaimed six-course dinner at the award-winning **Mill Restaurant** in Dunfanaghy, or head to **The Village Tavern**, just outside Donegal town, for equally great seafood dishes and craft beers in a pub that dates back to 1798.

#### DON'T MISS

Take in glorious views from **Malin Head** – Ireland's most northerly point; explore **Grianán of Aileach**, a stone fort from 1700BC; and walk through beautiful **Glenveagh National Park**.

#### TRY THIS

Learn to play the bodhrán (a type of Irish drum) at **Oideas Gael** language and cultural centre in the beautiful surrounds of Gleann Cholm Cille.

#### NEAREST AIRPORT

Belfast International Airport; George Best Belfast City Airport; City of Derry Airport; Donegal Airport (flights from Dublin and Glasgow).



### THE SURF COAST

Donegal town ➤ Erris, County Mayo

Stretching from southern Donegal to the wilds of western Mayo, Ireland's Surf Coast witnesses epic winter waves, but you don't have to be into surfing to get your kicks here. The landscapes offer everything from Céide Fields – a 6,000-year-old monument of stone-walled fields, houses and tombs – to Ben Bulbin, County Sligo's dramatic tabletop mountain. Little wonder Irish poet WB Yeats dubbed Sligo and Leitrim his "Land of Heart's Desire".

#### TASTE THIS

Head to the delightful Lyons Department Store in Sligo town for cakes, bakes and gourmet sandwiches at the **Lyons Café**. Or try some steamed mussels in the charming **Beach Bar** in Aughris, County Sligo, set within a traditional Irish thatched cottage.

#### DON'T MISS

**Glencar Waterfall**, County Leitrim – located slightly inland, it's so pretty WB Yeats immortalised it in a poem; **Lissadell House** in County Sligo, a beautiful Greek-Revival house in lovely countryside; **Ballycroy National Park** in County Mayo, with blanket bog and mountain terrain.

#### TRY THIS

Round up sheep with **Atlantic Sheep Dogs** (+353 85 740 2836), where you can meet and spend time with clever Irish sheep dogs.

#### NEAREST AIRPORT

Ireland West Knock Airport.

### THE BAY COAST

Erris, County Mayo ➤ Galway Bay

Whether you're a walker, cyclist or motorist, the Bay Coast beckons. This is where you'll find Galway city, home to some of Ireland's most vibrant festivals and food, and Achill Island, with its beautiful beaches. The Bay Coast also cradles Connemara, a stunning sprawl of mountains, loughs, islands and bogs that makes an impression whatever the weather. At the heart of it all is Croagh Patrick, overlooking island-studded Clew Bay. The views are fit for a saint!

#### TASTE THIS

Mixing mountain and sea views, the thatched cottage of **Cronin's Sheebeen** overlooks Clew Bay and serves great pub food. Head to **Kai** in Galway city for delicious dishes using local ingredients.

#### DON'T MISS

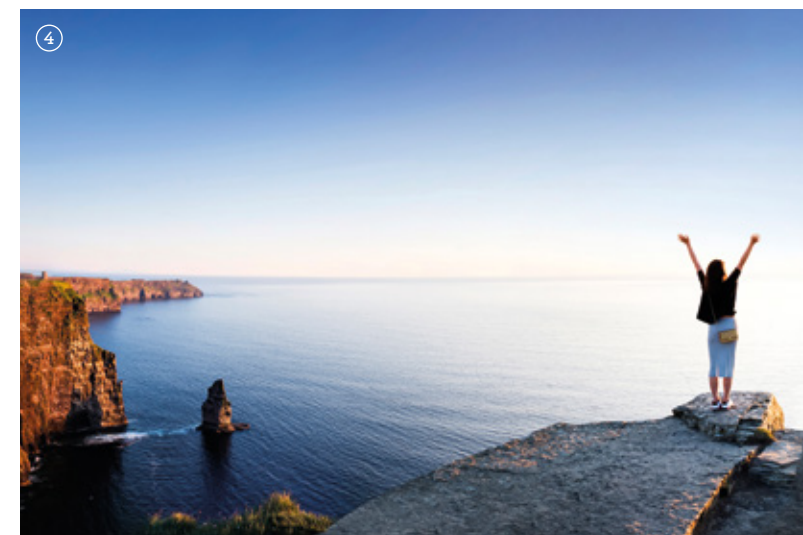
**Kylemore Abbey** is famed for its beauty and romantic tales; **Slievemore Deserted Village** on Achill Island, County Mayo, boasts remains of almost 100 abandoned stone cottages; or head out to **Inishbofin** to enjoy coral beaches, a 17<sup>th</sup> century fort and looped walks (ferries leave from Cleggan).

#### TRY THIS

Take to the seas for a half-day boat trip with **Clew Bay Angling** (clewbayangling.com), catch some mackerel and cook it on board.

#### NEAREST AIRPORT

Ireland West Knock Airport.



### THE CLIFF COAST

Galway ➤ Tralee, County Kerry

Prepare for some incredible sights here: the Cliffs of Moher and the Burren are highlights but Ireland's Cliff Coast has lots of off-the-beaten-track moments, too. Detour onto Loop Head for sky-high sea arches, crashing waves and an ends-of-the-earth lighthouse, or enjoy one of County Clare's hopping traditional music pubs. For the bucket list, take a trip to the Aran Islands, see the Burren in wildflower season (May), or book a round of golf at Ballybunion.

#### TASTE THIS

The **Wild Honey Inn** on the edge of Lisdoonvarna town dates from 1860 and serves modern Irish bistro fare. With great views of Liscannor Bay, **Barrtrá Seafood Restaurant** within a traditional white cottage is a top spot for local seafood.

