Amazing Places

Take the Trip of a Lifetime Along Stunning Windswept Coasts

Great Food Experiences From Markets to Festivals

10 Top Things To Do In Dublin And Belfast
We’ve been sharing Ireland with the world since 1932. Come explore with us!

GUIDED HOLIDAYS
• Our most popular holidays with over 50 award-winning tours
• Friendly expert local tour directors
• All sightseeing is included along with full breakfasts, most dinners, entertainment and more
• Small group departures with a maximum of 26 guests available on many tours

GROUP HOLIDAYS
• Perfect for groups of 10 or more
• Customise your itinerary or book your group on one of our scheduled tours for a Shared Guided Holiday

PRIVATE DRIVER HOLIDAYS
• Perfect for individuals or groups up to 9 guests travelling together in your own private vehicle with driver
• Our travel experts will help plan a custom trip or choose to follow one of our preset Private Driver itineraries

SELF-DRIVE HOLIDAYS
• Explore Ireland at your own pace driving your own Hertz rental car
• Follow a pre-set itinerary or plan your own holiday, choosing where to stay from B&Bs, hotels or cozy inns

“I have just returned from Ireland, and it was absolutely wonderful. Our tour guide, Liam, did a marvelous job from start to finish. He was both knowledgeable and entertaining, making the tour informative and enjoyable. We had been wanting to visit Ireland for many years, and this tour exceeded our expectations in almost every way. I would highly recommend CIE Tours for anyone who wants to see this beautiful country, with the peace of mind of knowing that you are in reputable, experienced hands.”

– Rosemary and Mike

Check out all of our 2019 holidays!
Call 0800 680 0611 or your travel advisor
www.cietours.com
On a coastline full of romantic and spectacular sights, Mussenden Temple raises the bar with a beauty that is almost transcendent. Sitting right on the edge of a cliff in the glorious surrounds of Downhill Demesne, this late 18th century folly was inspired by the Temple of Vesta in Tivoli near Rome, and was originally constructed as a library. Panoramic views stretch out in all directions from golden sandy beaches to white-tipped waves. Our advice? Pack a picnic, walk along the beach below and head to the temple for unparalleled views basking in gold.
Ireland in Season

Get set for four fabulous seasons on the island of Ireland, each with their own unique appeal

Spring
Bluebells blanket ancient woodland, orchards bloom with the pink flowers of apple blossom season and lambs frolic in green pastures – spring is the perfect time to make Ireland your own, as the days get longer and the weather warms up.

Spring here is all about escaping into the great outdoors, with many of the island’s beautiful big-house estates opening their gates after a quiet winter. Delve into a riot of colour and natural beauty at the world-renowned Mount Stewart in County Down, where delicate snowdrops give way to crocuses as the season progresses. Or take a walk through the subtropical wonderland of Kells Bay Gardens in County Kerry, amid mountain streams, birdsong and wind-rustled trees. And don’t forget that in spring, Ireland really does turn 40 shades of green thanks to St Patrick’s Day on 17 March – don some shamrocks, feel the vibes and join one of the most enjoyable festivals in Europe!

Autumn
The landscape flames with gold, orange and red tones, pubs are warm and cozy and if you take a walk down to a beach, you’ll probably have it all to yourself. Autumn is an inspirational time to visit the island of Ireland, and you’ll find a real variety of things to do, from listening to cool tunes at the acclaimed Guinness Cork Jazz Festival (Oct) to whale watching off the coast of West Cork. Dublin soars into the autumn festival season from September, with a collection of world-class festivals including the Dublin Theatre Festival and the Dracula-themed Bram Stoker Festival, as well as island wide Culture Night. And keep your ears open for things that go bump in the night on 31 October with the ancient Celtic festival of Halloween.

Head to Derry~Londonderry for the excellent Derry Halloween festival or keep the lights on with a night in County Antrim’s Ballygally Castle Hotel, which is reputedly haunted by two ghosts.

Summer
Stand on a golden beach on the stunning County Down coastline or relax in a calm, butter-coloured cove in County Wexford and you’ll realise there’s a good reason Ireland in summer is so popular. Busy fishing villages thrum with people enjoying fish and chips in the sunshine, valleys shimmer with shades of jade green and emerald and the days seem to last forever. Come summer, festivals erupt all over the place, and parks, rivers, harbours and beaches turn into ideal locations for celebrations of literature, food, music, art and even surfing. Try a spot of music at the Westport Folk and Bluegrass Festival (June) in the beautiful town of Westport, County Mayo, enjoy immersive artistic events at the Cillullin Arts Festival (June), or soak up the summery vibes of the Foyle Maritime Festival (July) in Derry~Londonderry with sail boating, tall ships, kayaking, markets and music.

Winter
Take it from us, when the weather turns cold there’s no better place to be than on the island of Ireland, where you’ll find a welcome so warm you could wrap yourself up in it. Winter in Ireland is all about traditional pubs with roaring fires, Irish music sessions, fragrant hot whiskies and incredible coastal walks. The colder months are also an ideal time to visit some of Ireland’s most popular sights, including the Giant’s Causeway, the Cliffs of Moher and the Rock of Cashel, all of which can be surprisingly quiet. You can be sure of an authentic local atmosphere at great winter festivals, too, such as the Temple Bar TradFest (January) – a celebration of Irish traditional music in some of Dublin city’s unique venues. And make sure not to miss an Irish-themed Christmas, with local Christmas markets, quirky traditions and huge New Year’s Eve celebrations in both Dublin and Belfast.

Cairnryan – Larne
Liverpool – Dublin

Little Detour. Giant’s Causeway.

#WHATNEXT THAT’S UP TO YOU
Book the shortest, fastest crossing to Northern Ireland at poferries.com

Autumn at Powerscourt House and Gardens
County Wicklow
Bluebells, Glenariff
County Antrim
Foyle Maritime Festival
Derry ~Londonderry

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Bluebell, Glin Castle
County Limerick

Cowal Arts Festival
Dunoon

Guinness Cork Jazz Festival
Cork

Ballygally Castle Hotel
County Antrim

Temple Bar TradFest
Dublin

Christmas at Home

Ireland in Season

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Dublin

Christmas at Home
WELCOME TO WESTEROS

NORTHERN IRELAND HAS BECOME A HOME FOR HBO’S GAME OF THRONES® AND NEWRY, MOURNE AND DOWN IS WHERE IT ALL Began.

Escape to Westeros at real filming locations. Wield the weapons, eat the food and visit the sites that appear in this show. Discover why this epic landscape, with its rich and ancient history, made the perfect setting for the Game of Thrones® saga. Walk in the footsteps of stone age people, explore the ruins of ancient castles, place your hand on St Patrick’s resting place, and plummet down stark granite slopes on a mountain bike.

Whatever your idea of heaven, you can find it in Newry, Mourne and Down.

Embark on your journey at: heaveninaheartbeat.com/game-of-thrones

Lighthouses
Tales of shipwrecks, adventure and tragedy swirl in the waters surrounding the beacon that are Ireland’s lighthouses. And staying in one of these structures is an experience to cherish. Perched on the edge of cliffs, keeping a watchful eye over the turbulent sea, these lighthouses are unique places to stay, whether you’re cosying up in a lighthouse’s cottage in counties Antrim or Cork or sleeping in an actual lighthouse building itself in County Wicklow. Soak up the views, breathe in the fresh air and watch nature do its work across a seascape filled with elemental beauty.

Castles
Peat-scented whiskies by cracking log fires, resplendent medieval architecture and an old-world ambiance have made castle hotels in Ireland among the best in the world. Luxury living is beautifully displayed in rooms decked with four poster beds, oak panelling and windows that boast peaceful views over woodland, parkland and glasy lakes. Not only that, but with many castle hotels located on vast estates, you’ll often have the chance to try everything from clay-pigeon shooting, to archery, to wandering through Victorian walled gardens.

B&Bs
Tucked away in picturesque corners of the island, perfectly placed in cities and sitting at the heart of rural farms – B&Bs in Ireland are unique. You’ll find cozy rooms, incredible locations and a breakfast that could sustain a whole army. But you’ll also find a friendly welcome that keeps going throughout your entire stay. The really great thing about a B&B in Ireland is that they are family homes, and the people who run them are hives of local knowledge, offering cheerful inside information on the places to go, things to do and hidden gems to uncover in the local area.

Cottage holidays
Whether you’re seeking an extraordinary adventure on the Wild Atlantic Way, an unforgettable tour through Northern Ireland or a farm stay in the historic pastures of Ireland’s Ancient East, you’re guaranteed to find a lovely little self-catering cottage to suit your needs. Cottages on the island really do spring up everywhere – on remote headlands that nudge out into the tumultuous ocean, at the edge of vast beaches and in cosmopolitan cities where everything is right on your doorstep. You can even rent a thatched cottage for a slice of traditional charm with all the modern comfort you require.

Camping
Connect with nature on a camping or glamping holiday. Breathtaking camping spots beside the crashing ocean, eco farms with spacious bell tents and bohemian glamping surrounded by ancient woods and rippling streams – camping in Ireland serves up everything from the luxurious to the wonderfully quirky. There’s nothing quite like waking up in a forest or beside the beach with the sound of the sea crashing over the pebbles, the sizzle of sausages on a campfire and a sunrise that will blow your mind!

