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TAKE THE TRIP OF A
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WINDSWEPT COASTS

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10 TOP THINGS TO DO IN
DUBLIN AND BELFAST

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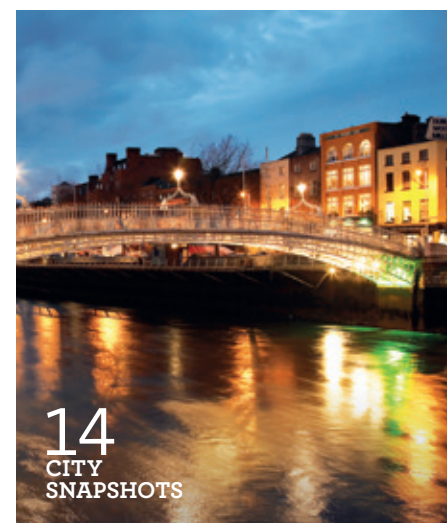
– Rosemary and Mike

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IRELAND WELCOME

The scenery is enchanting, the culture is captivating and the people will give you a welcome that will warm your heart. Ireland is unique, and a trip here will make memories that last a lifetime. Delve into Ireland's Ancient East, where history flows through the landscape; feel the ocean's blast on the Wild Atlantic Way as you travel a coastline like no other; or experience the drama of the Causeway Coastal Route. The time is right...



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CONTENTS

- 04 **PICTURE THIS**
Explore one of Ireland's most picturesque landscapes
- 07 **IRELAND IN SEASON**
Spring, summer, autumn or winter, let the island work its magic on you
- 09 **UNIQUE PLACES TO STAY**
Experience the very best accommodation on the island of Ireland, from castles to camping
- 11 **IRELAND GETS CINEMATIC**
There's a good reason Ireland lights up the screen – prepare to be wowed with some showstopping scenery
- 12 **GREAT TASTES OF IRELAND**
Experience the island's amazing flavours with food tours, farmers' markets and seafood gems
- 14 **CITY SNAPSHOTS**
The lowdown on 10 top things to do in Dublin and Belfast, plus highlights from Cork, Derry~Londonderry and more of Ireland's great cities
- 22 **IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST**
Three journeys into the heart of Ireland's past with ancient wonders, castle adventures and maritime history
- 26 **THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY**
From invigorating walks to wonderful seafood, get set for a coastline like no other
- 30 **NORTHERN IRELAND'S GIANT BEAUTY**
Hear the stories, see the sights, explore Titanic attractions and soak up the unique atmosphere of Northern Ireland
- 34 **EXPERIENCE IRELAND**
Immerse yourself in some of the island of Ireland's amazing things to see and do
- 38 **OPEN SEASON**
Major championship golf returns to Northern Ireland with The 148th Open at Royal Portrush
- 42 **FIVE GREAT TRADITIONAL PUBS**
Enjoy the very best of the island's traditional watering holes
- 44 **GENERAL INFORMATION**
Everything you need to know about organising a holiday to Ireland

Published by
Tourism Ireland
Marketing the island of Ireland

PICTURE THIS

Mussenden Temple

County Londonderry

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 broad sandy beaches to white-tipped waves. Our advice? Pack a picnic, walk along the beach below and head to the temple for unparalleled views bathed in gold. 🍷

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IRELAND IN SEASON

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

Autumn at Powerscourt House and Gardens County Wicklow

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!



Bluebells, Glenariff County Antrim

ireland.com



Foyle Maritime Festival Derry-Londonderry

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 **Carlow 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.

Autumn

The landscape flames with gold, orange and red tones, pubs are warm and cosy 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 roars 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!



Christmas in Dublin

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 whiskeys 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. ☘

HEAVEN in a HEARTBEAT



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.

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Wicklow Head Lighthouse County Wicklow



Ashford Castle County Mayo

Lighthouses

Tales of shipwrecks, adventure and tragedy swirl in the waters surrounding the beacons 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 seas, these lighthouses are unique places to stay, whether you're cosying up in a lightkeeper'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 whiskeys by crackling log fires, resplendent medieval architecture and an old-world ambience 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 glassy 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 cosy 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 crunching 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



Anna's House B&B County Down



Ballygally Castle County Antrim



Self-catering, Cnoc Suain County Galway



Glamping Portumna, County Galway



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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 Clearsky Adventure at the 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 craggy coastal beauty of **Sybil Head** in County Kerry to the jagged coastline and thriving birdlife 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 P.S. 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-flecked 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**. ☘



Ireland On Screen



Dark Hedges County Antrim



Malin Head County Donegal



Curraclloe Strand County Wexford

Look out for:

- Bangor**
Northern Ireland
Scene of cult film, High Rise.
- Curraclloe Strand**
County Wexford
This vast beach starred in both Saving Private Ryan and Brooklyn, which was also filmed in the town of Enniscorthy.



Blasket Islands from Dunmore Head County Kerry

GREAT TASTES OF IRELAND

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 Braniff

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 salamis – 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 the go. The two most famous markets are Cork's **English Market** and Belfast's **St George's Market**, both of which offer a tantalising range of foods from the island of Ireland in stunning 18th and 19th century surroundings. These famous covered markets certainly attract the crowds, but many towns and cities on the island also support a thriving weekly food market, where you can meet the very people who have grown the produce. Try **Kilkenny Farmers' Market** every Thursday in front of the 12th century castle, stroll through the bustling **Midleton Farmers' Market** in County Cork on Saturday mornings, or enjoy the community feel at the **Comber Farmers' Market** in the home of the unique Comber potato in County Down, which runs on the first Thursday of every month.



St George's Market Belfast

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 your interest in food is 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** (historicaltours.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.

Galway Farmers' Market



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 **Carlingford 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.



Carlingford Oyster Festival County Louth



Old Bushmills Distillery County Antrim



Octopussy's Seafood Tapas Howth, County Dublin

Liquid favourites

The island of Ireland has a reputation for producing quality beverages, from fine whiskeys to famous stouts, 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 Dillisk, 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 Carlow, 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 very own butter, or how to cook seafood to perfection? Then check out one of the quality cookery schools that offer a range of bespoke classes 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 **Saltee's Chipper** in the fishing village of Kilmore Quay, County Wexford, to the super-tasty **Quinlan's Seafood Bar** in Tralee, 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, scampi and homemade crab cakes at **Morton's Fish and Chips**.

Cheese tasting Dingle, County Kerry



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.

Dulse

A dried seaweed that is eaten as a snack or added to dishes such as soups and salads.