#### DON'T MISS

The **Cliffs of Moher** are a must-see – try walking to them along the cliff path (5 miles/8km) from Doolin; the **Flying Boat & Maritime Museum** in Foynes, Limerick, tells the story of the golden age of transatlantic travel; or relax on **Fanore Beach**, a stretch of butter-coloured sand in the Burren.

#### TRY THIS

Jump on the **Dolphin Discovery** in Kilrush (discoverdolphins.ie) to see one of the island's only resident groups of bottlenose dolphins.

#### NEAREST AIRPORT

Shannon International Airport.

1 Malin Head, County Donegal Rocky beauty on the north coast of County Donegal. 2 Broadhaven Lighthouse, County Mayo On the northeastern tip of the Mullet Peninsula. 3 Dog's Bay Beach, County Galway A mile-long sandy white beach. 4 The Cliffs of Moher, County Clare The cliffs soar to 702ft/214 metres.

"I have been photographing the Wild Atlantic Way for over 20 years now and I still find it exciting to go out there, explore and shoot. I think that says it all"

Carsten Krieger  
Photographer  
*This is the Burren*



5

5 Valentia Island, County Kerry  
A stunning island off the southwest coast of County Kerry, linked by bridge to the mainland. 6 Kinsale, County Cork One of Ireland's prettiest coastal towns is famed for its seafood.

## SOUTHERN PENINSULAS

Tralee, County Kerry ➔ Ballydehob, County Cork

From the Ring of Kerry to Ireland's most southwesterly point at Mizen Head, this sensational stretch of the Wild Atlantic Way sees five craggy peninsulas jut out into the ocean from Kerry to Cork. These peninsulas are as far west as Ireland gets, stashing away the beautiful Bere Island, Kerry's newly accredited International Dark Sky Reserve and, of course, the iconic Skellig Islands, now famous all over the world as a Star Wars: The Force Awakens location.

### TASTE THIS

Enjoy delicious seafood at the super-friendly **Moorings Restaurant** in Portmagee, County Kerry, and taste West Cork's famous flavours at **Manning's** deli, just outside Bantry.

### DON'T MISS

**Skellig Michael** is an ancient monastic outpost 7 miles/11.7km off the mainland in the Atlantic Ocean (booking ahead advised); see beautiful **Bantry House**, with its views of Bantry Bay, and **Gougane Barra**, a delightful monastic retreat set in the lush green landscapes of West Cork.

### TRY THIS

Cross the stunning **Mizen Head Bridge** and enjoy the spellbinding views and perfect photo opportunities.

### NEAREST AIRPORT

Kerry Airport, Cork International Airport.

## 6 GREAT EXPERIENCES

### TORY ISLAND

County Donegal

Embark on a trip to Tory, the most remote of Ireland's inhabited islands. Tory is a place that feels unique; it even has its own elected king. Expect cliff-edge scenery, shipwrecks, monastic ruins, folklore and very friendly locals.



Killary Fjord

### THE KILLARY FJORD BLUEWAY

County Kerry

This touring route, an extension of the Ring of Kerry, offers breathtaking Atlantic views, lively villages, quirky experiences and, of course, access to the Skellig Islands. Hardly surprising that it's been named one of the Top 10 Regions in Lonely Planet's Best in Travel 2017.

County Galway

One of just three glacial fjords in Ireland, Killary offers unforgettable snorkelling and kayaking experiences along the Blueway. Take a trip to Glassilaun beach, where you can snorkel into Killary Bay Little to the north.



Exploring a lighthouse

### SAMPLE THE SEAWEED

Counties Kerry, Mayo, Sligo

Seaweed is a cutting-edge health and food trend, but for communities on the Irish coast, it's been that way for centuries. Take a family foraging day with Wild Atlantic Cultural Tours in Mayo, a seaweed walk with Atlantic Irish Seaweed in Kerry, or relax with a seaweed bath in Sligo.

### A LIGHTHOUSE ADVENTURE

Several lighthouses have been restored and rebooted as visitor attractions, and some even offer accommodation in cottages and lighthouses themselves. Check out Clare Island Lighthouse in Clew Bay, Fanad Lighthouse in Donegal, Loop Head in County Clare or Galley Head in West Cork.



Great Western Greenway

### GREAT WESTERN GREENWAY

County Mayo

This 26 mile/42km off-road cycle and walking track links Achill Island and Westport along the line of a former narrow-gauge railway. You can do it in sections or its entirety. Quiet, leisurely and traffic-free, it also boasts incredible coastal views.



PHOTO: IAN THOMPSON

6

## THE HAVEN COAST

Ballydehob, County Cork ➔ Kinsale, County Cork

Start or finish your Wild Atlantic Way on the Haven Coast, and you're in for an unforgettable treat. Meandering from the lovely coastal village of Ballydehob to the Old Head of Kinsale, taking in offshore islands, tropical gardens and refreshing sea-kayaking, it's the route in a nutshell. Watch whales on a trip out into the Atlantic; trace centuries of history and taste the meats, fish and cheeses that have made West Cork a fabled foodie destination. It's all here for the taking.

### TASTE THIS

Clonakilty is famous for its black pudding, but it's also got high-grade seafood in lovely pubs such as **An Súgán**. For more great flavours of the sea, try the acclaimed **Fishy Fishy Café** in pretty Kinsale.

### DON'T MISS

A visit to either **Cape Clear Island** or **Sherkin Island**, off the coast of Cork; a round of golf at the **Old Head of Kinsale Golf Links**; or a view from on high at the **Galley Head Lighthouse**, built in 1875 near Rosscarbery, West Cork.

### TRY THIS

Go **whale watching** off the coast of West Cork – it's reputed to be the best place in Europe to spot minke whales, humpback whales and basking sharks (whalewatchwestcork.com).

### NEAREST AIRPORT

Cork International Airport.