UNIQUE PLACES TO STAY

A round-up of the very best places to stay on the island of Ireland, whether you want to camp beach-side under the stars, or lord it up in a fabulous castle loaded with history.

HEAVEN in a HEARTBEAT
IRELAND GETS CINEMATIC

From Star Wars stunners along the magnificent Wild Atlantic Way, to a wonderland of Westeros locations in Northern Ireland, we present Ireland’s stars of the screen...

Game of Thrones’ Territory
Northern Ireland is a place of fabled castles, spectacular coastline and out-of-this-world heritage sites – and the makers of the HBO blockbuster Game of Thrones® certainly agree. This remarkable corner of Europe has been home to more Seven Kingdoms locations than anywhere else in the world since it first hit TV screens back in 2011. A good place to start? Head to County Down’s Castle Ward (Winterfell) – a stunning, sprawling demesne that doubles as the ancestral home of the Stark family. With Clew Bay’s Castle, you can test your hand at archery in the same spot as Jon Snow, model some authentic Westeros costumes and take part in an opulent medieval banquet inspired by the show. The Dark Hedges in County Antrim is a haunting avenue of serpentine beech trees that will take your breath away, while in County Londonderry you’ll find another spectacular shooting location at Binevenagh Mountain, which boasts panoramic views from the summit.

Star Wars on screen
Movies evoke the magic of travel, transporting viewers on an extraordinary adventure. Nowhere is this better illustrated than along Ireland’s Wild Atlantic Way, where you’ll discover the real-life locations that posed as a galaxy far, far away. Star Wars location scouts chose Ireland to film scenes from Episodes VII and VIII. And from the ragged coastal beauty of Sybil Head in County Kerry to the jagged coastline and thriving biodiversity of Ireland’s most northerly point at Malin Head in County Donegal, these landscapes are so dramatic they feel like a ready-made film set. Surround yourself with the majestic scenery of Loop Head in County Clare or book ahead for a journey out to Skellig Michael in County Kerry, a 6th century monastic settlement on a wonderfully wild island.

Lights, camera, Ireland
All over the island of Ireland you’ll find stunning landscapes fit for the big screen. From the opening shot high above the Dingle Peninsula in County Kerry, Oscar-winning Ryan’s Daughter captures the drama and romance of Ireland’s southwest coast. Slea Head and Dunmore Head are two perennial standouts and one thing’s for sure – love on the rocks has never looked so good! In Ireland’s Ancient East, the romantic drama of PS I Love You is a bit like a love letter to Ireland. Featuring some of the most beautiful locations on the east coast, including Sally Gap and the picturesque lakeside village of Lacken, it’s hard not to be smitten by the heather-slecked landscape and enchanting views of the Wicklow Way featured in the film. And Braveheart might be Mel Gibson’s movie, but Trim Castle is the real star. This Norman stronghold in County Meath is a real showstopper, with its crenellated towers, medieval keep and battlements. Dublin isn’t overlooked, either, when it comes to our cinematic legacy. And in the charming movie Once, it’s not just the love story and the Oscar-winning soundtrack that sets it apart; it’s the great Dublin locations that include Grafton Street, Temple Bar, St Stephen’s Green and Killiney Hill.

Look out for:

**Bangor**
Northern Ireland
Scene of cult film, High Rise.

**Curracloe Strand**
County Wexford
This vast beach starred in both Saving Private Ryan and Brooklyn, which was also filmed in the Town of Enniscorthy.

**Skellig Michael**
County Kerry or book ahead for a journey out to Skellig Michael in County Kerry, 9th century monastic settlement on a wonderfully wild island.

**Loop Head**
County Clare
Surround yourself with the majestic scenery of Loop Head in County Clare or book ahead for a journey out to Skellig Michael in County Kerry, a 6th century monastic settlement on a wonderfully wild island.

**Slea Head**
County Kerry
Drama of PS I Love You is a bit like a love letter to Ireland.

**Dunmore Head**
County Wexford
Drama of PS I Love You is a bit like a love letter to Ireland.

**Lacken**
County Meath
Romantic drama of PS I Love You is a bit like a love letter to Ireland.

**Grafton Street**
Temple Bar, St Stephen’s Green and Killiney Hill

**Dingle Peninsula**
County Kerry
Ryan’s Daughter captures the drama and romance of Ireland’s southwest coast.

**Dunmore Head**
County Wexford
The Original, The Best!

**Malin Head**
County Donegal
This vast beach starred in both Saving Private Ryan and Brooklyn, which was also filmed in the Town of Enniscorthy.

**Loop Head**
County Clare
Surround yourself with the majestic scenery of Loop Head in County Clare or book ahead for a journey out to Skellig Michael in County Kerry, a 6th century monastic settlement on a wonderfully wild island.

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**Grafton Street**
Temple Bar, St Stephen’s Green and Killiney Hill
Boasting homegrown ingredients, innovative chefs and warm hospitality, the island of Ireland is an epicurean paradise. Unearth the history of Ireland’s food and drink culture, meet friendly local producers and enjoy seafood at the ocean’s edge with six of the best food experiences in Ireland. By Joanna Branniff

Visit a market
Hot apple juice made from local organic apples, glistening oysters served with crisp white wine and an abundance of farmhouse cheeses and local salami – the Irish farmers’ market is a bedrock of local community life. This is where you can try authentic street food with an artisan twist, as people picnic in the sunshine and snack on artisanal produce along an exciting slice of the Wild Atlantic Way. If your interest in food is more academic, try an entertaining insight into how food has shaped Irish society with a two-hour stroll through Dublin’s historic quarters on The Story of Irish Food (historicalnoses.ie). Or journey to the land of legends on the Causeway Coast in Northern Ireland for a culinary tour of artisan producers and chefs. Each trip with Causeway Coast Foodie Tours (causewaycoastfoodietours.com) provides exclusive tasting sessions and behind-the-scenes access to introduce you to new and exciting food experiences.

Take a tour
Food tours are an excellent way to get to know the local food culture with an expert guide. For an experience to nourish both body and soul, The Sligo Food Trail (sligofoodtrail.ie) is a spectacular scenic journey of fresh organic produce along an exciting slice of the Wild Atlantic Way. If you have an interest in more academic than gastronomic, try an entertaining insight into how food has shaped Irish society with a two-hour stroll through Dublin’s historic quarters on The Story of Irish Food (historicalnoses.ie). Or journey to the land of legends on the Causeway Coast in Northern Ireland for a culinary tour of artisan producers and chefs. Each trip with Causeway Coast Foodie Tours (causewaycoastfoodietours.com) provides exclusive tasting sessions and behind-the-scenes access to introduce you to new and exciting food experiences.

Food festivals
With such a rich bounty of culinary treasures and genuine enthusiasm for the joy of food, there’s hardly a week that goes by without a food festival being held somewhere on the island, from Kinsale in County Cork to the city of Belfast. Celebrating everything from seafood to craft beer, a festival is a great way to sample the unique taste of the land and sea. Such is the love of oysters and seafood in Ireland that festivals dedicated to them are a big part of the food calendar and events such as the Portavogie Seafood Festival in County Down (Aug) and the Castliron Oyster Festival (Aug) in County Louth serve up tastings, music, demos and competitions. And for a food festival to remember, head to the beautiful town of Dingle in County Kerry during the first weekend of October for the lively Dingle Food Festival. Part of the festival includes a food trail that offers over 70 different local taste experiences, and you can also enjoy market stalls, wine tasting, cookery demos and more.

Liquid favourites
The island of Ireland has a reputation for producing quality beverages, from fine whiskeys to famous studs, many of which run tours and classes. Ireland’s gin industry is booming right now with great local gins such as Blackwater No5, Listoke and Glendalough Distillery, but if you want to take your gin knowledge one step further then head to the Shortcross Distillery in County Down. At this craft gin distillery on the enchanting Rademon Estate, visitors can join a carefully curated tour that brings them through the distilling process, as well as a tutored tasting. And don’t forget to raise a glass to the island’s esteemed whiskey distilleries. In Dublin’s Liberties area, you’ll find the Teeling Whiskey Distillery, with a family legacy that stretches all the way back to 1782, as well as the delightful Pearse Lyons Distillery, set within the lovely restored St James’s Church. Other great distilleries around the island include the Walsh Whiskey Distillery in County Cork, and the iconic Old Bushmills Distillery along the Causeway Coastal Route, County Antrim.

A cooking experience
A cookery class is a fun way to learn new skills and explore local ingredients and techniques. Want to know how to craft a traditional brown Irish soda bread, how to make your own butter, or how to cook seafood to perfection? Then check out one of the quality cookery schools that offers a range of leek soup class to suit all tastes. Famous chef and Irish food champion Neven Maguire presides over a purpose built cookery school in County Cavan, which runs small cookery classes for all experience levels. Or opt for a Fish Masterclass at the Belfast Cookery School, where you can prepare, fillet and cook a selection of delicious fresh fish from local waters, including succulent Strangford Lough mussels.