Smoked salmon

Produced in small batches in turf smokehouses on the Burren and in Connemara, 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).

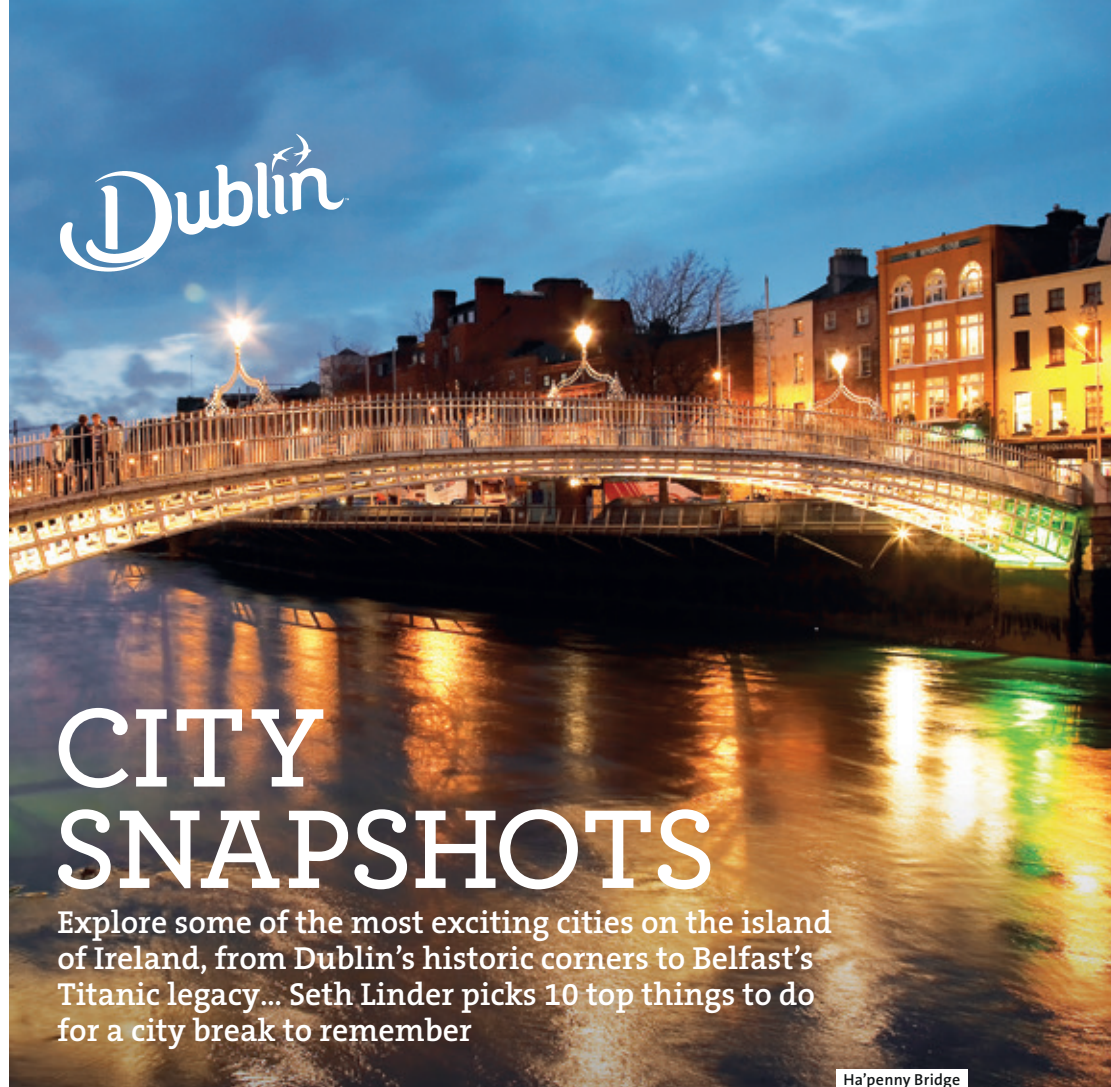
Ulster Fry

Northern Ireland's famous breakfast is a delicious combination of eggs, soda farl or potato bread, sausages, black and white pudding, and a grilled tomato.

Dublin

CITY SNAPSHOT'S

Explore some of the most exciting cities on the island of Ireland, from Dublin's historic corners to Belfast's Titanic legacy... Seth Linder picks 10 top things to do for a city break to remember



Trinity College Dublin

Ha'penny Bridge

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

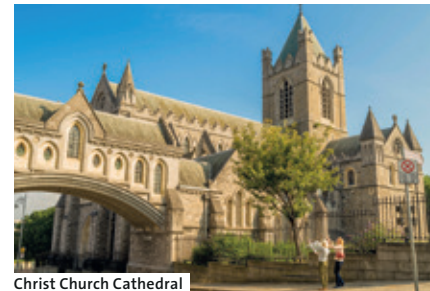
In the heart of the city sits Trinity, one of the world's most illustrious universities. This is where Swift, Wilde and Beckett studied, and is where you'll find a true treasure, the remarkable Book of Kells. After wandering the beautiful campus, step into the Old Library to enjoy the astonishing beauty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



Little Museum of Dublin



Christ Church Cathedral



Howth Head County Dublin

08 Great Dublin pubs

Why are Dublin pubs the world's favourites? 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; delve into the city's past with Historical Walking Tours of Dublin; or see the city on two (electric) wheels with Lazy Bike Tours Dublin.



National Museum



Guinness, St James's Gate

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, arts 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

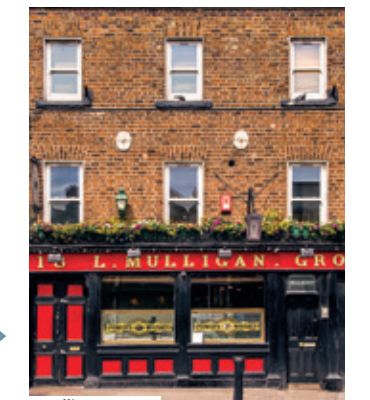
little museum, voted the city's "Best Museum Experience" by the Irish Times. With over 5,000 objects – many donated by Dubliners themselves – you'll get a unique insight into subjects as diverse as James Joyce and U2! littlemuseum.ie

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



L Mulligan Grocer

Flavours of Dublin

From tempting artisan fare at the Temple Bar Market to fabulous seafood at SOLE, great food is an essential part of the Dublin experience. Enjoy Ireland's wonderful local produce at charming restaurants such as the lovely Winding Stair overlooking the River Liffey, or gastro pubs such as L Mulligan Grocer in Stoneybatter.