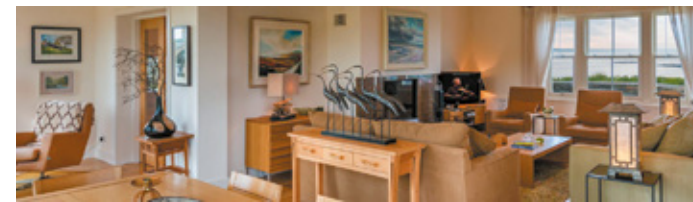
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# GET OUTSIDE

The only real way to appreciate the island's countryside, beaches and waterways is to head outdoors. Here are some wonderful ways to breathe in that fresh air.  
By Yvonne Gordon

1



2

## GARDENS

With so many castles, stately homes and wild landscapes, Ireland boasts gardens of all shapes and sizes. There are grand formal lawns, tumbling terraces, Victorian walled gardens and wild natural spaces. From one of the most beautiful gardens in the world at Powerscourt Estate in County Wicklow to the stunning walled garden of Florence Court in County Fermanagh, it's time to discover a world in bloom.

**GREAT PLACES TO TRY** In the glorious region of Connemara in County Galway, **Kylemore Abbey** basks in beauty with a six-acre walled garden dating to the Victorian period. The historic **Lissadell House** in County Sligo has a two-acre alpine garden from 1740, and a walled kitchen garden from 1840, featuring heritage fruit and vegetables. One of Northern Ireland's most beautiful green spaces, **Rowallane Garden** in County Down has a mix of formal and informal areas; while **Glenarm Castle** in County Antrim boasts one of the island's oldest walled gardens – and gardeners who are always happy to answer visitors' questions.

**INFO & TIPS** Check garden opening hours before your visit – some are closed to visitors during winter months. To maximise enjoyment of Ireland's gardens, consider a garden trail, such as the **Antrim Garden Trail**, the **Carlow Garden Trail** or the **Wexford Garden Trail**.



3

## GOLF

Home to over 400 golf courses, including more than a third of the world's links courses on this one island, Ireland is quite simply a golfer's paradise. It also boasts some of the most historic and scenic golf locations in the world – not to mention quite a few champions.

**GREAT PLACES TO TRY** The **Royal County Down Golf Club** consistently ranks among the best in the world, and is a favourite of Rory McIlroy. On the Antrim coastline, **Royal Portrush Golf Club** is another links beauty, loved by all because its Dunluce and Valley courses are just "so playable", according to Ryder Cup 2016 Captain, Darren Clarke. That's also probably why The Open is coming here in 2019. It's only a short distance from here to yet another stellar course at **Portstewart Golf Club**, which will host the 2017 Irish Open. Set on the Ring of Kerry, **Waterville Golf Links** is more than 100 years old and laden with dunes, gorse and native grasses; while **Lahinch Golf Club** in County Clare also overflows with history – the Old Course first opened in 1892.

**INFO & TIPS** It's always a good idea to book your tee time in advance, especially during the summer season. Different clubs have different rules on dress codes, so always check before you arrive. For more information on different courses, tee times and green fees, visit [Ireland.com/golf](http://Ireland.com/golf)



4



5



6

1 **Bantry House, County Cork** A delightful 18th century mansion overlooking Bantry Bay. 2 **Florence Court, County Fermanagh** This 18th century manor sits at the foothills of Cullcagh Mountain. 3 **Royal County Down** Voted number 1 golf course in the world by Golf Digest in 2016. 4 **Waterville, County Kerry** A classic links moulded by the sea. 5 **Great Blasket Island, County Kerry** This beautiful island was abandoned in 1953. 6 **Inis Oírr, County Galway** The smallest of Galway's Aran Islands.

## ISLAND VISITS

Fire up the imagination on ancient monastic islands such as Devenish on Lough Erne and Valentia in County Kerry, and you'll understand why Ireland's islands are outposts of traditional culture, wildlife and folklore. Regardless of how remote they seem, some can be reached by bridge, while others are a ferry ride away.

**GREAT PLACES TO TRY** Take the ferry across the Sea of Moyle off the coast of County Antrim and you might spot a dolphin on your way to **Rathlin Island**. Once there, enjoy the seals basking on rocks, hear tales of ancient shipwrecks and see one of the most flourishing sea bird populations in Ireland. Off the Galway coast, travel to the **Aran Islands** and you're stepping back in time, with a beautifully stark landscape and seas that glow turquoise on sunny days. The largest, **Inis Mór**, boasts an incredible cliff-top prehistoric fort called Dún Aonghasa, while **Inis Oírr** is famed for its sandy beaches. Day-trippers and bird-watchers should make their way to the **Saltee Islands**, just 3 miles/5km away from Kilmore Quay in County Wexford. A haven for sea birds, the islands are among the most ancient in Europe and show evidence of primitive Stone Age man.

**INFO & TIPS** Always check sailing times. Bring food and water with you to uninhabited islands and note that many will have no facilities. Bring sunscreen, walking shoes and weather-appropriate clothing.



## WALKING

With coasts, mountains, forests, National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Ireland has scenic walking trails for all levels. And the really great thing about it? After exploring brooding valleys, cliff edges and green pastures, you can relax in one of the island's welcoming towns and villages where you'll find traditional music pubs and great seafood restaurants.

**GREAT PLACES TO TRY** For a mix of woodland walks, lakelands and peat bogs, take to the **Sperrin Mountains** in County Tyrone for a variety of trails that let you soak up the unspoilt scenery. With over 40,000 acres, **Donegal's Glenveagh National Park** has six walking options for all levels of fitness. To make sure you get on the right track, the **Trail Walker Bus** takes walkers from the Visitor Centre on Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays. For something gentler, the eight looped walks at the **Glen of Aherlow** in County Tipperary (from 1.2 miles/2km to 6.2 miles/10km) will take you through the forests and moorland of the Galtee Mountains.