Great seafood
From sumptuously crafted dishes to tasty street food, Ireland is justly famous for its delectable fish and seafood. Looking for something simple, fresh and authentic? A good place to start is with fish and chips. Leo Burdock’s famous establishments have been offering traditional fish and chips in locations around Dublin since 1913, but you’ll also find local “chippers” all over the island, from the beautifully located Saltwater’s Chipper in the fishing village of Kilmore Quay, County Wexford, to the super-tasty Quinlans Fish Bar in Trillick, County Kerry. And nothing quite beats seafood in the very place where local boats unload their daily catch, so head to the scenic town of Ballycastle in County Antrim, and enjoy fish, chips and homemade crab cakes at Morton’s Fish and Chips in the home of the unique or enjoy the community feel at the Comber Farmers’ Market in County Down, which runs on the first Thursday of every month.

Traditional tastes
On your visit, make sure you try some traditional food! Boxty
A traditional savoury pancake made of mashed and grated potato, which is often enjoyed at breakfast.

Smoked salmon
Produced in small batches in turf smokehouses on the Burren and in Conna Mara, smoked wild Irish salmon is simply delicious served on brown bread with butter and a squeeze of lemon.

Cheese
West Cork is Ireland’s cheese hub, but you’ll find farmhouse cheese everywhere on the island of Ireland. Keep an eye out for St Tola (County Clare), Durrus (County Cork) and Young Buck (County Down).

Ulster Fry
Northern Ireland’s famous breakfast is a delicious combination of eggs, soda farl or soda bread, savoy cabbage, tattie scone and white pudding, and a grilled tomato.
Dublin
Step into a city where Viking history lurks beneath the surface, where modern architecture stands next to ancient buildings and where literature is written into the very fabric of the streets. Welcome to Dublin.

01 The National Museum of Ireland
You’ll find three great museums under the “National Museum of Ireland” banner covering Archaeology, Natural History and Decorative Arts & History. Explore Europe’s finest collection of prehistoric gold artefacts and exquisite Celtic jewellery at the Archaeology branch on Kildare Street. Discover extinct animals among the Natural History Museum’s fascinating collection (Merrion Street Upper), and trace Ireland’s social, design and military stories at historic Collins Barracks. museum.ie

02 The Little Museum of Dublin
Friendly experts will guide you through Dublin’s remarkable history at this great little museum, voted the city’s “Best Museum Experience” by the Irish Times. With over 5,000 objects – many donated by Dubliners themselves – you’ll get a unique insight into subjects as diverse as James Joyce and U2! littlemuseum.ie

03 Kilmainham Gaol
A monument to the long struggle for Irish independence, the restored Kilmainham Gaol offers a hugely atmospheric glimpse into 19th-century prison life. Famous movies, including Michael Collins, were filmed in the spectacular East Wing. The tour gives a dramatic insight into the history of this forbidding prison, with its overcrowding, hardships and brutal conditions. A definite don’t miss. kilmainhamgaolmuseum.ie

04 Guinness Storehouse
With a great location at St James’s Gate, the Guinness Storehouse invites you to explore seven floors of interactive experiences and discover the unique heritage of Ireland’s national drink. Finish with a pint and a 360° view over Dublin at the rooftop Gravity Bar. guinness-storehouse.com

05 Christ Church Cathedral
Founded by the Normans, Dublin’s oldest building has been a place of pilgrimage for over 1,000 years. It’s famous for its architecture and exquisite floor tiles, and the fascinating 12th-century crypt houses an enthralling exhibition on its history. christchurchcathedral.ie

06 The Book of Kells/Trinity College
In the heart of the city sits Trinity, one of the world’s most illustrious universities. This is where Swift, Wilde and Beckett studied, and is where you’ll find a true treasure, the remarkable Book of Kells. After wandering the beautiful campus, step into the Old Library to enjoy the astonishing beauty of the 9th-century gospel manuscript at The Book of Kells Exhibition. trc.ie

07 Dublin Bay Cruises
Get a unique perspective on Dublin, sailing past seals, lighthouses, islands and coastline, with these delightful boat trips that take you on journeys around Dublin Bay. The bay is a UNESCO biosphere – a place where natural and cultural heritage connect. There are five cruises every day (seasonal) between Dún Laoghaire port, the city centre and the traditional fishing village of Howth. dublinbaycruises.com

08 Great Dublin pubs
Why are Dublin pubs the world’s favourite? See for yourself at alluring gems such as Doheny & Nesbitt, literary McDaid’s and the ancient Brazen Head. Tour the fashionable Temple Bar area, Dublin’s pub hub; take in traditional music at welcoming spots such as O’Donoghue’s and the Cobblestone, or soak up the beauty of the 19th-century Long Hall, Stag’s Head and Palace Bar.

09 Dublin day trips
Dublin boasts a magnificent setting, with the coast and mountains on the city’s doorstep. Take the Dart to the seaside village of Howth and walk the beautiful Cliff Path, followed by a seafood lunch at one of the many restaurants. Or stroll around the rugged Dublin Mountains and enjoy a drink at Johnnie Fox’s, one of Ireland’s highest pubs.

10 Take a tour
Get up close and personal with Dublin on tours that cover virtually every aspect of city life. Embark on a journey around Dublin’s exciting food scene with Secret Food Tours Dublin set into the city’s past with Historical Walking Tours of Dublin, or see the city on two (electric) wheels with Lazy Bike Tours Dublin.
Belfast

Vibrant culture, gripping history and super-friendly locals are what Belfast is all about. With incredible Titanic attractions, old-world pubs and a dynamic restaurant scene, this is one city you won’t want to leave.

01 Titanic Belfast and SS Nomadic

Travel to the heart of prosperous Edwardian Belfast and the legendary ship it produced at Titanic Belfast, by the slipways from which Titanic was launched. Voted the world’s leading visitor attraction in 2016, it features nine interactive galleries. Nearby is the SS Nomadic, the tender that took first-class passengers to Titanic. Visit titanicbelfast.com; nomadicbelfast.com

02 Ulster Museum

Walk through the charming Botanic Gardens to the stunningly renovated Ulster Museum and discover the first-class passengers to Titanic. The energy and excitement of Belfast can be fully felt within its great pubs. With exquisite dining and delightful views, the Crown Liquor Saloon is surely the world’s finest 19th-century bar. Other venerable Belfast gems include White’s Tavern and Kelly’s Cellars, the Dirty Onion and Maddens are great for traditional music. Enjoy the unique triangular Bittles or live it up at the Revolución de Cuba.

03 Crumlin Road Gaol

A guided tour around this former prison includes the condemned man’s cell and the adjoining execution room. Restored cells reveal the grim prison life of the 19th century and you will discover the stories of former inhabitants, including Irish President Eamon de Valera. The gaol claims to be one of the most haunted spots in Belfast, and visitors can take the Paranormal Tour through the hotspots of spooky activity: crumlinroadgaol.com

04 Great Belfast pubs

in Ireland. Stellar art galleries and get an unrivalled insight into Belfast’s famous industrial history. It’s free too! nmm.org.uk

05 HMS Caroline

Moored in Alexandra Dock and recently restored as a visitor attraction, this survivor of the Battle of Jutland has cabins decked out as if the crew were still on board. There’s a dramatic film about the ship’s history and a café recreating the sailors’ mess. nmm.org.uk

06 City Hall

Sumptuous City Hall reflects the grandeur of Edwardian Belfast, its spectacular reception halls are overlaid with marble from the quarries that supplied classical Rome. Once known as the “Stone Titanic”, there are lots of associations with the doomed ship, including the Titanic Memorial Gardens. The free daily tours include a history of City Hall and its finest features: belfastcity.gov.uk/leisure

07 St George’s Market

As one of Ireland’s oldest covered markets, St George’s Market is a foodie’s paradise where you’ll find all kinds of artisan fare, freshly caught fish and seafood, stalls of fine Irish cheeses, organic meats, gourmet sausages and local seaweed. Saturday is the main day for food and you might even get a bit of jazz as you wander around this late 19th-century gem.

08 Cathedral Quarter

Taking its name from beautiful St Anne’s Cathedral, Belfast’s cobblestoned cultural and entertainment quarter hosts some of the city’s best pubs and lively clubs, as well as a selection of wonderful eateries. Look out for the splendid MAC (Metropolitan Arts Centre), which is home to cutting-edge drama and more.

09 Day trips from Belfast

Discover the Georgian beauty of the remarkable 18th-century Hillsborough Castle, which was recently reopened to the public after extensive conservation works. For great day trips just outside Belfast, explore the seaside town of Bangor by Belfast Lough and the linen legacy of historic Lisburn city.

10 Tours with a local

Get to know the locals on black cab tours of the famous murals of West Belfast or try the visual feast of the Street Art Walking Tour of the Cathedral Quarter. The Belfast Food Tour offers specialised food and drink outings, including a Gin Jaunt and a Whiskey Walk, or jump on a Riverboat Tour and see the Titanic Quarter from the water. Blue Badge guides will take you to historic locations and there’s a Hop-on/Hop-off bus, too.

