Fáilte Ireland IRELAND GOLF GUIDE 2019

- Championship Links Golf Courses
 Championship Parkland Golf Courses
 Hidden Gems Around The Island
- Where To Play Where To Stay
- Essential Travel Information





PETERSISE AND

🕄 Fāilte Ireland

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Lough Oughter, Co. Cavan



Welcome • Brendan Griffin T.D.

A message from the Minister of State for Tourism and Sport







elcome to the 'Ireland Golf Guide 2019' designed specially to provide you with all the information you will need to plan your golf visit

in Ireland – which we believe is one of the world's finest golfing destinations.

Ireland is world-renowned for the high quality and great choice of golf courses it offers, hosting over 190,000 golf tourists each year and generating 1.7 million bed nights equating to €270 million in revenue to the Irish economy.

Spread throughout every corner of Ireland are more than 400 courses lying within our scenic landscape whether on the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Ancient East, Ireland's Hidden Heartlands or Dublin. From championship links courses, to parkland courses and numerous hidden gems, there's a course to please everyone!

Our passion for golf, combined with our renowned tradition of hospitality, makes us want to share our courses and our companionship with visitors and so we extend a 'Céad M'le Fáilte' or 'One Hundred Thousand Welcomes' to golfers from all over the world. It is of course, the people that really make Ireland stand out amongst other golf destinations - the friendly welcome and warm hospitality will make any golfer want to return.

We hope you can join us for this special year of the Opens, whether it's the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open 2019 from the 3-7th July at the Lahinch Golf Club, in County Clare, or two weeks later The 148th Open from 14-21st July at the Royal Portrush Golf Club, County Antrim. These two spectacular settings which will take centre stage to an estimated audience of 500 million households and beamed across the globe showcasing our world class golf offering.

I hope that this 'Ireland Golf Guide 2019' will enable you to choose the golfing holiday in Ireland that is just right for you and your companions.

Enjoy your visit to Ireland, our landscape, our heritage, our food and our people - but most of all, enjoy our golf.

Brenden frittin T. D.

Brendan Griffin T.D. Minister of State for Tourism and Sport

Magnificent links courses of Ireland



Magnificent parkland courses of Ireland

CONCRA WOOD GOLF CLUB



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DUBLIN REGION

DOOKS, , CO. KERRY



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Welcome • Using the guide

Ireland is a country full of friends you haven't met yet and memories just waiting to be made, and this guide is your key to unlocking the holiday of a lifetime

About the guide

The 2019 Ireland Golf Guide is designed to provide all you need to know about playing golf and travelling around the beautiful Emerald Isle. We hope that it's user friendly, and that it helps you discover the many ways in which you can get the most out of your trip to Ireland.

Golf clubs and courses

Ireland has an embarrassment of riches when it comes to golf courses. The island might be small, but it is jam packed with many of the most illustrious, historic and talked-about courses, including one third of the world's links. With over 400 courses to choose from, deciding where to play is never easy - but it is always fun.

Green fees

Special golf passes, early birds, group discounts there are many ways to get a bargain at Irish golf courses. Contacting the club, or speaking with your tour operator, is always a good idea, but we'd like to be the first to dispel the myth about golf in Ireland being expensive - it's not. For the calibre of the courses, the service and welcome you'll receive, once you play here we think you'll agree: golfing in Ireland is great value and a priceless experience.

Caddies, clubs, buggies and carts

Because of the unique environmental character and history of many of Ireland's golf clubs, the experience might be a little different to what you're used to. It is not always possible to use a buggy, but if you speak with the club about your special needs you'll find them to be always friendly and accommodating. Caddies are almost always available, but should be booked in advance, and many courses these days now offer club hire also.

Dress code, soft spikes and handicaps

Golfing in Ireland is always a relaxed, friendly affair - but clubs do like to keep their traditions alive. Jeans and sneakers are best avoided, while if you dress smart casual you'll be perfectly attired for most tastes. Occasionally, some clubs will require a jacket and tie for the dining room. Soft spikes are advised, as some clubs will not allow traditional spikes any longer. Handicap certificates should be brought where possible.









Dublin

Dublin is the vibrant capital city of Ireland bursting with a variety of surprising experiences where city living thrives side by side with the natural outdoors

Ireland's Ancient East

Enjoy some of the world's best golf courses in Ireland's Ancient East - from breath-taking links and championship parklands to magnificent golfing resorts

Ireland's Hidden Heartland

Explore the green heartlands of Ireland's natural beauty, where activity and relaxation are centred around rural communities. With great golf courses like Slieve Russell and Glasson, there is an infinite variety of things to do for all ages.

Wild Atlantic Way

The magnificent links courses along the Wild Atlantic Way exploit the spectacular coastal scenery and beaches to the full and provide some of the most challenging and exhilarating golf in the world

Northern Ireland

Home to Rory McIlroy, Graeme McDowell, Darren Clarke - and some of the world's best golf courses





Every effort has been made to make this guide as comprehensive as possible. If we have overlooked any detail or club in any of the seven regions, please contact our office for inclusion in the 2019 guide. Walton Media Tel: 01 419 9604.





UNCONTO CLARE

Clare is a county renowned for its majestic coastline, traditional culture & heritage, unique environment and variety of landscapes. You will find interesting gems in every corner of Clare from breathtaking scenery to history and from its intriguing culture to fine dining.

Crucible of Golf

Clare has a long-standing history of welcoming visitors from across the water, particularly golfers.

Established in 1892, the Old Course at Lahinch Golf Club was designed by the father of modern golf, Old Tom Morris. It was redesigned in 1927 by Alistair McKenzie, who incidentally co-designed Agusta National. Considering this legacy, Lahinch could easily be described as the "Agusta of the West of Ireland". From weather-forecasting goats to some of the most challenges golf shots in the world, Lahinch has never disappointed in its 125 year reign.

Further south, you'll delight in the challenge of Greg Norman's famous links at Trump International in Doonbeg, which in tandem with the Old Course at Lahinch; copper fastens County Clare as a focal point for European golf.

Home to the South of Ireland Amateur Championship since 1895, the fairways at Lahinch have tempered some of the greatest Irish golfers. In 2019, when Lahinch plays host to the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open, it will challenge the metal of some of the best golfers across the world. Whether you are a novice or a pro, there are lots of other golf courses in County Clare to meet any ability or budget. You'll find lots of information to help you plan your trip on www.visitclare.ie.

Ennis... The Heart

Ennis, the county town of Clare, is full of character and natural charm.



Majestic Coastline

From ocean lovers to golfers, Clare offers a vast array of memory-making opportunities.

Some would argue that Lahinch is the spiritual home of surfing in Ireland, and boasting some of Ireland's most renowned surf schools just waiting to get you into the magical Atlantic surf: they might be right. More experienced water-sport enthusiasts can explore the myriad of world-class breaks and beaches.

With Clare's eleven award-winning beaches dotted all along its wild and rugged, you won't be short of a place to dip your toes in the pristine waters of the Atlantic Ocean. Whether it is the White Strand beaches at Doonbeg or Miltown Malbay, the brown sugar sands at Spanish Point or the terracotta fringe of Fanore, you'll be spoiled for choice.

Dating back to the 1670s, Loop Head Lighthouse stands proud on the western edge of Clare and the Loop Head Peninsula. This iconic landmark is steeped in history and is one of the Great Lighthouses of Ireland. Soak in the rich maritime heritage as you take in the exhibition in the Light Keeper's Cottage, enjoy a guided tour of the tower and relish the wonders of Loop Head Heritage Trail with its stunning landmarks such as the Bridges of Ross.

No matter where you visit, outstanding views, unique landscapes, incredible culture and heritage abound in Ireland's 'Banner County' - Clare.

Check out **www.visitclare.ie** for more.



Wander along the narrow laneways of the county town, where you will be delighted to lose yourself in the renowned sculpture trail - a unique series of sculptures of many forms depicting cultural, historical and sporting events as well as more abstract pieces.

Delve into the many boutique shops and millinery store in Ennis, where you are sure to find something for those special occasions. If there is still time left in the evening, why not check out Glór theatre - the centre for performing arts in Ennis.



Useful Info Making the most of your break

Airline operators

Ireland is well served by a number of the major international carriers, many of which offer nonstop connections from major gateways in the US and Europe. Contact details for most of the airlines are readily available on the website of your destination airport in Ireland.

Ireland by car

Travelling by car in Ireland is a great way to see the country at your own pace and time. Some tips when driving in Ireland:

- Always drive on the left.
- All speed limits and distances are designated in kilometers. The maximum speed on motorways is 120 km/h. In urban areas, speed is restricted to between 30 and 50 km/h.
- Tourists require a driving licence issued by their country of origin.
- Drink driving is a very serious offence in Ireland and the best advice is not to drink and drive.
- The wearing of seat belts is compulsory in front and rear seats for all passengers.

Ireland by coach

The national bus company, Bus Eireann, operates a wide variety of services available to tourists. These include connections to and from all the main airports as well as Expressway services linking Ireland's main cities and towns. For more information go to their website: www.buseireann.ie.

In addition, there are quite a number of private coach companies dedicated to serving the needs of tourists. These coach operators offer individualised service to groups, as well as regular sightseeing tours.

Ireland by rail

Irish Rail is the national rail company, with a comprehensive list of Intercity services across the country. For full details on destinations, routes, timetables and fares, visit their website: www.irishrail.ie.

In addition to the national rail links, there are two commuter rail lines serving

the Greater Dublin Area: – the Luas Lines (www.luas.ie) and DART Lines (www.irishrail.ie). Both of these offer tourists a reliable and inexpensive method of seeing the capital city.

Tipping in Ireland

Ireland does not have as strong a tipping culture as exists in other countries. However, locals and visitors tend to tip for restaurants and taxi services. A rough general rule is around 10% and all tips are at your own personal discretion, based on the quality of service delivered. In restaurants with table service, if you have received exceptional service you can tip slightly higher.

Currency/Credit cards

In common with most of the European Continent, the Republic of Ireland uses the Euro. The Euro has denominations of \in 500, $\in 100, \in 50, \in 20, \in 10$ and $\in 5$ in paper notes. Coinage consists of €1 and €2 coins, plus smaller denominations of 50c, 20c, 10c and 5c. (Note: the "c" refers to cent). Banking hours are generally 10.00am to 4.30pm Monday through Friday, with some banks open on Saturday. ATM (cash) machines are located at most banks and Irish ATMS accept cards that have the CIRRUS, ACCESS or PLUS symbol. The ATMs may also issue cash on major credit cards. Visa, MasterCard and American Express credit cards are widely accepted in Ireland.

The Irish language

In the Republic of Ireland, both English and Irish (Gaelic) are the official languages, but most residents will use English as their primary language. Street name signs and directional road signage are all bilingual. In Gaeltacht areas of the country (typically found in the west around Galway, north in Donegal and south around Kerry), Irish is spoken daily. However, even in these regions, people will also speak English.

Irish Climate

Ireland generally has a temperate climate and tends not to suffer extremes of heat or cold. The average annual temperature is about 9-10 °C. Drops in temperature below freezing occur infrequently during winter and snow is rare. January and February are the coldest, with the average around 7°C. In summer, daytimes are a comfortable 15° to 20°C. There are about 18 hours of daylight daily during July and August. However, the Irish weather is certainly going to offer the visitor rain at some point, with wet weather common throughout the year. Pack accordingly!



Car Hire Companies:

Most of the major international car hire companies, as well as a number of indigenous Irish car hire companies, have desks conveniently located at all the major airports as well as at ferry terminals and in the city centres. Car hire can be pre-booked prior to travel. The Car Hire Council (www.carrentalcouncil. ie) offers a full list of their member companies, all with contact details and links directly to an individual car hire company's website and reservations.

Airports in Ireland

The three main airports serving the Republic of Ireland are:

- Dublin Airport: 00 353 (0)1 814 1111
 www.dublinairport.com
- Cork Airport: 00 353 (0)21 431 3131
 www.corkairport.com
- Shannon Airport: 00 353 (0)61 /12000 www.shannonairport.ie

Ireland is also served by the following regional airports:

- Donegal: 00 353 (0) 74 954 8284
 www.donegalairport.ie
- Kerry: 00 353 (0) 66 9/6 4644
 www.kerryairport.ie
- Ireland West Knock: 00 353 (0) 94 936 8100
- www.irelandwestairport.com
 Waterford; 00 353 (0) 51 846 60
 www.flywaterford.com
- In Northern Ireland, the main airports are • Belfast City Airport:
- www.belfastcityairport.com
 Belfast International: 00 44 (0) 28 9448 4848
 www.belfastairport.com
 - 00 44 (0) 28 7181 0784 www.cityofderryairport.com

SPEND MORE TIME GOLFING AND LESS TIME TRAVELLING



TRAVEL TIMES BY **AIR**

Adare Manor										
00:20	Ballybunnion									
00:20	00:10	00:10 Doonbeg								
00:25	00:20	00:25	Killarne	y						
00:20	00:20	00:10	00:30	Lahinch						
00:35	00:40	00:45	00:30	00:50	Old He	ad				
00:30	00:15	00:20	00:15	00:30	00:35	Tralee				
00:40	00:30	00:35	00:20	00:45	00:35	00:20	Waterville			

TRAVEL TIMES BY ROAD

Adare Manor									
01:10	Ballybunnion								
01:30	01:30	01:30 Doonbeg							
01:30	01:15	02:30	Killarney	Y					
01:30	02:00	00:30	02:40	Lahinch					
02:15	02:45	03:30	01:45	03:30	Old Hea	ad			
01:30	00:50	02:30	01:00	02:30	02:30	Tralee			
02:20	02:00	03:30	01:15	03:30	03:00	01:45 Waterville			

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Festival Times • Cultural events in 2019

Golf is just one of the many great activities on offer in Ireland,

with many festivals to enjoy upon your visit to the island



TEMPLE BAR TRADFEST DUBLIN 23-27 Jan 2019

Temple Bar Tradfest is an annual music and culture festival that takes place in late January in Dublin. Taking place over five days and five nights, the festival features over 200 free events, and it showcases the cream of both Irish and international trad and folk artists, providing a stage to promote the next generation of Irish musicianship. www.tradfest.ie

ST PATRICK'S DAY FESTIVAL

DUBLIN / VARIOUS

14-18 March 2019

Don your shamrock and enjoy the festival surrounding St Patrick's Day, Ireland national day celebrating the patron saint of the country. The day showcases Ireland's identity, arts and culture, with the very best of Irish and international talent for the world to see. The Dublin parade will travel across the city and will delight with its myriad of colourful performers and floats. www.stpatricksfestival.ie

LISTOWEL WRITERS' WEEK LISTOWEL, CO. KERRY 29 May-2 June 2019

Listowel Writers' Week is an internationally acclaimed 5-day literary festival devoted to bringing together writers and audiences at unique and innovative events in the historic and intimate surroundings of Listowel. It includes writing competitions, writing workshops, book launches, readings, lectures and seminars, showcasing the best of Irish literature from across the world. www.writersweek.ie

RORY GALLAGHER FESTIVAL

BALLYSHANNON, CO. DONEGAL 30 May-2 June 2019

Guitar legend Rory Gallagher has sold over 30 million albums worldwide and the Rory Gallagher International Tribute Festival takes place in the town where he was born – Ballyshannon. With over 10,000 fans now attending the festival annually from all over the world, it features some topquality rock-and-roll music from the big top concerts, as well as 25 hours of Free Open Air Concerts and Pub Gigs. www.rorygallagherfestival.com



VHI WOMEN'S MINI MARATHON DUBLIN

2 June 2019

The biggest all-women's event of its kind in the world, the VHI Women's Mini Marathon has grown steadily in numbers since it began in 1983. Women of all ages, representing every county and every walk of life, take part in this great festival of women. No pressure is put on anyone, all you have to do is walk, jog or run the 10k, it is up to each individual to set her own target.

www.vhiwomensminimarathon.ie



Rory Gallagher Festival 30 May - 2 June 2019



Bloomsday Festival

BLOOMSDAY FESTIVAL DUBLIN 11-16 June 2019

The Bloomsday Festival is an annual celebration of James Joyce's modernist epic Ulysses, the events of which take place on 16 June 1904. The day is named after the central character in the book, Leopold Bloom. A lively celebration of all things Joyce, join avid fans of the literature from all over the world as they descend on Dublin. www.bloomsdayfestival.ie

BODY & SOUL FESTIVAL

KILRUSH UPPER, CO. WESTMEATH 21-23 June 2019

A bizarre and beautiful banquet of music, art, food, theatre and more, Body & Soul festival takes place over the Summer Solstice Weekend at Ballinlough Castle, where the grounds and woods are transformed to create a mystical atmosphere. You never know what you might stumble upon, with installations of all sorts around every corner. www.bodyandsoul.ie

SEA SESSIONS CO DONEGAL 21-23 June 2019

A surf and music festival in Co Donegal, Sea Sessions welcomes Two Door Cinema Club, Sigrid, Clean Bandit and more to the beach town of Bundoran this June. The location for the concert is breathtaking along the north-west coast and while taking in the great music, you can take your board and go for a surf, a swim or grab your skateboard for some nice flips. www.seasessions.com



21-23 June 2019

IRISH DERBY FESTIVAL CO KILDARE 27-29 June 2019

The Irish Derby Festival is one of the highlights of the Irish horseracing calendar, taking place at the historic Curragh racecourse in Co Kildare. The three-day event promises a spectacle of fashion, entertainment, music and fine racing as attendees get swept up in the magic of an unmissable summer celebration.

www.curragh.ie/visiting-the-curragh /derby-festival

DUBAI DUTY FREE IRISH OPEN CO CLARE 3-7 July 2019

The famous links at Lahinch Golf Club will host the 2019 Dubai Duty Free Irish Open. This year, the tournament will be hosted by 2014 Ryder Cup-winning captain Paul McGinley and promises to be a treat on one of the world's best courses. With its Rolex Series designation on the European Tour, a world-class field is guaranteed, as many of the world's best prepare for the The Open in Royal Portrush two weeks later.

www.dubaidutyfreeirishopen.com



Dubai Duty Free Irish Open 3-7 July 2019



Galway Arts Festival 15-28 July 2019

GALWAY ARTS FESTIVAL CO GALWAY 15-28 July 2019

Every July, the Galway Arts Festival turns the City of Tribes into a festival party with literature, drama, theatrics and pop-up surprises. Right on the Wild Atlantic Way, the festival is packed with history. The festival packs in over 200 shows in 25+ locations over 14 days. www.giaf.ie

MONAGHAN COUNTRY MUSIC FESTIVAL

MONAGHAN, CO. MONAGHAN 20-23 July 2019

Monaghan Town Country Music festival is a charity-funded, open air, four-day country music and jiving festival, featuring some of the best Irish acts in country music. Beginning in 2013, the festival has taken over the entire town, and it also features a jiving dance competition with a prize of $\in 1,000$ up for grabs, so get practising! www.monaghantowncountrymusic.ie



Rose of Tralee International Festival 23-27 August 2019

NORTHERN IRELAND OPEN

BALLYMENA, CO. ANTRIM

July/August 2019

The Northern Ireland Open is a golf tournament at Galgorm Castle on the European Challenge Tour and a stepping stone to the 'big time' of world golf. It continues to grow every year thanks its family-orientated nature, with the NI Open Food Festival, exhibitors, live music, golf art exhibition and Fun Golf Area all included in the NI Open Village. www.niopen.golf



Fleadh Cheoil 11-18 August 2019

FLEADH CHEOIL CO LOUTH 11-18 August 2019

More than 500,000 people headed to Drogheda, Co Louth last year to take part in the Fleadh Cheoil, Ireland's most famous Irish music festival. The best musicians in the country will be there for competitions for instruments such as the violin, tin whistle, harp and banjo, as well as singing and dancing. It is a unique and welcoming festival of the best of traditional arts that offers a wide range of activities to be enjoyed by all. www.fleadhcheoil.ie

ROSE OF TRALEE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL TRALEE, CO KERRY

23-27 August 2019

The Rose of Tralee International Festival is going into its 60th year in 2019. It brings young women of Irish descent from around the world to County Kerry and connects the global Irish community in a carnival atmosphere of street entertainment and live music, culminating in the selection of the Rose of Tralee for 2019.

www.roseoftralee.ie





Lisdoonvarna Matchmaking Festival 30 August-22 September 2019

LISDOONVARNA MATCHMAKING FESTIVAL LISDOONVARNA, CLARE 30 August-22 September 2019

Europe's largest matchmaking festival draws throngs of people to Lisdoonvarna every year, where they can enjoy live music and dancing with traditional music performances, endless opportunities to meet people – from speed-dating to sessions. Age is no barrier, those attending range from 18 to 80. Most importantly, it is great craic and will leave many long-lasting memories. www.matchmakerireland.com



Electric Picnic 30 August - 1 September 2019

ELECTRIC PICNIC STRADBALLY, LAOIS 30 August - 1 September 2019

Electric Picnic is Ireland's premier music and arts festival, which has consistently attracted some of the biggest names in music, from Kendrick Lamar to Arctic Monkeys, from the Sex Pistols to the Beastie Boys. More than just a music festival, the event also showcases art, theatre, comedy, food and holistic health. www.electricpicnic.ie

THREE BROTHERS CLASSIC CO KERRY 6-7 September 2019

Fifty-four teams of three brothers will take part in a two-day golf competition at Kenmare Golf Club. Teams will be travelling for the event from the US, France, the UK and around Ireland for this event. As well as the competitive side to the Classic, this event is an annual chance for brothers and their families to get together and experience all that Kenmare has to offer. Songs will be sung and stories told until late at night. www.kenmaregolfclub.com/3-brothers/



Banks of the Foyle Halloween Carnival 28-31 October 2019

NATIONAL PLOUGHING CHAMPIONSHIPS CO CARLOW 17-19 September 2019

An outdoor agricultural show incorporating a ploughing contest, the National Ploughing Championships are a celebration of Irish rural life. Hosted since 1931, it draws over 1500 exhibitors and achieves attendances of over 200,000 each year. More than just farming, it features attractions such as live entertainment, fashion shows, crafts, live cooking demonstrations, sheep dog trials, pony games and welly throwing. www.npa.ie

BANKS OF THE FOYLE HALLOWEEN CARNIVAL CO DERRY

28-31 October 2019

Nowhere quite does Halloween like Derry! Every year, the city goes above and beyond to wow the festival goers with its spooktacular events. There's something for every age group to enjoy, with a jampacked carnival calendar extravaganza. www.derryhalloween.com



National Ploughing Championships 17-19 September 2019



Irish Theatre Putting On A Show

Ireland is home to four Nobel Literature winners, who have worked in the many historic theatres across the island.



reland is known as the land of saints and scholars, with many literary giants growing up inspired by these shores. From acclaimed poets to world-class novelists, Ireland has had four Nobel Prize

Winners for Literature - Seamus Heaney, William Butler Yeats, George Bernard Shaw and Samuel Beckett. Ireland is also the home of the great novelist James Joyce, who wrote Ulysses, often voted as the greatest novel of all-time.

Bernard Shaw and Beckett were particularly well known for their flair as playwrights, as well as Oscar Wilde, JM Synge and Sean O'Casey to name just a few. Plays like Waiting for Godot, Playboy of the Western World, Plough and the Stars and The Importance of Being Earnest are Ireland's gift to the literary world. These plays and many others are often shown in the thriving Irish theatrical scene, with a host of festivals and events to enjoy.

Irish theatre venues are brimming with history and often played important roles in key moments of Irish history. For example, the Abbey Theatre, founded by WB Yeats, Edward Martyn and Lady Gregory, features heavily in Ireland's nationalist independence struggle. The Abbey was often a venue of civil disobedience as playwrights tried to bring in brave new themes to theatre. When rioters returned for O'Casey's Plough and the Stars, Yeats famously said, "You have disgraced yourself again. Is this to be the recurring celebration of the arrival of Irish genius?"

A stage adaption of The Country



Girls, Roddy Doyle's Two Pints, and Glasgow Girls are among the highlights of the 2019 schedule at the Abbey Theatre.

The Gaiety Theatre has given the people of Dublin opera, musicals, drama, comedy, concerts, dance, festivals and pantomime for 146 years. 2019 will see great shows such as The Cripple of Inishmaan, the Magic Flute and Riverdance. The similarly named but not-to-be-confused-with Gate Theatre features plays like the Great Gatsby and Roddy Doyle's The Snapper this year, while the 2,111-capacity Bord Gaís Energy Theatre has a full line-up too, from ballet to musicals like Dirty Dancing.

Head to Belfast and you have the award-winning Lyric Theatre, which

EMANUEL GAT'S SUNNY AT ABBEY THEATRE

"Irish theatre venues are brimming with history and often played important roles in key moments of Irish history."

makes a unique and vital contribution to the community as the only full-time producing theatre in Northern Ireland. It has shows like Sweeney Todd and Ulster American coming up in 2019.

In Cork, you will find the 650-seat Victorian theatre, the Everyman Theatre, the oldest purpose-built theatre building in Cork, which features an eclectic mix of plays, operas and concerts, but specialises in drama. The Fit-up Theatre Festival in West Cork is a biennial festival in February and July and August, which brings touring shows to small towns and villages where theatre is only occasionally aired and promotes Irish writing.

In Galway, An Taibhdearc are Irish plays in Gaelic, the national Irish

language theatre in Ireland. The theatre is busy during the two weeks of the Galway Arts Festival in July, one of many great literary festivals over the course of the year. Founded in 1976, the Galway Arts Festival has more than 200,000 attendees at 200 performances, talks and exhibitions across 26 venues. The BBC has described the Galway Arts Festival as "one of Europe's most important cultural events".

Elsewhere in Connacht, the Boyle Arts Festival in Co Roscommon is highly regarded for its group exhibition of contemporary Irish art, classical music, drama and literature, while the Westport Arts Festival is a mix of evening music and theatrical programmes from some of the best global acts in the world.



FOUNDING FATHER MAUREEN ANN LYNCH CASK NO.268 BOURBON FILL 17-01-14

WHISKEY DISTILLERS

DINGLE

FOUNDING FATHER MICHEAL NIALL AGUS BRIAN O CONCHUIR CASK NO.234 BOURBON FILL 03-01-14



FOUNDING FATHER PAT & MARK DUNLEAU CASK NO.212 BOUS FILL 23-1

Irish Whiskey Tours Places to go and whiskeys to try in the home of 'uisce beatha'

The venerable alcoholic spirit in Ireland for many centuries, whiskey is believed to have been invented in Ireland and Scotland in the 15th century. While there is some dispute over who made it first, the oldest licenced distillery is found in Ireland, the Old Bushmills Distillery in Co Antrim.

The key difference between the whiskey in the two countries is that the Irish version is generally distilled three times instead of two, producing smooth-tasting worldwide brands like Bushmills, Jameson and Powers. In Gaelic, whiskey is known as "uisce beatha", meaning the "water of life".

"Too much of anything is bad, but too much good whiskey is barely enough," wrote Mark Twain about the drink, and you can explore the best Irish whiskey here with distillery tours, tours to the best pubs and bars in the country and the finest whiskey shops, where whiskey is as much at home as the excellent food and hospitality.