**INFO & TIPS** Weather can change quickly – check the forecast, wear layers and bring a waterproof jacket, hiking boots, sunscreen and plenty of water. For details of all routes check out [walkni.com](http://walkni.com) and [irishtrails.ie](http://irishtrails.ie)

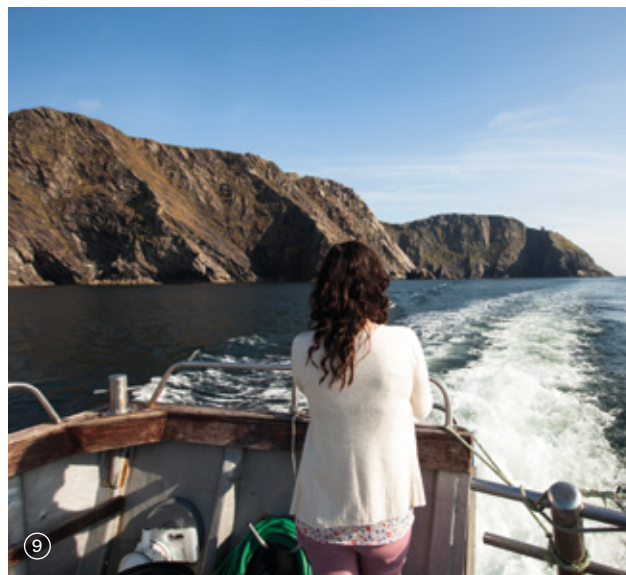


## CITY TOURS

The best way to get your bearings in one of Ireland's cities is to take a guided walking or bus tour – then go back and explore the places you love in more detail.

**GREAT PLACES TO TRY** Kilkenny is small enough to be explored on foot, especially along the Medieval Mile. Discover its secrets and hear stories of witches and the Black Death with **Kilkenny Walking Tours**, visiting the medieval laneways, old city walls and the Black Abbey. For larger cities such as Belfast and Dublin, get your bearings with a **Hop-On Hop-Off Bus Tour**. Highlights of **Dublin Bus's** 90-minute tour include The Guinness Storehouse, Kilmainham Gaol and Dublin Castle, while **Sightseeing Belfast's** tour takes in the Cathedral Quarter, Belfast City Hall and the Peace Wall. Or brave two wheels for a **Segway Guided Tour** of Belfast, gliding to the famous Titanic Quarter. In Cork, discover the city on the **Fabulous Food Trail**, which has tastings and stops at markets, cheesemongers, butchers and bakers, including The English Market.

**INFO & TIPS** Book walking tours in advance, especially during peak season and holiday weekends. Wear comfortable shoes and bring a raincoat, just in case...



**7** **Glenveagh National Park, County Donegal** Set in the Donegal mountains, the park is home to a large herd of red deer. **8** **Kilkenny's Medieval Mile** On the River Nore, a tour of the city takes in 13th century St Canice's Cathedral and Kilkenny Castle. **9** **Slieve League, County Donegal** Expect fabulous views on a boat trip around one of Europe's highest sea cliffs. **10** **A tour of the River Lagan** Enjoy Belfast's Titanic Quarter from the water.



## BOAT TOURS

The island of Ireland is surrounded by coastline and dotted with lakes, rivers and even fjords, so it's no surprise that boat trips are a great way to explore our natural waterworld. Bringing you to the mouths of caves and hidden coves, to the base of spectacular sea stacks and geological wonders, a boat tour can go from gentle and serene to utterly invigorating. It's time to enjoy Ireland from a different angle.

**GREAT PLACES TO TRY** The great thing about boat tours in Ireland is that you don't have to look very far to find one... Just check out Lough Neagh in Northern Ireland – the island's largest lake. Tranquil and scenic, it's the ideal place to explore historic ruins and beauty spots, with **Abhainn Cruises** offering stopovers at Ram's Island and Coney Island. Connemara's Killary Fjord is one of only three natural fjords in Ireland, and the incredible scenery is best appreciated from the water on the 90-minute **Killary Fjord Boat Tour**. Keep watch for the resident dolphins! Or take to the waters of Lough Derg, known as Ireland's "pleasure lake". **Killaloe River Cruises** will take you through the scenery, wildlife, heritage and folklore of this beautiful area in the River Shannon basin.

**INFO & TIPS** Always wear a lifejacket and bring a raincoat. Take boat trips with registered providers, and be advised that many sailings/tours are weather-dependent.

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# THE LAST WORD ON... TRADITIONAL CULTURE

Traditional culture is alive and well on the island of Ireland. Here's how to enjoy it...

## THREE FESTIVALS TO ENJOY

Traditions are at the heart of festivals in Ireland

### BANKS OF THE FOYLE HALLOWE'EN CARNIVAL

**Derry~Londonderry city (October).**  
The Irish invented Halloween (31 October) so no wonder it's such a big deal in villages, town and cities around the island. Derry~Londonderry is definitely the place to go, though: the city's annual carnival is now the largest of its kind in the world.



### PUCK FAIR

**Killorglin, County Kerry (August).**  
With a history stretching back almost 400 years, Puck Fair is thought to be one of Ireland's oldest. Celebrations last three days and see a mountain goat crowned.



### FESTIVAL OF THE FIRES

**Uisneach Hill, County Westmeath (May).**  
Held in the mythological and sacred centre of Ireland, the Uisneach Festival of Fire celebrates a tradition that can be traced back to this site over 1,400 years.