16 Ireland

16 Ireland

17 Ireland
the legend

TITANIC

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Explore the sights, sounds and stories of RMS Titanic at this world leading visitor attraction in the city where it all began, Belfast, Northern Ireland.

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CORK

Cork is laden with great museums, local breweries, enjoyable walking tours and a graceful 18th century food market. After a few days soaking up this entertaining spot, push out beyond the city to the lovely fishing village of Cobh, the island-prison of Spike Island and historic Blarney Castle, where you can kiss the Blarney Stone for the “gift of the gab”.

01

The English Market
One of Europe’s finest, this historic food market is a haven of foodie temptations. From freshly baked soda bread and delicious Irish cheeses to local delicacies such as “dishes” (blood sausages) and “crubeens” (pigs’ feet), there’s a dazzling array of artisan produce. The Farmgate Café here is a great spot for lunch, too.

02

The Guildhall
Derry-Londonderry’s fascinating history comes to life at several unique museums, and a particularly interesting choice is the Museum of Free Derry, which offers a local perspective of the Civil Rights Movement. The museum recently won an award for the most authentic visitor experience at the Tourism Northern Ireland Awards.

03

Cork Butter Museum
Fancy seeing thousand-year-old butter? The Cork Butter Museum tells the story of creamy Irish butter from ancient times, and traces its huge importance to the economy of Cork, once home to the largest butter market in the world.

04

The pubs of Cork
It’s the breadth of choice that makes Cork’s pub culture so attractive to visitors. Enjoy the candlelit atmosphere of the historic Mutton Lane Inn, traditional music at Sin É, fabulous craft beers at the Franciscan Well Brewery and Brewpub, or try the rooftop bar at Suas, with views over the city.

05

Day trips from Cork
Gorgeous Cobh, the buzzing harbour town and last port of call of Titanic, is only 30 minutes from Cork. Visit the Titanic Experience Cobh, take a boat trip out to Spike Island – “Ireland’s Alcatraz”, or explore the town’s history in the Cobh Museum. Foodies should head straight for the stylish seaside town of Kinsale, and its seafood restaurants and buzzing pubs.

PEACE BRIDGE

Sitting at the point where the Causeway Coastal Route meets the Wild Atlantic Way, Derry-Londonderry is cultured, cosmopolitan and characterful. Enjoy traditional music in cozy pubs, walk the 400-year-old city walls and experience the story of times past in excellent city museums.

01

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03

The Walls
The magnificent city walls, which celebrate their 400th anniversary this year, were built in the early 1600s to defend newly arrived settlers. Transport yourself back to those times as you circle the atmospheric old city, its four great gates and the huge cannons! And within the walls, don’t miss both the Tower Museum, for a history of the city, and the Siege Museum, which retells the story of the 1689 siege.

04

Ebrington Square and the Peace Bridge
A symbol of Derry-Londonderry’s renaissance, crossing the spectacular Peace Bridge has become a rite of passage for visitors. It leads from the city centre over the River Foyle to Ebrington Square, home to sporting and cultural events.

05

The Craft Village
Wander through a recreated 18th century street and 19th century square, exploring artisan craft shops, intimate eateries and live music. A wonderful place to seek unique Irish gifts.
CITIES TO EXPLORE

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

Armagh
Ireland’s ecclesiastical capital? Welcome to Armagh, proud possessor of two cathedrals, both dedicated to St Patrick. A small and attractive city, Armagh is perfect for exploring on foot. Wander through the gracious Georgian Mall; watch out for the 22 quirky bronze gargoyles and angels around the city; or visit the ancient monument of Navan Fort. Armagh has some great restaurants, including Uluru Bar & Grill and 4 Vicars, making this a spot to be savoured.

Galway
The spirit of Ireland’s west coast is very much present in this vibrant seaside city, which is currently gearing up for a stint as European Capital of Culture in 2020. Galway does festivals brilliantly, from arts to oysters, and with its compact streets and colourful shop fronts, it can often feel like a rolling street party. The super Galway City Museum, thronging food scene (Galway has two Michelin-starred restaurants, Aniar and Loam) and the scenic coastal suburb of Salthill seal the deal.

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

Limerick
Limerick is a place with culture at its heart. Overlooking the River Shannon, this appealing medieval city is known for its festivals, galleries and museums. There’s the faded Georgian elegance of the Newtown Pery district; the Hunt Museum, with its collection of precious art and antiquities; and the Frank McCourt Museum, based in the author’s old school. See rugby at Thomond Park, try local food at the Milk Market’s weekend market and explore the fortifications of the 13th century King John’s Castle.

Waterford
Waterford, in Ireland’s Ancient East, feels more small town than big city, with a friendly atmosphere and easy going vibe. Founded by the Vikings, the city boasts an exciting history that can be explored within the Viking Triangle, which boasts the Medieval Museum, Bishop’s Palace and Reginald’s Tower. See beautiful cut glass at the House of Waterford Crystal, taste a “blaa” (bread roll) at the Granary Café or take a walk along the historic quays.
Turtle Bunbury embarks on three road trips from Dublin, Cork and Shannon and experiences exceptional history, mesmerising beauty and compelling tales with a journey around parts of Ireland’s Ancient East.

**Ancient wonders**

**Start: Dublin**

Ever since I set off west across the River Liffey from Cельbridge in County Kildare, the history of this region has been rock-solid blockbuster stuff. At **Trim** in County Meath, I march around a massive stone castle built with such precision by a Knights Templar architect that Mel Gibson used it as a location for the Braveheart movie.

Further west over the Westmeath border, I travel to the **Hill of Uisneach** where the Ail na Míreann (or “Stone of Divisions”) marks the very spot where the innumerable ruined churches and monastic sites around parts of Ireland’s Ancient East tell us the story of the first Christians in this historic landscape.

**Start: Shannon**

Travelling east towards the **Glen of Aisbear** I can easily see why Ireland has gained a reputation for being so green. This lush glen in County Tipperary sits between the Galtee Mountains and the hill of Slievenamuck, and makes a wonderful place for tranquil walks surrounded by verdant scenery.

I journey on through Tipperary’s Golden Vale to the astounding **Rock of Cashel**, surrounded by its fairy-tale-like citadel. Here, the heroic Irish figure who fought the Vikings, Brian Boro, was crowned king of Munster over 1,000 years ago.

In his time, Boro must have admired the splendid high crosses that now adorn the temples of the 6th century monastic site of **Clonmacnoise**, a neoclassical mansion in County Offaly. The River Shannon winds into view as I behold the round tower and churches of the 6th century Clonmacnoise, a neoclassical mansion in County Offaly, once a seat of learning to which the leading Christians of ancient war-torn Europe sent their sons to study in peace.

Further north, the castle at Athlone overlooks perhaps the most important crossing in Ireland, the gateway between the former kingdoms of Leinster and Connacht. I enjoy a pint in nearby Sean’s Bar, one of the oldest pubs in the world, before setting off for the Bar Castle at Tullamore DEW in County Offaly.

The mighty **Rock of Dunamase** presents an exceptional site on a rocky outcrop in County Laois and was refortified when the Normans arrived to the island in the 12th century. In fairness, the Normans introduced Arabian horses to Ireland and now, entering County Kildare, there are so many stud farms, racecourses and paddocks that the horses in this serene, green landscape might even outnumber the stars in the tranquil sky above.

A land of castles

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A maritime adventure

Start: Cork

Laying claim to the title of second largest natural harbour in the World, Cork Harbour stands at the mouth of the River Lee in southwest Ireland. It’s an impressive place, but just further south of here is a smaller seaport that is intrinsically tied to the island’s history of emigration. So many people left Ireland forever via the small town of Cobh that this colourful coastal spot became known as the “Town of Tears”. Monuments to the doomed Titanic and Lusitania ocean liners also serve as stark reminders of the perils of the sea.

From Cobh, I head east to Midleton where a beautiful sculpture honours the generosity of the Choctaw Indians of Oklahoma at the height of the Great Irish Famine. A visit to the Jameson Distillery sets me up for the journey to New Ross, the sliver of land running into County Wexford. Stories abound from Hook Head Lighthouse to the town of New Ross.

The history of this part of the island is spiced with tales of emigration, but also with a real sense of rural life. At the Irish Agricultural Museum you can see recreations of trade workshops and details of the history of farming, before taking a walk through the lovely Johnstown Castle Gardens. There is immense coastal beauty here, too – in the whitewashed thatched cottages of Kilmore Quay, with the sealarks of the Wexford Slobs and the Saltire Islands, with the basking sharks who first came to these shores long before the humans arrived. It’s a perfect place to finish a road trip never to be forgotten.

Need to Know

Ireland’s Ancient East highlights the immense wealth of over 5,000 years of history in an area that stretches over 15 counties, filled with stories, festivals and fun, with an amazing array of free-to-visit recreations of trade workshops and details of the history of farming, before taking a walk through the lovely Johnstown Castle Gardens. There is immense coastal beauty here, too – in the whitewashed thatched cottages of Kilmore Quay, with the sealarks of the Wexford Slobs and the Saltire Islands, with the basking sharks who first came to these shores long before the humans arrived. It’s a perfect place to finish a road trip never to be forgotten.