MAC Belfast



visit
Belfast

Titanic Belfast and SS Nomadic

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. nmrn.org.uk



HMS Caroline

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



City Hall

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.



Hillsborough Castle County Down

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 liveliest 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.



St George's Market

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. titanicbelfast.com; nomadicbelfast.com

02 Ulster Museum

Walk through the charming Botanic Gardens to the stunningly renovated Ulster Museum and discover the first mummy to be displayed outside Egypt, and the most complete dinosaur fossil



Botanic Gardens

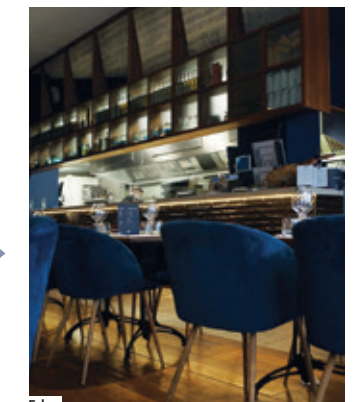
in Ireland. Stroll art galleries and get an unrivalled insight into Belfast's famous industrial history. It's free too! nmni.com

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

The energy and excitement of Belfast can be fully felt within its great pubs. With exquisite tiling and delightful snugs, 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! visitbelfast.com



Edo

Belfast flavours

Thanks to talented chefs and their use of superb local produce, Belfast has become a leading foodie destination. Restaurants such as Molly's Yard, in an old coaching house, and the Mourne Seafood Bar are famous for their produce. Join the locals at Belfast's oldest chip shop, Longs, or taste Northern Ireland's acclaimed "salt-aged" steaks at Edo.

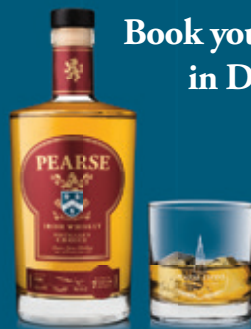
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CORK

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 "drisheen" (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. englishmarket.ie

02

Ring the Shandon Bells

Follow in a world-famous tradition. Walk the 132 steps to the top of the 18th century St Anne's Church to enjoy an amazing 360° panorama of Cork. On the way you'll have a chance to ring the Shandon Bells. shandonbells.ie

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. thebuttermuseum.com

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.



DERRY~ LONDONDERRY

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 cosy pubs, walk the 400-year-old city walls and hear stories of times past in excellent city museums.

01

Museum of Free Derry

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. museumoffreederry.org

02

The Guildhall

Located between the mighty city walls and the winding Foyle River, the striking red sandstone 19th century Guildhall hosts a fascinating exhibition on the Plantation. Restored as a visitor attraction, the Guildhall is famous for its exquisite stained glass windows.

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. ☘



The English Market Cork



Pub culture Cork

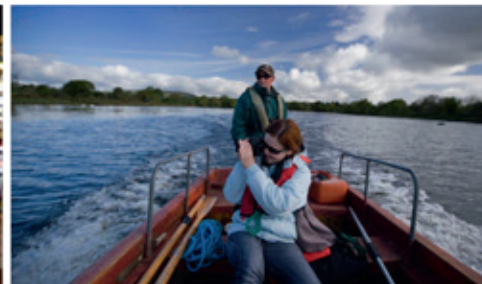
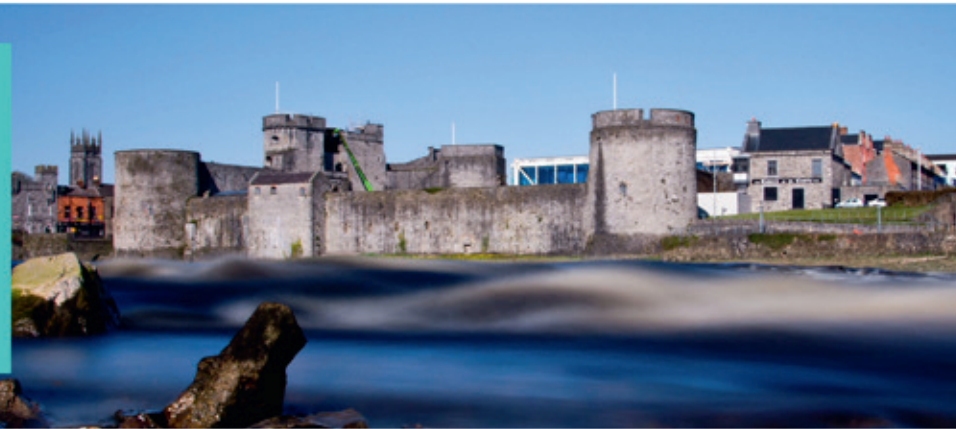


Peace Bridge Derry~Londonderry



The Guildhall Derry~Londonderry

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Be Inspired!



Limerick.ie TOP 25 BEST TOURISM WEBSITES IN THE WORLD - Skift 2017



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, thriving 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

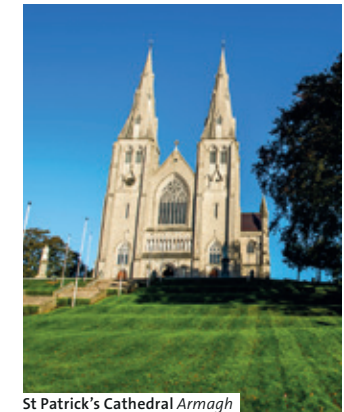
Limerick is a place with culture at its heart. Overlooking the River Shannon, this appealing medieval city is known for its festivals, galleries and museums. There's the faded Georgian elegance of the Newtown Pery district; the Hunt Museum, with its collection of precious art and antiquities; and the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



Claddagh Quay Galway



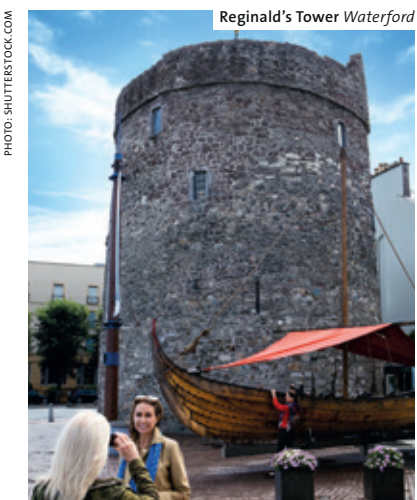
St Patrick's Cathedral Armagh



Kilkenny Castle Kilkenny



King John's Castle Limerick



Reginald's Tower Waterford

A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING

HALFWAY BETWEEN DUBLIN AND BELFAST IS NEWRY, MOURNE & DOWN - ST PATRICK'S COUNTRY.