WHISKEY DISTILLERY

Learn how world-famous whiskey is prepared by going on a distillery tour. Jameson Whiskey was distilled at the Old Jameson Distillery in Dublin until 1971, which is a popular tourist attraction, as is the current location in Midleton in Cork. One can't miss the popular Old Bushmills Distillery in Co. Antrim which produces the smooth-tasting Bushmills. Elsewhere, try the Connacht Distillery Company in Ballina, Mayo. Along the banks of the River Moy in a unique western Irish setting, the distillery's barrel room houses casks full of whiskey, where it slowly matures.

The Tullamore Distillery is a new distillery in County Offaly, where you can taste the famous Tullamore Dew. Visitors on a tour can explore the production process from still house to warehouse and even create their own unique blend of whiskey in the blending room. Surrounded by the beautiful Wicklow Mountains guarded by the mighty Sugar Loaf, enjoying a temperate coastline climate and bathed by pure spring waters, try the Powerscourt whiskey for

a new whiskey distilling

experience. In Drogheda, the Boann Distillery sees every raw ingredient sourced 100 per cent natural and local, with every drop of water drawn from the Boyne Valley well. Born of heritage barley grown in Atlantic soil, Clonakilty Distillery in Co Cork is triple distilled in traditional copper pot stills and cut with the purest of water.

IRISH WHISKEY MUSEUM

Teeling Whiskey Distillery is in the historic Liberties of Dublin city centre, and each tour concludes with a taste of awardwinning Teeling Whiskeys, with a selection of tasting options to suit the novice and aficionado alike. Also in Dublin city centre is the Irish Whiskey Museum at College Green, telling history and tales of the rise and fall of Irish whiskey, through interactive exhibits, plus a tasting at the end.

IRISH WHISKEY TRAILS

Irish Whiskey Trails are available not just for whiskey-lovers but also for anyone who wants to enjoy some of the very best Irish traditional pubs or who is simply interested in Irish history and culture. Visit pubs from McCaul's in Cavan in the north to the Brian Boru Pub in Glasnevin, Dublin in the east, from Folk House Bar in Cork in the south to Lowry's Pub in Galway in the west.

WHISKEY SHOPS

Buying the best whiskey comes sometimes from specialised whiskey shops, others are off-licences attached to pubs, but each offers you an exceptional choice of Irish whiskeys. Many of the whiskeys available in these shops cannot be found in airport duty-free shops or on ferries, so they are well worth checking out if you are looking for the fullest possible choice of Irish whiskeys.

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Irish Retail • Shop 'Til You Drop

From Kildare Village to Victoria Square, Ireland is a shopper's paradise with an array of brands to choose from

reland is a nation that is booming economically, and after the tough days that followed the economic crash of 2008, the retail sector is thriving once more. Any visitor to Irish shores will find an array of gifts to take home from the world's top fashion brands, as well as the best in Irish design. Ireland is known for its home products such as Irish crystal, Aran sweaters and Irish tweed, which are mentioned in detail elsewhere in the guide.

Dublin is a modern European city and the very best brands are available throughout stores in the capital. The city was recently voted fifth best shopping city in the world, with praise for the city's "eclectic mix of shops, cafes, galleries and restaurants". The elegant Grafton Street is one of the top shopping streets in Europe, and with buskers and street performers always around, it is always worth a walk down. Its flagship clothing department store, Brown Thomas is also located in Cork, Limerick and Galway, and includes designer brands from Chanel to Armani.

Shopping centres are common in the capital city. The largest of which is Dundrum Shopping Centre, which at 125,000 square metres and 170 shops and restaurants, is one of the biggest in Europe. Blanchardstown Shopping Centre has more than 180 stores, including four Starbucks, a nine-screen cinema and Leisureplex. From Liffey Valley to Jervis, from Ilac to Omni Park, there is something for everybody in Dublin's shopping centres.

Just outside Dublin, shoppers must try out Kildare Village, a stylishly designed shopping village of designer outlet shopping, home to luxury fashion and homeware stores. Luxury goods on sale include Tommy Hilfiger, Gucci and Armani, which offer up to 60 per cent off all year round. Whitewater Shopping Centre in Newbridge, Co Kildare is Ireland's largest regional shopping centre, with a whole host of retailers, from Debenhams to M&S, from Zara to H&M.

In Cork city, the newly added Opera Lane outdoor shopping mall and street has become a haven for shoppers, offering the best shopping mix in Munster. It is home to premium fashion stores and the prestigious Apple computer dealership, Compu B, in the home city of Apple's European headquarters.

In Belfast, Victoria Square Shopping Centre is home to more than 70 shops, cafes and restaurants, including House of Fraser, Apple, Topshop and Cruise. It is beautifully designed with a massive glass dome measuring 35m (115ft) in diameter. One of the most expensive property developments ever undertaken in Northern Ireland, there is a wonderful 80 ft viewing area for families to enjoy.

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Irish Food • Quirky tastes Ireland has a number of food idiosyncrasies that you must experience



he people of Ireland eat all types of food, like any other nationality, but there are certain oddities to their diet that are ingrained in Irish diet.

When you think of Irish eating habits, you may think of the potato, and they are still involved in a lot of traditional Irish meals, including the famous Irish stew. The exact recipe is not consistent from place to place but common ingredients include lamb or mutton as well as potatoes, carrots, onions and parsley.

Other traditional dishes include: bacon and cabbage (which consists of unsliced back bacon boiled with cabbage and potatoes), boxty (an Irish potato pancake) and colcannon (mashed potatoes with kale or cabbage).

It would not be a trip to Ireland without enjoying a traditional Irish breakfast, a common offering at Irish hotels before a round of golf or a day of sightseeing. The Irish breakfast includes bacon rashers, pork sausages, fried eggs, white pudding, black pudding, toast and fried tomatoes. Black pudding is made from blood, grain (usually barley) and seasoning. Tea or coffee is usually included also. In Northern Ireland, the Ulster Fry will see a slight variation, most

notably soda bread and potato bread, with an omission of white pudding.

The "piece de resistance" of traditional Irish food is the Sunday Carvery, a roast dinner, but done in a buffet style, and see which hunk of roast meat you want cut for you, as well as your choice of mash, vegetables, gravy and roast potatoes.

Bread is loved in Ireland, particularly brown bread, made with coarse flour, typically covered in butter and jam, but also common with soup. Irish people will put just about anything in their sandwich, but try out a crisp sandwich, particularly with Tayto crisps, or a "chip butty" (chips in a sandwich). The chicken fillet roll from a deli is very popular throughout all corner shops in Ireland, a chicken sandwich with salad, placed in a baguette. When in Waterford, check out Waterford Blaa with its floury baps.

Ireland is surrounded by the sea and has a fine seafood industry to be enjoyed by tourists. Oysters from the West Coast are popular, and the European Flat Oyster is native to Irish shores, and Gigas Oysters, Wild Mussels and Wild Surf Clams are harvested within Galway Bay. Top-class fish and chip restaurants can be enjoyed across the country, from Howth to Kinsale to Dingle, while trout, salmon, mackerel, cod and shellfish are also common seafood meals.

Irish Cottage Industry • Authentic Wool

In Ireland, everything was home produced in our grandparent's time and some of those traditions still thrive today



Sweaters, Irish cottage industries produce unique clothing to take home. The history of the cottage industries dates back to a time when the skills of spinning and weaving in early Ireland were so important that the Brehon Laws included a part of a wife's entitlement in case of divorce that she keep her spindles, wool bags, weaver's reeds and a share of the yarn she had spun.

The earliest known evidence in Ireland of woven material dates from 1600 B.C., as pottery from that period shows signs of



woven material in which the clay was placed before firing. A fragment of cloth in the National Museum, found in a bog in County Antrim, is dated from at least 700 B.C.

Historically, weaving in Ireland took two forms. Firstly, the rural handweaver working in his own home, supplying his own and his neighbours' needs. Secondly, from the 13th century onwards, the more organised urban craftsman weaved for a larger domestic and export market. This letter was largely destroyed by restrictive laws imposed on the export of Irish woollen cloth at the end of the 17th century and did not revive again until the late 19th century.

By the 20th century, there were power mills, handweaving mills and individual weavers operating. The handweavers were also encouraged by the Irish Homespun Society, which was founded in 1936. Kerry Woollen Mills is one of the last surviving traditional woollen mills still manufacturing in the wonderful Kerry countryside. The mill is set in a rural location with many of the 300-year-old buildings still standing and functional. The company produces natural fibres in classic and traditional styles and colours. Perhaps the most famous product of the Irish Cottage industry is the Aran Sweater.

Often known as a Fisherman Sweater, they are distinguished by their use of complex textured stitch patterns, several of which are combined in the creation of a single garment. Aran Sweaters were knitted using unscoured wool that retained natural oils, which made garments water-resistant and meant they remained wearable even when wet. Famous for its warmth and durability throughout the world, the hand-weaving skills of Donegal Tweed have been passed down through many generations.

Today, most Donegal Tweed comes from the Magee, Molloy & McNutt factory power looms which yield 600 or more yards a day, but there are still some 25 local craftsmen working at home, turning out the all-wool, handwoven fabric that is treasured throughout the world. Cushendale Woollen Mills in Graiguenamangh, Co Kilkenny dates back to Cistercian monks in the early 13th century and Flemish weaves in the 17th century. In the 19th century, a man called Patrick Cushen began making wool there and the business is still run by relatives of that family. You can visit the various mill shops to view the full range of Irish wool and tweed available.





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Irish traditional • Folk Music and Dance

Take part in a 'session' of trad music to experience the craic and ceol Ireland is famous for



from popular music from rock acts like U2 and Hozier to the mystic Celtic music of Enya. But if Ireland is known for one type of music, it is traditional Irish music.

"There are no notes on a banjo. You just play it," said famous folk musician, Pete Seeger, and that kind of joie de vivre is present in all types of traditional music from the banjo to the fiddle to the tin whistle.

Irish traditional music began as an oral tradition, passed on from generation to generation by listening, learning by ear and without formally writing the tunes on paper. It originated with the Celts 2,000 years ago, who were influenced by music of the East. It is believed that the traditional Irish harp may have originated from Ancient Egypt.

It was not until the 18th century that music was officially written down for the first time. The collecting of music continues today, and the Irish traditional music has travelled much further than Ireland thanks to our long history of emigration, especially during the Great Famine, where vast numbers of Irish moved to the United States and brought their music with them.

Traditional music, or trad for short, has endured more strongly against the forces of cinema, radio and mass media than the indigenous folk music of other countries.

The popularity of the Fleadh Cheoil music festival is one reason why the music has endured to present day. Every year, hundreds of thousands flock to a designated host town for a music competition. This year it is in

Drogheda, Co Louth and it promises to be a week to remember. Another traditional Irish music festival to watch out for is the TradFest in Temple Bar, which attracts some of the biggest international names in folk and traditional Irish music, right in the heart of bustling Dublin city centre, attracting some of the biggest names internationally in folk and traditional Irish music.

Aside from festivals, trad music can be found in bars throughout Ireland. A gathering of people that play trad music is known as a "session", an experience that is shared, not a performance that is bought and sold, and one that often goes on until the early hours of the morning

Common instruments used to play traditional music include the fiddle, accordion, tin whistle, flute and Uilleann pipes. The 4-string banjo and guitar are also regularly used. The bódhran drum is famous in Irish traditional music, measuring from 35 to 45 cm. A goatskin head is tacked to one side, with the other side open-ended for one hand to be placed against the inside of the drum head to control pitch and timbre.

The harp is one of the chief symbols of Ireland and the Celtic Harp is a beautiful wire-strung instrument requiring great skill and practice to play. Irish traditional songs are written in English and Irish. Vocals unaccompanied by music are called sean nós and are considered the ultimate expression of traditional singing, with songs called caoineadh often sang in sorrow at funerals.

But most trad music is upbeat, suiting Irish dancing of jigs, reels and polkas. Irish dancing was, of course, made famous by the Riverdance show, which took off as an interval performance act during the 1994 Eurovision Song Contest, featuring Irish dancing champions Michael Flatley and Jean Butler. It has since visited over 450 venues worldwide and has been watched by over 25 million people, making it one of the most successful dance productions in the world.

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Irish Pubs • Craic agus Ceol

One of Ireland's greatest exports, the Irish pub is home to a hearty welcome and a pint of Guinness



ood puzzle would be cross Dublin without passing a pub," mused Leopold Bloom in James Joyce's novel Ulysses. This is the case not just in Dublin

but across Ireland. Figures from the Drinks Industry Group of Ireland show that there are 7,140 pubs nationwide and are the social hub of activity in cities, towns and villages across the country.

Internationally, the words "Irish pub" are met with respect, as the pub sparks thoughts of a unique culture, a casual and friendly atmosphere, hearty food and drink, Irish sports and traditional music.

For many years, the local pub was considered the cornerstone of the community in the same way the local church would be. It functioned as both a place to consume alcohol at leisure as well as a place in which to meet and greet people of the locality. The congenial atmosphere still exists today, where a warm and friendly atmosphere is extended to outsiders.

While not all Irish pubs will feature live Irish music, it is an important part of the culture,

along with food, drink and sports. Drinks include a variety of spirits and beers on tap, including Guinness and Irish whiskeys such as Bushmills or Jameson. As the home of the "Black Stuff", the quality of the Guinness in Ireland is unmatched elsewhere, and a pint is an essential experience for all visitors in the country.

The main cities on the island have a vibrant nightlife. Temple Bar in Dublin is packed with pubs playing live music, and if you fancy hanging around to the late hours of the morning, try the famous nightclub Copper Face Jacks. The Cathedral Quarter is the cultural hub of Belfast, from the Dirty Onion to the Duke of York. Galway is one of the most authentic Irish "going out" experiences, while Cork is unmatched for the quality of its nightlife on Oliver Plunkett Street. In truth, every urban area, no matter how small in Ireland, has its fair share of interesting pubs. And some of the most authentic Irish drinking experiences will come in rural areas, where you will be transported back to a simpler time of "craic and ceol".





GALLERY Grogan's, Co Dublin

Grogan's is one of Dublin's liveliest city centre pubs on South William Street, but it differs from pubs around it in that it also operates as a gallery. The pub showcases a revolving display of work from local artists. It decorates the pub nicely, while giving exposure to local art. With some of the best Guinness in the world, Grogans is one of those places where time stands still and the world passes by.



EXPLORE The South Pole Inn, Co Kerry

Local Dingle legend Tom Crean was involved in three of history's most punishing Antarctic expeditions and earned a medal for bravery. On returning to his native county, Crean opened The South Pole Inn, where the shelves are packed with stories attesting to his heroism.



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Pub grub • Tasty tradition Authentic Irish food locally produced

is available in pubs across Ireland

reland is perhaps better known for a delicious, creamy pint of Guinness from the pub than it is for its food offering. But as the years go by, pubs have adapted

to the needs of the 21st century, realising that the bar is more than just a place for drinking, it can be a place for high-quality dining as well.

Take, for example, the Wild Honey Inn in Lisdoonvarna, Co Clare. In 2018, the familyrun bar became the first Irish pub to win a coveted Michelin Star. Run by chef Aidan McGrath and his wife, Kate, the Irish Times review wrote that it was a "great combination of a pub full of character and a kitchen that cares about putting the food of the Burren onto plates".

A Michelin star is a long way from the days where a packet of Tayto crisps and a packet of nuts would be the only thing to eat in many pubs across the country. Today, it is unusual for a pub not to offer a food menu of some sort, with carvery dinners particularly popular at lunchtimes and weekends, with their Sunday roast dish.

Food in the pub also benefits from the cosy atmosphere of historic venues. Billy Andys in Co Antrim, for example, is a 19th century traditional pub with peat fires, low ceilings and traditional music, but also exciting and contemporary fine food at reasonable prices. It is one of 30 pubs listed in Michelin's "Eating Out in Pubs" guide for 2018. An emphasis on fresh local quality pub is seen in Cronin's Sheebeen in Westport, Co Mayo, overlooking Clew Bay on the west coast of Ireland, a former winner of Hospitality Ireland's Best Traditional Pub competition. For delicacies to try when in the pub, experience a "blaa" (a soft white roll) in Waterford, an Ulster Fry with soda bread and potato farls in Belfast or try a "boxty" with traditional potato pancakes. From colcannon to Irish stew, there is something for everyone in the pub grub across Ireland.





ANTRIM

 Billy Andy's (Mounthill, near Larne)

CLARE

- Morrissey's (Doonbeg)
- Vaughan's Anchor Inn (Liscannor)
- Wild Honey Inn (Lisdoonvarna)
- Linnane's Lobster Bar (New Quay)

CORK

- Poacher's Inn (Bandon)
- Deasy's (Clonakilty)
- Cronin's (Crosshaven)
- Toddies at The Bulman (Kinsale)

DOWN

- Bull & Ram (Ballynahinch)
- Pheasant (Annahilt)
- Poacher's Pocket (Comber)
- Parson's Nose (Hillsborough)
- Plough Inn (Hillsborough)
- Pier 36 (Donaghadee)
- Balloo House (Killinchy).

DUBLIN

- Old Spot (Ballsbridge)
- Chop House (Ballsbridge)

GALWAY

- Moran's Oyster Cottage (Kilcolgan)
- O'Dowd's (Roundstone)

KILDARE

- Harte's (Kildare)
- Ballymore Inn (Ballymore Eustace)
- Fallon's (Kilcullen)

LEITRIM

Oarsman (Carrick-on-Shannon)

LOUTH

• Fitzpatricks (Jenkinstown)

MAYO

- The Tavern (Murrisk)
- Sheebeen (Westport)

SLIGO

• Hargadons (Sligo Town)

TIPPERARY

• Larkins (Garrykennedy)

WEXFORD

Lobster Pot (Carne)


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What the Critics say



Accommodation – Live like royalty

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utstanding hospitality comes naturally to Irish people, which is why Ireland is a home to Céad Míle Fáilte, or a thousand

welcomes. Famous Irish hospitality takes its roots from the ancient Brehon law of Celtic times, where all households were obliged to provide some measure of oigidecht (hospitality) to travellers, even if unknown, including food, drink, a bed and entertainment. No prying questions would be asked of the guest, while exchanges of travelling tales, poetry and songs were welcome.

Today, the highest level of accommodation is maintained with Fáilte Ireland's Welcome Standard, where hotels and lodgings are assessed on their behavioural standards, customer journey, meeting customer expectations and quality of the experience. This is seen particularly along the winding roads of Ireland's Ancient East, which offer the unique opportunity to stay in a magnificent house, stately home or castle. Live like a Lord or Lady in your very own demesne. Visitors can absorb centuries of history, enjoying sumptuous afternoon teas and sipping drinks in old-world libraries. Visiting the likes of Castle Leslie in Co Monaghan or Ballyfin Demesne in Co Laois and the elaborate architecture, lush gardens and grand interiors will add a touch of magic to your trip.

Meanwhile on the Wild Atlantic Way, right on the edge of west Europe, there is the chance to stay in some of the most remarkable places imaginable, with blasts of sea air, stunning views and dramatic landscapes. Take, for example, Bantry House in Co Cork where you can stand atop the parterre and be treated to a magnificent panorama that reaches in the wild, wonderful, green blue mists of Bantry Bay, while the rooms overlook the 19th century Italianite garden. Enjoy similar experiences at Clare Island Lighthouse in County Mayo and Coopershill in Co Sligo.



Northern Ireland is full of unique accommodation options. From cruisers to castles, mountain lodges to coastal lighthouses and luxury spas to glamping, there is something for everyone. For something different, cast away to Finn Lough, a 75-acre peninsula resort in the Fermanagh Lakelands, where you can lie back in a four-poster bed and watch the starry night skies above in a secluded forest bubble dome.



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Golf fans may recognise the brand as a prolific creator of golf trophies. Waterford Crystal produce trophies for tournaments such as the Honda Classic, the Memorial, The Players Championship and The Tour Championship on the PGA Tour, while at home the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open trophy is made by the company.

For the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open trophy, a combination of diamond and flat cutting was used to create the contour of a golf ball. "A player will look back at his or her achievements and trophies play an important part in that. No matter what prize money you have won, it's nice to have magnificent trophy, which recognises the effort and work that went into winning," says David McCoy, sales and Marketing Director of House of Waterford Crystal.

It's not just golf that Waterford Crystal manufactures trophies for, snooker fans will recognise the Masters trophy – recreating the concept of 15 snooker balls in a triangle, in an upright position.

Outside of sport, the company designs pieces for the Peoples' Choice Awards, as well as the spectacular Times Square Ball – a crystal ball which forms a prominent part of the New Years Eve celebration in Times Square in New York, known as the "Ball Drop". The latest version is lit by 32,256 LED lamps provided by Philips



and at 12 feet (3.7 metres) in diameter, it contains 2,688 Waterford Crystal panels and weighs 11,875 pounds (5,386 kg).

More than 190,000 visitors travel from all over the world to see the Waterford Crystal factory. The factory on the Mall is now a major tourist attraction as well as a crucial business for the Irish economy.

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The Waterford factory contains a brandnew continuous melt tank furnace that has been tailor-made for Waterford Crystal's range of premium products. Around 80 per cent of visitors are international travellers from Australia, USA or Europe and the rest are domestic visitors on holiday in the southeast. Why not visit Waterford and experience it yourself first hand?



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Irish caddies make the game so much more fun

They are a unique breed, with a unique sense of humour, essential for any real Irish golf experience.

By Dermot Gilleece

addies, according

Raymond Floyd,

to the distinguished

C

are like your wife: they're always right. Few players would argue with that, but whatever the rights and wrongs of their behaviour, they are invariably a fascinating bunch.

American

professional,

Whenever I think of that great line from one of the Pink Panther movies "Give me 10 men like Clouseau and I could destroy the world", the resourcefulness of golf caddies immediately springs to mind. They're the ultimate backs-tothe-wall brigade, who seem capable of prompting tears, cheers and recrimination in equal measure.

They can become extremely loyal friends to their master, which is not difficult to understand when we realise that player and caddie probably spend more time together than the average married couple. Which leads me to a scene of high emotion that I witnessed at Augusta National on the opening day of the 2004 US Masters, when it emerged that Tom Watson's long-time caddie and friend, Bruce Edwards, had died that morning from motor neurone disease, less than two hours before the opening shots of a tournament he loved so well.

"DAMN THIS DISEASE!," Watson shouted in anger in the media centre. "DAMN IT!" And it was only when his tears began to irritate his mouth that he thought of wiping them away with a tissue. This was a different side to golf; a deeply caring side that seemed starkly removed from blinkered battling for a Major trophy.

Sally for Edwards, he never got the chance of caddying for Watson in the Masters victories of 1977 and 1981, which occurred before players were given the option of using their own caddies in 1983. Known in the US as Lou Gehrig's disease, it had been diagnosed in January of the previous year. By then, Edwards had only 15 months to live.

All of which was a world away from the humour we associate with caddying, especially in this country.

I'm thinking of Peter Maguire, an irrepressible character who caddied and did odd-jobs for all of 50 years at Portmarnock GC until his death in March 2001. Small wonder that his passing was

marked by a large turn-out, including the club captain, Vincent Sex, who delivered a warm tribute at the funeral mass.

Colourful of speech and much loved of the members, Peter was the source of some marvellous stories. Like the one about the American visitor who, pointing to the pond on the short seventh, enquired: "Peter, is that casual water?" To which the caddie replied: "Oh no sir. There's no f...ing way you can drink that water."

Then there was the visitor who, after being instructed by

Peter to slide his sand wedge under the ball, made several vain attempts at extricating it from the cavernous bunker fronting the green at the long sixth. Exasperated, the caddie demanded: "Give me the club." And when he, too, had smashed the ball into the face of the bunker, he remarked without batting an eyelid: "That's what you're f....ing doing wrong."

During the 1950s, in the whole of his health, it was no trouble to Peter to carry two bags at weekends, so he was understandably miffed when a regular client turned "During the 1950s, in the whole of his health, it was no trouble to Peter to carry two bags at weekends, so he was understandably miffed when a regular client turned up with a new-fangled caddie-car." up with a new-fangled caddie-car. On the fourth, after carving his approach into uncharted territory, the man with the wheels enquired: "Did you see that, Peter?" Whereupon the caddie turned directly to the caddie-car and repeated the question: "Did you see that?" The contraption didn't reappear.

On a flight back to Dublin after the 1997 Open at Royal Troon, I happened to be sitting beside John O'Reilly. He had two requests: how much had his employer, Padraig Harrington, won by finishing in a share of fifth place behind Justin Leonard the previous day, and would I share his considerable load of duty-free cigarettes going through customs.

Nothing from the Tallaght caddie ever surprised me. Like when he told Paul McGinley that whether or not he was invited to the player's 1996 wedding at Luttrellstown Castle, he planned to be there. And he was. But I must confess to a bit of a jolt when, on informing him that Harrington's cheque from Troon was for $\pounds 62,500$, he had worked out in his head in a matter of seconds that his own, seven and a half per cent share, amounted to $\pounds 4,687.50$.

Then there was the time when Reilly, as he's popularly known, bet £5 that he would buy himself a drink in the Members' Bar of the Royal and Ancient clubhouse at St Andrews. Impossible? South Africa's Hugh Baiocchi clearly thought so when gladly proffering the fiver. With a group of tournament players and fellow caddies watching, Reilly headed into the lockerroom, where he had full access, and from there to the Members' Bar, where he most certainly did not have access. On being stopped at the door as he had anticipated, the grizzled Dubliner took off his watch and insisted that it belonged to his "master", Des Smyth, and that he had to return it to him.

"Sorry sir. Cannae do that," insisted the doorman, even after Reilly declared it to be a valuable Rolex, which it clearly wasn't. "But if anything happens to this watch, I'll be sacked," he pleaded. At this, the doorman wavered fatally and when it was followed up with "Oh look! There he is", Reilly had his opening.

Before the bemused Scot realised what was happening, Reilly darted past him and headed straight for an untended glass of beer on a table. As he later recalled: "I picked it up and went straight over to the window so that my friends could see me. There, I was in the act of saluting the lads outside with my glass when I felt this hand on my shoulder. It belonged to Keith MacKenzie [then secretary of the R and A1."

A]." "What the hell are you doing in here?" the voice thundered, as only MacKenzie could thunder. Whereupon Reilly was effectively frogmarched back whence he came. But on arriving outside, he was greeted like a conquering hero to resounding cheers from admiring players and caddies alike. As he put it: "My mission had been accomplished. It was the sweetest fiver I ever earned."

Given such levels of ingenuity, the notion of caddies as little more than menials is to seriously undervalue their craft. And by way of emphasising this point, a Tralee caddie grandly described himself as a 'wind and distance consultant'. Bangor-born David Feherty has described caddies as "the lifeblood of the pro game." The US TV commentator added: "When golfers ask if they've chosen the right club, a caddie has to know whether the player actually wants an opinion or just wants his opinion confirmed. That's the trick. Small wonder the relationship between player and caddie is considered the most stressful any human being is likely to encounter, outside of armed conflict."

Having got through his formative years on tour with O'Reilly, Harrington won his three Major championships with brother-in-law, Ronan Flood, on his bag. It's a relationship based essentially on companionship, respect and friendship.