Discover Ireland’s Original Triple Blend

The Waterford Greenway is a wonderful way to discover the scenic delights of the southeast coast, and you can hire a bike or go on a tour of this 28.6-mile/46km off-road cycling or walking trail. It may seem long, but it can also be visited in smaller parts, and the 6.2-mile/10km section from Dungarvan to Dunmore is known for its stunning scenery. Drop into O’Mahony’s pub in Dunmore for restorative post-cycle refreshments.

Award-winning Kilkenny ambassador Frank Kavanagh is the ultimate storyteller for the Kilkenny-Tipperary region, having mastered his craft during 40 years’ service at Kilkenny Castle. He’s a great one for really unearthing the unique stories that swirl around Kilkenny, or if you fancy something a little quainter: try a right-time Kilkenny Ghost Tour with tales of witches and plagues!

A very special way to visit the 6th century monastic site of Glenamuck in County Offaly on the banks of the River Shannon is with Viking Tours Ireland. Captain Michael McDonnell is brilliant for bringing the area’s history to life as you sail the same route the Vikings would have taken.

The Waterford Greenway - County Waterford

Tower: I learn of a wedding that sealed the deal for the Norman invaders, and marvel at the handsome medieval vestments on show at the city’s excellent Medieval Museum. Signs for the Waterford Greenway – a wonderful off-road cycling route – point west, but I am headed east on a ferry, not a bike, which leads me across the River Suir into County Waterford. Stories of chivalry, crusades and castle building abound from Hook Head Lighthouse to the town of New Ross.

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San oileán mara thír
Becht faoi noraíomh is cead... On an island to the west. The warmest welcome awaits me.

The Caelic Language is one of the World’s oldest living languages. It is still spoken in Gaeltacht regions in Ireland today. The resilient Gaeltacht people have held on to their native language and traditions. Located within 7 counties in Ireland, experience the warm hospitality and rugged beauty of Ireland’s Gaeltacht regions. www.visitgaeltacht.com

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DISCOVER IRELAND’S ORIGINAL TRIPLE BLEND

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VISIT US IN THE HEART OF IRELAND
THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

Vanessa Harriss wraps herself in the exceptional landscapes, great pubs and restaurants, and spectacular experiences along 1,500 miles/2,500 km of coastal road on the Wild Atlantic Way

NORTHERN HEADLANDS AND SURF COAST

Craggy coasts contrast with quiet glens and surfers enjoy some of the world’s best waves along an extraordinary stretch of the Wild Atlantic Way. Malin Head in County Donegal, with its rugged landscapes and beautiful beaches, is a fitting start for this windswept adventure. Watch the sun set over the rocks and sea at Bloody Foreland. This is a fitting start for this windswept adventure.

If gathering your own dinner sounds too much like hard work and you’re in the mood for a treat, make your way to Eithna’s By the Sea in Bundoran. It’s a great place to end your journey through this incredible area.

Donemana town

Donemana is around the 15th-century castle and the ruins of Donemana Abbey. Take the Donemana Bay Waterbus down the calm waters of Lough Swilly and enjoy a night out around The Diamond in the town centre.

Mulaghmore

Mulaghmore is a great base for exploring the countryside, hiking up to the mountains, visiting ancient sites, experiencing the land’s myths and legends and rambling by lakes in quiet glens. You’re spoilt for walking and hiking opportunities here, but the high grasslands of Glengesh Pass are something special, or head further south and stroll the gentle lanes around Glencolmcille, with its megalithic sites.

Glengesh Pass

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Bay Coast and Cliff Coast

The mid-section of the Wild Atlantic Way offers sandy beaches, dizzying cliffs and the mysterious grey stone blanket of County Clare’s Burren. Hugging close to the coastline, the road skirts around north Mayo to Edel’s Field, an enormous prehistoric landscape and the oldest known field system in the world. Step into the award-winning visitor centre before marvelling at the lives of our Stone Age ancestors. Achill Island (accessible by land bridge) amps up the wild factor with its rugged landscapes and beautiful beaches, or try a looped walk around the stunning flat-topped mountain of Ben Bulben. Nearby Slieve League is a perfect contrast, with a pretty waterfall that inspired the poet WB Yeats. If you have an interest in Yeats you’re in the right place − the poet’s grave is in Drumcliffe Cemetery, a short drive away. Sligo beckons with great bars and restaurants, as well as some top walks, such as Knocknarea just outside town. Panmer yourself afterwards with a relaxing seaweed bath at Yoya in Strandhill, or look with Wild Atlantic Way Cultural Tours for a foraging course, where you’ll be picking out seafood and seaweed to be cooked up into a feast.

Don’t miss a dive. From here you are very close to the Loop Head Peninsula – fabulous walking country with wonderful views. As you head further south, cross the River Shannon on the ferry to Tarbert, and on arrival visit the Tarbert Bridewell. This 15th-century courthouse, now a museum, is a chilling reminder of how hard life could be for the poor or the criminal. To go back even further, book a day’s cycling tour with Ecotrek and explore the myths and the megalithic monuments between Ballybunion and the Burren. The perfect way to end the trip? Take a seaweed bath at the Ladies Beach in Ballybunion. Bliss.

NORThERn hEADlAnDS

Bloody Foreland

Admire the extraordinary views of Bloody Foreland, visit the ancient megalithic tomb of Poulnabrone Dolmen, and drop into the Burren Perfumery in Carron. The company creates perfumes, soaps and cosmetics from their own herb garden.

If gathering your own dinner sounds too much like hard work and you’re in the mood for a treat, make your way to Eithna’s By the Sea in Bundoran. It’s a great place to end your journey through this incredible area.

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Travel through wild terrain to gentle coves and quiet lanes. Take your time and let the region work its magic on you as the Wild Atlantic Way heads south.

It’s a warm welcome you’ll get in Tralee in County Kerry. Drop into the County Museum for 7,000 years of history and book a table at Croi Restaurant for great seafood dishes. Traditional ways live on in this region. In the summer, you might just be lucky enough to see Irish naomhóg boats race off the Maharees in the bay at Castlegregory, and you can get a taste of the past at Tinteán Ceoil every Monday night in Cloghane in a replica Irish cottage kitchen. Music, storytelling and dancing is fuelled by tea and scones beside the fire.

The gorgeous town of Dingle is packed with excellent restaurants and pubs, but make sure to leave room for a Murphy’s Ice Cream – the queue out the door tells its own story. While here, take a boat trip out to the bay and say hello to Fungie the dolphin, who greets visitors and happily swims beside the boats.

On the next peninsula you’ll find St Finian’s Bay, where the monks used to set off to the Skelligs back in the 6th century. Sitting 6.8 miles/11km out into the Atlantic Ocean, the dramatic outline of the islands is just visible, but if the weather is fair, you’re fit and you book well in advance, a trip out to visit Skellig Michael is an experience not to be missed. In not so fair weather, head to the Skellig Experience Centre for a taste of monastic life without the climb. Waterville is a must for seafood, and you’ll find it served in relaxed pubs and more formal settings. Or if you love a traditional pub, drop into the Blind Piper in Caherdaniel for great pints and music.

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The coast of Kerry is fantastic wild walking country on what feels like the edge of the world. There are long-distance trails and circular routes, or take a stroll through the ancient oak woods of Killarney National Park. In this region, the nights are as eventful as the days, and not just because of the lively nightlife. Kerry is designated by the International Dark-Sky Association – you can hire an astronomer or join a group to go out and explore the heavens. In West Cork, try kayaking by starlight on Lough Hyne, where the silence and the moonlight make for a magical experience.

To the south and heading east into County Cork, the warm sea’s influence softens the land. Pretty lanes are lined with fuchsia hedges, gardens bloom around elegant houses and little coves welcome explorers and kayakers.

Dining choices get tougher in this part of the world, with great places to eat around every corner. Scannell’s Bar in Clonakilty has delicious lunches and music at night, or head to nearby Ring to Deasy’s Fish Restaurant. In beautiful Kinsale at the end of the Wild Atlantic Way, food is king. Fantastic restaurants and café owners work wonders with local ingredients, and there’s lots to keep you here long enough to eat your way through the town! 🍴

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Kinsale’s narrow, winding streets are lined with irresistible artsy shops (artists love the light and the views), cafés and seafood restaurants, all set around a beautiful harbour full of bobbing fishing boats.

Along the famous Ring of Kerry driving route, the very pleasant village of Glenbeigh is a great base for outdoor activities such as hiking, fishing, golfing and horse riding.

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From Presidents to Prime Ministers, from film icons to farmers, from sporting greats to singing legends, the pub has become famous for its guests and its true ‘Cead mile faidh’.

Johnnie Fox’s is a jolly old character – if it says ‘Never mind the clock’, the pub has become famous for its guests and its true ‘Cead mile faidh’. 

**H ave a Hooley**

Step back in time to discover the true Irish experience at the renowned Johnnie Fox’s Hooley Night – this includes the famous Fox’s troupe of Irish dancers, lively band playing traditional Irish music, a four course meal by our award winning kitchen and plenty of good ‘aul’ Irish craic.