This is where he began his ministry and where he died.

Walk in the footsteps of Ireland's patron saint on the St Patrick's Pilgrim Way. Visit his first church at Saul, the ancient wells at Struell and his final resting place at Down Cathedral. Discover the world's only St Patrick exhibition at Downpatrick's Saint Patrick Centre, where interactive displays and unique artefacts bring the world of early Christian Ireland to life.

His epic story unfolded against an epic backdrop. The Mourne Mountains' granite tors erupt from the landscape and tumble into the sea. The valleys of the Ring of Gullion shelter lush forests dotted with mass stones and ancient megaliths. The drumlins of Down are capped with Norman castles and the ruins of grand abbeys.

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



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IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST



Hill of Tara County Meath

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

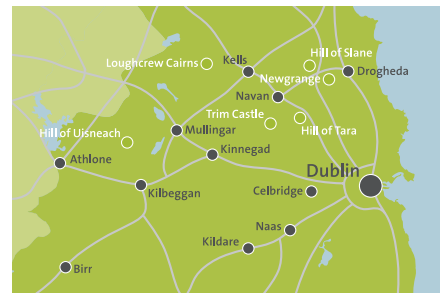
Ever since I set off west across the River Liffey from **Celbridge** in County Kildare, the history of this region has been rock-solid blockbuster stuff. At **Trim** in County Meath, I march around a massive stone castle built with such precision by a Knights Templar architect that Mel Gibson used it 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 five original kingdoms of Leinster, Munster, Connacht, Ulster and Meath met in ancient times. It's staggering how close it stands to Ireland's actual geographical centre. I close my eyes and imagine the Druid ceremonies taking place here long ago; it's said that the bonfires from Bealtaine, the ancient Celtic festival, that blazed on its summit to mark the start of summer could be seen from the **Hill of Tara**, ancient seat of Ireland's high kings, 50 miles/80km east.

Onwards, I pass through Westmeath to

explore the passage graves of Loughcrew in County Meath, built over 5,000 years ago. The **Loughcrew Cairns** are aligned with the spring and autumn equinoxes; the one I see later at **Newgrange** is famously lined up with the winter solstice. How is it that the architects of these masterpieces were so incredibly in tune with the secrets of the sun and stars? I pay my respects to these wise old souls amid the grassy shadows of what was once the Royal Palace at Tara. The **Hill of Tara** was once the seat of the High Kings of Ireland, but has been an important site since the Stone Age. Looking north I see the **Hill of Slane**; small wonder that is where St Patrick chose to light the Paschal fire and introduce Christianity to Pagan Ireland. With all the kings and druids around, he could be sure of a decent audience.

At my journey's end, standing by the **River Boyne**, I can see why the battle fought here in 1690 was so epic. The conflict could have gone either way, but fate fancied William of Orange. It was certainly not the first time Ireland's future was shaped by the events that took place in this historic landscape.



Trim Castle County Meath



Hill of Slane County Meath



Clonmacnoise County Offaly



Athlone County Westmeath



Rock of Dunamase County Laois

A land of castles

Start: Shannon

Travelling east towards the **Glen of Aherlow**, 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**, surmounted by its fairytale-like citadel. Here, the heroic Irish figure who fought the Vikings, Brian Boru, was crowned king of Munster over 1,000 years ago.

In his time, Boru must have admired the splendid high crosses that now adorn the ruined graveyards of the **Lingaun River Valley**; these ecclesiastical gems are the subject of a fabulous exhibition at **Kilkenny city's Medieval Mile Museum**.

For many long centuries, Kilkenny was the stronghold of the Butlers, an Anglo-Norman family, headed up by the Dukes and Earls of Ormond. My mother was a Butler so I feel a special affinity with Kilkenny, as well as **Ormond Castle** in **Carrick-on-Suir** in County Tipperary and the innumerable ruined churches and towers scattered throughout this former Butler dominion.

Other castles and big houses offer interesting tales – strange and spooky ones



Rock of Cashel County Tipperary



Birr Castle County Offaly

at **Leap** in County Offaly; inspirational ones at **Birr** also in Offaly, home to a vast telescope, the world's largest for over 70 years; and architectural ones at **Emo Court**, a neoclassical mansion in County Laois.

The **River Shannon** wends into view as I behold the round tower and temples of the 6th century monastic site of **Clonmacnoise** 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 **Seán's Bar**, one of the oldest pubs in the world, before spinning onwards to compare the whiskey distilleries of **Kilbeggan** in County Westmeath and **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.

Take a tour

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 Durrow is known for its stunning scenery. Drop into O'Mahony's pub in Durrow 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 quirkier, try a night-time **Kilkenny Ghost Tour** with tales of witches and plagues!

A very special way to visit the 6th century monastery site of **Clonmacnoise** 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.



Cobh County Cork



abound from **Hook Head Lighthouse** to the town of **New Ross**.

The history of this part of the island is spliced 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 seabirds of the **Wexford Slob** and the **Saltee 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. ☘

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 **Youghal**, home to many fine medieval buildings, including the Clock Gate Tower, a unique structure that holds many timeless stories of tragedy and rebellion.

Over 4,000 years ago, a new wave of settlers arrived in Ireland from Europe with cutting-edge copper mining technology. I think of them as I drive along the **Copper Coast** from **Dungarvan** to **Stradbally**; the sliver of land running by the sea to the south is stuffed with secret coves and sandy beaches.

At **Tramore**, I turn north for **Waterford**, once the largest Viking settlement outside Scandinavia, where today Georgian architecture and pints of stout in **Geoff's Bar** settle my soul. Next day, at **Reginald's**



The Waterford Greenway County Waterford



Copper Coast 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 Wexford. Stories of chivalry, crusades and castle building

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 attractions along the way. Here, you'll find ancient passage tombs that are older than the pyramids at Giza, Celtic-era ringforts, early Christian monasteries and medieval castles. Some of Ireland's exceptional sights lie within this area, including the majestic 6th century monastic settlement at **Glendalough**, County Wicklow, the spectacular collection of medieval buildings that is the **Rock of Cashel** in County Tipperary and the Neolithic passage tomb of **Newgrange**, County Meath.