There are probably as many caddie-



When golfers ask if they've nosen the right ib, a caddie has now whether the er actually wants opinion or just ants his opinion confirmed.

> stories as there are golfers. And even in its relatively short existence, the caddieshack at Old Head Links has already produced a wealth of humour from the largest and most professional group now working at club level in this country.

They were originally under the command of Noel Hurley, the caddie-master when the course opened officially in June 1997. His staff were recruited from scratch and Jack Jolley, the caddiemaster from Loch Lomond GC came over to help streamline the process before Hurley eventually took sole charge.

During the golfing season from April to November, they stay locally, either in a caravan park or in bed-and-breakfast accommodation and are never short of work. In times of relaxation, there is the prospect of a song from Leprechaun Danny, so christened by Hurley because of his small stature. His given name is Pat Daly and his son, Cian, caddied for Tiger Woods during a memorable visit in July 1999.

Hurley proudly claimed that Leprechaun Danny sang in Carnegie Hall, before adding: "When I heard him singing one day to nobody in particular, I could tell he had a good voice." In the event, he proved to be quite a balladeer, giving rousing renditions of such favourites as "The Holy Ground", "The Banks of My Own Lovely Lee" and "Danny Boy", along with the little-known Kerry song, "Boys of Ba na Sraide".

Mind you, the singer didn't always have an appreciative audience. As Hurley recalled: "One day, an American visitor asked me what sort of a singer Leprechaun Danny was. And when I said he was a tenor, our guest replied 'here's 20 bucks: tell him to get lost.'" The vast majority of his audience, however, delighted in the singing, nor was it unusual for him to be called upon in Kinsale's restaurants to entertain guests at the table while they dined.

Most golfers will be familiar with the old chestnut about the player who complains: "You have got to be the worst caddie in the world." Prompting the reply: "Impossible sir. That would be too much of a coincidence." As Floyd observed so accurately, the seasoned bagman is always right.

Counties in this section: Dublin

Dublin is a growing modern city, the tech capital of Europe, booming with foreign investment, but its historic golf courses are often an insight into its storied past



oyal Dublin, for example, is Ireland's second oldest club, situated on Bull Island on the

Dollymount Strand. It was instituted at a meeting held all the way back in 1885 on Grafton Street and one of the island's premier links courses has seen the world's best players play on it for hundreds of years. The club once hosted the greatest pioneer in the history of the game, Old Tom Morris, who played two matches there in 1894. Some of the world's best golfers from Jack Nicklaus to Lee Trevino to Greg Norman to Ernie Els have played at Royal Dublin, while it was also a favourite of former US President Bill Clinton and showbiz stars





Bob Hope and Sean Connery. Both Bernhard Langer and Seve Ballesteros won Irish Opens there in the 1980s. Bull Island is also home to another classic links in St Anne's Golf Club, a tight course with holes nearby and parallel to each other, where the final three holes will send you to the clubhouse with a smile.

Links courses may be more associated with the West of Ireland and the Wild Atlantic Way, but there are few more treasured links in the world than Portmarnock Golf Club, which will host the Amateur Championship in 2019. Just 12 miles from the city centre, it is regularly voted among the best golf courses in the world.

It has a long history of hosting golf tournaments, including the 1960 Canada Cup, when an American team of Arnold Palmer and Sam Snead won the trophy. Portmarnock was Palmer's first ever experience of links golf and Palmer fell in love with the course and that type of game. Upon returning home to America, he said: "I recall saying to Sam that every aspect of our games was examined that week. It's the first time I've played a course like this one, and I've learnt a lot of shots - shots I've never played before in my life."

The King would go on to win the 1961 and 1962 Open, and his love of links would later inspire him to design Tralee Golf Links in Kerry, a magnificent course almost the equal of the great Dublin course. Portmarnock has been played by the best in golf, from Tom Watson to Phil Mickelson to Seve Ballesteros, who won the Carroll's Irish Open there in 1986. The course has not held an Irish Open since 2003 but has been used by the best golfers in world to tune up for The Open, including former World Number 1 Dustin Johnson. Tiger Woods used to play at Portmarnock en route to his record-breaking displays at golf's oldest championship. "Coming here has been instrumental in preparing for the British Open, not only for getting me adjusted to

Portmarnock has been played by the best in golf, from Tom Watson to Phil Mickelson to Seve Ballesteros, who won the Carroll's Irish Open there in 1986.

> the time difference but also for getting used to playing links golf," Woods said. "We've played Portmarnock just about every year. It's one of the most enjoyable links courses I have had the opportunity to play."

> Bernhard Langer won the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open at Portmarnock in 1987 and he liked the area so much that he came back less than a decade later to create the wonderful Portmarnock Hotel and Golf Links beside the famous links. The Hotel course is more accessible than its older brother and combines the charm of a traditional style layout with the challenges of the modern game.

A trip around Dublin's premier links courses wouldn't be complete without a

visit to the magnificent The Island Golf Club, near Donabate in north Dublin. It is bordered on three sides by water, its massive dunes are its only protection from the winds that appear to blow almost incessantly. The Island was once only accessible by boat - golfers rowed across the estuary from Malahide from its founding in 1890 until 1973 when the burgeoning membership opted for the car as its preferred mode of access. The Island will host the qualifying rounds of the Amateur Championship in 2019, and this par-71 challenge is far from easy. Darren Clarke has fond memories of The Island, and shot an eight-under-par, course record 63 there, in the second round of the Irish PGA Championship.

When in the area, check out the wonderful Corballis Links with its rugged beauty and lovely views. It is also a very accessible course with its very reasonable green fees among the best value for money in Ireland.

Moving away from links courses, there are several excellent parkland set-ups in the north of the county, a short drive from the city centre. Balbriggan Golf Club, just 15 minutes from Dublin Airport, has been newly developed by Eddie Connaughton with USGA standard sand-based greens and tee boxes along mature tree-lined fairways and well-placed hazards. One of the more scenic locations to play golf in Dublin is Howth Golf Club, meandering across the Hill of Howth, featuring panoramic views of Dublin Bay and the north Dublin coast. Situated in the picturesque fishing town, it has a selection of world-class seafood restaurants to enjoy after the round.

North of the city, there are also newer additions like St Margaret's, Roganstown, Hollywood Lakes and Hollystown that ensure a fun day out. If staying in the city centre and looking for a budget option, there are some public courses accessible by Dublin's expansive public transport system of rail, tram and bus. Access the 4 bus to arrive at Silloge Park Golf Club, access Elm Park Golf Club and Deer Park Golf Club from the Dart line. Designed by Eddie Hackett, Malahide Golf Club combines the pleasant ambience of parkland with a whiff

of salty sea air.

In the north-west of the county, you'll find the excellent Luttrellstown Castle Resort. Cast by the same design team that created the likes of Turnberry and Royal St George's, Luttrellstown is an impressive venue with a great course in excellent condition. The clubhouse facilities further complement the wonderful on-course experience. It is beautifully maintained all year round and run with precision by former European Tour player and Spanish Open winner Peter Lawrie.

Not far from Luttrellstown is Hermitage Golf Club, a quality parkland course popular with the rich and famous. Blessed with a verdant, rolling setting, it is within the part of the beautiful Liffey Valley known as the Strawberry Beds.

Head for the leafy suburbs of Dublin, south of the River Liffey and you will find an abundance of great courses. The course at Castle Golf Club is located in what was Rathfarnham Castle estate and is an excellent test laid out in two loops of nine holes with a sting in the tail.

Three-time major winner Harrington was a member of another Rathfarnham club, Stackstown, which sits high above the city in the Dublin mountains.

2014 Ryder Cup-winning captain Paul McGinley learned the game at neighbouring course at The Grange and another Ryder Cup star, Eamon Darcy, was assistant professional there. Situated in the foothills of the Dublin mountains, just 15 minutes from the city centre, it has been voted the best parkland course in Dublin by Golf Digest.

McGinley won the World Cup with good friend Padraig Harrington in 1997. Threetime major winner Harrington was a member of another Rathfarnham club, Stackstown, which sits high above the city in the Dublin mountains, offering panoramic views of the metropolis and its golfing delights. Visitors can bask in the history of Harrington's major wins at Stackstown with the 'Harrington Room', where one can see the trophies and memorabilia of the Irishman's great achievements.

"One of the underestimated tourist destinations is staying in the centre of Dublin city and travelling from there," Harrington said. "You probably have half a dozen great links courses within 30-40 minutes of where you are staying. It's a great golfing destination."

It is hard to argue with Harrington. As the nation's capital, Dublin serves as a superb access point to visit the many fantastic courses across the island. But it sometimes easy to forget how great golf is in the county itself. And with the capital attracting most tourists who come to Ireland every year, golf must rank as one of our most hidden assets.



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- Balbriggan 1.
- 2. Balcarrick 3. Ballinascorney
- 4. Beaverstown
- 5. Beech Park
- 6. Carrickmines
- 7 Castle
- 8. Castleknock
- 9. Citywest Hotel & Golf
- 10. Clontarf
- 11. Corballis Links
- 12. Corrstown
- 13. Deer Park
- 14. Donabate

- 15. Dublin City
- 16. Dublin Mountain
- 17. Dun Laoghaire
- 18. Edmondstown
- 19. Elm Park
- 20. Elmgreen
- 21. Forrest Little
- 22. Foxrock
- 23. Glencullen
- 24. Grange
- 25. Grange Castle
- 26. Hazel Grove
- 27. Hermitage
- 28. Hollystown

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- 29. Howth
- 30. Killiney
- 31. Kilmashogue 32. Leopardstown
- 33. Lucan
- 34. Luttrellstown Castle
- 35. Malahide
- 36. Milltown
- 37. Newlands
- 38. Portmarnock Hotel & Golf Links
- 39. Rathfarnham
- 40. Roganstown
- 41. Rush

- 42. Silloge Park
- 43. Skerries 44. South County
- 45. St. Anne's
- 46. St. Margarets
- 47. Stackstown
- 48. Sutton
- 49. Swords
- 50. The Island
- 51. Portmarnock Golf Club
- 52. The Royal Dublin
- 53. Westmanstown



DUBLIN



Balbriggan Golf Club Blackhall, Balbriggan, Co Dublin

Tel353 (0) 1 8412229Emailbalbriggangolfclub@eircom.netWebwww.balbriggangolfclub.comCourseParklandLength6,077 metresPar72

Balbriggan is ranked in the Top 100 Courses in Ireland following a superb course re-development. Located 15 minutes from Dublin Airport, this exciting course with many water features is surrounded by rolling parkland with views of the Mourne Mountains. All visitors will find a warm welcome, a fully stocked pro-shop and excellent clubhouse catering. Green fees: midweek €30-35, midweek early bird special €20.





The Royal Dublin Golf Club North Bull Island Nature Reserve, Dollymount, Dublin 3

Tel	353 (0) 1833 6346
Email	info@theroyaldublingolfclub.com
Web	www.theroyaldublingolfclub.com
Course	Links
Length	7,297 yards
Par	72

The Royal Dublin Golf Club is home to one of Ireland's finest links courses with a proud history of hosting championship golf since the Club was founded in 1885. The course will put your golfing skills to the test as you try to avoid the well placed bunkers and wispy fescue rough. Green fees: Monday, Tuesday and Thursday €150. Friday to Sunday €175.





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Corballis Links Golf Club Donabate, Co. Dublin

Tel353 (0) 1 843 6583Emailinfo@corballisgolflinks.comWebwww.corballislinks.comCourseLinksLength4,682 metresPar66

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 Email
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 Web
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 Course
 Links

 Length
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 Par
 71

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Balcarrick

Corballis, Donabate, Co Dublin www.balcarrickgolfclub.com balcarr@iol.ie 00 353 (0) 1 843 6957

Ballinascorney

Oldfield, Kilmashogue Lane, Rathfarnham, Dublin 16 www.ballinascorneygc.com info@ballinascorneygc.com 00 353 (0) 1 493 7755

Beaverstown

Beaverstown, Donabate, Co Dublin www.beaverstown.com office@beaverstown.com 00 353 (0) 1 843 6439

Beech Park

Johnstown, Rathcoole, Co Dublin www.beechpark.ie info@beechpark.ie 00 353 (0) 1 458 0522

Carrickmines

Golf Lane, Carrickmines, Dublin 18 www.carrickminesgolfclub.ie info@carrickminesgolfclub.ie 00 353 (0) 1 295 5972

Castle Woodside Drive, Rathfarnham, Dublin 14 www.castlegc.ie info@castlegc.ie 00 353 (0) 1 490 4207

Castleknock

Porterstown Road, Dublin 15 www.castleknockgolfclub.ie info@castleknockgolfclub.ie 00 353 (0) 1 640 8736

Citywest

Citywest Hotel, Saggart, Co Dublin www.citywesthotel.com proshop@citywesthotel.com 00 353 (0) 1 401 0878

Clontarf

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Into the heartlands

Home is where the heart is, and that's especially true when it comes to golf and passion for the game.

By Brian Keogh



Home is where the heart is, and that's especially true when it comes to golf and passion for the game.

Golfers are products of their environments, and just as Stackstown, Grange and Esker Hills shaped the games of Pádraig Harrington, Paul McGinley and Shane Lowry, a great golfing adventure through Ireland's Hidden Heartlands is a golden opportunity to discover the real Ireland.

Lowry grew up in Clara in County Offaly, a 20-minute bike ride from the rolling fairways of Esker Hills, one of the many magnificent, modern parklands built in Ireland in the past 30 years and the perfect starting point for a magical golfing voyage of discovery.

Trace a route along the iconic River Shannon and its environs, and you will pass through some of the most beautiful parts of Ireland — Leitrim, Roscommon and Longford as well as parts of Clare, Westmeath, Cavan, North Tipperary, Galway, and Offaly.



Known as the Faithful County, Offaly is home to some of Ireland's great parkland courses with Esker Hills a superb foil to its neighbours Birr, Castle Barna and Tullamore.

Built on the ancient Esker Riada — a series of low-lying ridges composed of sand, gravel and boulders that were deposited by melting glaciers around 10,000 years ago — it proved the perfect training ground for a future world star and is now a place for pilgrimage for golf lovers from all over the world.

"I have a good short game, and I learned all the difficult shots by playing off hilly lies and playing into tough greens around Esker Hills," Lowry says of his home course. "Playing at Esker Hills taught me so much about the game. I just loved heading out there from school and taking a club or two out to chip around and teach myself those shots.

"I'd say I used to drive them mad out there. I'd be out there all day every day

and had no problems playing 36, 45 holes some days; I used to love it."

A worldwide tour winner, Lowry has played all the great Irish courses, but he's always enjoyed a game at his local courses in Offaly, such as Tullamore or Birr, both of which have more than a century of history behind them.

Birr is a testing par-70, measuring just over 6,500 yards from the tips and some of Ireland's most celebrated players have tested themselves there including the club's former Walker Cup and PGA Tour player Richie Coughlan and Challenge Tour player Justin Kehoe. "I remember going out to watch the last five holes when Peter Lawrie shot a course record 62 back in 1996," recalled Kehoe, a former Irish international.

"And I remember Harrington too because, at the 18th, his tee shot ended up in the valley, which you can bomb your drive over now.

"It's a hole full of character because the fairway still has visible traces of the ridges left from the potato drills that date to Famine times."

Head north from Offaly to Leitrim, and you can play the county's only course, Ballinamore. Beautifully situated on the Shannon Erne Waterway, you can drink in panoramic views of the Sliabh an Iarainn (Iron Mountain) and test your game before head further west across the border into Roscommon where Carrick on Shannon Golf Club, a parkland course constructed to the highest USGA specifications on the banks of the great river, awaits.

Set in the shadow of the Argina Mountains, it's an excellent 18hole course with its new nine holes built on land that sweeps down to Drumharlow Lake and the Boyle River.

From there it's but a 30-minute drive south to nine-hole Strokestown Golf Club and another short hop from there to Roscommon Golf Club, which was established in 1904 as a nine-hole course on the old Mote Park Estate before the members bought an additional 58 acres in 1991 to create a championship standard 18hole course.

Mature trees, which once graced Lord Crofton's estate, have been retained and new trees have been strategically planted, which not only add to the scenic beauty but challenge the golfer to plan their

Known as the Faithful County, Offaly is home to some of Ireland's great parkland courses with Esker Hills a superb foil to its neighbours Birr, Castle Barna and Tullamore.

route from tee to green.

Cross the Shannon again heading east, and you will come to County Longford Golf Club, founded in 1894 but not extended to 18 holes until 1969.

It is not a long course from the members' tees by any means. However, tight fairways and several well-placed water hazards mean you have to be on your game to score well.

The signature hole is the 453m (495-yard) par-five 18th, which plays uphill towards a large conifer know locally as the Christmas Tree.

A straight drive will leave you in position to lay up left of the tree and play your third over a stream which cascades from the left side into a small pond. From here you can head north to the drumlins and lakes of County Cavan, where Slieve Russell Hotel, Golf and Country Club, Belturbet, Farnham Estate, Co Cavan and Blacklion offer some excellent golf.

ESKER HILLS GOLF CLUB

The Slieve Russell has been a massive favourite with Irish golfers since 1990 and as home to the Maguire sisters, Leona and Lisa, it's a great test of golf.

Another beautiful Patrick Merrigan design, it's a championship standard layout that now boasts a popular, nine-hole Adventure Golf Course, designed by Ken Kearney, that's proving to be a huge success for guests with young families.

County Westmeath lies further south along the Shannon with four magnificent challenges awaiting at Athlone, Glasson Country House Hotel & Golf Club, Mount Temple and Moate.



Designed by Christy O'Connor Jnr, Glasson is a golfer's dream venue, set on the shores of Lough Ree just a few yards from the front door of the top class hotel with the signature, 180-yard, par-three 15th, requiring a brave tee shot to a green that juts out into the lake. Head south from Glasson's sylvan splendour, and you will enter

north Tipperary where Nenagh and Roscrea await. Affiliated to the Golfing Union of Ireland in 1929, Nenagh started

as a nine-hole course designed by Alister McKenzie of Augusta National fame before and remained substantially unchanged until 1973, when Eddie Hackett developed Nenagh's first 18 hole course.

The purchase of additional land in the 1980s and 90s allowed the club to undertake a major re-development that led to the creation of a new 18-hole course, designed by the great Merrigan in 2001. It's a splendid test for golfers of all abilities while the town offers the chance to visit some historic sites in the area, including Nenagh Castle, a Norman keep built around 1200 by Theobald Walter, the 1st Baron Butler.

Roscrea is equally beautiful and challenging, nestled in the shadows of the Slieve Bloom Mountains in the geographical centre of Irelan. The town is situated strategically in a gap in the hills on one of the great ancient roads of Ireland, the Slighe Dála but Roscrea is famous for another road.

Every Irish course has its Joe Carr story, and Roscrea's inevitably involves its most iconic hole — the Burma Road.

The moniker was first used to describe the West Course at Wentworth during World War II when the course was requisitioned by the military and allowed to grow wild because it was feared that enemy aircraft might land on the fairways.

Towards the end of the war, German prisoners were brought in from a nearby internment camp to clear the course. One of the officers overseeing the clearance operation reputedly said: "Let this be their Burma Road".

Roscrea's Burma Road is equally treacherous — a long, 559 yard, tree-lined par-five with out of bounds in the form of a bog and forest

running the entire length of the left-hand side and tall trees all down the right.

The hole remains one of the best-loved originals at the club, which celebrates its 125th anniversary this year and its journey from its first home at Millpark in Golden Grove in 1892 to idyllic parkland surround at its current home at Derryvale near Rackett Hall in 1911.

While it has been an 18-hole course since 1992, when Dr Arthur Spring built 11 new holes, it was a much-loved nine-hole course for many years and the venue for Roscrea's popular Phoenix Senior Scratch Cup.

It's always tough to resist the lure of the west and crossing the Shannon once more we are faced the choice between the parklands of East Clare, Shannon and Woodstock in County Clare or the Galway gems that are Portumna, Ballinasloe and Mountbellew.

Clare is famous for its links courses, such as Lahinch or Doonbeg, but while some clubs are held in high esteem for their towering dunes, their storied architecture or their huge historical significance for the game, there is more to golf in Ireland than links.

Shannon Golf Club is just 53 years old, but its story is a microcosm of the recent history of Irish golf and a great place to blow away the cobwebs after a long transatlantic flight into Shannon Airport.

Memorable International Pro-Ams held there in the late 1970s, and early 1980's when the likes of Greg Norman, Seve Ballesteros, Bernhard Langer and Nick Faldo would turn up to play the testing parkland course by the Shannon estuary before heading on to play the Irish Open.

It's a testament to the quality of the course that it has hosted the Irish Amateur Close Championship, the European Ladies Junior Team Championships, the All Ireland Cups and Shields and a host of other major national and international events.

It's also a gentle reminder that for all its great championship courses, Ireland boasts its share of hidden gems in its Hidden Heartlands, where a warm welcome is always guaranteed.

Golf for all Seasons

Winter golf is Ireland not only offers the best in value but also the greatest challenge

By Dermot Gilleece

n talking the talk of golf-tourism promotion, Paddy O'Looney of SWING liked to claim that the world's committed practitioners were waterproof, warproof and recession-proof. So he would have had no problem in suggesting winter visits to Irish terrain, notwithstanding serious drops in temperature.

Though the leading tour operators tend to take a more conservative view, our links courses offer tremendous appeal, certainly in the domestic market. Indeed with so many advances in the maintenance of parkland terrain, circumstances there have also changed dramatically from only 30 years ago, when it was commonplace to see mats introduced on tees on October 1st every year, irrespective of the weather.

That was a time when the appeal of links terrain was unrivalled, especially during the festive season. And Christmas golf for the Smyth family of Mornington, was a well-regulated affair. "It took the form of an annual outing," recalled tournament professional Des, of their festive trips to the splendid links of Laytown and Bettystown.

"Having gone to midnight mass the night before, our only concern was the time my mum (Josie) would have stipulated for the Christmas dinner, he went on. Breakfast would be cooked by my dad [Paddy], who then joined my brothers Val, Pat and myself on the links. Later, by way of bowing to the passing years, my dad stopped playing and my younger brother, Raphael, would take his place.

We'd play nine or maybe 12 holes and though I was too young to drink, I remember back in the car-park, someone would hand out bottles of beer from the boot of a car, by way of spreading seasonal cheer."

These festive gatherings are so precious, that the dreaded notice, "Course Closed" (because of frost) can come as a crushing blow. Indeed seething resentment is often directed towards the unfortunate greenkeeper, especially when his counterparts elsewhere, seem to have no problem with footprints on frost-affected surfaces.

Still, even in really extreme conditions, the enthusiastic golfer tends to find a way. I can recall a chat with the late Paddy Harrington about a particular winter's day when his son, Padraig, asked if he would join him at their club, Stackstown, situated on its hilly perch in south-west Dublin. This, even though the ground was covered in a thick blanket of snow.

Won over by the eagerness in his son's eyes, Paddy agreed to make the trip. He recalled: "When we went up there, Padraig cleared away snow from one of the tees and began hitting balls into a sea of white. The thought of missing a day's practice would have killed him."

Another of Ireland's leading players, Paul McGinley, recalled

similar conditions around Christmas time in Dunfanaghy, his father's home club in northern Donegal.

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"I remember one of the guys had a screwdriver with him to get tees into the icy ground on the par-threes," he recalled. That was Bernard Hanlon, a past captain of the club, who was a sufficiently good player to have competed in the West of Ireland Championship.

McGinley added: "Normally on Christmas Day, I'd play with dad and my brother Michael. And maybe with my mother. That would be after mass in the local church up in Donegal. Those were my teenage years when I wasn't a particularly good player. To be honest, I wouldn't play in those conditions any more. Nor would I go out hitting balls in a strong breeze. Maybe I'm getting soft in my middle years."

That, too, was traditional links terrain. Golf has since become so important to the Irish tourist industry, however, that the condition Opportunities for open competitions, vever, are quite d, not least due to traditional boost ctivities of club embers around the festive season.

> of the betterquality parkland layouts has been transformed by

money and greenkeeping expertise. Nowhere is this more apparent than at Adare Manor, where the owner, JP McManus, is nursing eminently realistic aspirations of staging the 2026 Ryder Cup.

There, winter golf was put sharply into context by the country's leading player, Rory McIlroy, in the wake of a visit late in 2017. Only a matter of days after the south-west had been lashed by rain, McIlroy could only marvel at the quality of finish and firmness of sod which had been wrought by dramatic upgrading of the layout. "I came here, played the golf course, and it felt like it was the middle of summer," he said.

This is the experience that lies in wait for winter visitors to a course where one of the world's leading golf-course architects, Tom Fazio, has left his indelible imprint.

Some of the country's other leading venues, however, choose to close their doors to tourists during the winter months from November until April when, in Shelley's immortal words "thine azure sister of the spring shall blow her clarion o'er the dreaming earth. Like at Old Head Links in Kinsale, where the resort's general manager, Jim O'Brien, uses the winter break to further tweak a magnificent layout so as to heighten the pleasure of returning regulars in the coming season. Ballybunion also break for winter, though not for the club's members.

But there are other, unheralded visitors, as Steve Nelson from the marketing staff of Carr Golf, pointed out. They arrive here in the winter months, possibly for conferences which are popular in the greater Dublin area during the months of October and November, he said. And the conference business generally resumes around February.



He went on: Obviously smaller in number than during the summer months, some will be here without indicating the precise purpose of their visit. Either way, we can now offer a far stronger golfing menu in winter, than would have been the case in the past. This stems from the fact that parkland courses are now more robust than they were, with advanced drainage techniques making them playable 12 months of the year, for the most part. In our experience, there's certainly a market for winter golf.

Rugby internationals are another lucrative source of off-season tourist revenue for golf clubs, especially in the Dublin area, where a round can be arranged online, possibly for a Friday afternoon, to tie in with the match the following day. In fact the internet has opened up exciting possibilities for clubs interested in boosting their green-fee traffic.

Opportunities for open competitions, however, are quite limited, not least due to the traditional boost in activities of club members around the festive season. There is also the fact that after a busy season, links courses need the chance to recover during the off-season through the protection of mats on fairways or moving balls off the fairway entirely.

In this context, greenkeepers have beeen known to take contrasting approaches

to course protection. For instance, Paul McGinley informed me that his local club, Sunningdale in Surrey, remains open in the severest of frost. "It never closes," he said. "I'm not an expert on greens, but the only thing that would close it is fog, because of the danger of hitting somebody."

When I informed Gerry Byrne, greens superintendent of The K Club of McGinley's observations, he remarked: "Yes, I know about Sunningdale. And I know they don't close Wentworth for frost either. But we do here." These last words were uttered with a finality which brooked no argument.

His views on the damaging effects of frost are shared by Declan Branigan, a leading golf-course designer and agronomist, with a master's degree in soil structure. Branigan's clear, clinical view was: "Water accounts for 75 to 85 per cent of the total weight of grass and helps maintain the turgidity of plant cells, which is where frost becomes a problem."