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**Johnnie Fox’s is a must!**
In Northern Ireland, you’re never far from a memory in the making. This is a land of story-strewn cities and wave-lashed coastline, of Titanic attractions and tranquil moments surrounded by undiscovered landscapes. And with friendly locals, lots of charm and a diverse range of experiences from epic attractions to under-the-radar gems, you’ll find Northern Ireland has a giant spirit of its own. By Lynn Harding

**NORTHERN IRELAND’S GIANT BEAUTY**

**Watery wonders**

Whether you’re visiting the underground river of the Marble Arch Caves or admiring Lough MacNean from a distance at the top of the Cuilcagh Legnabrocky Trail, the waters in this part of the world give you a chance to see things from a different perspective. This is the other side of Northern Ireland, where you can cruise into Belfast via the River Lagan, and where loughs contain mysterious islands, each with their own story. A good place to start is at the largest lake in both Ireland and Great Britain, Lough Neagh. Filled with more nooks and crannies than you could possibly explore, this vast body of water borders five of Northern Ireland’s six counties, and is the beating heart of a historic network of waterways. The Lough Neagh Canoe Trail is perhaps the best way to get to grips with all this fantastic environment has to offer, and to discover why it’s as unmissable for nature lovers as for water lovers. The lake is home to one of Europe’s most significant waterfowl populations, with 10,000 birds nesting here. Different in character yet no less beautiful are Upper and Lower Lough Erne in County Fermanagh – two serene, connected lakes dotted with islands. Life moves at a slow pace here. The countryside is deeply infused with rural charm and seems dominated by deep greens and rainy blues. Explore the elegant beauty of Mount Stewart, where walking trails weave through quiet forest and alongside the water, step into the 18th-century glory of Florence Court, one of the most important Georgian houses in Ireland, or visit one of the many islands from the monastic beauty of Devenish to the antiquity of White Island, with its carved stone figure. And for water teeming with wildlife along with history, holy wells and ancient abbeys, try Strangford Lough, just 20 minutes outside Belfast. Breathe in the old world glamour of Mount Stewart House and its spectacular gardens on the shores of the lough, before revving up the excitement with a high-speed Strangford Sea Safari boat tour.

**Take it slow**

Northern Ireland is the perfect place to get off the beaten track and into a wonderland of slow travel experiences, where you can connect with locals and soak up authentic culture and nature. Whether you fancy wild camping, gentle kayaking and fascinating slow food tours, or you want to learn about an indigenous craft, there’s something to suit. How about a Nature Connections Tour of the Sperrin Mountains in County Tyrone in the company of a local ecologist, or a visit to the Steenven Économusée in County Antrim, where you can watch goldsmiths at work. Immerse yourself in local culture on walking trails around undiscovered areas such as Lough Foyle and the Lower Bann. Or head for a real hidden gem – the Faughan Valley in County Londonderry, where the Beech Hill Country House makes an elegant base for a spot of horse riding through lindy and fragrant woodlands.

To keep the dream going, grab the rare chance to spend a night in an unforgettable and outstanding natural location. Waking up in a magical place, such as the remarkable Finn Lough Forest Domes in County Fermanagh, which boast huge transparent domed ceilings, is like nothing else. And as night falls, you can watch the stars in utter comfort and silence as the stunning night sky reveals itself in all its glory.
Captivating museums

It’s impossible to visit Northern Ireland and not feel a connection to those who have gone before. Whether you can trace your family tree back to this rugged land or not, the stories, struggles and successes of the people whose lives are represented throughout its museums will strike a chord. Take Titanic Belfast, which was voted the world’s leading tourist attraction. The harrowing tales behind the “Ship of Dreams” are brought to life in nine interactive galleries, artefacts from the White Star Line and a tour of the spot where Titanic was launched. Ask around, and the city’s characteristic wit will reiterate wryly that, “She was all right when she left here!”

If you’re a lover of literature, Seamus Heaney HomePlace is a pilgrimage worth making. One of the world’s most beloved writers and Nobel laureate, Heaney was born and laid to rest right here in the Bellaghy area of County Londonderry.

Northeastern Ireland on a plate

Spectacular flavours, super-skilled chefs and a deep respect for local ingredients, when it comes to food, Northern Ireland is cooking up a storm. This is destination delicious, thanks to waters teeming with fish and shellfish, and fields full of grass-fed cattle and sheep. Although Northern Ireland’s restaurant scene is anchored by the food-conscious city of Belfast, with its Michelin-starred restaurants and cutting-edge eateries, you’ll find exciting and innovative places to try the very best homegrown cuisine.

Fuelled by great produce such as grass-fed salt-aged beef, succulent shellfish, artisan cheese and local butters, honeys and herbs, chefs all over Northern Ireland are creating food experiences you won’t want to miss. Try the unique old-world cottage charm of Clenaghans in County Antrim, where innovative cooking is served against a backdrop of stone walls and low-beamed ceilings, or taste traditional baking in Ursa Minor Bakery and Café in Ballycastle. Savour the flavours of the Mourne Mountains with a Mourne Honey Afternoon Tea at Enniskillen House in County Down, or step into the warm, traditional surroundings of Chapter V in Moy, County Tyrone, for excellent locally sourced produce. Right now, Northern Ireland tastes great! 🍽️

Five more to try in Northern Ireland

01 Moonlight Kayaking
With backdrops including Binevenagh Mountain and Magilligan Fort, this enchanting night-time kayak is an experience to remember. askmorenorthernireland.com

02 Lough Naneagh
Accompanied by a local historian, this great tour will bring you along the western shores of Lough Neagh and its fascinating fortifications. loughnaneagh.com

03 Newry Canal Way
This scenic towpath can be enjoyed on bicycle or on foot as it weaves along a 20-mile/32km route from Portadown to Newry. It also skirts the borders of counties Down and Armagh from Newry to Carlingford Lough. cycleni.com

04 St Patrick’s Trail
Follow in the footsteps of Ireland’s patron saint on this trail through Christian sites at Bangor, the Ards Peninsula, Downpatrick, Newry and Armagh. discovernorthernireland.com

05 Corrlea Electric Bike Tour
Tour around beautiful Fermanagh on a bike and stop at country pubs, megalithic sites and Game of Thrones’ locations. ebikeni.com

Fan the flames of your imagination with the top attractions for all ages.

Silken Thomas KILDARE HERITAGE TOWN

Eat

Try Irish traditional fare and exquisite dishes, including grass-fed salt-aged beef, succulent shellfish, artisan cheese and local butters, honeys and herbs.

Drink

Relax with a pint of Guinness, fresh local craft beer, or a local wine.

Dance

Dance to the tunes of local musicians and experience the lively atmosphere of traditional Irish music.

Sleep

Stay in one of our charming accommodation options, which offer a warm welcome and comfortable accommodations.

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

Northern Ireland

A place of natural beauty, history, culture, and diverse cuisine. Experience the rich heritage and unique attractions of this beautiful region.

Ireland Northern Ireland

The centre’s Helicon theatre hosts events year round, along with permanent exhibitions on the poet’s life. The 18th century Robinson Library in Armagh has a similarly literary theme, and counts Jonathan Swift’s very own copy of Gulliver’s Travels amongst its treasures. Jonathan Swift’s very own copy of a similarly literary theme, and counts Gulliver’s Travels amongst its treasures.

Northern Ireland

Silken Thomas KILDARE HERITAGE TOWN

Free Exhibitions, Guided Tours, Museum Shops & Cafés

Museum

National Museum of Ireland

Archaeology

Natural History

Decorative Arts & History

Country Life

Dance

Eat

Drink

Sleep
**EXPERIENCE IRELAND**

A tour of a 13th century lighthouse, a medieval banquet, a traditional Irish music session. There are so many amazing ways to enjoy the island of Ireland, here are some to get you started...

**A traditional music session**

*County Kilkenny* by Colin White

The city of Kilkenny in Ireland’s Ancient East isn’t just a great spot to explore medieval history; it’s the perfect place to experience the undulating rhythms and lilting melodies of traditional Irish music. Music runs in the blood here, and at John Cleere’s Bar & Theatre, situated within the old medieval city walls, I find something quite special. Amongst friendly faces and top-notch local brews, the next few hours pass in the blink of an eye. The music on offer is distinctively Irish, but its jigs and reels cross cultural boundaries and strike a chord with the many nationalities that are present in this charming pub. Feet stomp, fiddles romp and the good times roll. Kilkenny may be famous for its medieval history, but don’t miss the opportunity to discover a side to the city that comes alive to music.

**Medieval magic at Dunguaire Castle Banquet**

*County Galway* by Jane Cowen

Stepping inside the stone walls of Dunguaire Castle is akin to stepping back in time. This 16th century castle has become a popular spot for medieval banquets, and we are lured by the thought of fine wines, great food, historic surroundings and a whole host of stories. And Dunguaire doesn’t disappoint. Long wooden tables illuminated by candlelight fill the room, the walls are adorned in medieval shields and a King and Queen are crowned at the top table. After a huge feast served by kitchen maids in aprons and ruffled caps, the evening is rounded off with tasty apple pie, as our goblets are filled with wine. It’s great fun, and the banquet is a unique way to experience castle living on the island of Ireland from the inside. It’s fair to say we were living the (medieval) dream!