The region is serviced by airports in **Dublin**, **Cork** and **Shannon**, as well as the ferry ports at **Dublin**, **Cork** and **Rosslare**. You travel around Ireland's Ancient East by either public bus (coach) on Bus Éireann's Expressway Coach Service or local bus service. For a full map of the area's public bus transport options see buseireann.ie. Rail travel between some destinations is an option (irishrail.ie), and guided tours are also widely available.

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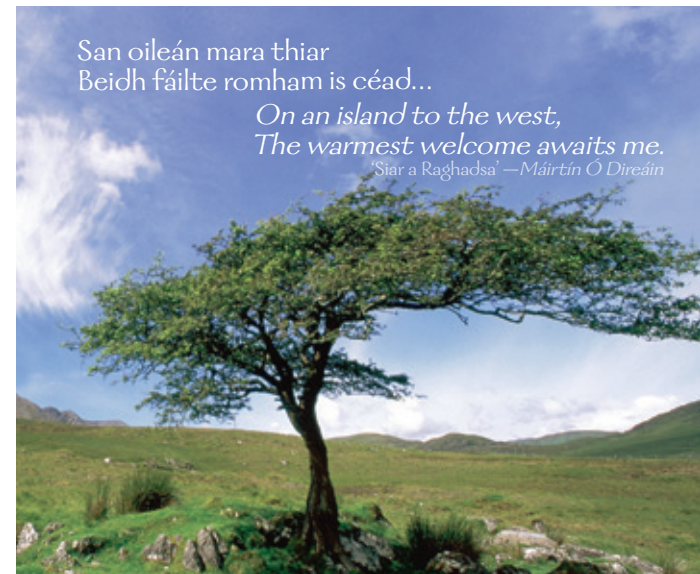
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Beidh fáilte romham is céad...
*On an island to the west,
The warmest welcome awaits me.*
Siar a Raghadaí — Máirtín Ó Direáin

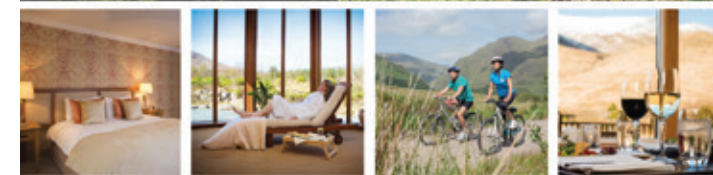


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THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

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



Malin Head County Donegal

NORTHERN HEADLANDS AND SURF COAST

Craggy coasts contrast with quiet glens and surfers enjoy some of the world's best swells 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** (which gets its name from the colour the evening sun turns the land) as these rocky headlands are pounded by waves. Don't miss **Nancy's Bar** in Ardara. This whitewashed traditional pub boasts a quirky interior, a chunky flagstone floor and a roaring fire. It's a real gem, with some of the best seafood around.

Stay a while – **Ardara** is a great base for exploring the countryside, hiking up into the mountains, visiting ancient sites, experiencing the land's myths and legends and rambling by lakes in quiet glens. You're spoiled 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.



Mullaghmore County Sligo

Not to be missed are the exceptional cliffs at **Slieve League**, majestic rugged precipices that plunge into the ocean below. People have been coming here for thousands of years and you'll find Neolithic tombs along with early Christian monastic sites close to the cliffs. Heading south towards **Bundoran** and **Mullaghmore**, look out to sea – the waves here are famous with surfers around the world. Hire a board and wetsuit from one of the many surf schools and take to the waves, or simply grab a spot on a beach and watch the surfers do their thing.

Sea air means big appetites, so stop off at **Eithna's By the Sea** restaurant in Mullaghmore, where the menu is built around seaweed and seafood. You can work it off with a bracing hike, such as the



Gleniff Horseshoe walk, an exhilarating 6-mile/9.6km route with fantastic views, or try a looped walk around the stunning flat-topped mountain of **Ben Bulbin**. Nearby **Glencar** is a total 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. Pamper yourself afterwards with a relaxing seaweed bath at **Voya** in Strandhill, or book 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.

If gathering your own dinner sounds too much like hard work and you're in the mood for a serious treat, make your way to **Coopershill House**. Once a stately home, this vast manor is now a grand country house that also welcomes dinner guests. It's a great place to end your journey through this incredible area.

Donegal town

Wander around the 15th century castle and the ruins of Donegal Abbey. Take the Donegal Bay Waterbus down the calm waters of the River Eske and enjoy a night out around The Diamond in the town centre.

Strandhill

This little surf village is bursting with energy. Brush up on your surfing technique or go sea kayaking, walk Strandhill Beach or take in a round of golf.



Gurteen Bay County Galway



Keem Strand Achill Island, County Mayo



Kylemore Abbey County Galway

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 **Céide Fields**, 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 a landscape that sweeps from bogland to cliffs to sparkling bays.

Watching over the island-studded **Clew Bay** is the mighty mountain of **Croagh Patrick**. Follow in the footsteps of centuries of pilgrims with a climb up to the top – the view out over the bay and its islets is definitely worth the effort.

The gentle white sand beaches of **Connemara** are perfect for strolling and paddling, and the landscape here is among the most beautiful on the island. Walk through the **National Park**; go horse riding down the beach near **Cleggan**; or visit the astounding **Kylemore Abbey** and Victorian walled garden.

Relax for a while in charming **Clifden**, or spend some time in the city of **Galway**, with traditional music, a bohemian buzz and excellent places to eat.

Heading into County Clare the scenery changes dramatically. The **Burren** is a karst limestone landscape with unique flora and fauna. Walk part of the **Burren Way**, 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. Food-wise you're in for a treat in this part of the island – take lunch in the garden at **Burren Fine Wine and Food** or drop into the award-winning **Burren Smokehouse** for some smoked salmon.

Traditional music fans should hotfoot it straight to **Doolin** and **Fitzpatrick's** and **McGann's** pubs, both of which host legendary music sessions. And after a night listening to cracking tunes, you can clear your head with a trip to the **Cliffs of Moher** for blasts of Atlantic sea air and astonishing views of the coastline.

Heading south, a good place to stop is the village of **Kilkee**, where excellent seafood is served in every pub and restaurant. While you're there, look out for the **Pollock Holes**, deep pockets left by the

Croagh Patrick County Mayo



Burren County Clare



Westport

This strikingly pretty town will make you want to stay. Browse the art galleries, visit Clare Island in Clew Bay and enjoy dinner at Sage Restaurant or An Port Mór.