He explained: "Though the ionic properties of the plant solutions create a lower freezing rate than for water, unfortunately they have little or no antifreeze protection. And in the case of very short grass on greens, our severe frosts are capable of freezing the water within the plant. "Though of itself, this would rarely kill the grass species, which are quite hardy, they are reduced to a very brittle state and break quite easily. So, the downward pressure from vehicles or pedestrian traffic is sufficient to fracture stems with a high water content. And when broken completely, the grass plant dies. In some cases, traffic doesn't completely kill the grass which, despite sustaining brown or blackish footprints or tyre-marks, recovers as soon as growth returns. In other cases, however, the plant is shattered irreversibly.

"Where golfers claim to have played frozen greens with no ill-effect, this can be attributed simply to luck, since basic science doesn't lie. The fact is that a few hours' golf could do sufficient, serious damage to put greens out of play for months." So now you know.

Branigan concluded: "Members who think they are taking a harmless walk on a frost-affected course, could find their footprints still visible after a week or two. In my opinion, they should be made aware of this in the club's autumn newsletter."

So, in the matter of promoting off-season tourism, caution needs to be exercised. But in milder winters, an eye on business clearly makes financial sense.



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A region brimming with culture, attractions and fun, Ireland's Ancient East is also a golfing paradise

rom megalithic tombs to medieval monasteries, Ireland's Ancient East is a treasure trove of history and covers a large part of Ireland, from Monaghan in the north to Cork in the south. The region is carpeted by lush landscapes and idyllic towns, and the fertile, flat land on much of the land leads to some world-class parkland golf, but also includes some of the best links courses in Ireland. There is no better place to test how good you are at the game than at Pat Ruddy's devilish set-up at The European Club in Co Wicklow, which benefits from the constant input of one of the most astute designers in the game. The course record is held by none other than Tiger Woods with a score of 67. "What wonderful optical illusions. I thought some







of those par-4s were par-5s. A great links," Tiger said.

Padraig Harrington credits winning the Irish PGA Championship there in in 2007 and 2008 for giving him the perfect preparation for winning the Open a few weeks later, while Rory McIlroy said that he considered The European Club to be the best links he had played, "including Royal St. George's, Royal Portrush and Royal County Down." Another links to try out in Wicklow is Arklow Golf Club, just 20 minutes down the road, where Eddie Connaughton's green designs are a marvellous collection, rolling raucously and undulating violently in some places.

Wicklow is known as the Garden of Ireland, with some magnificent greenery and landscapes to take in. Look no further than Powerscourt Hotel Resort & Spa to experience that beauty, where the five-star estate includes a garden ranked number 3 in the world's top 10 gardens by National Geographic, where The Walled Gardens, Italian and Japanese Gardens, Dolphin Pond and Pet Cemetery all feature. It features two Championship courses in spectacular surroundings, East and West, with fast greens and hilly fairways.

There is another five-star resort with a great golfing history at Druids Glen Hotel & Golf Resort in Wicklow, where Sergio Garcia won his first professional event at the 1999 Irish Open, and features two fine courses - Druids Glen and Druids Heath.

NEWGRANGE, CO. MEATH

Druids Heath features golden fescues and gorse protecting the course in a heathland fashion, while the pristine Druids Glen is a fine test of golf, with views over the Irish Sea coupled with the surrounding woods. Wicklow has a history of hosting international tournaments - Dun Laoghaire Golf Club, at the foot of the spectacular Sugarloaf Mountain, hosted the 2016 Curtis Cup.

The Paul McGinley-designed Macreddin Golf Club is one of the best new parklands in Ireland, incorporating statuesque pines, well protected greens, elevated landing areas and a free-flowing brook to a course with wonderful definition. Another picturesque wooded challenge is Woodenbridge, which has been described as 'Ireland's Augusta', and makes wonderful use of the Avoca and Aughrim rivers throughout. Other parkland classics to play in Wicklow include Tulfarris Hotel, Delgany Golf Club, Woodbrook, Charlesland and Greystones Golf Club, where golf star Paul Dunne grew up.

Bordering Wicklow to the south is Carlow and Wexford, where another links test, Rosslare Golf Club, is an original Hawtree design and a great example of a traditional links. Head to Wexford town and you will find Wexford Golf Club in the heart of the town, which has reaped the rewards of recent upgrades to the course. Meanwhile, Bunclody Golf & Fishing Club is a beautiful open parkland course which features mixed terrain that will

> To the west of Carlow is Kilkenny. Golf in Kilkenny is dominated by the superb Mount Juliet Estate, which has twice hosted the World Golf Championship.

ed challenge golfers, especially the string of quality ending holes that culminate with the tree-lined par 5 18th. Head to Carlow and you will find Mount Wolseley, a five-star hotel and a great

parkland played through mature woodland on one of the best maintained courses in the country. Carlow Golf Club is regarded as one of the finest of the older parkland courses in Ireland and hosts the annual Midland Scratch Cup that's been captured by many of the game's greats.

To the west of Carlow is Kilkenny. Golf in Kilkenny is dominated by the superb Mount Juliet Estate, which has twice hosted the World Golf Championship, won by Tiger Woods and Ernie Els. One of Ireland's most luxurious parkland enclaves has seen constant investment, including a new academy recently designed by Paul McGinley. This Jack Nicklaus design is a delight and is famous for attracting repeat business from its loyal customers. Playing Mount Juliet will leave happy memories of some great holes, some delightful countryside and perhaps even a glimpse of
GRAND CANAL, CO. KILDARI

facility with a course that features tricky bunkering and engaging greens.

Head up to the midlands and you have got another stunning Championship course in Laois, the five-star Heritage Resort and Spa, created by the great Seve Ballesteros in partnership with Jeff Howes. Set in the beautiful rolling countryside, the course wanders its way through this picturesque setting, featuring some tricky water hazards and a plethora of bunkers. The course hosted the 2007 Seve Trophy. It is a special place that is so well built that it is playable all through the winter and spring, no matter how much rain might fall.

Shane Lowry won the Mullingar Scratch Trophy as an amateur, as did Rory McIlroy and Darren Clarke, and this famous competition on the Irish amateur scene is held at Mullingar Golf Club in County Westmeath, a James Braid classic that winds its way through this wooded parkland setting. Nearby New Forest is an undulating parkland gem with some of the finest putting surfaces in Ireland.

Shane Lowry famously burst onto the scene when he won the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open at the peaceful links at County Louth Golf Club in Baltray, one of the top ranked links courses in the country. The serene atmosphere gives way to towering dunes, treacherous rough and long holes that will make use of every club in the bag, which tests the best amateurs in the East of Ireland Championship every year. Elsewhere in Louth, the excellent Seapoint is another cleverly designed links



the wandering pheasants.

Head south of Kilkenny to Waterford, with great courses like Waterford Castle, which is Ireland's only true island golf course, accessed by complimentary car ferry. Also worth checking out are West Waterford, Tramore and Faithlegg House Hotel and Golf Resort. A thriving resort that is popular with golfers and families alike, Faithlegg is an enticing parkland challenge designed by the great Patrick Merrigan, and features undulating greens, water hazards and perfectly placed sand traps, which complete and heighten the challenge.

There are few greener counties than Tipperary and it is no surprise that it is also home to some wonderful parkland courses from Clonmel and Cahir Park to the Philip Walton-designed Tipperary Golf Club, Ballykisteen Golf and Country Club or Thurles Golf Club. The county is brimming with wonderful attractions such as the Rock of Cashel - a spectacular collection of medieval buildings set on an outcrop of limestone in the Golden Vale.

Cork city is the third biggest on the island and a treat for the visitor with a host of attractions for lovers of music, the arts and sport. Not only are you within a short drive of the Blarney Stone, it is also a great place to golf with up to a dozen clubs within easy reach from the city, including Douglas, Mahon, Lee Valley and Muskerry. One of Irish golf's historic clubs, Cork Golf Club was formed in 1888 by prominent Cork businessmen, before undergoing a major redesign by Dr Alister MacKenzie - the future designer of the likes of Augusta National, Cypress Point and Royal Melbourne - in 1926. Outside Cork city is Fota Island Hotel & Golf Resort in Cobh, a three-time host of the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open. Also host to Ireland's only wildlife park and the historical Fota House, it is a tremendous golfing



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PALMERSTOWN HOUSE GOLF CLUE

Kildare is a treasure trove of golf courses from Dunmurry Springs to Moyvalley to Palmerstown to Royal Curragh Golf Club, which is believed to be the oldest golf club in the country.

course that will test all golfers, while there is good golf to be had at Greenore, Ardee and Dundalk Golf Club.

Neighbouring Meath includes another quality links test in Laytown & Bettystown, as well as parkland classics like Royal Tara, County Meath Golf Club and two courses at Headfort Golf Club, the Old and the New Course. It also includes Killeen Castle, home to a magnificent Jack Nicklaus designed golf course, which hosted the 2011 Solheim Cup. With beautiful views of the Co Meath countryside throughout the 600-acre estate, players will never come bored of the golfing test that is provided.

From one top parkland to another, Concra Wood, host of the Monaghan Irish Challenge on the European Challenge Tour, is one of the Christy O'Connor Jnr's greatest creations. The Co Monaghan course is strikingly beautiful with brilliant landscape features carefully sculpted around Lough Muckno. When in the area, don't forget to check out Rossmore Golf Club, a lovely little design in the drumlins of Monaghan where views stretch four counties during a clear day.

That leaves us with the golfing heartland of Kildare to finish, where Carton House is well worth a visit, where you tee off the first in County Meath and, with any luck, your drive should land in County Kildare on the other side of the River Rye. It is home to the Golfing Union of Ireland and features two great courses, the Montgomerie and the O'Meara.

Kildare is a treasure trove of golf courses from Dunmurry Springs to Moyvalley to Palmerstown to Royal Curragh Golf Club, which is believed to be the oldest golf club in the country. Then there is the most famous club of them all in the county, the prestigious Kildare Club, otherwise known as The K Club, a five-star hotel and venue that has hosted many great tournaments, from the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open to the European Open to the 2006 Ryder Cup. It features the Smurfit Course, designed with dunetype mounding, and the Palmer Course, which displays all the daring risk-and-reward shot selection of its late designer, Arnold Palmer. Rory McIlroy's heroic shots to win the 2016 Dubai Duty Free Irish Open showcased the finish at the Palmer course to the world, which is one of the most dramatic parkland finishes that you will play anywhere on the planet.







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1. Abbeyleix 2. Ardee 3. Arklow 4. Ashbourne 5. Athy 6. Ballinastoe 7. Ballinlough Castle 8. Ballykisteen 9. Ballymoney 10. Baltinglass 11. Bellewstown 12. Birr 13. Black Bush 14. Blainroe 15. Blessington Lakes 16. Bodenstown 17. Borris 18. Bray 19. Bunclody 20. Cabra Castle 21. Cahir Park 22. Callan 23. Carlow 24. Carrick-on-suir 25. Carton House 26. Castle Barna 27. Castlecomer 28. Castlemartyr 29. Castlewarden 30. Celbridge Elmhall 31. Charlesland 32. Cill Dara 33. Clane 34. Clones 35. Clonmel 36. Co Louth 37. Co Meath 38. Cobh 39. Concra Wood 40. Coollattin 41. Cork 42. Courtown 43. Craddockstown 44. Crover House 45. Delgany 46. Djouce 47. Doneraile

48. Douglas

49. Druid's Glen 50. Druid's Heath 51. Dundalk 52. Dundrum House 53. Dungarvan 54. Dunmore East 55. Dunmurry Springs 56. East Cork 57. Edenderry 58. Enniscorthy 59. Esker Hills 60. European 61. Faithlegg 62. Fermoy 63. Fernhill 64. Fota Island 65. Frankfield 66. Glebe 67. Goldcoast 68. Gowran Park 69. Greenore 70. Greystones 71. Headfort 72. Highfield 73. Kilcock 74. Kilcoole 75. Kilkennv 76. Killeen 77. Killeen Castle 78. Killerig 79. Knightsbrook 80. Knockanally 81. Laytown & Bettystown 82. Leinster Hills 83. Lismore 84. Macreddin 85. Mahon 86. Mannan Castle 87. Millicent 88. Mitchelstown 89. Monkstown 90. Mount Juliet 91. Mount Wolseley 92. Mountain View

93. Mountrath

94. Moyvalley

- 95. Mullingar 96. Naas 97. Navan 98. New Forest 99. New Ross 100. Newbridge 101. Nuremore 102. Old Conna 103. Palmerstown House Estate 104. Portarlington 105. Portlaoise 106. Powerscourt 107. Raffeen Creek 108. Rathcore 109. Rathdowney 110. Rathsallagh 111. Ringenane 112. Roscrea 113. Rosslare 114. Rossmore 115. Roundwood 116. 'Royal Curragh 117. Royal Tara 118. Scarke 119. Seapoint 120. Slievenamon 121. South Meath 122. St. Helen's Bay
- 123. Summerhill
- 124. Tara Glen 125. Templemore 126. The Heath 127. The Heritage 128. The K Club 129. Thurles 130. Tipperary 131. Townley Hall 132. Tramore 133. Tulfarris 134. Tullamore 135. Virginia 136. Water Rock 137. Waterford 138. Waterford Castle 139. West Waterford 140. Wexford 141. Wicklow 142. Williamstown 143. Woodbrook 144. Woodenbridge 145. Woodlands 146. Youghal





Blainroe Golf Club Blainroe, Co Wicklow

Tel353 (0)404 68168Emailinfo@blainroe.comWebwww.blainroe.comCourseParklandLength6,800 yardsPar72

With sea views from all 18 holes, this enjoyable and challenging USGA spec course carries the prestigious Hawtree & Son design signature. Host of the Irish Seniors and many other championship events. Golf buggies available, visitors welcome everyday. Book online for best available rates. A Failte Ireland quality assured course. Green fees: from €25-€55.





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Practice Facilities

MA.

Clonmel Golf Club Clonmel, Co Tipperary

 Tel
 +353 52 6124050

 Email
 cgc@indigo.ie

 Web
 www.clonmelgolfclub.com

 Course
 Parkland

 Length
 5,821 metres

 Par
 71

Located two miles from bustling Clonmel town, this wonderfully elevated course offers unparalleled views of the valley of Slievenamon and the Comeragh mountains. Providing meet & greet and full catering facilities to all Society and Open Day visitors, Clonmel Golf Club offers a unique challenge to golfers of all ages and abilities. 2018 Full & Distance membership available.





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Concra Wood Golf & Country Club Castleblayney, Co Monaghan

 Tel
 353 (0) 42 974 9485

 Email
 info@concrawood.ie

 Web
 www.concrawood.ie

 Course
 Parkland

 Length
 6,048 Metres

 Par
 72

Concra Wood Golf and Country Club was designed by Christy O'Connor Junior and Christy O'Connor Senior. We have now hosted three PGA Europro Tour Events. Eleven holes lure you to the water's edge, promising danger and excitement time and again. It is a stern and beautiful test of golf, whatever your ability. Green fees available on request.









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County Louth Golf Club Baltray, Drogheda, Co Louth

Tel00 353 41 9881530Emailliam@countylouthgolfclub.comWebwww.countylouthgolfclub.comCourseLinksLength6,328 metresPar72

Classic traditional Links course located on Ireland's East coast, one hour north of Dublin. Host to many Championships over it's 125 years, including the Irish Open in 2004 and 2009. A member owned club that offers a warm welcome to visitors from all over the world.





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A.S

Golf & Leisure Resort Dundrum House Resort, Co Tipperary

 Tel
 353 (0)62 71116

 Email
 golfshop@dundrumhouse.ie

 Web
 www.dundrumhousehotel.com

 Course
 Parkland

 Length
 5,922 m

 Par
 72

This magnificent 18 Hole Championship Course has been woven into the fabric of a mature Georgian Estate and is a real challenge to golfers of all levels. The Resort offers golf lodge accommodation adjacent to an excellent clubhouse and leisure club. Renowned for its warm, friendly welcome and great food. Green Fees from \in 20- \in 39.

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61

Fota Island Resort Fota Island, Co Cork

 Tel
 353 (0)21 488 3700

 Email
 pshop@fotaisland.ie

 Web
 www.fotaisland.ie

 Course
 Parkland

 Length
 7043/7183/7416 Yards

 Par
 71/72/73

Fota Island Resort, host to the Irish Open 2001, 2002 and 2014, has three championship courses set amongst beautiful scenery and maintained to the highest standards. Fota Island Resort is the ideal venue for any golfing break with a five-star hotel, self-catering lodges and an exceptional golf academy facility available on site. Green fees: €85 to €110. Group and residential rates available.







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Headfort Golf Club Navan Road, Kells, Co Meath

Tel353 (0)46 924 0146Emailinfo@headfortgolfclub.ieWebwww.headfortgolfclub.ieCourseParklandLength6,741 mPar73

Established in 1928, Headfort Golf Club is one of the finest 36 hole complexes in Ireland. Headfort has two magnificent parkland courses, with the Christy O'Connor Jnr designed Headfort New Course is consistently in the Top 10 ranked parkland course in Ireland. Contact the club directly for bookings or visit our website for offers.





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Killenard

 Tel
 353 (0)57 864 2321

 Email
 info@heritageresort.ie

 Web
 www.heritageresort.ie

 Course
 Parkland

 Length
 6588 metres

 Par
 72

Ireland's only Seve Ballesteros designed championship course. Located less than 1 hour from Dublin, this state of the art facility regularly features in the top 20 parkland courses in Ireland. If you're looking for spectacular, then the Heritage is a must play with water a major feature on 10 holes.







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Practice Facilities

A.S

Mount Juliet Golf Club Thomastown, Co. Kilkenny

Tel353 (0) 56 777 3071Emailgolfreservations@mountjuliet.ieWebwww.mountjuliet.ieCourseParklandLength6,600 metresPar72

Set on 500 acres of rolling pastures in Ireland's sunny South East, the course is both captivating and memorable. Mount Juliet is consistently regarded as Ireland's leading parkland golf course. Mount Juliet Golf Course has improved on an already outstanding layout and facilities, in its ongoing pursuit of golfing excellence - a perfect golfing venue.





Monkstown Golf Club Monkstown, Co Cork

Tel	353 (0) 21 484 1376
Email	office@monkstowngolfclub.com
Web	www.monkstowngolfclub.com
Course	Parkland
Length	5,672 metres
Par	70

100 years old in 2008. Mature and scenic parkland course with a good variety of holes. Pleasant to play and presenting a good test to all standards of golfers. New clubhouse and well known for high standard of catering. Green fees: €30-€35.





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Palmerstown House Estate Johnstown, Co. Kildare

Tel +353 4590 6901 Email golf@palmerstownhouse.ie www.palmerstownhouse.ie Web **Course** Parkland Length 6,750 metres Par 72

Golfers of all skill levels will find enjoyment and challenge on our well-designed 18-hole championship course. This challenging course is set amidst thousands of mature trees that boast a variety of colour throughout all four seasons, and each hole has its own individual charm. The course presents players with feelings of tradition, excellence and quality.





Powerscourt Golf Club Enniskerry, Co Wicklow

Tel 353 (0) 1 204 6033 Email golf@powerscourt.net Web powerscourtgolfclub.com Course Parkland Length 6416 metres Par 72

Nestled in the foothills of the Wicklow Mountains and surrounded by breath-taking views, The East & West Courses at Powerscourt Golf Club are a magnet for both novice and experienced golfers. With its spectacular vista, delectable food from a varied menu and friendly staff, Powerscourt has all the makings of a great day out!







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Rosslare Golf Club

Tel	353 (0)53 9132203
Email	office@rosslaregolf.com
Web	www.rosslaregolf.com
Course	Links
Length	6,800
Par	72

Rosslare Golf Links is the hidden gem of Irish links golf courses. Situated in the sunniest part of the country, it stands on a narrow peninsula with the Irish Sea on one side and the huge expanse of Wexford Harbour on the other. High Season €80.00. GUI /ILGU Rate €50.00 W.ends €40. 00 W.days.Shoulder Season and Low Season from €25.00. For group rates and special Offers call 053 9132203 or visit our website www.rosslaregolf.com.





Royal Tara Golf Club

Tel	353 (0)46 902 5508
Email	info@royaltaragolfclub.com
Web	www.royaltaragolfclub.com
Course	Parkland
Length	5,980 metres
Par	72

Nestling at the base of the historic Hill of Tara in County Meath, Royal Tara Golf Club is among Ireland's most enjoyable and conveniently located golfing complexes with 27 holes set in mature parkland. All visitors are assured of a warm welcome to a royal golfing gem with terrific facilities. Venue for the All Ireland GUI Clubs Cups & Shields Finals 2013. Green fees: contact the club or see website for offers.





shores of Lough Muckno, in Castleblayney, it is one of Ireland's most beautiful and evocative settings for golf. The shape and flow of the golf course are perfectly complemented by the drumlins that roll across the countryside. This easy rhythm adds to the beauty and challenge of the course; and with 11 holes luring you to the waters edge, it promises a stern and beautiful test of golf whatever your ability.



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Seapoint Golf Links Drogheda, Termonfeckin, Co Louth

Tel353 (0)41 9822333Emailgolflinks@seapoint.ieWebwww.seapointgolflinks.comCourseLinksLength7,150 yardsPar72

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The K Club Ryder Cup Course Straffan, Co. Kildare

 Tel
 353 (0) 1 601 7200

 Email
 sales@kclub.ie

 Web
 www.kclub.ie

 Course
 Parkland

 Length
 6,720 metres

 Par
 72

Ranked regularly in the top 3 parkland golf courses in Ireland, this Palmer designed golf haven is a must play 'badge of honour' that has hosted the top golf players in the world. Recognised as one of Europe's most spectacular courses, the Ryder Cup Course features a dramatic layout with numerous water hazards.





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The K Club Smurfit Course Straffan, Co. Kildare

Tel	353 (0) 1 601 7200
Email	sales@kclub.ie
Web	www.kclub.ie
Course	Links
Length	6,654 metres
Par	72

Described as the greatest inland golf course in Ireland, the Arnold Palmer designed Smurfit Course features a dramatic landscape with dune type mounding throughout and some 14 acres of water worked into the course design.





Tullamore Golf Club Brookfield, Tullamore, Co Offaly

Tel	353 (0)57 932 1439
Email	info@tullamoregolfclub.ie
Web	www.tullamoregolfclub.ie
Course	Parkland
Length	6,472 yards
Par	70

This James Braid designed course was recently upgraded and is regarded as one of the top parkland courses in the country. Centrally situated an hour from Dublin it has hosted many major amateur championships. The high quality of the course with its mature trees and level terrain make it an attractive venue for all visitors. Green fees for our Opens at €20 to €40 with group rates available. Check our Website for Opens and to view a video of our course (also on Youtube).



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Our organisation represents the various companies who form the wider Irish Golf Tourism sector. The IGTOA represents leading Golf Tour Operators who actively promote Ireland as a primary golfing destination. We also represent Ireland's many golf courses, golf resorts, accommodation and transportation providers operating within the Irish Golf Tourism industry. These companies offer a vital service to our sector and they are represented through our annual IGTOA Partnership Program.

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> Open Competition every Tuesday Book on line or contact the Pro Shop on 041 9881066



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WWW.SEAPOINTGOLFLINKS.COM





Tel: 0404 68168 Email: info@blainroe.com



Wicklow Golf Club Dunbur Road, Co Wicklow

 Tel
 353 (0)404 67379

 Email
 info@wicklowgolfclub.ie

 Web
 www.wicklowgolfclub.ie

 Course
 Seaside

 Length
 6,035 yards

 Par
 71

Set between the scenic splendour of the Irish Sea and the Wicklow Mountains, you will find 18 holes of unbeatable golfing pleasure. Wicklow Golf Club is a picturesque seaside course which follows the coastline of Wicklow Bay and is situated just outside the historic town of Wicklow. Please view our website for open days. Green fees: from €20-€35. Go to our website to book online.





Woodenbridge Golf Club Avoca, Co Wicklow

Tel	353 (0) 402 35202
Email	reception@woodenbridge.ie
Web	www.woodenbridge.ie
Course	Parkland
Length	6,341 Yards
Par	71
Course Length	Parkland 6,341 Yards

Surrounded by rivers and mature forests, Woodenbridge Golf Club is situated just south of the village of Avoca in Wicklow, where the Avoca and Aughrim rivers meet some 45 minutes from Dublin. Woodenbridge was described by the legendary Joe Carr as "Ireland's Augusta" and "the most scenic golf course in Ireland, a hidden gem".









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Ardee

Townparks, Ardee, Co Louth www.ardeegolfclub.com ardeegolfclub@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 41 685 7472

Arklow

Abbeylands, Arklow, Co Wicklow www.arklowgolflinks.com info@arklowgolflinks.com 00 353 (0) 40 232492

Ashbourne

Archerstown, Ashbourne, Co Meath www.ashbournegolfclub.ie info@ashbournegolfclub.ie 00 353 (0) 1 835 2005

Athy

Geraldine, Athy, Co Kildare www.athygolfclub.com info@athygolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 59 863 1729

Ballinastoe

Ballinastoe, Roundwood, Co Wicklow www.ballinastoegolfclub.com fergal.mulligan@comreg.ie 00 353 (0) 1 281 8480

Ballinlough Castle Clonmellon, Co Westmeath www.ballinloughcastle.com golf@ballinloughcastle.com 00 353 (0) 46 943 3760

Ballykisteen

Ballykisteen, Co Tipperary www.ballykisteengolfclub.com golf@ballykisteenhotel.com 00 353 (0) 62 32117

Ballykisteen Hotel & Golf Resort

Limerick Junction, Co Tipperary info@ballykisteenhotel.com 00 353 (0) 62 33333

Ballymoney

Ballymoney, Gorey, Co Wexford www.ballymoneygolfclub.ie ballymoneygolfclub@ymail.com 00 353 (0) 53 942 1976

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Bellewstown

Bellewstown, Drogheda, Co Meath www.bellewstowngolfclub.ie info@bellewstowngolf.com 00 353 (0) 41 988 2757

Birr

The Glenns, Birr, Co Offaly www.birrgolfclub.ie birrgolfclub@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 57 912 0082



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Blainroe

Blainroe, Co Wicklow www.blainroe.com info@blainroe.com 00 353 (0) 404 68168

Blessington Lakes

Baltyboys, Blessington, Co Wicklow www.blessingtonlakesgolfclub.com info@blessingtonlakesgolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 45 867146

Bodenstown

Sallins, Co Kildare www.bodenstown.com bodenstown@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 45 897096

Borris

Deerpark, Borris, Co Carlow www.borrisgolfclub.ie info@borrisgolfclub.ie 00 353 (0) 59 977 3310

Bray

Greystones Road, Bray, Co Wicklow www.braygolfclub.com info@braygolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 1 276 3200

Bunclody

Carrigduff, Bunclody, Co Wexford www.bunclodygfc.ie info@bunclodygfc.ie 00 353 (0) 53 937 4444

Cabra Castle

Kingscourt, Co Cavan www.cabracastle.com sales@cabracastle.com 00 353 (0) 42 966 7030

Cahir Park

Kilcommon, Cahir, Co Tipperary www.cahirparkgolfclub.com cahirgolfclub@hotmail.com 00 353 (0) 52 7441474

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Cill Dara

Little Curragh, Kildare, Co Kildare www.cilldaragolfclub.com cilldaragc@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 45 521295

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Mountain Rd, Clonmel, Co Tipperary 00 353 (0)52 6124050

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Mount Juliet

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Palmerstown House

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Tulfarris

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Tullamore

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Woodenbridge

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Woodlands

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Youghal

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2

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Ρ

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Email	info@thekingsley.ie
Web	www.thekingsley.ie

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Nearby Golf Courses: Fota Island Resort, Cork Golf Club, Lee Valley Golf Club, The Old Head





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Spa facilities

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Tel	353 (0) 56 777 3000
Email	info@mountjuliet.ie
Web	www.mountjuliet.ie

Mount Juliet Estate remains one of Ireland's finest country Estates. We are proud to maintain traditions and standards that have endured from the glory days, just as we are proud of the hospitality that has brought us international renown. Enjoy a play & stay at the Manor House or the newly refurbished Hunter's Yard.