**Game of Thrones® Winterfell Tour at Castle Ward**

*County Down* by Emer Taffe

I start to get in character as soon as I arrive in the courtyard of Castle Ward demesne. This is Winterfell, after all, ancestral home of the Stark family. It’s where the Stark boys practised their archery skills, where Eddard Stark welcomed his old friend King Robert, and where events were set in motion that have kept the world glued to Game of Thrones® for seven years. Northern Ireland is Game of Thrones® Territory and is home to more of its filming locations than anywhere else in the world. There’s nowhere better to immerse yourself in the fantasy series than right here. The people at Winterfell Tours are expert at making you feel like you’ve been transported into a world of drama and dragons, while also sharing some of the real history of this ancient estate on the shores of Strangford Lough.
An island adventure

West Cork by Emily O’Sullivan

Like all of the islands scattered around Ireland’s coast, Cape Clear seems wrapped in an air of mystery – remote, traditional, unique. The sense of isolation, of far-flung romance, of island secrets and maritime drama hits me as soon as I step onto the pier. As I walk around the island, I discover an undulating landscape of dry-stone walls and wildflowers, of traditional music and the Irish language, of friendly islanders and car-free country lanes. Cape Clear’s relative remoteness has allowed traditions to continue unchanged, which gives it a unique atmosphere. Exploring this island makes you feel like you’re in another world. Maybe it’s the green hills set against the vast blue ocean, or the crystalline tones of the light, but Cape Clear’s wild beauty is hypnotic. I make a promise to myself: one day, one day soon, I’ll come back.

Hook Head Lighthouse

County Wexford by Emily O’Sullivan

“It’s an amazing place to work,” our tour guide smiles at us as we look out at the view. We’re at Hook Head Lighthouse, on a balcony 150 feet/46 metres off the ground, being gently buffeted by a fresh sea wind. The striped black-and-white tower that stands here today dates from the 13th century, but a light has burned on this spot since St Dubhan lit one in the 5th century. Walking up through Hook’s chambers is a surprisingly profound experience – the building is unadorned, but it bears the marks of soot from medieval coal and boasts the original rib-vaulted ceilings under which monks would have slept, eaten and worked. As our guide explains its 800-year-old history, we start to get a sense of what an astonishing place Hook is, and how much history is contained here, in this maritime gateway to Ireland’s Ancient East.

The Gobbins Cliff Path

County Antrim by Lynn Harding

Below, the water is bubbling, seafoam visible through the latticed metal bridge, crashing against the sheer rock face. Above, the sky is teeming with birds: cormorants diving like arrows into the water; guillemots ruffling their feathers on the crowded cliffs; solemn-faced puffins huddled in their nests. And beyond – nothing but wide, open sea. This is The Gobbins: an impossibly narrow path snaking along the County Antrim coast. From your first step through Wise’s Eye at the path’s mouth, through the secretive smugglers’ cave beyond, you can’t help but marvel at the ingenuity that brought this to life more than a century ago. But it’s as you cross the tubular bridge suspended above the deep green water that you really feel your heart in your mouth. Solid as the rock itself, there’s still no hiding from the might of nature beneath your feet and the stunning coastal scenery all around. Are you brave enough to look down?
Over eight spellbinding July days in 2019, a beguiling stretch of the spectacular Causeway Coastal Route in Northern Ireland will become the focus of attention for the sporting world. The Open will be returning to the hallowed fairways and greens of Royal Portrush Golf Club for the first time since 1951, when Max Faulkner lifted the famous Claret Jug aloft. It will also be only the second time that golf’s most prestigious championship has been staged on the island of Ireland.

The 148th Open is set to be the biggest sporting event ever held in Northern Ireland, if not the island as a whole. At least 190,000 spectators are expected for the 2019 event, including the practice days, and the competition days are expected to attract a daily attendance of at least 190,000 spectators are expected for the 2019 event, including the practice days, and the competition days are expected to attract a daily attendance of at least 190,000.

The Open is the last major golf course design by celebrated architect Robert Trent Jones Senior and opened in 1995, Adare Manor Golf Club in the pretty village of Adare, County Limerick, has just undergone a complete revamp, which is intended to position it at the very top of Ireland’s golf facilities. The course meanders through 230 acres of lush parkland and majestic mature trees, crossed at various points by the River Maigue. The closing hole demands an approach shot over water to a green adjacent to the magnificent, turreted 19th century Adare Manor.

The Irish Open 2019
Beautifully situated on the Wild Atlantic Way in County Clare, Lahinch Golf Club is gearing up for a bumper year with the hosting of the Irish Open 2019. From its opening in 1892, Lahinch has been renowned for the quality of its links course with exceptional views of the Atlantic Ocean. According to 2014’s Ryder Cup Captain and Dubliner Paul McGinley, Lahinch is "embedded in the history of Irish amateur golf, as well as in the hearts of our many international visitors, and it now deservedly gets the opportunity to showcase itself on the world stage."

Adare Manor Golf Club
County Limerick
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Championship courses to try
Actor Bill Murray once said, “My favourite place to play golf is in Ireland. When you come as a guest, you’re treated as a king.” And he’s not wrong. With courses to suit all abilities, majestic locations and a very warm welcome waiting, you’ll find courses on the island of Ireland to be a cut above the rest. With The 148th hitting our shores in 2019, we look at other championship courses around the island where you can test your skills with the best of them.

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Our B&B hosts look forward to offering you the warmest of welcomes.

Book your B&B Experience online www.bandbireland.com

Unforgettable holidays start in a Bed and Breakfast in Ireland

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Portrush is the biggest golfing event in Northern Ireland in 2019, it’s also set to be a bumper year for the game in Northern Ireland, with the Northern Ireland Open taking place at Galgorm Castle, only 30 miles/38km from Belfast. A Ladies European Tour event will run at the same time as the European Challenge Tour.

Beyond the course

Golf may dominate Portrush, but there’s plenty to keep visitors occupied off the course. The small seaside resort town makes a great base for exploring the coastline, and there are wonderful beaches, including White rocks and Portrush Strand.

Those with time can drive the entire 120-mile/193km Causeway Coastal Route that hugs the Atlantic coast from Belfast to Derry-Londonderry. Stay a while in Derry-Londonderry, and walk around the city’s 400-year-old walls, followed by a guided tour of the auburn-brick beauty known as the Guildhall. At the opposite end of the route is Belfast, with its vibrant Botanic Gardens, the Ulster Museum and the excellent Michelin-starred restaurants, Ox and Stag.

For a taste of some great local traditional music, head inland to the quaint Crosskeys Inn, just north of Lough Neagh. This little thatched pub is one of the most famous traditional music pubs on the island, and quite incredibly, dates back to 1654. If you’re lucky you might even catch an eel supper!

For more information visit ireland.com/golf

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The K Club

County Kildare

The Kildare Country Club, to give it its full name, memorably hosted the 2006 Ryder Cup on its Palmer Course, created by Arnold Palmer in 1991. The River Liffey is an ever-present danger and the closing holes are memorable, especially the light fairways and risk-reward temptation of the 16th and 18th – as the Ryder Cup stars of Europe and America will recall. You can also try fly-fishing on the K Club Estate, which is situated near Dublin in Straffan, County Kildare.

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Old Head of Kinsale Golf Links

County Cork

Perhaps the most exhilarating golf course of all in Ireland, the Old Head of Kinsale Golf Links is laid out atop 300 feet/91 metres high cliffs in the shadow of the Old Head of Kinsale lighthouse along Ireland’s Wild Atlantic Way in County Cork. Few courses will distract you as much as this, with its stunning coastal and ocean views – quite apart from the sheer drop down to the Atlantic waves, which crash against the rocks just beyond the edge of its fairways and greens. For golfers with cash to splash, arrive by helicopter at the heliport close to the opening hole and stay on site in luxury suites oldhead.com

Mount Juliet Golf Club

County Kilkenny

Its opening hosted a match featuring golfing legends Christy O’Connor Jr and Jack Nicklaus back in 1993, and the prestigious Mount Juliet has been weaving both professionals and amateurs ever since. Set amid the gorgeous County Kilkenny countryside, the painstakingly designed parkland course boasts water features, fairways and contoured greens with plenty of tests for the keen golfer. Sick around afterwards as the resort hotel here features one of the most acclaimed restaurants on the island of Ireland — the delightful Michelin-starred Lady Helen.mountainlodge.ie

Royal County Down

County Down

Royal County Down has been to one of the island’s most formidable courses. Golf Digest calls it its “favourite course outside of the US”. Thanks to designer Tom Morris, who shaped the natural undulations of sand dunes on the edge of Dundrum Bay into a links layout that is as beautiful as it is challenging. The Mourne Mountains provide this sculptural masterpiece with a dramatic backdrop, but a word to the wise: don’t get distracted by your surroundings at any of the five blind tee shots, deep pot bunkers, duned greens and narrow ribbons of hummocky fairways, or you’ll rue your scorecard in the Irish 18th, the clubhouse.