Doolin

Welcome to the traditional music capital of Ireland and gateway to the gorgeous Aran Islands. Doolin makes a great base for exploring the best the Burren region has to offer, from cliffs to cafés.

outgoing tide where you can swim and 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 19th 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 **Ballyunion** and the **Bromore Cliffs**. The perfect way to end the trip? Take a seaweed bath at the **Ladies Beach** in Ballyunion. Bliss.



The Kerry Cliffs



Dunquin Harbour County Kerry



Skellig Michael County Kerry



Portmagee County Kerry



Kinsale County Cork

SOUTHERN PENINSULAS AND HAVEN COAST

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.

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 Seafood Restaurant**. In beautiful **Kinsale** at the end of the Wild Atlantic Way, food is king. Fantastic restaurants and cafés work wonders with local ingredients, and there's lots to keep you here long enough to eat your way through the town! ☘



Glenbeigh

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



Kinsale

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.

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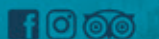
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NORTHERN IRELAND'S GIANT BEAUTY

Cushendun County Antrim



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



Mussenden Temple County Londonderry



Dunluce Castle County Antrim

A majestic coastline

It's not enough to call the Causeway Coastal Route a trip, a drive, or even a discovery – this monumental stretch of coastline is more a series of adventures, with cliffs, pretty villages, sandy beaches and mysterious caves.

Starting in the energetic buzz of **Belfast** and reaching all the way to **Derry~Londonderry**, the route is on Lonely Planet's Best in Travel list 2018. No surprise either, with sights such as the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the **Giant's Causeway** – 40,000 hexagonal basalt columns that tumble down to the sea – and the **Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge**, which wobbles precipitously over the crashing ocean below.

There's the craggy ruins of **Dunluce Castle** and the elegant beauty of the clifftop **Mussenden Temple**. And how about **Rathlin Island**? Venture out by boat and you're bound to meet one of the 150 islanders lucky enough to call this nature reserve home. But amongst all these epic sights, there are quiet moments, too... a post-touring pint in cosy **Mary MacBride's** pub in Cushendun; a walk through breathtaking **Glenariff Forest Park**, near Waterfoot; a wander around the handsome Georgian village of **Glenarm**. Our advice? Go slow, and take it all in.

Watery wonderlands

Whether you're visiting the underground river of the **Marble Arch Caves** or admiring **Lough MacNea** 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 hope to 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 navy blues. Explore the elegant beauty of **Crom Estate**, 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 intrigue of **White Island**, with its carved stone figures.

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



Mount Stewart County Down



Strangford Village County Down

Tyrone in the company of a local ecologist, or a visit to the **Steensons 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 leafy and fragrant woodland.

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 stargaze in utter comfort and silence as the stunning night sky reveals itself in all its glory.



Devenish Island County Fermanagh



Finn Lough Forest Domes County Fermanagh

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.



Titanic Belfast



Mourne Mountains County Down



Seamus Heaney HomePlace County Londonderry

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. Further west in County Tyrone, the **Ulster American Folk Park** offers an authentic look into the humble existence of countless emigrants before they made the perilous journey across the Atlantic.

Soaring beauties

There's something otherworldly about Northern Ireland's mountains, where walking and biking trails bring you to silent peaks and around moody valleys. It's a feeling that you've stumbled upon a secret that makes the **Silent Valley**, an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty in County Down's **Mourne Mountains**, such a delight. At the heart of the valley is a massive reservoir, fringed by

mountains and surrounded by trails. To facilitate its construction in the 1920s, the picturesque village of **Watertown** sprang up.

Today, an information centre remains, complete with details on local wildlife, trail maps and abandoned artefacts of a once-bustling hub. Beauty comes easily to the Mourne Mountains, so take some time to enjoy the 28 peaks, the highest of which, **Slieve Donard**, offers stunning views out over **Murlough Bay**.

No less breathtaking, the mighty **Sperrins** reach skyward through the heather-dotted moors of counties Tyrone and Londonderry. This is true hikers' territory, with 10 summits spanning 40 miles/64km across sparse valleys that were hewn during the Ice Age; but if you're looking for a more laid-back adventure, take to the road. National Geographic also named the Sperrins one of the Top 101 Scenic Drives in the World, and driving here is thrilling.

Northern 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 **Urso Minor Bakery and Café** in Ballycastle. Savour the flavours of the Mourne Mountains with a Mourne Honey Afternoon Tea at **Enniskeen House** in County Down, or step into the warm, traditional surrounds 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. discovernorthernireland.com

02 Tour Lough Neagh
Accompanied by a local historian, this great tour will bring you along the western shores of Lough Neagh and its fascinating fortifications. loughneaghtours.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 Lough Neagh 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 Corralea Electric Bike Tour
Tour around beautiful Fermanagh by bike and stop at country pubs, megalithic sites and Game of Thrones® locations. ebiken.com

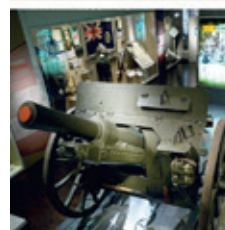


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EXPERIENCE IRELAND

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...



Traditional music session

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.



Castle Ward County Down

Game of Thrones® Winterfell Tour at Castle Ward

County Down by Emer Taaffe

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.



Dunguaire Castle County Galway

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!

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



Cape Clear County Cork

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

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.



Hook Head Lighthouse County Wexford

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? 🦾



The Gobbins County Antrim

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OPEN SEASON

Major championship golf returns to Northern Ireland's iconic Royal Portrush in 2019, giving visitors from around the world the opportunity to see this beautiful part of the island and play some great golf themselves, writes Peter Ellegard



5th hole, Royal Portrush Golf Club County Antrim

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 around 40,000. A park-and-ride system will be used to ferry the public from and back to nearby car parks.

As in 1951, the drama will be played out on the links of the famous Dunluce

Course at Royal Portrush, which was laid out by celebrated designer Harry Colt in 1932 and has recently been enhanced. The best golfers in the world will undoubtedly find the Dunluce Links a stern challenge at The Open. However, it is a fair test for all levels of golfer – provided you play straight and avoid the punishing marram grass rough and its deep bunkers. The wind is a constant factor as it twists and winds around the dunes. No two consecutive holes run in the same direction. Among the special qualities that make it so revered is the fact that it is a true links, enjoying an elevated position on the dunes and blending into the rugged landscape as Colt intended, rather than being below the dunes like some links.