## TRADITIONAL CRAFTS

From glassblowing to pottery, weaving to woodwork – craft in Ireland is thriving. Connected to the landscape and calling on skills passed down from generation to generation, craft is an integral part of Irish culture whether it's knitwear, basket-weaving or lace-making. In Donegal, the hills and the sheep that roam them have led to a rich tradition of handweaving. Visit **Handwoven Tweed** in Ardara for great wool blankets and tweed. Kilkenny's creative spirit can be enjoyed to the full on the **Made in Kilkenny Craft Trail**, which allows you to meet the makers of textiles, ceramics, jewellery and glass in idyllic locations. Or make your way to **Belleek** in Enniskillen, County Fermanagh, one of the oldest working potteries creating fine Parian china. A tour of the visitor centre is ideal for learning about its history.

**DON'T MISS** The **House of Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre**, Waterford, is where pieces of this famous crystal are created before your eyes. The **Irish Linen Centre**, Lisburn, is great for a walk-through of this historic and prestigious industry. The **Claypipe Centre**, County Roscommon, is where to discover all about the traditional craft of claypipe making, which dates back to the 1700s.

## DID YOU KNOW?

**THE CLADDAGH RING**  
One of Ireland's most famous pieces of jewellery has to be the Claddagh Ring. Believed to have originated in the village of Claddagh in Galway Bay, you wear it with the crown pointing in if you're in love or married; or pointing out if you're looking for love! Thomas Dillon's in Galway city has been making this iconic ring since 1750.



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK

## LISTEN OUT FOR:

The Irish language spoken in the Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking areas). You'll find Gaeltacht areas around the west coast of the island, along with parts of counties Cork, Donegal, Meath and Waterford. And in Northern Ireland, keep an ear out for Ullans, a variant of Scots-Irish.

## LOOK OUT FOR:

**Dry-stone walls** in the west of Ireland, particularly along the Wild Atlantic Way. What's remarkable is that these traditional walls are held together with just stone and no mortar. In Northern Ireland, you'll find the **Mourne Wall** in County Down, which is the longest on the island and stretches for over 22 miles/35km. The **Irish thatched cottage** also holds centuries of tradition within its walls and can be seen all over the island. Back in the 1800s, it's thought that half the population slept in a thatched cottage. Visit the village of **Adare** in County Limerick for a picture-postcard scene.



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**SMOKING RESTRICTIONS**

Smoking is not allowed in public areas and workplaces including pubs, restaurants, hotels and taxis, in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

**PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2017**

New Year's Day	2 Jan
St Patrick's Day Holiday	17 Mar
Good Friday (NI only)	14 Apr
Easter Monday	17 Apr
May Bank Holiday	1 May
Spring Bank Holiday (NI only)	29 May
June Bank Holiday (ROI only)	6 June
July Holiday (NI only)	12 July
Aug Bank Holiday (ROI only)	7 Aug
Aug Bank Holiday (NI only)	28 Aug
Oct Bank Holiday (ROI only)	30 Oct
Christmas Day	25 Dec
St Stephen's Day (ROI)	26 Dec
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 AROUND IRELAND**

The island of Ireland is well serviced with bus, coach and train operators. You can plan your trip using public transport by using the Journey Planner.  
journeyplanner.transportforireland.ie

If you're travelling in your own car, or renting a vehicle, it's important to know the following: cars drive on the left-hand side of the road; signposts in Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking) areas are written in Irish (Gaelic); you will need either a full valid national driving licence or an international driving permit to drive on the roads; Northern Ireland uses miles per hour, while the Republic of Ireland uses kilometres; and passengers are required by law to wear seat belts at all times in the front and back of the vehicle.

There are no tolled roads in Northern Ireland but you'll find tolls on a number of roads in the Republic of Ireland (disabled drivers are not charged). These are managed by the National Roads Authority and Dublin City Council. Generally tolls are paid at the barrier of the toll booth, however, there is one exception: M50 eFlow Barrier System. For more information visit: [etoll.ie](http://etoll.ie)

The award winning Jackie Clarke Collection comprises over 100,000 historical artefacts, spanning 400 years. It includes items associated with some of the most influential figures in Ireland's history.

Located in a restored 19th century bank in the centre of Ballina with a newly designed walled garden. Special features of the attraction include a memory booth where you can record your own memories and interactive touch-screens throughout. Suitable for all ages.

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OPENING TIMES Mid March to May 10am-5pm;  
June to August 9.30am-5.30pm; September to October 10am-5pm;  
Last admission is 30 minutes before closing

**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**LANGUAGE**

Irish (Gaelic) and English are the official languages of the Republic of Ireland; street and road signs are bilingual. In Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking) areas, road signs may only be displayed in Irish and Irish is spoken daily, although everyone speaks English, too. In Northern Ireland, English is the official language. Irish is also taught in many schools and summer schools. Ulster-Scots is also spoken by some in Northern Ireland.

visitor attractions are accessible to wheelchair users, and an increasing number of hotels and restaurants are well equipped to accommodate guests with disabilities.

**REPUBLIC OF IRELAND**

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[nda.ie](http://nda.ie)

**NORTHERN IRELAND**

Disability Action

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[disabilityaction.org](http://disabilityaction.org)

**PASSPORT/VISA REQUIREMENTS**

While UK citizens do not require a passport or visa to enter Ireland, most air and sea carriers require photographic identification (ID), such as a passport or driving licence. Visitors are advised to check which form of ID is required with the individual airline, ferry company, tour operator or travel agent before travelling. Non-UK nationals must have a valid passport or national ID card as appropriate. Visitors of other nationalities should contact their local Irish Embassy/Consulate or their local British Embassy, High Commission or Consular Office in Northern Ireland with any queries.

**CURRENCIES**

In the Republic of Ireland the currency used is the euro (€) and in Northern Ireland the currency used is the pound sterling (£).