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Whitestrand Beach County Antrim

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NORTHERN IRELAND
Contact the local police station where support will be available: Tel: 101 or 999
EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS
Republic of Ireland
Emergency Services (Police, Fire, Ambulance, Coastal & Mountain Rescue) Tel: 112 or 999
Northern Ireland
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SMOKING RESTRICTIONS
Smoking is not allowed in public areas and workplaces including pubs, restaurants, hotels and taxis, in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2019
New Year’s Day 1 Jan
St. Patrick’s Day 17 Mar
St. Patrick’s Day Holiday 18 Mar
Good Friday (Not public holiday) 19 Apr
Easter Monday 22 Apr
May Bank Holiday 6 May
Spring Bank Holiday (Not public holiday) 27 May
June Bank Holiday (Not public holiday) 3 June
July Holiday (Not public holiday) 12 July
Aug Bank Holiday (Not public holiday) 5 Aug
Aug Bank Holiday (Not public holiday) 26 Aug
Oct Bank Holiday (Not public holiday) 28 Oct
Christmas Day 25 Dec
St. Stephen’s Day (Bank holiday) 26 Dec
Boxing Day (Not) 26 Dec

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

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

If you’re travelling in your own car, or renting a vehicle, it’s important to know the following: cars drive on the left-hand side of the road, signs in English (Irish-speaking) areas are written in Irish (Gaelsic); you will need either a full valid national driving licence or an international driving permit to drive on the roads,
Northern Ireland uses miles per hour, while the Republic of Ireland uses kilometres; and passengers are required by law to wear seat belts at all times in the front and back of the vehicle. There are no tolled roads in Northern Ireland but you’ll find tolls on a number of roads in the Republic of Ireland (disabled drivers are not charged). These are managed by the National Roads Authority and Dublin City Council. Generally tolls are paid at the barrier of the toll booth, however, there is one exception: M50 of Eirow Barrier System.
For more information visit: etoll.ie

PASSPORT/VisA REQUIREMENTS
While UK citizens do not require a passport or visa to enter Ireland, most air and sea carriers require photographic identification (ID), such as a passport or driving licence. Visitors are advised to check which form of ID is required with the individual airline, ferry company, tour operator or travel agent before travelling.
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CURRENCES
In the Republic of Ireland the currency used is the euro (€), and in Northern Ireland the currency used is the pound sterling (£).

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

Republic of Ireland
Irish Tourist Assistance Service
Mon–Sun: ITAS, Pearse Street Garda Station, Pearse Street, Dublin 1; ITAS: Cliff Street Garda Station, Cliff Street, Dublin 1. Tel: +353 (0) 1 666 9514/1890 365 700 (local number)
Mon–Fri: ITAS, 6 Hanover Street East, Dublin 2 Tel: +353 (0) 1 666 0562
Opening hours: Monday–Saturday 10am–6pm, Sundays, public holidays 12pm–6pm
Email: info@itas.ie

Northern Ireland
Security Services
Freefone: 100 (in Northern Ireland only)

NORTHERN IRELAND
Contact the local police station where support will be available: Tel: 101 or 999
EMERGENCY TELEPHONE NUMBERS
Republic of Ireland
Emergency Services (Police, Fire, Ambulance, Coastal & Mountain Rescue) Tel: 112 or 999
Northern Ireland
Emergency Services (Police, Fire, Ambulance, Coastal & Mountain Rescue) Tel: 999
SMOKING RESTRICTIONS
Smoking is not allowed in public areas and workplaces including pubs, restaurants, hotels and taxis, in both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2019
New Year’s Day 1 Jan
St. Patrick’s Day 17 Mar
St. Patrick’s Day Holiday 18 Mar
Good Friday (Not public holiday) 19 Apr
Easter Monday 22 Apr
May Bank Holiday 6 May
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Email: info@itas.ie

Northern Ireland
Security Services
Freefone: 100 (in Northern Ireland only)
### Airline Contact Details

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Airport</th>
<th>Contact</th>
<th>Telephone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aer Lingus</td>
<td>aerlingus.com</td>
<td>0333 004 5000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BMI Regional</td>
<td>flybmi.com</td>
<td>0330 333 7998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Airways</td>
<td>britishairways.com</td>
<td>0344 493 0787</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>easyJet</td>
<td>easyjet.com</td>
<td>0871 246 0000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flybe</td>
<td>flybe.com</td>
<td>0371 700 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loganair</td>
<td>loganair.co.uk</td>
<td>0344 800 2855</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ryanair</td>
<td>ryanair.com</td>
<td>0871 246 0000</td>
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### Air Access & Routes to Ireland

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Depart</th>
<th>Arrive</th>
<th>Airline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Belfast International</td>
<td>easyJet, Ryanair</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>easyJet, CityJet</td>
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<tr>
<td>East Midlands</td>
<td>Nottingham</td>
<td>Aer Lingus Regional</td>
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<td>Edinburgh</td>
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<td>Exeter</td>
<td>Bristol</td>
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<td>Aer Lingus Regional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Isle of Man</td>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>Aer Lingus Regional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jersey</td>
<td>Leeds Bradford</td>
<td>Aer Lingus Regional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Manchester</td>
<td>Aer Lingus Regional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>London City</td>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>Aer Lingus, British Airways, CityJet</td>
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<tr>
<td>London Gatwick</td>
<td>Leeds Bradford</td>
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<td>Aer Lingus, British Airways</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southampton</td>
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<td>Aer Lingus, British Airways</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Portsmouth</td>
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<table>
<thead>
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<th>Airline</th>
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<tr>
<td>Aberdeen</td>
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<td>Aer Lingus, CityJet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birmingham</td>
<td>Aberdeen</td>
<td>easyJet, CityJet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bristol</td>
<td>Cardiff</td>
<td>Aer Lingus Regional, Ryanair</td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>Newcastle</td>
<td>Aer Lingus, British Airways</td>
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</table>

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

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**A Great Base to Explore Dublin**

Sandymount Hotel is conveniently located in Dublin’s affluent residential area, close to Dublin Airport and ferry port, and with complimentary parking for our guests.

Sandymount Hotel, Herbert Rd, Dublin 4 +353 1 614 2000
info@sandymounthotel.ie
www.sandymounthotel.ie
TRAVELLING TO IRELAND BY SEA

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

SEA ROUTES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPART</th>
<th>ARRIVE</th>
<th>CARRIER</th>
<th>VESSEL</th>
<th>DURATION</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cairnryan</td>
<td>Belfast</td>
<td>Stena Line</td>
<td>Superfast VII/ VIII</td>
<td>3hrs 30mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larne</td>
<td>P&amp;O Ferries</td>
<td>Express</td>
<td>Superferry</td>
<td>3hrs 45mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishguard</td>
<td>Rosslare</td>
<td>Stena Line</td>
<td>Superferry</td>
<td>3hrs 45mins</td>
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<tr>
<td>Holyhead</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>Irish Ferries</td>
<td>Ulysses Cruise Ferry</td>
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<tr>
<td>Isle of Man</td>
<td>Belfast</td>
<td>Steam Packet Company</td>
<td>Fastcraft</td>
<td>3hrs 30mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liverpool</td>
<td>Dublin</td>
<td>Steam Packet Company</td>
<td>Fastcraft</td>
<td>3hrs 30mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pembroke</td>
<td>Rosslare</td>
<td>Irish Ferries</td>
<td>Irish Sea Ferry</td>
<td>3hrs 30mins</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Calls to sea/coach operators may incur local or national call charges. Please see websites for details.

FERRY AND COACH OPERATORS CONTACT DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FERRY COMPANY</th>
<th>WEBSITE</th>
<th>TELEPHONE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cairnryan</td>
<td>cairnryan.co.uk</td>
<td>0871 701 0281</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Larne</td>
<td>larneferries.com</td>
<td>0871 730 0400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fishguard</td>
<td>fishguardferries.co.uk</td>
<td>0800 150 0050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holyhead</td>
<td>holyhead-ferries.com</td>
<td>0872 299 2992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isle of Man</td>
<td>steam-packet.com</td>
<td>0844 770 7070</td>
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<tr>
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<td>steam-packet.com</td>
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MIZEN HEAD

Ireland’s most southerly point! www.mizenhead.ie  A Wild Atlantic Way Signature Experience
Welcome to Waterford, where Ireland begins...

Waterford is part of Ireland’s Ancient East and is situated in the South East of the country. Filled with historic sites, lush green river valleys, stunning mountains, coastline and a vibrant city - Waterford has something for everyone. There's lots of accommodation options including hotels, self catering and B&B’s. Choose how best to spend your time, from attractions, festivals, interesting places to visit, great restaurants, shopping, night life and much, much more.

Explore all that Waterford has to offer
www.VisitWaterford.com
#VisitWaterford

Take a beautiful journey...

Waterford Greenway is a spectacular 46km off-road cycling and walking trail which travels through time and nature across eleven bridges, three tall viaducts and a long atmospheric tunnel, all the way from the river to the sea. Along the route, is the site of a 9th century Viking settlement; the world renowned ornamental gardens at Mount Congreve; Kilmacthomas Workhouse; old railway stations and a heritage railway train that still runs along part of the track.

Plan your visit to Waterford Greenway
www.VisitWaterfordGreenway.com
#WaterfordGreenway