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Wi-Fi

"**1**"

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www.nuremore.com
Parkland
5,870 metres
71

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Web	www.kclub.ie
Web	www.kclub.ie

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Nearby Golf Courses: Ryder Cup Course and the Smurfit Course





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Email	info@woodenbridgehotel.com
Web	www.woodenbridgehotel.com

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 Image: Image





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The One The Open

The Open makes a comeback to Royal Portrush for the first time since 1951

By Dermot Gilleece

ne of this island's leading golf club administrators, captured beautifully the essence of what this year's Open at Royal Portrush will mean to her revered establishment. "My marketing budget has been reduced to zero," said Wilma Erskine, the secretary/manager of the Co Antrim links.

Big sport generates big money, and the famed Dunluce stretch didn't have to wait until this year to cash in on the return of the game's most celebrated event after a lapse of 68 years. The very idea of such status has been enough to send pulses racing among peripatetic golfers worldwide.

Apart from contributing more than £100m to the local economy, The Open will secure the venue's future for the next generation, according to past captain, Sir Richard McLaughlin. The 1951 Open continued to bring people here, he said. And there's no doubt that the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open became a complete turning point in getting it back.Indeed the importance of that 2012 staging with its record-breaking attendances, couldn't be overstated. It was all there in an interview which Peter Dawson, the now retired chief executive of the Royal and Ancient, gave to Scotland on Sunday newspaper in January 2012. "We will be very interested to see how the course copes commercially and in terms of spectator movement when the Dubai Duty Free Irish Open is held there later this year, he said. So we are taking it seriously."

Local personalities also played their part, notably the 2011 Open champion, Darren Clarke, who badgered the R&A relentlessly in pursuit of this prize. He could recall a somewhat dispiriting start of a crushing nine at the first hole on his competitive debut over Dunluce, as a 15-year-old. "I would consider it tighter than most of the other Open courses," he said. "Stand on the ninth tee out there and you've got to hit the fairway, which is a big ask. It is simply a very demanding course."

On a memorable Tuesday in July 2005,

Local personalities also played their part, notably the 2011 Open champion, Darren Clarke, who badgered the R&A relentlessly in pursuit of this prize

needed to par the finishing two holes for a courserecord 63 in the second qualifying round of the North of Ireland Amateur Championship. From the very back tees of a course measuring 7,134 yards, he responded to the challenge with two birdies for a stunning 61, two months past his 16th birthday.

Rory McIlroy

Looking further back, we are drawn inevitably to stories of 1951 when local hero, Fred Daly, signed more autographs than, ideally, he would like to have done. It was also a time when the eventual champion, Max Faulkner, signed autographs than he might sensibly not

have done.

The 34-year-old Englishman was declared a very worthy winner of the top prize of £300, by a two-stroke margin over Argentinian, Antonio Cerda. And out of the total prize fund of £1,700, there was



sufficient for a reward of $\pounds 20$ to a virtual unknown by the name of Christy O'Connor, from Tuam GC.

References to autographs stem from the fact that by his own estimation, Daly signed as many as the rest of the field put together, while Faulkner seriously tempted fate by signing himself Open Champion 1951, with a final round still to play. Granted, he was a comfortable six strokes clear of his closest challengers after 54 holes, but the more superstitious among players known to be notoriously superstitious, were absolutely horrified than he should have been so presumptuous.

Still, we're told that Bernard Darwin of the Times, quickly brought him back to earth. "Faulkner,", barked the doyen of golf-writers, within minutes of the final putt finding the cup, "I understand you've won The Open. Sit there and I'll write about you." The thoughts of issuing such a command to modern-day practitioners such as Nick Faldo, Ernie Els or Tiger Woods, is enough to chill the blood.

On seeing for the first time the masterpiece which Harry Colt had created in the Dunluce Links, Darwin wrote that the architect had built himself a monument more enduring than brass. The link with Colt stemmed from his redesign of Royal Dublin after it had been used as a musketry range during World War I. In this context, a key figure was Sir Anthony Babington, a one-time Dublin resident who was a prominent member of both Royal Dublin and Royal Portrush.

As Ian Bamford pointed out in his fine history of Royal Portrush: "Only men of perception and foresight would have contemplated improving on a natural championship links, which had been the venue of a most successful Irish Amateur Open Championship in 1919 and had been the venue of the 1911 and 1924 British Ladies Championships." Babington was such a man. Given that both men practised law, though Colt had quit his practice as a solicitor in Hastings, Kent, by that stage, they became firm friends, and the architect was often Babington's guest on visits to this country. So it was that, in 1923, Colt prepared a comprehensive layout for two new courses, though it was eight years later "It will be quite a different course, this time around. It was decided that the land occupied by the 17th and 18th holes was required so as to accommodate the modern Major."

before leases were acquired to the land. Then there was

the price. Though Colt's initial figure for the development was $\pounds7,000$, he intimated that the eventual cost would probably be closer to $\pounds10,000$. This was accepted by the club, despite the fact that they had insisted at a general meeting in 1932 that the cost should not exceed $\pounds3,200$. Little more than a year later, the Dunluce course was formally opened, having been played on as early as Easter of that year.

The Valley course, which was a particular favourite of Babington's, took somewhat longer. And when completed, the entire project reflected enormous credit on the determination and foresight of a man who was captain of the club from 1932 to 1936, and president for eight years, from 1938 to 1946.

The reward for all of this endeavour was becoming the first and still the only club outside of mainland Britain to stage The Open. Understandably, there was huge in the build-up to the event not only in Portrush, but in the neighbouring resort town of Portstewart, which would be used for the qualifying stage.

excitement

Despite the hardship of the post-war years, golf had become a significant part of everyday life in the area. We should emphasise, however, that the scale of the championship was actually quite modest, when compared with the present-day when daily crowds in excess of 40,000 are pretty-much routine. Back in 1951, when, incidentally, the last two rounds were staged on Friday, July 7th, attendances were estimated at around 7,000 per day earlier in the week and roughly 8,000 for the climax.

Still, for the avid fan it was an absolute treat, with crowds permitted to walk the fairways which were not roped off. There were restrictions, however, on encroaching into the precious dune structure, not unlike the arrangements which were deemed necessary at Ballybunion GC for the 2000 Murphy's Irish Open. It will be quite a different course, this time around. It was decided that the land occupied by the 17th and 18th holes was required so as to accommodate the various tentage, grandstands and other infrastructure of a modern Major. Which meant finding two new holes back into the course. Architect, Martin Ebert, found the answer in a new seventh and a new eighth.

These holes take in elements of the adjoining Valley course, so facilitating a finish on the existing 16th which becomes a suitably testing, 465-yard par-four.

Halfway up the right side of the sixth, is the tee for the new, par-five seventh of 572 yards. And a highlight will be a replica in scale and shape of the iconic, Big Nellie bunker from the old 17th, generated by computer.

The 435-yard eighth returns to a green about 25 yards back, right of the existing sixth green. Meanwhile, the bunker count on the entire course has been increased by three to 62. Acknowledging this assignment as a considerable feather in his designing cap, Ebert said: "It is hard to argue against this being the finest piece of linksland on which The Open is played. No other venue,



in my view, has such pure links undulations through its 18 holes. And the great skill of the original designer, Harry Colt, was as a master in traversing such difficult terrain to bring the best out of it, without making you feel that you're walking uphill. Then we have the detailing and shaping of the greens and surrounds, which is just second to none."

Justifiably proud of this momentous revival, there may be a tendency among Northern fans to focus credit for events next July on the Major achievements of McIlroy, Clarke and Graeme McDowell from their part of the island, quite apart from Portrush native, Daly, who was the first Irish winner of the Open in 1947.

Clarke, however, takes a different view. All of this wasn't started by G-Mac or Rory, it was started by Padraig [Harrington] winning, he said. We all followed him. Just so.



Counties in this section: Leitrim, East Clare, East Galway, Offaly, Longford, Westmeath, Roscommon, Cavan, North Tipperary

Just out of the tourist glare, stretching from Leitrim to Lough Derg along the River Shannon, the Hidden Heartlands is full of golf courses and towns brimming with character

he collection of counties that cover Ireland's Hidden Heartlands - encompassing Leitrim, Roscommon and Longford as well as parts of Clare, Westmeath, Cavan, North Tipperary, Galway and Offaly – are off the beaten track, but are more enticing for it. The Hidden Heartlands put the focus back to nature, taking deep breaths and immersing yourself

in a gentler form of tourism. The area hugs the Shannon's long shoreline and is marked by the gently undulating landscapes of the middle of the country. A good place to start is in County Cavan, the so-called "Lakeland County" with its 365 lakes, one for each day of the year. Lakes provide a prominent feature on one of the best parkland courses in Ireland, Slieve Russell.








The course is a part of a popular resort, which is ideal for weddings and short breaks, and recently hosted the Fine Gael National conference, the government of Ireland.

There are few better stay and play offerings in Ireland, with the Slieve Russell set in 300 acres of country bliss. The fantastic golf course has been designed with a certain boldness and sureness of instinct, which has resulted in the development of a truly strategic test. Watch out for the dramatic 16th hole, a par 3 all over water, which sent many golf balls from the world's best to their watery grave when the course hosted the North West Ireland Open on the European Tour. Slieve Russell is the home course of former World Amateur Number 1 and budding Tour star Leona Maguire, and she tries to play it when she can to test her game for the Tour.

Slieve Russell in Ballyconnell in Cavan is the perfect base to explore Cavan, where you can look at the fascinating patchwork of Neolithic tombs, 19thcentury farms, glacial erratics and karstic limestone around Cuilcagh Mountain in County Cavan. Or tackle part of Ireland's newest long-distance walking route, the Beara Breifne Way, mapped over the trail undertaken by Irish chieftain O'Sullivan Beare and his followers in 1603, a 14-day march from Blacklion, County Cavan to Dursey Island in Cork. Excellent parklands dot through Cavan, including County Cavan Golf Club, which carved through the natural drumlin terrain of the Lakeland region. The 18-hole layout at Farnham Estate Golf Club is a superb contemporary course that came directly from the design studio of Kilkenny-based Canadian architect Jeff Howes. A wandering stream and several lakes – plus a fairy fort and wishing – make an appearance, adding to the mystique.

Longford, Leitrim and Roscommon may be sparse in terms of population, but feature some nice courses, including Longford Golf Club, which is ideally located in the heart of the "Lakelands and Inland Waterways" region, making it a perfect place for those with a love of water sports. There is great golf on offer at tracks such as Strokestown, Castlerea, Boyle and Ballaghaderreen or more demanding 18-hole tests such as Carrick-on-Shannon, Roscommon or Athlone on the shores of Lough Ree.

Off the course, you can zip through trees, go for easy boat rides or jump aboard a Segway at Lough Key Forest Park, just outside Boyle, Co Roscommon. In Leitrim, the Glencar Waterfall is situated near Glencar Lake, 11 kilometres west

Offaly is famous for its bogs, which have gifted Ireland a treasure trove of Bronze Age artefacts that date from between 6,800 - 6,000 BCE

> of Manorhamilton in Co Leitrim. It is particularly impressive after rain and can be viewed from a lovely wooded walk. There are more waterfalls visible from the road, although none is quite as romantic as this one, which is mentioned by WB Yeats in his poem "The Stolen Child".

Offaly is famous for its bogs, which have gifted Ireland a treasure trove of Bronze Age artefacts that date from between 6,800 - 6,000 BCE. It features Tullamore Golf Club, which is an excellent parkland challenge thanks to massive clusters of century old oak, beech and chestnut trees. With Slieve Bloom Mountains as a backdrop, Tullamore is one of the more underrated courses in Ireland. The inward half will live long in the memory for the standard of shotmaking required to make a good score.

The county is also the home to European



Tour star Shane Lowry, who grew up at Esker Hills. Esker Hills was designed by the great Christy O'Connor Jnr, who created a challenging layout where land is rolling, with four lakes. The club takes its name from the Esker Riada, where over 10,000 years ago, retreating glacies shaped the land at the end of the Ice Age. As the frozen water melted, narrow ridges of sand and gravel – called eskers – were left behind, deposited by streams that flowed in tunnels under the melting waters.

Athlone in Co Westmeath is known as the "heart of Ireland", and is known for its 12th century castle, housing eight chronologically themed interactive exhibition rooms. A former garrison town, it's rich with heritage and history – making it the perfect location for a getaway. Be sure to sample some of Athlone's excellent cuisine, accessible without even leaving a boat across the River Shannon; or you can make a designated stop: Athlone alone is emerging is a major foodie hub, with some exquisite restaurants well worth the effort. Check out Sean's Bar when you're there, the oldest bar in Ireland, dating back more than 1,000 years.

Just outside the town is the family-run Glasson Country Hotel & Golf Club, one of the best hotels and golf courses in the region. The hotel dating from 1780 is renowned for its hospitality, while another masterpiece from Christy O'Connor Jnr awaits, an excellent Championship course with lakeside scenery to die for, and tour-quality conditions to enjoy.

Athlone is situated on the River Shannon, Ireland's longest river at approximately 360km. The source of the Shannon is said to be the 'Shannon Pot', a small pool in the mountains of North West Cavan. After meandering through Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, it meets the Atlantic Ocean in the Shannon Estuary to the West of Limerick City.

The Shannon widens at various points along the way to form some spectacular lakes. The three most prominent lakes include Lough Allen to the north, Lough Ree in the centre and Lough Derg to the south.

There is an infinite variety of things to do for all ages along the length of the River Shannon, by the many beautiful lakes or along the many quiet rural byways that crisscross this picturesque part of Ireland. The water offers leisurely boat trips, water sports and angling, and there are numerous walks, cycle trails and pony trekking trails that allow you to take in the views or explore together the rural heartlands and small villages in this quiet, relaxing part of the country.

The Shannon Blueway offers a network of multi-activity recreational trails that provide scenic routes into the heart of the country from Drumshanbo to Ballyleague / Lanesborough by canoe, bike or on foot. A new development at Acres Lake in Leitrim includes an iconic floating boardwalk.

Head south from Athlone and you will find Portumna, the market town on the border between Galway and Tipperary. The town is located to the west of the point where the River Shannon enters Lough Derg. With so much water around, fishing is very popular, but so is golf, no surprise given that Portumna Golf Club is an excellent parkland course. To use a hackneyed term, Portumna is very much a "hidden gem" in the Irish golfing landscape, as the course weaves around mature trees that bound many fairways, providing seasonal colour. Watch out the wild deer that roam the course and provide a nice diversion.

Loaded with natural charm, Lough Derg offers stunning views, water sports, scenic walking trails, and 90+ heritage sites. Explore during the day and settle into an evening of fine dining, lively pubs and eclectic history. Check out the Portumna Forest Park, where 450 hectares on the shores of Lough Derg are dominated by coniferous woodland, offering excellent views of the lake from its four trails, which are suitable for all walkers.

Head the other side of Lough Derg and towards the southern end of the River Shannon and you will find Shannon Golf Club, just south of Shannon Golf Club. Shannon is one of the best inland courses in Co Clare, where holes have been fitted into a tidy parcel of land beside the Shannon Estuary, with many fairways bounded on either flank by a variety of deciduous trees. Experience the East Clare Way, a 172km circular walking route that takes you through some spectacular countryside, mainly consisting of quiet tarmac roads, forestry tracks, bog roads, open ground and field paths. Start and finish in the town of Killaloe.

The Hidden Heartlands is about exploring 'off-radar' Ireland, and in so doing discovering a more sedate, easygoing part of the country, where the threads of a more traditional life are still in evidence and the unaffected friendliness that Ireland is so famous for is on full display. Slow down, breathe and relax: you might want to stay awhile.



Ireland's Hidden HEARTLANDS



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- 10. Co. Cavan
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2

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 Web
 www.glassoncountryhouse.ie

 Course
 Parkland

 Length
 7215 metres

 Par
 73

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Parking

Ρ

Wi-Fi

"1"

Tennis

Slieve Russell Golf Club Ballyconnell, County Cavan, Ireland

 Tel
 353 (0)49 952 5090/93

 Email
 golf@slieverussell.ie

 Web
 www.slieverussell.ie

 Course
 Parkland

 Length
 6500 metres

 Par
 72

Forming part of a magnificent 300 acre estate, including 50 acres of lakes, our 18-hole championship course is sensitively wrapped around the lakes and the drumlins of County Cavan.The course presents a wonderful challenge and the devilishly tricky greens present a searching examination of accurate approach play. Ranked top 5 parklands in Ireland 2019.





IRELAND'S HIDDEN HEARTLAND



Glasson Country House

Glasson, Athlone, Co. Westmeath

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This 65 Bedroom Four Hotel is situated in the middle of a superb Christy O'Connor Junior designed Golf Course. With stunning lakeviews and an onsite Golf Academy & Driving Range – a must visit venue!

Nearby Golf Courses: Glasson Country House Hotel & Golf Club





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Nearby Golf Courses: Lough Erne, Farnham Estate, Concra Wood





Spa facilities

2

Wi-Fi Parking Fishing

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Horse Riding

Golf on site

Tennis

((1))



Club listings in Ireland's Hidden Heartland

Athlone

Hodson Bay, Athlone, Co Roscommon www.athlonegolfclub.ie athlonegolfclub@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 90 649 2073

Ballaghaderreen

Ballaghaderreen, Co Roscommon www.ballaghaderreengolfclub.com info@ballaghaderreengolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 94 986 0295

Ballinamore

Creevy, Ballinamore, Co Leitrim www.ballinamoregolfclub.ie ballinamoregolfclub@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 71 964 4346

Ballinasloe

Rosgloss, Ballinasloe, Co Galway www.ballinasloegolfclub.ie ballinasloegolfclub@hotmail.com 00 353 (0) 90 964 2126

Belturbet

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Lahinch set for special Dubai Duty Free Irish Open celebration

Golf is a global village and if you're looking experience traditional Irish links golf with a smattering of international glitter, Lahinch is the place to be in 2019 By Brian Keogh



aul McGinley, whose connection with the great County Clare links goes back to his teenage years caddying for his father Mick in the South of Ireland

Championship, will host the European Tour's Dubai Duty Free Irish Open there from July 4-7.

Defining what makes Lahinch so special is akin to describing that happy glow that comes with a well-struck drive. But the denizens of the venue many consider the St Andrews of Ireland are confident that its special essence and the club's privileged place at the heart of the Irish game will produce an unforgettable event.

There is no one key to what is hoped will be a huge success, but when you take the organisational skills and the charisma of arguably the greatest Ryder Cup captain Europe has produced and add a generous sprinkling of world stars battling for a \$7 million prize fund, the possibilities are endless. "They come for the golf; they come back for the experience," is a motto that sums up Lahinch's inimitable charm. And that's the key to McGinley's plan for the Irish Open, which will take place just two weeks before The Open, which is set for Royal Portrush.

"I want to say to the guys that if you really want good preparation for The Open, the Irish Open at Lahinch is going to provide that," McGinley said.

"I want a festival atmosphere and for the fans to really get involved and have a good time. It's going to be a carnival atmosphere with a great crowd and a great course that's going to be a great test.

"Those are all the things that add to the theatre of an event, which is crucial when TV pictures go out across the world.

"A great hurling match is a great hurling match but when it is a great hurling match with 80,000 watching it goes to another level.

"That's what I'm looking for; big crowds, big corporate engagement to make this a tournament we are all going to be proud of."

Special venues make for special events and Lahinch is certainly unique, situated just a few miles from the famous Cliffs of Moher in the heart of the west of Ireland, easily accessible from Cork, Limerick and Galway.

How many courses on earth can claim to have been shaped by nature and some of the biggest names in golf course design?

Old Tom Morris laid out the original course in 1894, but its essence is very much intact and the club remains central to daily life in this small seaside town, buffeted year round by the breeze from the Atlantic Ocean.

Dr Alister MacKenzie, who would go on to create Augusta National with Bobby Jones, was retained to design a new course in 1926 and the famous links remained largely untouched until 2000 when Dr Martin Hawtree was retained to modernise it.

The result was a resounding success and happily for anyone with an interest in the history of the game, its two most famous

Lahinch Golf Club

"That's what I'm looking for; big crowds, big corporate engagement to make this a tournament we are all going to be proud of."

holes have remained untouched since Old Tom laid them out more than 100 years ago.

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The par-five fourth, known as Klondyke, is played down a narrow valley and requires a blind approach over a huge dune. Then there is the stunning, par-three fifth, The Dell, which is played blind over a whitewashed stone sitting high on another dune to a green that hides from the elements, and the golfer, in a natural depression.

What makes Lahinch even more special is the people that created the myriad stories that are still told in the club's bar.

When returning to the club for dinner held in honour of past winners of the South of Ireland Championship, McGinley recounted told how his victory with Pádraig Harrington over Tiger Woods and Davis Love in the Saturday afternoon foursomes in the 2004 Ryder Cup at Oakland Hills might not have happened but for the matchplay lessons he learned caddying for his father and later playing himself in what's fondly called "the South". Harrington was ordered by skipper Bernhard Langer to hit a wedge to the bottom tier of the par-three 13th because the back tier was too firm.

Paul McGinley

He was reluctant to hit the shot, preferring to go with a nine-iron to attack the flag. But Langer insisted and Harrington eventually came up short on the bottom level, 45 feet away.

McGinley recalled the matchplay tricks he learned at Lahinch and immediately took out his putter, letting it glint in the sunshine before leaning on it in full view of Woods, as if to say, 'We're on the green and we're two up — let's see what you've got.'

Woods flew the green and Harrington and McGinley went on to claim a crucial 4 and 3 win.

"That came from here in the clubhouse in Lahinch, many years earlier," McGinley said of his golfing apprenticeship, pointing to a corner of the bar, overlooking the first tee, where the greats of yesteryear would gather to tell their golfing tales. "Paraic O'Rourke had done the same here that year on the 16th - taking out the putter. His opponent missed the green and he won 3 and 2. It's a story of the importance of the mental edge in golf.

"I learned that in amateur golf from one of my heroes, here in Lahinch. It's not necessarily about what you learn on the course but also about how you learn and listen and the lessons you learn.

"It's also about the friends you make and those friends are often made around a drink, in the clubhouse."

McGinley won the "South" in 1991 and it proved to be the turning point in his career.

"Without winning the South of Ireland, I wouldn't have made the Walker Cup team that year and without making the Walker Cup team, I wouldn't have gone to the tour school," he said. "So it all evolved from my success here in Lahinch."

He has insisted on the importance of maintaining the integrity of the Old Course for the Irish Open, which will be a par-70 If the goats are seen near the clubhouse, the weather prospects are not good. If they are out on the dunes, the weather is sure to be fine.

The Goats at Lahinch Golf Club

measuring just over 7,000 yards.

The only concession to the power hitters comes with the conversion of the second (534 yards from the back tee) and fourth (475 yards) from par-fives to par-fours and the construction of a new back tee at the driveable 13th, stretching that great riskreward hole from 280 yards to around 340 yards.

With the new tee now some 60 yards further back and right, players would be required to carry The Mine and fly the ball over 300 yards to reach the green.

The club's new short game academy, which offers great views of the 18th green, has been earmarked for corporate hospitality while five new target greens have been added to the practice ground.

With no restrictions on re-entry, crowds of up to 25,000 per day will be able to come and go as they please for what promises to be a festival of golf with the village set to become an integral part of the event. "There's huge excitement both at home and overseas especially amongst the golfing fraternity," said Lahinch Golf Club's general manager Paddy Keane, who is a member of the club's organising committee.

"With the tradition of 'the South', there's a huge affinity with Lahinch and the excitement will only increase."

What Lahinch's famous goats— proudly displayed in the club crest — will be doing during the Irish Open remains to be seen but there are sure to have a role.

The story goes that former club secretary Brud Slattery, frustrated with the frequent breakdowns of the barometer in the porch, put a sign on it that simply read — "See Goats".

According to tradition, if they are seen near the clubhouse, the weather prospects are not good. If they are out on the dunes, the weather is sure to be fine.

The first game of golf was played at Lahinch on Good Friday, 15th April 1892 between Lieutenant William McFarlane of the Black Watch Regiment and William F. McDonnell, a Limerick businessman. Feathers and sticks were used to mark out the course.

In the days of the Golf Links Hotel and the West Clare Railway, a golfer could leave Euston Station, London at 6 p.m. and arrive in Lahinch for lunch the following day. Sadly, neither the hotel nor the West Clare Railway survived into modern times but the arrival of the Irish Open will elevate the club and Irish golf to new heights.

Pádraig Harrington, Graeme McDowell and Darren Clarke all won titles there but the likes of Phil Mickelson, Tom Watson, Greg Norman, Curtis Strange, Ken Venturi, Luke Donald and Bubba Watson have also visited and enjoyed its charms.

Consistently ranked among the Top 50 courses in the world, the stories that the course has created are innumerable.

Once served by the infamously unpunctual

railway that prompted Percy French to write "Are You Right There Michael?", the links have undergone a marvellous renaissance over the past few years, leaving it well-placed to vie with Royal County Down, Portmarnock, Royal Portrush and Ballybunion for the unofficial title of Ireland's premier club. Lahinch Golf Club

"Lahinch is one of Ireland's great golfing venues, not just because of the golf course but also the town, which is right on the doorstep of the golf club and is always buzzing with life," McGinley said. "That whole region on the west coast is just very special."

Last year's Irish Open at Ballyliffin in Donegal created memorable television pictures that were beamed around the world.

"It was a marvellous event which the whole of Donegal should be proud of," McGinley said. "Now I want to bring that feel-good factor to County Clare.

"I will be aiming to set the course up to make it perfect preparation for the players ahead of The Open in Portrush two weeks later and I think we will attract a world-class field. It promises to be a fantastic occasion."

"I will be aiming to set the course up to make it perfect preparation for the players ahead of The Open in Portrush two weeks later."

Paul McGinley

Counties in this section: Clare, Cork, Donegal, Galway, Kerry, Leitrim, Limerick, Mayo, Sligo

A 2,500-kilometre, hair-raising route that passes through some of the greatest courses ever created, enjoy the Wild Atlantic way, the world's most diverse and spectacular coastline

escribed by Lonely Planet as "untamed and utterly divine", the Wild Atlantic Way is a sensational journey of soaring cliffs, buzzing towns and cities, hidden beaches and epic bays.