**PERSONAL SAFETY**

Though the general level of personal safety is high, should you be unfortunate enough to be a victim of crime, contact:

**REPUBLIC OF IRELAND**

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[itas.ie](http://itas.ie)

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The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

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Passport and Visa Office

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Tel: 020 7373 4339

For a list of Irish Embassies, visit [dfa.ie](http://dfa.ie) and

[dfa.ie/irish-embassy/great-britain](http://dfa.ie/irish-embassy/great-britain)

**NORTHERN IRELAND**

Further information is available from your

local British Embassy or Consulate.

For details contact:

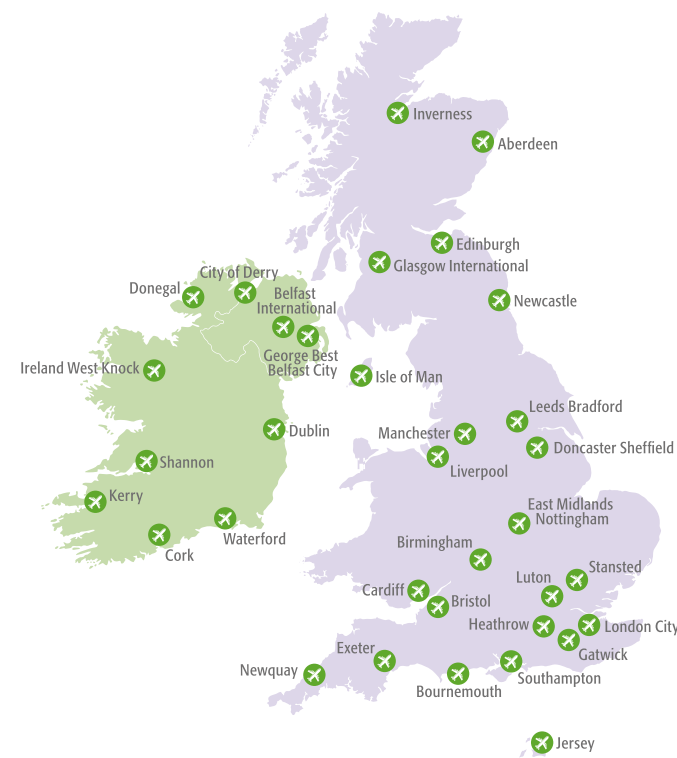
The Foreign and Commonwealth Office

[gov.uk](http://gov.uk)

**VISITORS WITH DISABILITIES**

Ireland extends a warm welcome to visitors with disabilities. Many public places and





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	Dublin	Ryanair
	Ireland West Airport Knock	Ryanair
	Kerry	Ryanair
Manchester	Shannon	Ryanair
	Belfast International	easyJet
	Cork	Aer Lingus Regional
	Dublin	Aer Lingus, Ryanair
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
Newcastle	Ireland West Airport Knock	Flybe
	Shannon	Ryanair
	Belfast International	easyJet
	Cork	Aer Lingus Regional
	Dublin	Aer Lingus Regional, Ryanair
Newquay	Dublin	Aer Lingus Regional
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
Southampton	Cork	Aer Lingus Regional
	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 code sharing and operator franchise agreements. Please see websites for details. Calls to airlines may incur local or national call charges.

## TRAVELLING TO IRELAND BY AIR

### AIR ACCESS & ROUTES TO IRELAND

DEPART	ARRIVE	AIRLINE
Aberdeen	Dublin	Aer Lingus Regional
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
	Ireland West Airport Knock	Flybe
Birmingham	Belfast International	easyJet
	Cork	Aer Lingus Regional
	Dublin	Aer Lingus, Ryanair
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
	Ireland West Airport Knock	Flybe
Bournemouth	Shannon	Aer Lingus Regional
	Dublin	Flybe
Bristol	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
	Belfast International	easyJet
Cardiff	Cork	Aer Lingus Regional
	Dublin	Aer Lingus Regional, Ryanair
	Ireland West Airport Knock	Ryanair
	Shannon	Ryanair
Doncaster Sheffield	Dublin	Aer Lingus Regional, Flybe
	Cork	Flybe
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
East Midlands Nottingham	Dublin	Aer Lingus Regional
	Dublin	Aer Lingus Regional, Ryanair
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
London Heathrow	Ireland West Airport Knock	Ryanair
	Shannon	Ryanair

DEPART	ARRIVE	AIRLINE
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	Cork	Aer Lingus Regional
	Dublin	Aer Lingus Regional, Flybe, Ryanair
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
Exeter	Ireland West Airport Knock	Flybe
	Dublin	Flybe
	George Best Belfast City	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
Inverness	Dublin	Flybe
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
Isle of Man	Dublin	Aer Lingus Regional
	George Best Belfast City	Citywing
Jersey	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

DEPART	ARRIVE	AIRLINE
London City	Dublin	Aer Lingus, British Airways, CityJet
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
London Gatwick	Belfast International	easyJet, Ryanair
	Cork	Ryanair
	Dublin	Aer Lingus, Ryanair
	Ireland West Airport Knock	Aer Lingus
London Heathrow	Shannon	Ryanair
	Cork	Aer Lingus
	Dublin	Aer Lingus, British Airways
London Luton	George Best Belfast City	Aer Lingus, British Airways
	Shannon	Aer Lingus
	Belfast International	easyJet
	Dublin	Ryanair
London Stansted	Ireland West Airport Knock	Ryanair
	Kerry	Ryanair
	Dublin	Ryanair

### AIRLINE CONTACT DETAILS

AIRLINE	WEBSITE	TELEPHONE
Aer Lingus	aerlingus.com	0333 004 5000
British Airways	britishairways.com	0344 493 0787
CityJet	cityjet.com	0203 481 1259
Citywing	citywing.com	0871 200 0440
easyJet	easyjet.com	0330 365 5000
Flybe	flybe.com	0371 700 2000
Ryanair	ryanair.com	0871 246 0000