As a result, golfers enjoy stirring views of the Atlantic Ocean and north Antrim coast, from the **Giant's Causeway** and the cliff-top ruins of **Dunluce Castle** in one direction, to the sweep of beaches that

Royal Portrush Golf Club County Antrim



Royal Portrush Golf Club County Antrim

The Irish Open 2019

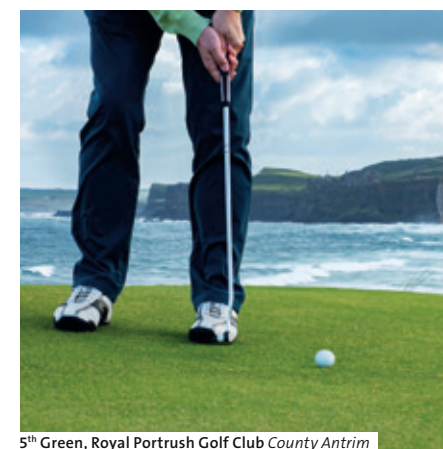
Beautifully situated on the Wild Atlantic Way in County Clare, Lahinch Golf Club is gearing up for a bumper year with the hosting of the Irish Open 2019. From its opening in 1892, Lahinch has been renowned for the quality of its links course with exceptional views of the Atlantic Ocean. According to 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." lahinchgolf.com



Lahinch Golf Club County Clare

lie beyond neighbouring **Portstewart** and **Castlerock** courses as far as Donegal to the west. On a clear day, golfers can even see beyond the offshore **Skerries islands** to the island of Islay, the southern bastion of Scotland's Inner Hebrides. The green of the par-four 5th hole, White Rocks, sets hearts racing with its spectacular position right on a cliff edge high above a beach, as does the adjacent 6th tee box.

Royal Portrush is steeped in the success of its local heroes. Fred Daly, a one-time caddy at the club, became Northern Ireland's first Champion Golfer of the Year with his victory at Hoylake in 1947. Graeme McDowell was born and grew up in Portrush, and won the US Open >



5th Green, Royal Portrush Golf Club County Antrim

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 Open 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.



Adare Manor County Limerick

Adare Manor Golf Club County Limerick

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. adaremanorgolfclub.com



Ballybunion County Kerry

Ballybunion County Kerry

Regarded by many as Ireland's finest course, Ballybunion's Old Course is situated on the shores of the Shannon in County Kerry, and winds through huge sand dunes. The opening hole is one of golf's most intimidating, with a cemetery bordering the right for 200 yards. Five-time Open champion, Tom Watson, first visited in 1981, and recalls that it "started his love affair with Ballybunion and links golf, side by side." He also describes it in the official course planner as "a true test of golf". ballybuniongolfclub.com



Whiterocks Beach County Antrim

in 2010, eight years after being awarded life membership of Royal Portrush.

Although the 148th Open at Royal 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 **Whiterocks** 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 and exciting attractions including **Titanic Belfast**, the **Botanic Gardens**, the **Ulster Museum** and the excellent Michelin-starred restaurants, **OX** and **Eipic**.

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!

Of course, a highlight for whiskey fans has to be the **Old Bushmills Distillery**, in the village of Bushmills. Here they've been producing whiskey since 1608,



Harry's Shack County Londonderry

making it the island of Ireland's oldest working distillery.

Interested in more golf? Besides Royal Portrush, other local courses to tee up on include 2017's Irish Open host **Portstewart** and **Castlerock's** 110-year-old Mussenden Links, reworked by Harry Colt in 1925, and then updated by Martin Hawtree in 2018, as well as the 18-hole Ballycastle course. Inland courses include **Lough Erne** and **Castle Roe** resorts and **Galgorm Castle Golf Club**, venue for the annual Northern Ireland Open.

Once you've worked up an appetite, Portrush harbour has the **Mermaid**, the **Neptune & Prawn** and the **Harbour Bistro**, all of which are popular dining spots with golfers. You can also head to the wonderful beachside **Harry's Shack** or Italian restaurant **Amici**, both a few minutes away in Portstewart. The Bushmills Inn also dishes up great food with a nice "wee dram" on the side.

A perfect way to toast The Open, Ireland-style, perhaps? ☘

For more information visit ireland.com/golf

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 tight 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. kclub.ie



Old Head of Kinsale County Cork

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 Snr and Jack Nicklaus back in 1991, and the prestigious Mount Juliet has been wowing 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. Stick 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. mountjuliet.ie

Royal County Down

County Down

Royal County Down has to be 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, domed greens and narrow ribbons of hummocky fairways, or you'll rue your scorecard in the Irish 19th, the clubhouse. royalcountydown.org



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Matt Malloy's Westport, County Mayo

FIVE GREAT TRADITIONAL PUBS

The traditional Irish pub will never go out of fashion because it is perfectly presented to make people happy! Conviviality, conversation, a warm fire and picture-lined walls are basic requirements, but these five pubs have something extra special that make them worth seeking out



Tigh Neachtain's Galway

Tigh Neachtain's Galway

Picture this: beautiful wood panelling, little private snugs with frosted glass and shelves stacked with old bottles. Walk into Tigh Neachtain's in the heart of bustling Galway city and it feels like you're entering a different era. Here, the city's creative types mingle and chat over slow-settled pints of Guinness, and nothing ever seems like too much effort. Opened in 1894, Neachtain's certainly feels wrapped in history but it still anchors the city social scene, with traditional music, arts and cultural events served up throughout the year.

Foxy John's Dingle

There was a time when almost every village in Ireland had a place like Foxy John's, where the pub served as general store, undertakers and post office. Foxy John's is a pub and hardware shop, with a thriving line in bike repair and rental – excellent news for visitors who ride the nearby Sleah Head Loop. After taking on the trail, you can hand the bike back and settle in for a great night's "craic" (fun). You'll be in good company, too – the Star Wars team chose Foxy John's for their wrap party after filming in County Kerry.



Foxy John's Dingle, County Kerry

Matt Molloy's Westport

There are certain things you expect from a traditional Irish pub. Ideally, you're looking for an open fire, great pints, good company – and live music. If music is at the top of your list, head to Matt Molloy's in Westport, where live traditional music happens every night. Matt himself is a professional musician who plays the flute with traditional Irish music band The Chieftains, and if he's in, he'll give the audience a taste of musical magic for the price of a pint. The pub is cosy, so the atmosphere is intimate and coloured completely by the music, whether it's a lively jig or a sorrowful lament.

The Crown Liquor Saloon Belfast



The Crown Liquor Saloon Belfast

Expect your jaw to drop when you step into The Crown Liquor Saloon. The interior is adorned with carved wood, stained glass and decorative tiling, so it's no surprise that it has gained a reputation as one of the most beautiful pubs in the world. From the marble bar and the gas lighting to the cosy little snugs (private booths), this place is pure pleasure from start to finish. Having begun life back in the 1880s, today The Crown stands as a stopped-in-time example of a traditional Victorian gin palace.