From the wind-whipped tip of Malin Head to the safe haven of Kinsale Harbour, it is home to many of the world's best links courses from 2018 Irish Open venue Ballyliffin on the north coast to the beautiful Ballybunion in County Kerry. Filled with courses that are on every golfer's bucket list, none moreso than the magnificent Old Head Golf Links in Kinsale. One of the most dramatic, it







"Meanwhile, a Tom Watson favourite, Ballybunion is natural golf at its best. With very few man-made elements, it offers an unparalleled back nine"

sites for golf in the world, it will leave memories that you will never forget. One of the most dramatic sites for golf in the world, you are at the edge of the world at Old Head, three hundred feet up, looking over the edge of a cliff, with Atlantic waves crashing onto the rocks. With an iconic lighthouse in view, it protrudes more than 3km into the heaving Atlantic Ocean.

It is a favourite with American visitors, as is Waterville Golf Links in Co Kerry, where the late Payne Stewart is remembered with a statue. Situated on the shores of Ballinskelligs Bay, Tom Fazio, was commissioned to update the memory of this Eddie Hackett masterpiece. It provides a true links golf experience, complete with rolling dunes, firm fairways and sod-faced bunkers.

Kerry has some of the greatest courses in the world, particularly Tralee Golf Club, where significant investment has been undertaken to improve its practice facilities and to introduce a Hawtree-designed par 3 course. This is to complement an Arnold Palmerdesigned course that is one of the most majestic courses you will ever encounter. The front nine features some spine-tingling holes that navigate the rocky Atlantic coast, but it's the back nine's massive dunes and challenging tee placements that leave a lasting impression.

Meanwhile, a Tom Watson favourite, Ballybunion is natural golf at its best. With very few man-made elements, it offers an unparalleled back nine and countless interesting and testing approach shots on a unique layout featuring back-to-back par 3s and par 5s. One of the greatest and oldest links in Kerry is Dooks Golf Club. Founded 127 years ago in 1889, it is situated on the stunning Dingle Bay and is one of the ten oldest golf clubs in Ireland, with the Atlantic Ocean lapping the shores and the McGillycuddy Reeks nearby. The perfect place to

stay while in Kerry is Killarney, with its many accommodation options and congenial atmosphere, and there you will also find one of the country's best parkland courses. Killarney Golf & Fishing Club has been a four-time host of the Irish Open, two of them won by Nick Faldo. The wonderful lake and mountain views make for a spectacular backdrop to both the two courses, Killeen and Mahony's Point.

Head up to Co Clare and you will find Trump International Golf Links in Doonbeg, a Greg Norman designed links recently revamped by Martin Hawtree. A five-star resort right by the ocean, owned by the family of the US president, the course features spectacular views on holes that make excellent use of the sand dunes. It is truly a majestic site and when Greg Norman arrived to design the course, he said: "When



I first looked at this site, I thought I was the luckiest designer in the world. If I spent the rest of my life building courses, I don't think I'd find a comparable site anywhere."

One site that may be comparable is the host of the 2019 Dubai Duty Free Irish Open, which will be hosted by former Ryder Cup-winning captain Paul McGinley. Lahinch Golf Club dates back to 1892 and is one of the world's greatest courses. Created by Old Tom Morris and revised by Dr Alister Mackenzie, the course overlooks Liscannor Bay and is an enchanting place to play links golf. Head further inland towards Limerick city and Adare Manor and Dromoland Castle offer five-star stays with top-class golf as well. Dromoland Castle has been one of Ireland's premier resorts for over 40 years, where investment continues to improve the golf course set amidst 150 hectares of woodland.

Adare Manor, meanwhile, is a truly stunning €70 million development from JP

McManus, where no stone was left unturned in making it a stunning stay and play for all guests. McManus brought in Tom Fazio, who helped make changes to Augusta National, to improve the golf course with the stated goal to turn Adare into the "Augusta of Europe". The course is heavily tipped to host the 2026 Ryder Cup, and will welcome Tiger Woods and other top golfers to the IP McManus Pro-Am in 2020. Oh, and the hotel has been named Best Hotel in the World. Adare Manor must be experienced.

Galway is at the heart of the craic and ceol of Ireland and it also has some excellent golf courses. Galway Golf Club, home of the late





Christy O'Connor Snr and Jnr, is laid out by Dr Alister MacKenzie nearly 100 years ago. Galway has undergone an extensive upgrade programme in recent years but has lost none of its original charm, especially when the gorse is in full bloom with Galway Bay as a backdrop. Galway Bay Golf Resort was created by O'Connor Jnr, and it is a sensational golfing enclave, thanks to the Atlantic Ocean, which surrounds virtually the entire course.

Connemara Golf Links is one of Galway's great venues - a starkly beautiful links golf

course, designed by the Eddie Hackett for a very modest fee at the behest of a group of locals led by an enthusiastic curate, Fr Peter Waldron, the local parish priest who pushed to get the course built. The course has received many illustrious visitors over the years, including five-time Open champion Tom Watson, who raved about the elevated and "spectacular" greens on the back nine. "If there were a course like this on the west coast of England, it would surely host the British Open," said former Ryder Cup star and commentator Peter Alliss. Head north to Mayo , one of Eddie Hackett's masterpieces, the great Carne Links at Belmullet must be played. The remote beauty of the Mullet peninsula and inquisitive holes are laid out through some of golf's largest dunes. From the towering dunes of Carne Golf Links there is a sensational drive through Co Mayo to Westport Golf Club.

Off it is then to Sligo, the county which Nobel Prize-winning poet WB Yeats so revered. Enniscrone Golf Club is one of Ireland's greatest links. courses. Set in the scenic splendour of the sand dunes with breath-taking views overlooking Killala Bay, it is not to be missed. Strandhill is a links course with a terrific variety of challenging shots and dramatic scenery. The most famous Sligo course of the lot, however, is County Sligo Golf Club at Rosses Point, where Rory McIlroy won back-to-back West of Ireland Amateur titles as a teenager. There is something epic about the venue that kicks off the elite amateur season in Ireland, and each hole bring a new challenge as golfers navigate along the Atlantic and Benbulben Mountain.

Then we hit Donegal, named the "coolest place on the planet" by National Geographic. Let's start with the rugged beauty that is Rosapenna Hotel and Golf Resort in north Donegal, which combines the old with the new - the Pat Ruddy designed Sandy Hills Links and the Old Tom Morris Links, created by Old Tom in the 19th century and updated in 1900s by the greatest players of the time, Harry Vardon and James Braid. Rosapenna Hotel is a four-star hotel with 65 bedrooms and extensive facilities. Recently added

ENNISCRONE GOLF CLUB

to resort was the Sandy Hills Links, designed by Pat Ruddy. Last year, the 2018 Irish Open was a tremendous success for Ballyliffin Golf Club, as Russell Knox was victorious in the Rolex Series event on the European Tour. The world was watching as the stunning views were broadcast of the two brilliant courses on site, the Glashedy and the Old Links, which was upgraded and re-opened by Nick Faldo in 2006.

Also in the north of this large county is Portsalon Golf Club, founded in 1891. Rated among the top 25 courses on the island by Golf Digest Ireland, the par 4 second is one of the world's great holes with the 14th - named Matterhorn - not far behind. Undulating and eccentric holes means that this is a shotmaker's paradise. Narin & Portnoo Golf Club, one of the most picturesque courses in Ireland, has sweeping views of Gweebarra Bay taking the breath away. Just north is the nine-hole Cruit Island, on a small inhabited island in the Rosses region, linked by bridge.

Head south and you will find County Donegal Golf Club, otherwise known as Murvagh, one of the great links courses, which has been described as the Muirfield of Ireland. Isolated from the outside world by a forest of evergreens, washed on one side by the great Atlantic Ocean and by Donegal Bay on the other, it is one of Darren Clarke's favourite courses in the world.

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WILD ATLANTIC WAY



Beaufort Golf Club Churchtown

Tel353 (0)646 644440Emailinfo@beaufortgc.comWebwww.beaufortgc.comCourseParklandLength7007 metresPar71

Beaufort Golf Club is a superb 18 hole parkland championship golf course located just 10 minutes from Killarney Town on the Ring of Kerry road. It is a spectacular course in stunning surroundings and is enjoyable for all standards of golfers.





No. hole:

18

X

Tel353 (0) 71 98 41302Emailinfo@bundorangolfclub.comWebbundorangolfclub.comCourseLinksLength5729 metresPar70

Bundoran GC, established 1894,a challenging Par 70 cliff-top links on a scenic rugged headland overlooking Donegal Bay on the Wild Atlantic Way. A windy day may add to the challenge of this Harry Vardon designed Links. The Course is surrounded by the famous Roguey Walk. You may also see surfers and seals in the Bay.





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Club shop Practice Facilities Club hire Tuition Food & Drink

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Castleisland Golf Club Doneen, Castleisland Co Kerry

Tel353 (0) 66 714 1709Emailoffice@castleislandgc.comWebwww.castleislandgolfclub.comCourseParklandLength6034 metresPar72

Castleisland Golf Course overlooking the N21 and its scenic views of the county make it the gateway golf course to kerry. A parkland course built in 2001 on 200 acres to the highest championship standard with modern sand based greens and tees has matures into a gem of a golf course.





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TRAVEL TIMES BY AIR

Adare N	lanor							
00:20	Ballybunnion							
00:20	00:10	Doonbe	g					
00:25	00:20	00:25	Killarne	y				
00:20	00:20	00:10	00:30	Lahinch	1			
00:35	00:40	00:45	00:30	00:50	Old He			
00:30	00:15	00:20	00:15	00:30	00:35	Tralee		
00:40	00:30	00:35	00:20	00:45	00:35	00:20	Waterville	

TRAVEL TIMES BY ROAD

Adare N	lanor							
01:10	Ballybunnion							
01:30	01:30	Doonbe	g					
01:30	01:15	02:30	Killarne	Ý				
01:30	02:00	00:30	02:40	Lahinch				
02:15	02:45	03:30	01:45	03:30	Old Hea			
01:30	00:50	02:30	01:00	02:30	02:30	Tralee		
02:20	02:00	03:30	01:15	03:30	03:00	01:45	Waterville	

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 Visit our Website @ www.galwaygolf.com

Galway Golf Club, Blackrock, Salthill, Galway • Telephone 00 353 (0)91 522033 • Email: info@galwaygolf.com • Facebook: www.facebook.com/galwaygolfclub



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13 UK/ROI with Golf Digest • 53 UK/ROI with Golf World

Enniscrone, Co. Sligo Tel: 353 96 36297 E-mail: info@enniscronegolf.com www.enniscronegolf.com



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Tel: +353 (0)74 97 34054 | www.donegalgolfclub.ie

WILD ATLANTIC WAY

Connemara Championship Links Ballyconneely, Clifden, Co <u>Galway</u>

Tel353 (0)95 23502Emailinfo@connemaragolflinks.netWebwww.connemaragolflinks.comCourseLinksLength7,055 yardsPar72

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The only Links course in Galway with 27 Championship holes along the rugged Connemara shoreline on the Wild Atlantic Way. Established in 1973, designed by Eddie Hackett, the course is a true links challenge with the most unique rocky landscape and breathtaking scenery. Voted Best Links Course in Connaught 2013, 2016 and 2018. Rates Online.





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A.S

Links Ballyferriter, Dingle, Co. Kerry

 Tel
 353 (0)66 915 6255

 Email
 dinglegc@iol.ie

 Web
 www.dinglelinks.com

 Course
 Links

 Length
 6,696 yards

 Par
 72

Founded in 1924, Dingle Golf Links moved to Ballyferriter in 1970. The course was designed by Eddie Hackett and Christy O'Connor Jnr. The townland of Ballyferriter occupies a very special and historic corner of Kerry. Each hole on this glorious links is carved from the natural landscape of one of the most unspoiled parts of Europe. Green fees: €75-€90.





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Donegal Golf Club Murvagh, Laghey, Co Donegal

 Tel
 353 (0)74 973 4054

 Email
 info@donegalgolfclub.ie

 Web
 www.donegalgolfclub.ie

 Course
 Links

 Length
 6,349 metres

 Par
 73

Donegal Golf Club is an outstanding links golf course. Designed by the legendary course architect Eddie Hackett, it is continually featured in Golf World's Top 100 courses in Ireland and Great Britain. We now feature an online availability facility and you can also view the course through our new virtual tours. Visitor welcome 7 days a week all year around.




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Dromoland Golf Club Newmarket on Fergus, Co Clare

 Tel
 353 (0) 61 368444

 Email
 golf@dromoland.ie

 Web
 www.dromolandgolf.com

 Course
 Parkland

 Length
 6,240 metres

 Par
 72

.....

20 minutes from Shannon Airport, this terrific parkland course is presided over by the incredible 16th century 5 star Dromoland Castle hotel. Redesigned by renowned architects Ron Kirby and J.B. Carr, the course sweeps through 410 acres of shady woodland, open pasture and feral lakes. A must-play for those visiting the West of Ireland.



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MA.

Enniscrone Golf Club Enniscrone, Co Sligo

Tel	353 96 36297
Email	info@enniscronegolf.com
Web	www.enniscronegolf.com
Course	Links
Length	6,430 metres
Par	73

Established in 1918, Enniscrone Golf Links began as a nine hole course on a spectacular piece of links land near a picturesque seaside resort in County Sligo, Ireland. Today there are 27 holes of golf situated on a 400 acre promontory on Killala Bay and the Atlantic Ocean. A true links with spectacular dunes.



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Galway Golf Club Blackrock, Salthill, Galway

Tel	353 (0) 91 522033
Email	info@galwaygolf.com
Web	www.galwaygolf.com
Course	Parkland
Length	5,974 metres
Par	72

Situated less than 4 km's from Galway City Centre and in the Heart of the Seaside Resort of Salthill. Host Club to the 2020 & 2021 Irish Amateur Open Championship. 2019 Group Green Fee Rates from €30.00p/p. Non GUI/ILGU Members €100.00 Full Bar & Catering Facilities Available. Buggies, Carts & Clubs for Hire.Short Game Practice Area, Putting Green, Driving Nets & Practice Area.





DOOKS GOLF CLUB



Dooks Golf Club is one of the premier links courses in the South West of Ireland

Redesigned by Martin Hawtree in 2005 Dooks is situated only 30 minutes from Killarney and offers breath taking views of Dingle Bay

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hoto: Dooks, Co. Kerry





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Conveniently situated just 5 minutes from Killarney's three golf courses, it's the ideal base for your golfing trip and seeing the sights and attractions of one of Kerry's most scenic towns. The Heights unique charm and atmosphere will ensure we are the perfect place for you to enjoy the best of Irish Hospitality on your break away.

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THE HEIGHTS HOTEL, CORK ROAD, KILLARNEY, COUNTY KERRY, V93 XKR4 T: + 353 64 663 1158 E: INFO@KILLARNEYHEIGHTS.IE W: WWW.KILLARNEYHEIGHTS.IE



Killarney Golf & Fishing Club Killarney, Co Kerry

 Tel
 353 (0)64 663 1034

 Email
 reservations@killarneygolfclub.ie

 Web
 www.killarneygolfclub.ie

 Course
 Parkland

 Length
 (K) 7,249 yds, (MP) 6,780 yds

 Par
 (K) 72, (MP) 72

Killarney Golf & Fishing Club is one of the oldest clubs in the country and the home of golf in Ireland. The two Championship courses, Killeen and Mahony's Point, nestled amidst unrivalled lake and mountain scenery Killeen has been a four-time host of the Irish Open, while Mahonys is one of the most traditional layouts in the country. For green fee rates contact the club, or visit our website www.killarneygolfclub.ie.





Letterkenny Golf Club Barnhill, Letterkenny Co Donegal

Tel353 (0) 74 9121150Emailadmin@letterkennygolfclub.comWebwww.letterkennygolfclub.comCourseParklandLength6282 metresPar72

The Premier parkland course in the North West with tree lined fairways, several lakes and scenic views of Lough Swilly. The signature hole Par 3 5th gives all golfers a challenge as well as the view of the Inishowen Hills in the background. Golfers can relax after their round in the Barnhill Bar & Grill.





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Stealroe, Killorglin, Co. Kerry

 Tel
 353 (0)66 9761979

 Email
 Kilgolf@iol.ie

 Web
 www.killorglingolf.ie

 Course
 Parkland

 Length
 5862 metres

 Par
 72

Killorglin is superb Eddie Hackett designed course on the Wild Atlantic Way. Since opening in 1992, and has matured to become a real gem with panoramic views of both Dingle Bay and the McGillicuddy Reeks. The course is an enjoyable test for all golfers and you're assured of a warm welcome in the club restaurant.





Narin & Portnoo Golf Club Portnoo, Co Donegal

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The Links is located on the Northwest coast of Ireland and in 2018 was purchased by a new owner who continues to upgrade all the facilities. Gil Hanse completed a redesign and 12 holes of the new layout will be in play by April 2019 while 18 holes will still be available for the season.

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Lee Valley Golf Club Clashanure, Ovens, Co Cork

Tel	353 0 21 7331721
Email	reservations@leevalleygcc.ie
Web	www.leevalleygcc.ie
Course	Parkland
Length	6,185 metres
Par	72

Located only 15 minutes from Cork city, Lee Valley Golf & Country Club is situated in one of the most beautiful parts of southern Ireland. Enjoy a game of golf around our picturesque, 18-hole Championship golf course, or get away from it all with a stay at one of our four star holiday homes.





Newcastle West Golf Club Newcastle West, Co. Limerick

068 76500
info@newcstlewestgolf.com
www.newcastlewestgolf.com
Parkland
6,451 metres
71

This is a unique golf course, featuring strategic bunkering, water hazards and well designed risk and reward holes. The course is playable all year round and is maintained to the highest standards. The club house offers visitors the very finest of Irish hospitality and has earned the reputation as 'Munster's Friendliest Golf Club'





Experience Championship Golf in an Unrivalled Setting

Visit Killarney Golf & Fishing Club and experience this slice of golfing heaven on the doorstep of one of the most popular towns in Europe. The Championship courses at Killarney have hosted multiple European Tour and Ladies European Tour events. They have undergone significant development in recent years ensuring a fantastic playing experience for golfers of all abilities. The friendly relaxed atmosphere, unrivalled setting and legendary après-golf make Killarney a unique and unmissable experience.

Visitors, societies and corporate events welcome. Limited Overseas Membership also available.



Killarney Golf & Fishing Club, Killarney, Co. Kerry *Tel*: +353 64 6631034 Fax: +353 64 6633065 *Email:* reservations@killarneygolfclub.ie *Website:* www.killarneygolfclub.ie



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Old Head Golf Links Old Head of Kinsale, Kinsale, Co Cork

 Tel
 353 (0)21 4778444

 Email
 marketing@oldhead.com

 Web
 www.oldhead.com

 Course
 Links

 Length
 5361 - 7149 Yards

 Par
 72

Located in County Cork on the South West Coast of Ireland, as the incredible brainchild of the late John O'Connor together with his brother Patrick, the Club has developed into one of the most recognised and sought after golf experiences anywhere on earth. Green fees: €350 high season, €200 low season.





Length Old Tom Morris 6,901 yards Sandy Hills 7,183 yards Par Old Tom Morris 71/Sandy Hills 72

The Rosapenna Hotel & Golf Resort is set alongside the beautiful Sheephaven Bay in North-West Donegal. The two championship links courses have the luxury hotel on site providing great value play & stay packages from March-October. The Old Tom Morris Links & Sandy Hills Links welcome visitors for green fee play seven days with online offers available on our website. Green Fees: see our website for all online offers.







Trump International Golf Links & Hotel, Doonbeg Doonbeg, Co. Clare, Ireland

Tel	00353 (65) 905 5600
Email	Doonbeg.Reservations
	@trumphotels.com
Web	www.trumpirelandhotel.com
Course	Links
Length	7,026 yards / 6,425 metres
Par	72

The course follows nature along 1.5 miles of crescent-shaped beach and dunes, with ocean views from 16 of 18 holes and has recently been resigned by Dr Martin Hawtree. With natural routing among dunes resulting in an uncommon combination of 5 par 3s and 5 par 5s. Variation in wind speed assures the course plays differently almost every day; most holes feature 5 or more tee locations to allow for a range of conditions and abilities.





Waterville Golf Links Waterville, Co. Kerry

Tel	353 (0) 66 9474102
Email	info@watervillegolflinks.ie
Web	www.watervillegolflinks.ie
Course	Links
Length	7,355 yards
Par	72

Mystical links on the roaring Atlantic. Founded in 1889 and ranked among the top three of Ireland and the top 100 in the world. Golf at Waterville is a mystical experience - the beauty of classic links land, surrounded by sea, yet forever challenged and shaped by the elements. Visitors and societies welcome. For accommodation, tee times, rates and reservations please contact the clubhouse.







Your home for golf in the North West of Ireland... & "A river runs through it..."

Mount Falcon estate is ideally located in North County Mayo providing convenient access to 12 golf courses within an hour's drive including the top championship links courses of Carne-Belmullet, Enniscrone and County Sligo/Rosses Point, All voted in the Top 20 courses in Ireland.

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A warm welcome to the South West Coast of Ireland, home to two worldclass links golf courses!

Located on the north west coast of County Kerry, on a beautiful stretch of sand dunes overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, you'll find two wonderfully challenging and unique links golf courses at Ballybunion - the Old Course and the Trent Jones Cashen Course.

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$\star \star$ WINNERS $\star \star$





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Winner of the ITGOA Boutique Golf Hotel of the Year 2018, Ireland.





Service States



When you are playing the finest links courses in Ireland, such as Waterville, Dooks, Tralee or Ballybunion then you deserve to stay in the finest boutique townhouse in Kerry.



Recognised locally as one of the finest places to eat we create top class dishes that will amaze every diner. We serve only fresh, wild Irish fish, supplied by the family company, Quinlan's Kerry Fish.



We have the only FSX Golf Studio in Ireland, an educational and intuitive golf simulation, where you can play some of the most iconic courses...a round at Hazeltine anyone?



There is also a small, well equipped modern gym available to Quinlan & Cooke residents. It is designed for golfers to stretch, warm up and flex before heading to the tee.



Quinlan & Cooke 3 Main St, Cahersiveen, Ring of Kerry.

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Achill

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Adare Manor

Adare, Co Limerick www.adaremanor.com golf@adaremanor.com 00 353 (0) 61 605200

Adare Manor Golf Club

Adare, Co Limerick www.adaremanorgolfclub.com info@adaremanorgolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 61 396204

Ardfert

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Athenry

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Ballina Mossgrove, Ballina, Co Mayo www.ballina-golf.com ballinagc@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 96 21050

Ballinrobe Cloonacastle, Ballinrobe, Co Mayo www.ballinrobegolfclub.com info@ballinrobegolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 94 954 1118

Ballybofey & Stranorlar Stranorlar, Ballybofey, Co Donegal

www.ballybofeyandstranorlargolfclub.ie info@ballybofeyandstranorlargolfclub. com

00 353 (0) 74 913 1093

Ballybunion

Sandhill Road, Ballybunion, Co Kerry www.ballybuniongolfclub.ie info@ballybuniongolfclub.ie 00 353 (0) 68 27146

Ballyhaunis

Coolnaha, Ballyhaunis, Co Mayo www.ballyhaunisgolfclub.com ballyhaunisgc1@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 94 963 0014

Ballyheigue Castle

Ballyheigue, Co Kerry www.ballyheiguecastlegolfclub.com golf@ballyheiguecastlegolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 66 713 3555

Ballyliffin

Ballyliffin, Inishowen, Co Donegal www.ballyliffingolfclub.com info@ballyliffingolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 74 937 6119

Ballymote

Ballymote, Co Sligo www.ballymotegolfclub.ie ballymotegolfclub@gmail.com 00 353 (0) 71 918 3111

Bandon

Castlebernard, Bandon, Co Cork www.bandongolfclub.com enquiries@bandongolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 23 884 1111



LAHINCH GOLF CLUB

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Bearna

Corboley, Bearna, Co Galway www.bearnagolfclub.com info@bearnagolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 91 592677

Beaufort

Beaufort, Killarney, Co Kerry www.beaufortgolfresort.com info@beaufortgolfresort.com 00 353 (0) 64 664 4440

Berehaven

Filane, Castletownbere, Co Cork www.berehavengolf.com info@berehavengolf.com 00 353 (0) 27 70700

Blarney

Tower, Co Cork www.blarneygolfclub.ie info@blarneygolfclub.ie 00 353 (0) 21 438 4477

Buncrana

Buncrana, Inishowen, Co Donegal www.buncranagolfclub.com info@buncranagolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 74 9362279

Bundoran Bundoran, Co Donegal www.bundorangolfclub.com info@bundorangolfclub.com

info@bundorangolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 71 9841302

Carne (Belmullet)

Carne, Belmullet, Co Mayo www.carnegolflinks.com info@carnegolflinks.com 00 353 (0) 97 82292

Castle Dargan

Ballygawley, Co Sligo www.castledargan.com info@castledargan.com 00 353 (0) 71 9118080

Castlebar

Rocklands, Castlebar, Co Mayo www.castlebargolfclub.ie info@castlebargolfclub.ie 00 353 (0) 94 9021649

Castlegregory

Stradbally, Dingle Peninsula, Co Kerry www.castlegregorygolflinks.com info@castlegregorygolflinks.com 00 353 (0) 66 713 9444

Castleisland

Dooneen, Castleisland, Co Kerry www.castleislandgolfclub.com office@castleislandgolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 66 714 1709

Castlerosse

Castlerosse Hotel, Lakes of Killarney, Killarney, Co Kerry www.castlerosse.ie res@castlerosse.ie 00 353 (0) 64 663 1144

Castletroy

Golf Links Road, Castletroy, Limerick www.castletroygolfclub.ie golf@castletroygolfclub.ie 00 353 (0) 61 335753

Charleville

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Cregmore Park

Cregmore, Co Galway www.cregmorepark.com info@cregmorepark.com 00 353 (0) 91 799799

Cruit Island

Kincasslagh, Letterkenny, Co Donegal www.cruitislandgolfclub.com bookcruitisland@gmail.com 00 353 (0) 74 954 3296

Curra West

Curra, Kylebrack, Loughrea, Co Galway www.currawest.com curragolf@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 90 974 5121

Dingle Links

(Ceann Sibeal) Ballyferriter, Dingle Peninsula, Tralee, Co Kerry www.dinalelinks.com

dinglegc@iol.ie 00 353 (0) 66 915 6255

Donegal

Murvagh, Laghey, Co Donegal www.donegalgolfclub.ie info@donegalgolfclub.ie 00 353 (0) 74 9734054

Dooks

Dooks, Glenbeigh, Co Kerry www.dooks.com office@dooks.com 00 353 (0) 66 976 8205

Dromoland Newmarket-on-Fergus, Co Clare www.dromolandgolf.ie golf@dromoland.ie 00 353 (0) 61 368444

Dunfanaghy Kill, Dunfanaghy, Co Donegal www.dunfanaghygolfclub.com dunfanaghygolf@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 74 9136335

Dunmore

Dunmore, Clonakilty, Co Cork www.dunmoregolfclub.ie dunmoregolfclub@gmail.com 00 353 (0) 23 883 4644

Ennis

Drumbiggle, Ennis, Co Clare www.ennisgolfclub.com info@ennisgolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 65 6824074