## TRAVELLING TO IRELAND BY SEA

The island of Ireland has four main ferry ports – Belfast, Dublin, Larne and Rosslare



### SEA ROUTES

DEPART	ARRIVE	CARRIER	VESSEL	DURATION
Cairnryan	Larne	P&O Ferries	Express Superferry	1hr 1hr 45mins
	Belfast	Stena Line	Superfast VII/VIII	2hrs 15mins
Fishguard	Rosslare	Stena Line	Stena Express Superferry	2hrs 3hrs 30mins
	Holyhead	Irish Ferries	Ulysses Cruise Ferry	3hrs 15mins
Dublin	Dublin Swift		1hr 49mins	
	Irish Ferries Epsilon Ferry		3hrs 15mins	
Isle of Man	Belfast	Stena Line	Stena Superferry	3hrs 15mins
	Dublin	Steam Packet Company	Fastcraft	2hrs 55mins
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

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

### FERRY AND COACH OPERATORS CONTACT DETAILS

FERRY COMPANY	WEBSITE	TELEPHONE
Irish Ferries	<a href="http://irishferries.com">irishferries.com</a>	0871 730 0400
P&O Ferries	<a href="http://poferries.com">poferries.com</a>	0800 130 0030
Steam Packet Company	<a href="http://steam-packet.com">steam-packet.com</a>	0872 299 2992
Stena Line	<a href="http://stenaline.co.uk">stenaline.co.uk</a>	0844 770 7070
Eurolines	<a href="http://eurolines.co.uk">eurolines.co.uk</a>	0871 781 8177

## DRIVE TO IRELAND THERE'S MORE TO EXPLORE.

There's no better way to see Ireland than in your own car. Get there in as little as 1 hour and 49 minutes and pay no luggage charges. For our lowest fares and special deals on Hotels, Cottages and B&Bs, **book online today at [irishferries.com](http://irishferries.com). Travel. Together.**



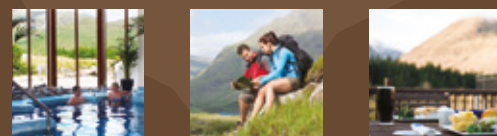
UNLIMITED LUGGAGE
 FREE WIFI
 30 MIN CHECK-IN



## Any questions?

Thinking of a trip – but not sure where to begin? We're right here to help! For tips, tricks and recommendations, talk to the people who know Ireland best.

Visit us on [community.ireland.com](http://community.ireland.com)



TRAVEL INTO THE CONNEMARA LANDSCAPE  
AND EXPERIENCE A STAY ON IRELAND'S WILD ATLANTIC WAY  
4\* HOTEL | SPA | ADVENTURE | DINING

Delphi Resort, Leenane, Connemara, Co. Galway  
[www.delphiresort.com](http://www.delphiresort.com)  
+353 (0)95 42208

## TOUR OPERATORS

COMPANY	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE
Andrews of Tideswell Ltd	01298 871 222	andrews-of-tideswell.co.uk
Anglers World Holidays	01246 221 717 01246 221 753	anglersworld.tv / irelandbreaks.co.uk
Bakers Dolphin	01934 415 000	bakersdolphin.com
Barrhead Travel Ltd	0141 222 2223	barrheadtravel.co.uk
Bennetts of Kilwinning	01294 551112	bennettskilwinning.com
Best of Scotland Holidays	01592 752 990	best-of-scotland.co.uk
Booking.com	0845 080 5012	booking.com
Breaks2go	0141 332 7078	breaks2go.com
Brightwater Holidays	01334 657 155	brightwaterholidays.com
British Airways Holidays	0844 493 0787	britishairways.com
Caledonian Travel	08448 153 001	caledoniantravel.com
CIE Tours	+353 (0) 1703 1888	cietours.co.uk
Cottages 4 You	0845 268 0760	cottages4you.co.uk
Crusader Holidays	01255 425 453	crusader-holidays.co.uk
David Urquhart Travel	08448 717 717	davidurquhart.com
Dodds of Troon Ltd	01292 288 100	doddssoftroon.com
Driveline Golf	0870 330 1056	drivelinegolf.com
Ebookers	020 3320 3320	ebookers.com
Eclipse Breaks	0844 8009424	Eclipsebreaks.com
Edwards Coaches	01443 202 048	edwardscoaches.co.uk
Executive Golf & Leisure	01786 832 244	execgolf-leisure.com
Expedia	0800 783 2384	expedia.co.uk
Faillte Travel	01698 760 272	failltetravel.com
GB Tours	0151 652 2222	gbtours.com
Glenton Holidays	08000 242 424	glentonholidays.co.uk
Glenton Palmer Coaches	01924 895 849	davidpalmercoaches.co.uk
Golfbreaks.com	0800 279 7988	golfbreaks.com
Golf Ireland	01382 522 500	golfireland.com
Golf Par Excellence	01737 211 818	golfparexcellence.com
Grand UK Holidays	01603 619 933	grandukholidays.com
Great Rail Journeys	01904 521 936	greatrail.com
Harry Shaw Travel	024 764 55544	harryshaw.co.uk
HF Holidays	0345 470 7558	hfholidays.co.uk
Hogans Cottages	01 244 357718	hogansirishcottages.com
Hostelbookers.com	-	hostelbookers.com
Hostelworld	-	hostelworld.com
Hotel Connexions	01786 82 5407	hotelconnexions.com
Hotel Direct	0800 633 8000	hoteldirect.co.uk
Hotelpia	+353 818 275 725	hotelpia.com

COMPANY	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE
Hotel Reservation Service (HRS)	+353 (0) 1524 5122	hrs.com
Hotels.com	+353 (0) 1656 9450	hotels.com
Hotels4u.com	0844 875 3455	hotels4u.com
Imagine Ireland	01756 707 720	imagineireland.com
In the Saddle	01299 272 997	inthesaddle.com
Irish Ferries Holidays	08717 300 400	irishferries.com
Just Go! Holidays	08432 244 244	justgoholidays.com
Kings Angling and Activity Holidays	01708 453 043	kingsanglingholidays.co.uk
Kirker Holidays	0207 593 2288	kirkerholidays.com
Lastminute.com	+353 818 300 064	lastminute.com
Laterooms	0844 774 1001	laterooms.com
Leger Holidays	08445 046 251	leger.co.uk
Leisure Link Golf Holidays	01708 339 300	leisurelinkgolf.com
Links Golf St Andrews	01334 478 639	linksgolfstandrews.com
McKinlay Kidd Ltd	0844 804 0020	seeirelanddifferently.co.uk
National Holidays	08444 779 990	nationalholidays.com
Newmarket Holidays	0330 160 7705	newmarketholidays.co.uk
On Course Travel	01372 451 910	ireland-oncourse.co.uk
Opodo	0871 277 0090	opodo.co.uk
Osprey Holidays Ltd	0131 243 8098	ospreyholidays.com
PAB Coach Holidays	+353 1 871 9819	pabtours.com
Parrys International Tours	01922 414 576	parrys-international.co.uk
Pitchup.com	-	pitchup.com
Rabbie's Small Group Tours	0131 226 3133	rabbies.com/en/tour-ireland
Rambler's Worldwide Holidays	01707 331 133	ramblersholidays.co.uk
Responsible Travel.com	01273 823 700	responsibletravel.com
Saga Holidays Ltd	0800 096 0074	saga.co.uk
Shearings Holidays	0844 824 6351	shearings.com/ireland
Spabreaks.com	0800 043 660	spabreaks.com
Stena Line Holidays	08445 768 889	stenaline.co.uk
Superbreak	0871 2213344	superbreak.com
Take the Family	-	takethefamily.com
Tangney Tours	01732 886 666	tangney-tours.com
Tayleur Mayde Golf Tours	0131 524 9554	tayleurmayde.com
The Camping & Caravanning Club	024 7642 2024	campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk
The Caravan Club	01342 318 813	caravanclub.co.uk
Titan Travel Ltd	0800 988 5823	titantravel.co.uk
Travel Republic	0208 974 7200	travelrepublic.co.uk
Travelling the Fairways	01334 460 789	ttfgolf.com
Travelzoo	-	travelzoo.co.uk
Wilkinson Golf & Leisure	01383 629 940	wilkinsongolf.com
Your Golf Travel	0800 1936630	yourgolftravel.com

For the most up-to-date list of operators visit [ireland.com/touroperators](http://ireland.com/touroperators). All information correct at time of going to press but may be subject to future operator changes.

## REMEMBER - DUBLIN'S M50 TOLL IS BARRIER-FREE

Located between Junction 6 (N3 Blanchardstown) & Junction 7 (N4 Lucan) on the M50 motorway, instead of a conventional barrier plaza, the toll is operated using eFlow's registration plate recognition technology. Gantry-mounted video cameras are used to record details of passing vehicles which are then allocated a toll. Just look for the purple signs.

### How does the M50 Toll work?



1. The M50 barrier-free toll is clearly marked between Junction 6 (N3 Blanchardstown) and Junction 7 (N4 Lucan). Look for the purple signs.
2. When you drive through this junction, cameras will automatically read your vehicle registration number (from both directions).
3. The toll charge is then assigned to your vehicle depending on its size.
4. You have until 8pm the day after your journey to pay the toll.
5. If you miss the payment deadline of 8pm, fines will be issued.

### 3 simple ways to pay your Toll

- A. Prepay your journey at [eflow.ie](http://eflow.ie)
- B. Pay before 8pm the day after your journey at [eflow.ie](http://eflow.ie)
- C. Go to your nearest payzoneoutlet and pay in person.



# 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.



**Legend:**

- Motorway
- Motorway (Under Construction)
- Primary road
- Secondary road
- Mainline Train
- Ferry
- Airport
- Tourist Information (Year round)
- Tourist Information (Seasonal)
- Beach

**Scale:** 0 to 80 Kilometres / 0 to 50 Miles

**EXPLORER TRIPS**

To view or download a copy of the 'Great Irish Road Trips' guide, visit [ireland.com](http://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!



# VISIT SOUTH EAST IRELAND



## WEXFORD

SO OLD, SO NEW

With a spectacular coastline, a wealth of historic sites and attractive towns and villages, it's little wonder that Wexford is a favourite holiday destination for visitors and locals alike. The county offers a mix of mountainous scenery, river valleys with fine fishing, spectacular parks and gardens, scenic walking trails and mile upon mile of fine unspoiled beaches such as Rosslare and Curracloe. And not forgetting the many fascinating visitor attractions to choose from... Wexford has it all!

## WATERFORD

Where Ireland Begins

Waterford is Ireland's oldest city. It's a buzzy, picturesque place, full of atmospheric streets, historic architecture as well as a variety of craft studios, galleries, cafes, restaurants and traditional style pubs. A great base to explore the Copper Coast, Comeragh Mountains and the historic towns and villages of Waterford.



## Kilkenny

Living History, Loving Culture

Kilkenny is a cosmopolitan city, - an ancient city with contemporary appeal - steeped in medieval history and heritage, a jewel in the crown of Ireland's Ancient East. It's a place which inspires great design and where ancient crafts are practiced and perfected, and given a modern twist! Friendly people, festivals all year round, restaurants, boutique shopping, and a vibrant night life all combine to make Kilkenny a fantastic place to visit.

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

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