Enniscrone

Enniscrone, Co Sligo www.enniscronegolf.com enniscronegolf@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 96 36297

Galway

Blackrock, Salthill, Galway www.galwaygolf.com info@galwaygolf.com 00 353 (0) 91 522033

Galway Bay

Oranmore, Co Galway www.galwaybaygolfresort.com info@galwaybaygolfresort.com 00 353 (0) 91 790711

Glengarriff

Droumgarriff, Co Cork www.glengarriffgolfclub.com info@glengarriffgolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 27 63150

Glenlo Abbey

Bushypark, Galway, Co Galway www.glenlo.com glenlogolf@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 91 526666



Club listings in counties on the Wild Atlantic Way

Gort

Castlequarter, Gort, Co Galway www.gortgolf.com info@gortgolf.com 00 353 (0) 91 632244

Greencastle

Greencastle, Co Donegal www.greencastlegolfclub.com b_mc_caul@yahoo.com 00 353 (0) 74938 1013

Gweedore

Derrybeg, Letterkenny, Co Donegal www.gweedoregolfclub.com eugenemccafferty@hotmail.com 00 353 (0) 74 953 1140

Hogs Head

Ballybrack, Waterville, Co. Kerry www.hogsheadgolfclub.com info@hogsheadgolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 66 947 4133

Kanturk

Fairyhill, Kanturk, Co Cork www.kanturkgolf.com kanturkgolfclub@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 29 50534

Kenmare

Kenmare, Co Kerry www.kenmaregolfclub.com info@kenmaregolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 64 664 1291

Kilkee

East End, Kilkee, Co Clare www.kilkeegolfclub.ie kilkeegolfclub@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 65 9056048

Killarney

Mahony's Point, Co Kerry www.killarney-golf.com reservations@killarney-golf.com 00 353 (0) 64 663 1034

Killorglin

Killorglin, Co Kerry www.killorglingolf.ie kilgolf@iol.ie 00 353 (0) 66 976 1979

Kilrush

Parknamoney, Kilrush, Co Clare www.kilrushgolfclub.com info@kilrushgolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 65 9051138

Kinsale

Farrangalway, Co Cork www.kinsalegolf.ie admin@kinsalegolf.ie 00 353 (0) 21 477 4722

Lahinch

Lahinch, Co Clare www.lahinchgolf.com info@lahinchgolf.com 00 353 (0) 65 7081003

Lee Valley

Ovens, Co Cork www.leevalleygolfclub.com info@lleevalleygolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 21 7331721



Letterkennv

Barnhill, Letterkenny, Co Donegal www.letterkennygolfclub.com info@letterkennygolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 74 912 1150

Limerick

Ballyclough, Limerick, Co Limerick www.limerickgolfclub.ie information@limerickgolfclub.ie 00 353 (0) 61 415146

Lisselan

Clonakilty, West Cork www.lisselan.com info@lisselan.com 353 (0) 23 883 3249

Listowel

Feale View, Listowel, Co Kerry www.listowelgolfclub.com listowelgc@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 68 21592

Macroom

Macroom, Co Cork www.macroomgolfclub.com mcroomgc@iol.ie 00 353 (0) 26 41072

Mallow

Ballyellis, Mallow, Co Cork www.mallowgolfclub.net mallowgolfclubmanager@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 22 21145

Mulranny Mulranny, Co Mayo www.mulrannygolfclub.com mulrannygolfclub@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 98 36262

Muskerry Carraigrohane, Co Cork www.muskerrygolfclub.ie muskgc@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 21 438 5297

Narin & Portnoo

Narin Portnoo, Co Donegal www.govisitdonegal.com/do/activities/golf info@narinportnoogolfclub.ie 00 353 (0) 74 9545107

Newcastle West

Rathgonan, Ardagh, Co Limerick www.newcastlewestgolf.com info@newcastlewestgolf.com 00 353 (0) 69 76500

North West

Lisfannon, Buncrana, Co Donegal www.northwestgolfclub.com secretary@northwestgolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 74 936 1715

Old Head

Old Head of Kinsale, Kinsale, Co Cork www.oldhead.com info@oldhead.com 00 353 (0) 21 477 8444

Otway

Saltpans, Rathmullan, Co Donegal www.rathmullan.net/otway-golf-club/ otway_golf_club@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 74 915 8319

Oughterard

Gortreevagh, Oughterard, Co Galway www.oughterardgolfclub.com oughterardgc@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 91 552131

Parknasilla

Sneem, Co Kerry www.parknasillahotel.ie/golf info@parknasillahotel.ie 00 353 (0) 64 664 5195



Portsalon

Portsalon, Fanad, Co Donegal www.portsalongolfclub.com info@portsalongolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 74 915 9459

Rathbane

Crossagalla, Limerick, Co Limerick www.rathbanegolfclub.com info@rathbanegolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 61 313655

Redcastle

Redcastle Hotel, Redcastle, Co Donegal www.redcastlehoteldonegal.com info@redcastlehotel.com 00 353 (0) 74 938 5555

Ring Of Kerry

Templenoe, Killarney, Co Kerry www.ringofkerrygolf.com reservations@ringofkerrygolf.com 00 353 (0) 64 664 2000

Rosapenna

Rosapenna, Downings, Letterkenny, Co Donegal www.rosapenna.ie golf@rosapenna.ie 00 353 (0) 74 915 5000

Ross

Ross Road, Co Kerry rossgolfclub@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 64 663 1125

Shannon

Shannon Airport, Shannon, Co. Clare www.shannongolfclub.ie info@shannongolfclub.ie 00 353 (0) 61 471 849

Skellig Bay

Waterville, Co Kerry www.skelligbay.com

info@skelligbay.com 00 353 (0) 66 947 4133

Skibbereen & West Carbery

Licknavar, Co Cork www.skibbgolf.com info@skibbgolf.com 00 353 (0) 28 21227

Spanish Point

Spanish Point, Miltown Malbay, Co Clare www.spanishpointgolfing.com info@spanishpointgolfing.com 00 353 (0) 65 708 4198

Strandhill

Strandhill, Co Sligo www.strandhillgolfclub.com bookings@strandhillgolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 71 916 8188

Swinford

Brabazon Park, Swinford, Co Mayo www.swinfordgolf.com swinfordgolfclub@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 94 9251378

Tralee

West Barrow, Ardfert, Co Kerry www.traleegolfclub.com info@traleegolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 66 713 6379

Trump International

Doughmore Bay, Doonbeg, Co Clare www.trumphotelcollection.com/ireland/ doonbeg.reservations@trumphotels.com 353 65 9055600

Tuam

Barnacurragh, Tuam, Co Galway www.tuamgolfclub.com tuamgolfclub@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 93 28993

Tubbercurry

Ballymote Rd, Tubbercurry, Co Sligo www.tubbercurrygolfclub.com tubbercurrygolfclub@gmail.com 00 353 (0) 71 918 5849

Waterville

Waterville, Co Kerry www.watervillegolfclub.ie wvgolf@iol.ie 00 353 (0) 66 9474102

Westport

Carrowholly, Westport, Co Mayo www.westportgolfclub.com info@westportgolfclub.com 00 353 (0) 98 28262

Woodstock

Shanaway Road, Ennis, Co Clare www.woodstockgolfclub.com proshopwoodstock@eircom.net 00 353 (0) 65 682 9463



Ballygarry House Hotel Leebrook, Tralee, Co. Kerry

Tel353 (0)66 7123322Emailinfo@ballygarryhouse.comWebwww.ballygarryhouse.com

Ballygarry House Hotel & Spa is a 4 star luxury country house in the heart of Kerry, renowned for its reputation on quality and exceptional customer service. Set at the foot of the Sliabh Mish Mountains, with direct access to the Ballyseedy Woods and the hotel's 6 acres of beautifully landscaped gardens.

Nearby Golf Courses: Tralee, Ballybunion, Waterville, Dooks, Killarney





No. of rooms Leisure centre

2

Bellbridge House Hotel Spanish Point, Co. Clare

Tel +353 (0)65 7084038 Email info@bellbridgehotelclare.com Web www.bellbridgehotelclare.com

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At the Bellbridge House Hotel, we are committed to deliver your perfect golfing break. With Clare's best Golf Courses nearby and located along the Wild Atlantic Way, your Golf Break will not just be an exercise, but an adventure and a romance. Winner of FBD's Clare Best Hospitality Award 2017/WAW Route /Beach Location.

Nearby Golf Courses: Lahinch Golf Club, Trump Int. Golf Links

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Clanree Hotel Derry Road, Letterkenny, Co.Donegal

Tel+353749124369Emailinfo@clanreehotel.comWebwww.clanreehotel.com

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The 4 Star Clanree Hotel, Letterkenny, the ideal place to relax and revive. The Clanree Hotel provides a comfortable base for exploring Donegal and is conveniently located only a few minutes' drive from the bustling town centre of Letterkenny. The Clanree Hotel is ideally located for exploring beautiful Donegal and the Northwest of Ireland.

Nearby Golf Courses: Letterkenny, Rosapenna, Portsalon, Ballyliffin

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Downings Bay Hotel Downings, Letterkenny, Co Donegal

Tel353 (0)74 915 5586Emailinfo@downingsbayhotel.comWebwww.downingsbayhotel.com

Nestled on the banks of Sheephaven Bay lies the modern and relaxing Downings Bay Hotel. Offering 40 bedrooms, entertainment and dining all year round this family run hotel is the ideal base for your next golf trip. Nearby courses include Rosapenna Golf Resort, Portsalon GC and Ballyliffen GC. All packages include complementary parking, wifi and leisure facilities.

Nearby Golf Courses: Rosapenna, Letterkenny, Portsalon, Dunfanaghy



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& HOTEL

www.TrumpHotels.com/Ireland



Dromoland Castle Newmarket on Fergus, Co Clare

 Tel
 +353 (0) 61 368 144

 Email
 sales@dromoland.ie

 Web
 www.dromoland.ie

On the Wild Atlantic Way, the 5 star Dromoland Castle is, quite simply, one of Ireland's finest castle hotels. Offering guests the experience of living like royalty, surrounded by luxury, beauty and exceptional service. It's the perfect Irish luxury retreat; with archery, falconry, a spa and a terrific 18 hole parkland golf course.

Nearby Golf Courses: Dromoland Castle, Lahinch Links, Doonbeg Links





2.

Spa facilities Conference Rooms

Harvey's Point Lough Eske, Co.Donegal

2

Tel +353 74 9124369 Email stay@harveyspoint.com Web www.harveyspoint.com

Located on the shores of Lough Eske, Harvey's Point, is a luxurious hotel featuring the very best in accommodation to international standards, fine dining cuisine and traditional hospitality. Owned and managed by Swiss family Gysling, the hotel strives to become one of the leading hotels in Ireland. TripAdvisor's NO1 hotel in Ireland 2013 -2017.

Nearby Golf Courses: Donegal Golf Club, Narin Portnoo, Sligo Golf Club





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Tennis

Wi-Fi

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Killeen House Hotel Aghadoe, Killarney, Co. Kerry

Tel353 (0) 64 663 1711Emailcharming@indigo.ieWebwww.killeenhousehotel.com

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A charming 23 bedroom country house Hotel, famed for its superb food, its superb service and the superb water pressure in its showers. Beautifully located just 4 miles outside of Killarney, Ireland's premier Tourism centre. Also home to the only Pub in the world that accepts golf balls as Legal Tender. We kid you not!

Nearby Golf Courses: Killarne, Ballybunion, Waterville, Tralee, Dooks











ROSAPENNA HOTEL & GOLF RESORT



Set within the picturesque Sheephaven Bay, Rosapenna is the ideal venue for your golfing break with two of Ireland's finest links just a 7 iron from the hotel. Relax with an afternoon stroll on the famed Tramore Beach just minutes from your bedroom. Both championship links are ranked inside Golf Digest Irelands Top 50 in the country and the Sandy Hills Links was recently ranked No.44 in the 2019/20 Golf Monthly Top 100 UK & Ireland list, the 11th ranked Irish course.

Rosapenna - Ireland's Home of Golf

Downings, Letterkenny, Co. Donegal, Ireland



Spa facilities

No. of rooms





Old Ground Hotel Ennis, County Clare

Tel+353 65 6828127Emailreservations@oldgroundhotel.ieWebwww.flynnhotels.com

The Old Ground Hotel developed from an historic manor house into a luxurious 4* hotel with many elegant features and ultra comfortable bedrooms. Superb food is served in the Brendan O'Regan Room and the Town Hall Bistro. Traditional Irish music is very popular in the Poet's Bar where many locals will share a story.

Nearby Golf Courses: Doonbeg Lahinch Woodstock Ennis Shannon East Clare





No. of rooms Leisure centre

2

9

Spa facilities

Quinlan & Cooke 3 Main Street, Cahersiveen, Ring of Kerry

 Tel
 +353 66 947 2244

 Email
 hello@qc.ie

 Web
 www.qc.ie

Winner of the ITGOA Boutique Golf Hotel of the Year 2017. When you are playing the finest links courses in Ireland, such as Waterville or Dooks, then you deserve to stay in the finest boutique townhouse in Kerry. QC's guests can unwind in luxury rooms, all individually decorated in a unique and quirky style.

Nearby Golf Courses: Waterville, Dooks, Skellig Bay, Ring of Kerry

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Salthill Hotel Promenade, Salthill, Co Galway

Tel353 (0) 91 522711Emailreservations@salthillhotel.comWebwww.salthillhotel.com

Salthill Hotel is renowned as one of Galway's premier hotels providing the perfect venue for leisure breaks and golf breaks. The Clare Hills and world famous promenade provides a spectacular backdrop to the hotel with stunning sea views. The hotel has 161 bedrooms, many of which have exquisite sea views, two restaurants, one bar and two swimming pools to choose from.

Nearby Golf Courses: Galway, Bearna







Shandon Hotel & Spa Portnablagh, Dunfanaghy, Donegal

Tel00353 (0) 749136137Emailinfo@shandonhotelspa.comWebwww.shandonhotelspa.com

Newly opened 4 star resort right on the Wild Atlantic Way Donegal with unrivalled views over Sheephaven Bay. Luxury, award winning spa and within walking distance of Marble Hill Beach. Perfect base location to explore Donegal's finest Gold Courses.

Nearby Golf Courses: Dunfanaghy, Rosapenna, Portsalon & Letterkenny





9

Sligo Park Hotel & Leisure Club Sligo

Tel+353 71 919 0400Emailsligo@leehotels.comWebwww.sligopark.com

Located on the Wild Atlantic Way, just on the edge of Sligo Town the luxurious 4 star Sligo Park Hotel is set in quiet Parkland. This contemporary style Hotel Boasts 136 spacious, comfortable bedrooms. The Hotel has an AA Rosette award winning Restaurany, also a new state of the art Leisure Club with natural light streaming into the Swimming Pool and Jacuzzi.

Nearby Golf Courses: Rosses Point Golf Club, Strandhill Golf Club & Enniscrone Golf Club





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Wi-Fi

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Tennis

The Brehon & Angsana Spa Killarney

Tel	353 (0)64 6630700
Email	info@thebrehon.com
Web	www.thebrehon.com

The Brehon is a luxurious 4 star hotel in beautiful Killarney. The boutique style rooms vary in design. Choose from deluxe bedrooms, superior bedrooms or suites. Unwind after a day's golf with complimentary relaxation time in the Vitality Suite of the Angsana Spa, followed by dinner in the award winning Danú Restaurant.

Nearby Golf Courses: Killarney, Waterville, Ballybunion, Tralee, Dooks

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SCOTTS HOTEL KILLARNEY

Scotts Hotel is a luxury 4-Star deluxe Killarney town centre hotel, combining contemporary luxury and service in the heart of Killarney Town.

With 125 bedrooms, we offer guests a variety of extravagantly designed bedrooms, deluxe suites and plush self-catering apartments. Scotts has a lively traditional bar that host music 7 nights a week over the summer months Nearby Golf Courses: Killarney Golf & Fishing Club, Dooks Golf Club.

Tel 064 663 1060 | info@scottshotelkillarney.com | Scotts Street, Killarney

www.scottshotelkillarney.com





Great Southern Killarney East Avenue Rd, Killarney, Co Kerry, V93 R866

Tel353 (0)64 663 8000Emailinfo@greatsouthernkillarney.comWebwww.greatsouthernkillarney.com

.....

Killarney's premier historic hotel; established in 1854, The Great Southern is a stunning Victorian hotel situated on six acres of gardens in the heart of Killarney. Great Southern combines old world charm with luxurious modern facilities and is renowned for its wonderful food, attentitive service and comfortable surroundings. Winner of IGTOA Large Golf Hotel of the Year for 2018.

Nearby Golf Courses: Killarney, Ballybunion, Dooks, Tralee and Waterville





The Red Door Country House Fahan, Inishowen, Co. Donegal

Tel 353 (0)74 93 60289 Email info@thereddoor.ie Web www.thereddoor.ie

17th Century Country House located on the banks of Lough Swilly along the Wild Atlantic Way, 20 minutes from Ballyliffin, home of the Irish Open 2018.

- Award-winning evening dining,
- Afternoon Tea and Sunday Lunch
- 4 individually decorated bedrooms

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- Intimate wedding venue

Nearby Golf Courses:

North West, Ballyliffin, Buncrana





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The Rose Hotel Tralee, Kerry

Wi-Fi

Tel353 (0) 66 7199100Emailreservations@therosehotel.comWebwww.therosehotel.com

The Rose Hotel is a four-star hotel located in Tralee, close to the town centre with the backdrop of the Slieve Mish Mountains. We have 161 spacious bedrooms, choose from classic, executive or deluxe rooms. Relax in Dott's Bar after a great day's golf, enjoy a variety of whiskies, cocktails and delicious food menu. We also have two restaurants, Spa, Gym & Drying Room.

Nearby Golf Courses:

Tralee, Ballybunion, Dooks, Killarney, Waterville





The Smugglers Inn Waterville, Co. Kerry

Tel353 (0)66 9474330Emailinfo@thesmugglersinn.ieWebwww.thesmugglersinn.ie

Restored Farmhouse with 180 years history situated on 2km sandy beach on the famous Ring of Kerry. Comfortable en-suite rooms with TV, hairdryer, tea/coffee, free WiFi. Award winning gourmet restaurant, with ocean views overlooking Ballinskelligs Bay, serving Modern Irish & Continental cuisine, specialising in fresh seafood & local produce. Fully licenced bar serving bar food.

Nearby Golf Courses: Waterville Golf Links Hogs Head Golf Club

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Killeen House Hotel & Rozzers Restaurant

The Killeen House has been owned and personally managed by Michael & Geraldine Rosney since 1992.

In that time, their charming little hotel has become a home from home for many repeat guests from all over the world.

With just 23 bedrooms, the property is beautifully set in an acre of its own manicured gardens, and less than a 10 minute drive from the centre of Ireland's most vibrant town, Killarney.

The Killeen House is home to Rozzers Restaurant, acknowledged to be one of the finest dining experiences in the Kerry region.

Complimentary car-parking, and complimentary wifi throughout the building are just two more great reasons to choose the Killeen House for your Irish vacation.

A truly special little place!

Call: +353 64 6631711 email: charming@indigo.ie www.killeenhousehotel.com



Tales of the unexpected

Sometimes the truth is stranger than fiction

By Dermot Gilleece



hen Jan Blomqvist was a highly ambitious coach to the developing Swedish national golf team, he would remark with more than a little envy on Ireland's great

tradition in the game. "That's the one, key ingredient our players are missing," he observed, more than 30 years ago. "We've got to build our own tradition."

It certainly would be difficult to imagine a scene in the Baltic Sea, comparable to the sort of activity observed off the coast of west Cork, early in the last century. That was when, rather than relying on a nod and a wink, golf club activity was organised by semaphore (flag signals). Indeed players were expected to be ready for play inside 24 hours notice, back in 1902 at Castletown Berehaven.

Details of this extraordinary venture, appeared in "The Irish Tourist" magazine in 1902. Known as the Atlantic Fleet Golf Club, the nine-hole layout on Bere Island was described elsewhere as being "most inaccessible, except for residents and members of the Fleet."

"The Irish Tourist" reported: "Castletown Berehaven is now becoming an important naval station and is destined to become a harbour and refuge, second only to Portsmouth. Owing to the high pressure at which our naval staff are kept working when on the high seas, it is found necessary to run into some convenient harbour for recreation purposes.

"Not very long ago, 10 war ships ran into Castletown for this object, and it was resolved to form a golf club and that a match should be played at two o'clock the next day. After coming to anchor, accordingly, a committee was formed by signal and called together immediately, comprising an officer from each vessel.

"Within 15 minutes, the committee had met and sent ashore a sub-committee to survey, select and obtain a suitable site for a nine-hole course. This was done within the space of an hour or so; Jack tars were then told off, each ship providing a battalion to tackle and finish, fit to play, one green and teeing ground.

TARGET AND AND ADDRESS OF THE OWNER

The report went on: "The result was evidently satisfactory and play was begun at two o'clock precisely as resolved at the meeting held at 12 o'clock the day previous. This is a record performance in the way of establishing a golf club and it is interesting to know that this club is in a thriving state, supported almost entirely by naval officers.

It concluded: "The small farmer who provided the ground on which the links were made, has dropped agriculture and, instead, has built an iron pavilion, become greenkeeper and caterer and is now thriving better at this occupation than he did at farming."

In informing its readers about the Royal Naval Club, Berehaven, "The Irish Golfing Guide" of 1916 reported: "There are nine holes which have been laid out within the past few years, three miles to the east of Castletown. Formerly, the club existed as the Atlantic Fleet Club and had a nine-hole course on Bere Island." Affiliated to the Golfing Union of Ireland in 1939, Berehaven GC lasted about 40 years before becoming defunct.

This is part of the tradition which enhances golfing activity on this island. In fact by its very nature, golf has been the source of some decidedly rum occurrences since it began to grow in popularity here during the closing decades of the 19th century.

As it happened, west Cork had become noted for other, less wholesome activities

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letown haven is coming an naval station lestined to harbour and econd only tsmouth.

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of the royal and ancient game. A century further back, Bullen s Bay, at the landward end of The Old Head promontory, got its name from a local family notorious for lucrative smuggling activities, mostly involving tea, tobacco and spirits, especially brandy, on which no tax was paid.

prior

to the

arrival

We're informed that the smuggled goods were sourced from Lorient and Roscoff in Brittany and Guernsey in the Channel Islands and were unloaded onto smaller boats in Bullen's Bay. Most of the goods were moved on to Kinsale and to the city of Cork. Indeed there was such popular support for smuggling that a customs informer was beaten to death by a mob in Kinsale in 1735. Happily, the promontory is now known for the quality of a golf course that is widely regarded as the most spectacular in the world.

Around 180 miles to the north, a charming house called "The Chalet" on the fashionable Grove Road in Malahide, was the abode of Major Duff Gillespie. He played golf left-handed; had a notoriously brittle temperament and was captain of Malahide Golf Club in 1910.

It was claimed that the major was once heard threatening to shoot a skylark because its singing was distracting him while he lined up a tricky putt. And given his background in the British military, it was also considered no surprise that the bold major should have been instrumental in having a certain John Dolan sacked from Findlaters for being a member of the Volunteers.

It so happened that when Major Gillespie went to play golf at The Island GC, where he was also a member, he would bring his little terrier with him. It seems that the dog roamed freely among the sand dunes, as little terriers are wont to do, while the major concentrated on life's more important matters.

One day, shortly after the Dolan sacking, two local lads caught the little dog and painted him green, white and orange, before leaving him waiting at the boat slip for the major's return. Though his reaction on seeing the coloured canine is not recorded, we understand that Duff Gillespie was the very model of a galloping major as he set off in search of the culprits.

Though we're told that he did so with some enthusiasm, it seems that the mischievous locals were never caught.



Meanwhile, mischief of an unworldly nature has long been associated with the Galgorm Castle GC in Ballymena, Co Antrim. In fact locals believe that Dr Alexander Colvill of the Brooke family who inhabited the castle, outwitted the devil himself. The story goes that having agreed to sell his soul for a bootful of gold, the wily alchemist humbugged the devil by cutting the heel off the leather boot strategically placed over a hole in the floor, so that the coins fell into the room below.

The devil, apparently, was so ashamed at being outwitted by Dr Colvill, that he quit

the castle "very quietly and never has set foot in Galgorm since." In his place, albeit three centuries on, the estate acquired a golf facility that enthusiasts from near and far, welcomed as heaven-sent.

Then there were the strange happenings around Binion Bay, close to Ballyliffin GC on Donegal's Inishowen Peninsula. Locals will tell tales of sinister happenings involving ghosts and it is said that the unwary traveller could meet a mermaid on Binion sands. And it is believed that long dead souls come and go on lonely paths around the beach. It is also said that a piper entered Poll an Phiobaire (The Piper's Cave), which some believe has no end, playing a special air, 'Girls will be old women before I return.' And that was the last that was ever heard of him, though you can still hear music on the breeze when the fairies rest on Glashedy Island.

Back in the modern world, manic motorists returning from Carlow to Dublin, had cause to be on the lookout for gardai, long before the M7 and M9 motorways were built. Indeed the activities of one such driver significantly increased the Then there were the strange happenings around Binion Bay, close to Ballyliffin GC on Donegal's Inishowen Peninsula. Locals will tell tales of sinister happenings involving ghosts

loss incurred by Carlow GC, when Gene Sarazen, one of the many great practitioners to grace Irish terrain, played Joe Kirkwood in an exhibition there on July 15th, 1934.

Part of the Sarazen deal was that the club would hire a taxi from Doyles of Bachelors Walk, Dublin, to drive the players there and back, at a cost of three guineas (about £4.20 in today's money). The final bill was somewhat higher, however, due to the fact that the taxi driver, a certain D Hunt, was fined £5 for dangerous driving, having been stopped by gardai on the return journey.

On appeal, the fine was later reduced on

appeal to £1, which the club were obliged to pay along with legal costs of six shillings and eight pence. All of which had to be added to an official loss on the exhibition of £17.15s.

In 1997, Jean Kennedy Smith was US ambassador to this country when I happened to attend an early-morning media gathering at Iveagh House in Dublin. Though it had to do essentially with the impending Columbia Space Shuttle mission, there was a fascinating golfing dimension.

We were informed that through the influence of Paddy O'Looney, a pennant

would be carried on board by astronaut Lt Col Jim Halsell, incorporating the logos of nine Irish golf clubs in the south-west region. Which was typical of the sort of exposure achieved by Paddy O'Looney, the former chief executive of SWING, based in Tralee.

Ballyliffin Golf Club

One imagines that Sweden's Jan, would have been rightly envious and even further daunted, if he learned that Ireland's golfing tradition had extended all the way into space.

Counties in this section: Armagh, Down, Antrim, Derry, Tyrone, Fermanagh

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The world will be watching Northern Ireland this year as major golf comes to Royal Portrush in July, but casual onlookers may be surprised to learn that is only a small sample of what the region has to offer

his year shall be a special year for golf in Northern Ireland. The Open Championship returns to these shores for the first time in almost 70 years, when Royal Portrush hosts the major tournament from July 18-21.

The eagerly anticipated return of The Open to Royal Portrush is sure to become one of the highlights of the Championship's long and illustrious history. An event you won't want to miss, only three hours from Dublin. The historic return of The Open is set to attract an audience in excess of 190,000 spectators to the region and images of the Championship will be





NORTHERN IRELAND



ROYAL PORTRUSH GOLF CLUB



beamed into an estimated 600million homes worldwide.

Geographically Northern Ireland is not huge, but it is a giant in terms of golf. From the dedicated golfer to the first timer, Northern Ireland offers new places, new stories and new experiences to last a lifetime. Evidence lies scattered across the landscape, from the course at Royal County Down being voted number one in the world to world-renowned professionals whose origins lie in all corners. Therefore, it's not just the fans who are excitedly awaiting the return of The Open – the local players are looking forward to seeing it back on home turf.

Founded in 1898 with two 18-hole courses, Royal Portrush Golf Club's celebrated Dunluce Links was redesigned by Harry Colt in 1932 and has hosted the Open once before, in 1951, when Max Faulkner won. Its 17th and 18th holes have been replaced by spectacular new 7th and 8th holes, borrowed from an area of duneland spanned by two holes of its sister Valley course, to allow for the spectator village area at the 2019 Open. The new holes opened for play to critical acclaim in June 2017. Other tournaments it has hosted include the Irish Open four times and the Senior British Open six times.

Royal Portrush also offers the par-70 Valley course. It may not have the royal monicker, but Portstewart Golf Club, just 15 minutes from Royal Portrush, has 54 holes of links golf and boasts one of Ireland's most modern clubhouses, completed in 2009. Its Strand Course, venue for the 2017 Dubai Duty Free Irish Open, is set amidst towering dunes between the Atlantic and the River Bann and its opening hole is regarded by many as the best in Ireland.

Beyond capital Belfast's five parkland beauties there's a wealth of inland courses for golfers to play throughout the region. There are three golf resorts in Northern Ireland, all of them offering extensive golf facilities as well as accommodation, bars, restaurants, recreational activities – and full-service spas with massage treatments, to help ease those aching muscles after a round or prepare the body for the next golfing foray.

Lough Erne Resort opened in 2010 and has 120 rooms, suites and loughside lodges. Its Thai Spa offers a dual treatment room ideal for couples, with treatments including a two-hour Golfers Tonic massage. The resort's Catalina Restaurant is named after the World War II flying boats that were based on Lough Erne. Lough Erne Resort welcomed world leaders including Barack Obama, Vladimir Putin, Angela Merkel and David Cameron when it hosted the G8 summit in 2013. Roe Park Resort lies in the beautiful surroundings of the Roe Valley Country Park. Facilities also include an academy and high-tech indoor teaching studio.

Formerly a stately country house dating to 1729, Roe Park Resort's four-star hotel opened in 1995 and offers 118 rooms and suites, two restaurants, including its restored 18th century Coach House, and a spa that is a teaching academy for Elemis. The resort offers a Couples Escape package that includes dinner, bed and breakfast plus

In the

region's capital, Belfast, few cities offer such a choice of quality golf courses on its doorstep as Northern Ireland's capital

a mud skin treatment for two followed by a couples massage.

Although not connected, Galgorm Resort & Spa is close by for those playing golf at Galgorm Castle Golf Club and it features a new riverside Thermal Village. A couple's package includes bubbly and truffles on arrival, use of the Thermal Village and a Deluxe Duo treatment, with optional four-course meal and a cocktail or glass of wine. The hotel, which hosted the World Luxury Spa & Restaurant Awards in July, has opened a new 150-seat barbecue smokehouse restaurant, the Castle Kitchen Bar, at Galgorm Castle Golf Club in a £600,000 investment. It also features a 60-seat balcony terrace providing alfresco dining with views across the castle grounds and golf course.

Galgorm Castle Golf Club is laid out through mature wooded grounds in the heart of the 220-acre Galgorm Castle Estate, alongside its 17th century castle, and stages the annual Northern Ireland Open, part of the European Tour's Challenge Tour. More than 40,000 people watched the free-to-enter tournament in 2017, a record for the tour.

From Kilkeel to Massereene, from Newtownstewart to

Tandagree, there is something for every golfer in almost every pocket of Northern Ireland. Darren Clarke's home club, Dungannon Golf Club, has a restaurant was named regional and overall restaurant of the year for Northern Ireland in the 2016 Food Awards Northern Ireland, winning the regional category for County Tyrone again in 2017.

Several excellent seaside courses lie in the shadows of renowned venues. Just around the coast from the celebrated Royal County Down, the short but spectacular Ardglass Golf Club links hugs the rocky shore and cliffs, with several holes offering views across the bay to Coney Island. Golfers can enjoy the craic after their round in the bar of the oldest clubhouse in the world, originally built as a castle over 600 years ago and with cannons pointing out over the fairways just in front.

Kirkistown Castle Golf Club, on the Ards Peninsula, is the closest links course to Belfast and was designed by legendary architect James Braid, while Ballycastle Golf Club, a mix of parkland and links, lies opposite Rathlin Island on the Causeway Coast alongside the ruins of 500-year-old Bonamargy Friary.

In the region's capital, Belfast, few cities offer such a choice of quality golf courses on its doorstep as Northern Ireland's capital, and they include the home course of four-time Major champion, Rory McIlroy. Its most prestigious parkland courses all lie within a 15-minute drive of the city

Besides being perfect for a golfing city break, Belfast can also be a base for playing golf in other parts of Northern Ireland

centre. That makes a short break in the city combining golf, sightseeing and soaking up the sounds, culture, nightlife and culinary scene a very attractive proposition. And when the golf is done, enjoy the nightlife of a once-troubled city that has been transformed in little more than a decade and is now one of Europe's friendliest, most vibrant and most cosmopolitan cities.

It is just as lively during the week as on weekends. Belfast's golf is very close to the city's heartbeat. Just three miles (5km) from its centre, Belvoir Park Golf Club is the nearest course to the city. Yet golfers feel a world away from the metropolis, both on its fairways, edged by large trees, and the aptlynamed restaurant and bar of its modern clubhouse, The View, looking out across the course to the Black Mountains, complete with outdoor terrace. Malone Golf Club, only five miles (8km) from the city centre, lies in 330 acres of mature wooded parkland on the Ballydrain Estate and its clubhouse - the 200-year-old former manor house – is reached via a tree-lined drive. Comprising three nine-hole layouts, two of them forming its championship 18 course with the other including junior tees, its centrepiece is a 27-acre lake that comes into play on four of its closing holes.

The club hosted the Irish Senior Championship in 2017. Northern Ireland's oldest royal club, the Royal Belfast Golf Club, lies alongside Belfast Lough, the main seaway into the city's harbour. Seven holes look over the lough, the 9th green and 10th fairway playing next to it. The course is popular with golfing passengers from the cruise ships that regularly visit Belfast Harbour and it hosted the 2017 Ladies' Senior British Open Amateur Championship. Shandon Park's modern clubhouse has one of the liveliest atmospheres of Belfast's golf clubs, thanks in part to its many nongolfing social members as leafy Shandon Park suburb has no other drinking or dining establishments. Its course is known for its tight fairways lined by trees and shrubs. Holywood Golf Club's course is short but it produced a mercurial champion in Rory McIlroy, the young McIlroy honing his skills on Holywood's hilly fairways and greens. Rory is still a member, as is his father, and he often drops in to see old friends when he is back in Northern Ireland.

Away from the fairways, the striking £77 million Titanic Belfast attraction, which opened in 2012, a century after the RMS Titanic hit an iceberg on its maiden voyage and sank, was named the world's leading tourist attraction at the World Travel Awards in December 2016. Other options include Belfast City Hall for its exhibition charting the history of the city, a tour of the once-infamous Crumlin Road Gaol, now a tourist attraction documenting its 150-year history, and a tour of the city's powerful political and historical street-art murals, some framed by the towering, landmark gantry cranes of the Harland and Wolff shipyard, known as Samson and Goliath. The city offers excellent shopping, and there are fantastic wining and dining options, especially in Belfast's city-centre Cathedral Quarter, which is eminently walkable as is the adjacent Linen Quarter, regarded as one of its most exciting up and coming areas.

From bistros and gourmet coffee bars to gastro pubs, Belfast has it all. Besides being perfect for a golfing city break, Belfast can also be a base for playing golf in other parts of Northern Ireland. Royal County Down is less than an hour away and 2019 Open Championship host Royal Portrush is barely more than an hour's drive, with other courses also within easy reach. One thing's for sure: a golfing visit to Northern Ireland will leave titanic memories.


A-Z GOLF COURSES IN NORTHERN IRELAND

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- 2. Ardglass
- 3. Ardminnan
- 4. Ashfield
- 5. Aughnacloy
- 6. Ballycastle
- 7. Ballyclare
- 8. Ballymena
- 9. Balmoral
- 10. Banbridge
- 11. Bangor
- Belvoir Park
 Blackwood
- 14. Bright Castle
- 14. Dright Casti
- 15. Brown Trout
- 16. Bushfoot 17 Cairndhu
- 17. Cairnanu
- 18. Carnalea
- 19. Carrickfergus
- 20. Castle Hume
- 21. Castlereagh Hills
- 22. Castlerock

- 23. City of Belfast
 24. City of Derry
 25. Clandeboye
- 26. Clogher Valley
- 27. Cloverhill
- 28. Co Armagh
- 29. Crossgar
- 30. Cushendall
- 31. Donaghadee
- 32. Down Royal
- 33. Downpatrick
- 34. Dungannon
- 35. Dunmurry
- 36. Edenmore
- 37. Enniskillen
- 38. Faughan Valley
- 39. Fintona
- 40. Fortwilliam
- 41. Foyle
- 42. Galgorm Castle
- 43. Gracehill
- 44. Greenacres

- 45. Greenisland
- 46. Helen's Bay
- 47. Hilton
- Templepatrick
- 48. Holywood
- 49. Kilkeel
- 50. Killymoon
- 51. Kilrea
- 52. Kirkistown Castle
- 53. Knock
- 54. Lambeg
- 55. Larne
- 56. Lisburn
- 57. Lough Erne
- 58. Loughgall
- 59. Lurgan
- 60. Mahee Island
- 61. Malone 62. Manor
- 63. Massereene 64. Mayobridge
- 65. Mount Ober
- 66. Moyola Park 67. Newtownstewart 68. Omagh 69. Ormeau 70 Portadown 71 Portstewart 72. Rathmore 73. Rockmount 74. Roe Park 75. Royal Belfast 76. Royal Co Down 77. Royal Portrush 78. Scrabo 79. Shandon Park 80. Silverwood 81. Spa 82. Strabane 83. Tandragee 84. Temple 85. Traad Ponds 86. Warrenpoint
- 87. Whitehead

More information on North courses at www.ireland.com/golf

THE TITANIC EXPERIENCE BELFAST

Titanic Belfast is the world's biggest Titanic exhibition remembering the former Harland & Wolff shipyard in Belfast's Titanic Quarter. Explore the ship that the award-winning 1997 film is based upon.

www.titanicbelfast.com





THE GIANT'S CAUSEWAY CO. ANTRIM

Legend has it that this area of 40,000 interlocking basalt columns was built by an Irish

- giant Fionn Mac Cumhaill. The result of an ancient
- volcanic eruption, this is one of Ireland's most
- popular tourist attractions. So popular Lonely
- Planet has named Belfast and the Causeway Coast
- 2019's number one region to visit.
- www.giantscausewayofficialguide.com



GAME OF THRONES TOUR

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NORTHERN

IRELAND

Just 40 minutes from Belfast, visit 20 key filming locations of the world-acclaimed TV show, including Winterfell Castle, Robb's Camp and more. You will trek deep into old growth forests, along wild sea cliffs, across rocky beaches into caves and medieval ruins only 40 minutes from Belfast. www.gameofthronestours.com

CARRICK-A-REDE ROPE BRIDGE



CO. ANTRIM

Connected to the cliffs by a rope bridge suspended 100ft (30m) above the Atlantic Ocean, Carricka-Rede Island (home to a single building – a fisherman's cottage) is the final destination. The spinetingling views at Carrick-a-Rede must be experienced. www.nationaltrust.org.uk/ carrick-a-rede

THE MARBLE ARCH CAVES CO. FERMANAGH

This Global Geopark features a series of natural limestone caves located in County Fermanagh. Journey underground and prepare to be awe inspired. Visitors are guided through a fascinating natural underworld of rivers, waterfalls, winding passages and lofty chambers.

www.marblearchcavesgeopark.com





DERRY-LONDONDERRY WALLS DERRY

There are very few completely walled cities left in Europe and even fewer in such great condition. The Derry-Londonderry walls are a 400-year-old treasure you can explore on a brilliant walking tour. You'll follow the old fortifications around the city centre, hear all about their history and even see all the original cannons used in 17th Century sieges. thederrywalls.com

OLD BUSHMILLS DISTILLERY

CO. ANTRIM

One of the most popular spots along the Antrim Coast is the village of Bushmills, site of the world's oldest (legal) distillery. The whiskey is made with Irish barley and water from St Columb's Rill, a tributary of the River Bush, and matured in oak barrels. www.bushmills.com





BLACK TAXI TOUR

BELFAST

West Belfast, the neighbourhood that for three decades was at the heart of the conflict known as 'the Troubles,' is now perfectly safe to visit, and the best way to do so is on a black taxi tour. The cabs visit the more spectacular murals as well as the Peace Line (where you can write a message on the wall) and other significant sites. www.belfasttours.com



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NORTHERN IRELAND



Ballycastle Golf Club Cushendall Rd Ballycastle BT54 6QP

 Tel
 44 (0)28 2076 2536

 Email
 info@ballycastlegolfclub.com

 Web
 www.ballycastlegolfclub.com

 Course
 Links

 Length
 5899 meters

 Par
 71

Ballycastle Golf Club sits on the shoreline of the spectacular Causeway Coast in County Antrim. The course has a multitude of personalities and offers both wild links and tame parkland holes.The back nine launches you up into the seaside hills that command panoramic views of Fairhead, Rathlin Island and on a clear day Scotland.





Kirkistown Castle Golf Club 142 Main Road, Cloughey Newtownards, Co Down, BT22 1JA

Tel	44 (0)28 42771233
Email	office@kirkistowncastlegolfclub.com
Web	www.kirkistowncastlegolfclub.com
Course	Links
Length	6,167 yards
Par	69

Kirkistown Castle is the only "links" golf course in Ireland designed by the legendary James Braid. It has a tremendous variety of holes with some elevated greens and tees making perfect use of two hillocks at either end of the course. Visitors are assured of a very warm welcome, a challenging but very enjoyable golfing experience and unsurpassable value for money for a true links golf experience. Green fees: From £35.





18

X

Belvoir Park Golf Club Church Road, Newtownbreda, Belfast

Tel44 (0)28 90491693Emailinfo@belvoirparkgolfclub.comWebwww.belvoirparkgolfclub.comCourseParklandLength6,685 yardsPar71

Founded in 1927, this secluded and undulating championship course, which meanders through 136 acres of mature woodland, was designed by the famous course architect HS Colt. With stunning views from a spectacular clubhouse, this is one of Ireland's best golfing secrets. Many famous golfers have rated Belvoir Park as one of the best inland courses in Ireland, if not the British Isles. Green fees: from £75-£85.





Malone Golf Club Upper Malone Road, Dunmurry, Belfast, Co Antrim

 Tel
 44 (0)28 9061 2758

 Email
 manager@malonegolfclub.co.uk

 Web
 www.malonegolfclub.co.uk

 Course
 Parkland

 Length
 6,689 yards

 Par
 71

Malone is a fine championship course situated on 330 acres of wooded parkland. Its 27 holes of secluded parkland countryside is just five miles from Belfast City centre. The centre piece of the course is the beautiful natural trout lake which extends across some 27 acres. The course is a real challenge for all levels of golfer. Green fees: from £20-£85.





T

Practice Facilities Club hire

A

Castlerock Golf Club 65 Circular Rd, Coleraine, Co Derry

Tel	02870848314
Email	info@castlerockgc.co.uk
Web	www.castlerockgc.co.uk
Course	Links
Length	6,805 yards Mussenden /
	4,892 yards Bann
Par	73 Mussenden / 68 Bann

Classic links course set on the North Coast of Ireland. The Mussenden Course is an 18 hole championship course designed by legendary club maker Ben Sayers and Harry Colt which is a real test of golf! The Bann Course, situated on the banks of the river Bann and is a great 9 hole course designed by American Professional Harvey Penick.





Lough Erne Resort Enniskillen, County Fermanad

Tel+44(0)28 6632 3230Emailinfo@lougherneresort.comWebinfo@lougherneresort.com

Lough Erne Resort is Northern Ireland's luxury five-star resort featuring two championship golf courses, including The Faldo Course measuring 7,071 yards, Par 72 and designed by Sir Nick Faldo. Exceptional dining experiences can be enjoyed by Executive Chef Noel McMeel and his culinary team or why not pamper your senses in The Thai Spa?

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CASTLEROCK GOLF CLUB

Castlerock Golf Club is a classic links course set amid the towering dunes on the North Coast of Ireland. Situated on the causeway coast it not only boasts some stunning views down the coastline but proves a great test of traditional links golf. The club formed in 1901 boasts two golf courses onsite, firstly The Mussenden Course which is an 18 hole championship course and rated in the top five courses in Ireland. The course designed by legendary club maker Ben Sayers and Harry Colt is a great test of golf to golfers of any level. To the testament of the course it has held many National Championships both Amateur and Professional.

The Bann Course is situated on the banks of the river Bann and is a testing 9 hole course. Don't let the fact that there is only 9 holes fool you, it is every bit of a test as its partner. With 3 restaurants an extensive wine list there is certainly no better destination to relax and enjoy some of the finest Irish Hospitality.

TEL: - 028 7084 8314 WEB: - WWW.CASTLEROCKGC.CO.UK

CAUSERAA COAST GOLF

Experience golf on the North Coast like you have never experienced it before with the Causeway Coast Golf Tournament. For 2019 the organisers are pleased to announce return of Bushmills Irish Whiskey as the event sponsor.

A golfing summer extravaganza, the five-day Causeway Coast Golf Tournament takes place over four wonderful courses on the glorious Causeway Coast, surrounding the World Heritage Site of the Giant's Causeway in Northern Ireland.

The largest amateur tournament in Europe, it has been running successfully ever since 1967. A highlight of the golfing calendar, it has attracted over 1,000 golfers from all over the world in the past. The competition is popular, not only with Irish golfers, but players from mainland UK, Canada, USA, Scandinavia and continental Europe.

Taking place in the middle of the summer, from 3-7 June 2019, golfer will take on four links classics in Castlerock Golf Club (Mussenden Links), Ballyliffin Golf Club (Old Course) and Ballycastle Golf Club (The Warren Links) and North West Golf Club.

It comes at a special time for the North Coast of Ireland, the world will be watching in 2019, when Royal Portrush hosts the Open Championship, the first major championship to hit these shores in almost 70 years. Alas this will mean a change for The Causeway Coast Event as the Valley Course at Royal Portrush will be unavailable in 2019 so the organisers have introduced North West Golf Club to the course rota.

The Mussenden Links at Castlerock Golf Club is set among rolling sand dunes, where its scenic qualities embrace the River Bann flowing out to the Atlantic. Another top-class links that has been played by the best, there are eye-catching views of Donegal and the Isle of Islay

It comes at a special time for the North Coast of Ireland, the world will be watching in 2019, when Royal Portrush hosts the Open Championship, the first major championship to hit these shores in almost 70 years. towards Scotland.

The Warren Links at Ballycastle is situated in an 'Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty' on the North Antrim coast, and offers a part links, part parkland course. It is a spectacular stretch of coastline, with panoramic views of the like Mull of Kintyre, Rathlin Island and Ballycastle Bay, which mixes flat, low-lying holes with seaside classics.

The Old Course at Ballyliffin has had the input of one of golf's greatest champions, Nick Faldo, all over it on this stunning 36-hole facility in Donegal. The Old Links undulates in the glory of its natural terrain, presenting a golf course that is considered among the top 20 best courses in Ireland, according to Golf Digest.

Situated on the shore of Lough Swilly in County Donegal, on the Wild Atlantic Way, The North West Golf Club has been described as the St Andrew's of Ireland. The North West is a challenging course that offers breath taking views, fantastic hospitality and will require everything you have in the bag. This hidden gem in the rugged North West of Ireland is surely not to be missed. The quality of the courses speak for themselves, but it also offers another chance to visit the Causeway Coastal Route. Walking tours provide the opportunity to see the causeway coast on foot, while Coasteering with Aquaholics allow you to catch the sights of the coast – Dunluce Castle, Portrush beaches and more – in a highspeed boat.

With the Causeway Coast Foodie Tours, you can take the Catch and Sea Tour where you can even get to catch your own breakfast in the crystal clear waters of the Causeway Coast before you head out to the links.

And if you're feeling mythical, the ruined medieval castle of Dunluce Castle is only a five-minute drive from Portrush. This castle is surrounded by extremely steep drops on either side and is famous for appearing as the House of Greyjoy in Game of Thrones.

Northern Ireland's most famous natural attraction, Giant's Causeway, an ancient volcanic disruption, the area of around 40,000 interlocking basalt columns, is not to be missed.

Less than a 10-minute drive away from Giant's Causeway is the Bushmills Distillery, the oldest in Ireland and the home of our sponsors, which produces the



smooth-tasting whiskey known all over the world.

More than anything, you will discover the friendliness and camaraderie that comes with playing in the tournament. It is no coincidence that many of the golfers are repeat business, they come back every year to play these great courses and reminisce with friends in this picturesque part of the island.

A T-bone steak at the Harbour Bar in Portrush each night was believed to have been the secret behind Jon Rahm's Dubai Duty Free Irish Open triumph at Portstewart, and there are many fantastic bar and restaurant options along the North Coast, including Ramore Restaurant, The Anchor Bar and Ocho Tapas Bistro.

One of Ireland's best known luxurious hotels, the four-star Bushmills Inn is situated in an enviable location, only a stone's throw from Portrush, the Distillery and the Causeway.

Entrance fees are only £170 for GUI residents and £230 for overseas visitors, including green fees. The competition runs over five days, with one rest day, and complimentary practice rounds at the courses may also available. There are opening and closing ceremonies, with drinks receptions and prizegiving. For more information, check out **www.causewaycoastgolf.com**





Club listings in Northern Ireland

Antrim

45 Castle Road, Antrim, Co Antrim www.antrimgolfclub.com antrimgolfclub1@btinternet.com 00 44 (0) 28 9442 9001

Ardglass

Castle Place, Ardglass, Co Down www.ardglassgolfclub.com info@ardglassgolfclub.com 00 44 (0) 28 4484 1219

Ardminnan

15a Ardminnan Road, Portaferry, Co Down www.ardminnan.com sales@ardminnan.com 00 44 (0) 28 4277 1321

Ashfield

Cullyhanna, Co Armagh www.ashfieldgolfcourse.com secretary@ashfieldgolfcourse.com 00 44 (0) 28 3086 8180

Aughnacloy

99A Tullyvar Road, Aughnacloy, Co Tvrone Sidney.houston@yahoo.co.uk 00 44 (0) 28 8555 7050

Ballycastle

Ballycastle, Co Antrim www.ballycastlegolfclub.com info@ballycastlegolfclub.com 00 44 (0) 28 2076 2536

Ballyclare

25 Springvale Road, Ballyclare, Co Antrim www.ballyclaregolfclub.com info@ballvclaregolfclub.com 00 44 (0) 28 9332 2696

Ballymena

128 Raceview Road, Broughshane, Ballymena, Co Antrim www.ballymenagolfclub.com admin@ballymenagolfclub.com 00 44 (0) 28 2586 1487

Balmoral

518 Lisburn Road, Belfast, Co Antrim www.balmoralgolf.com admin@balmoralgolf.com 00 44 (0) 28 9038 1514

Banbridge

116 Huntly Road, Banbridge, Co Down www.banbridgegolfclub.com info@banbridgegolfclub.com 00 44 (0) 28 4066 2211

Bangor

Broadway, Bangor, Co Down www.bangorgolfclubni.co.uk office@bangorgolfclubni.co.uk 00 44 (0) 28 9127 0922

Belvoir Park

73-75 Church Road, Newtownbreda, Belfast, Co Antrim www.belvoirparkgolfclub.com info@belvoirparkgolfclub.com 00 44 (0) 28 9049 1693

Blackwood

150 Crawfordsburn Road, Bangor, Co Down www.blackwoodgolfcentre.com info@blackwoodgolfcentre.com 00 44 (0) 28 9185 2706

Bright Castle

14 Coniamstown Road, Bright, Downpatrick, Co Down www.brightcastlegolfclub.co.uk gordenennis7@aol.com 00 44 (0) 28 448 41319

Brown Trout

209 Agivey Road, Co Derry www.browntroutinn.com bill@browntroutinn.com 00 44 (0) 28 7086 8209

Bushfoot

50 Bushfoot Road, Portballintrae, Co Antrim www.bushfootgolfclub.co.uk admin@bushfootgolfclub.co.uk 00 44 (0) 28 2073 1317

Cairndhu

192 Coast Road, Ballygally, Larne, Co Antrim www.cairndhugolfclub.co.uk info@cairndhugolfclub.co.uk 00 44 (0) 28 2858 3324

Carnalea

Station Road, Bangor, Co Down www.carnaleagolfclub.com info@carnaleagolfclub.com 00 44 (0) 28 9127 0368

Carrickfergus

35 North Road, Carrickfergus Co Antrim www.carrickfergusgolfclub.co.uk carrickfergusgc@btconnect.com 00 44 (0) 28 9336 3713

Castle Hume

Belleek Road, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh www.castlehumegolf.com info@castlehumegolf.com 00 44 (0) 28 6632 7077

Castlereagh Hills

Upper Braniel Road, Castlereagh, Belfast, Co Antrim www.castlereaghhills.com

00 44 (0) 28 9044 8477

Castlerock

65 Circular Road, Castlerock, Coleraine, Co Derrv www.castlerockgc.co.uk info@castlerockgc.co.uk 00 44 (0) 28 7084 8314

City of Belfast

610 Antrim Road, Newtownabbey, Antrim www.cityofbelfastgolfclub.com enquiries@cityofbelfastgolfclub.com 00 44 (0) 28 908 43799

City of Derry

49 Victoria Road, Prehen, Co Derry www.cityofderrygolfclub.com info@citvofderrvaolfclub.com 00 44 (0) 28 7134 6369

Clandebove

Tower Road, Conlig, Newtownards, Co Down www.cgc-ni.com office@cgc-ni.com 00 44 (0) 28 9127 1767

Clogher Valley

476a Belfast Road, Fivemiletown, Co Tyrone www.cloghervalleygc.co.uk info@cloghervalleygc.co.uk 00 44 (0) 28 8952 1739

Cloverhill

Lough Road, Mullaghbawn, Co Armagh www.cloverhillgolfclub.co.uk info@cloverhillgolfclub.co.uk 00 44 (0) 28 3088 9374

Co Armagh

7 Newry Road, Armagh,Co Armagh www.golfarmagh.co.uk lynne@golfarmagh.co.uk 00 44 (0) 28 3752 5861

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Royal Co Down

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