Grace Neill's County Down

This pub near the port of Donaghadee has been serving the thirsty customers of County Down since 1611. A low ceiling, dark wood counter and small windows make it easy to imagine shadowy corners where in years gone by sailors and fishermen would down ales and tell tales. Today it's a beautiful place to enjoy a quiet drink on a slow afternoon – history really does make its presence felt in here. Originally known as The Kings Arms, it was given to a certain Grace Neill as a wedding present in 1842, and Grace ran the pub for an astonishing 72 years.



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Valentia Island County Kerry

GENERAL INFORMATION

LANGUAGE

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

PASSPORT/VISA REQUIREMENTS

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

EMBASSIES & CONSULATES

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND
For further information contact:
The Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
Tel: +353 (0) 1 408 2000
Passport and Visa Office
114a Cromwell Road, London SW7 4ES
Tel: 020 7373 4339
For a list of Irish Embassies, visit dfa.ie and dfa.ie/irish-embassy/great-britain
NORTHERN IRELAND
Further information is available from your local British Embassy or Consulate.
For details contact:
The Foreign and Commonwealth Office
gov.uk

VISITORS WITH DISABILITIES

Ireland extends a warm welcome to visitors with disabilities. Many public places and visitor attractions are accessible to wheelchair users, and an increasing number of hotels and restaurants are well equipped to accommodate guests with disabilities.

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND
National Disability Authority
Tel: +353 (0) 1 608 0400
nda.ie

NORTHERN IRELAND
Disability Action
Tel: 028 9029 7880
disabilityaction.org

CURRENCIES

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

PERSONAL SAFETY

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

REPUBLIC OF IRELAND
Irish Tourist Assistance Service
Mon–Sun: ITAS, Pearse Street Garda Station, Pearse Street, Dublin 2
Tel: +353 (0) 1 666 9354/1890 365 700 (local number)
Mon–Fri: ITAS, 6-7 Hanover Street East, Dublin 2
Tel: +353 (0) 1 661 0562

Opening hours:
Monday–Saturday 10am–6pm;
Sundays; public holidays 12pm–6pm
Email: info@itas.ie
itas.ie
Store Street Garda Station
Weekends and public holidays, Dublin 1
Tel: +353 (0) 1 666 8000

NORTHERN IRELAND

Contact the local police station where support will be available. Tel: 101
psni.police.uk

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 (NI only)	19 Apr
Easter Monday	22 Apr
May Bank Holiday	6 May
Spring Bank Holiday (NI only)	27 May
June Bank Holiday (ROI only)	3 June
July Holiday (NI only)	12 July
Aug Bank Holiday (ROI only)	5 Aug
Aug Bank Holiday (NI only)	26 Aug
Oct Bank Holiday (ROI only)	28 Oct
Christmas Day	25 Dec
St Stephen's Day (ROI)	26 Dec
Boxing Day (NI)	26 Dec

Good Friday is not an official public holiday in the Republic of Ireland, although 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 Translink.
journeyplanner.transportforireland.ie and translink.co.uk

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



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e info@theburrencentre.ie w www.theburrencentre.ie

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TRAVELLING TO IRELAND BY AIR

AIR ACCESS & ROUTES TO IRELAND

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

DEPART	ARRIVE	AIRLINE
Edinburgh	Belfast International	easyJet
	City of Derry	Loganair
	Cork	Aer Lingus Regional
	Dublin	Aer Lingus Regional, Ryanair
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
Exeter	Ireland West Airport Knock	Flybe
	Shannon	Aer Lingus Regional
	Dublin	Flybe
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
	Glasgow International	Belfast International
Glasgow International	City of Derry	Loganair
	Cork	Aer Lingus Regional
	Donegal	Loganair
	Dublin	Aer Lingus Regional, Ryanair
	Inverness	Dublin
Inverness	George Best Belfast City	Loganair
	Isle of Man	Dublin
Jersey	Dublin	Aer Lingus Regional
Leeds Bradford	Dublin	Aer Lingus Regional, Ryanair
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
	Liverpool	Belfast International
Liverpool	City of Derry	Ryanair
	Cork	Ryanair
	Dublin	Ryanair
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
	Ireland West Airport Knock	Ryanair
	Shannon	Aer Lingus Regional



DEPART	ARRIVE	AIRLINE
London Southend	Dublin	Flybe
London Stansted	Belfast International	easyJet, Ryanair
	City of Derry	BMI
	Cork	Ryanair
	Dublin	Ryanair
	Ireland West Airport Knock	Ryanair
	Kerry	Ryanair
Manchester	Shannon	Ryanair
	Belfast International	easyJet
	Cork	Aer Lingus Regional
	Dublin	Aer Lingus, Ryanair
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
Newcastle	Ireland West Airport Knock	Flybe
	Shannon	Ryanair
	Belfast International	easyJet
	Cork	Aer Lingus Regional
Newquay	Dublin	Aer Lingus Regional
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe
	Southampton	Cork
Southampton	Dublin	Flybe
	George Best Belfast City	Flybe

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

AIRLINE CONTACT DETAILS

AIRLINE	WEBSITE	TELEPHONE
Aer Lingus	aerlingus.com	0333 004 5000
BMI Regional	flybmi.com	0330 333 7998
British Airways	britishairways.com	0344 493 0787
CityJet	cityjet.com	0203 481 1259
easyJet	easyjet.com	0330 365 5000
Flybe	flybe.com	0371 700 2000
Loganair	loganair.co.uk	0344 800 2855
Ryanair	ryanair.com	0871 246 0000

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



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TRAVELLING TO IRELAND BY SEA

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Sheep County Kerry

SEA ROUTES

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

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

FERRY AND COACH OPERATORS CONTACT DETAILS

FERRY COMPANY	WEBSITE	TELEPHONE
Eurolines	eurolines.co.uk	0871 781 8181
Irish Ferries	irishferries.com	0871 730 0400
P&O Ferries	poferries.com	0800 130 0030
Steam Packet Company	steam-packet.com	0872 299 2992
Stena Line	stenaline.co.uk	0844 770 7070



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Andrews of Tideswell Ltd	0129 887 1222	andrews-of-tideswell.co.uk
Anglers World Holidays	0124 622 1717 0124 622 1753	anglersworld.tv / irelandbreaks.co.uk
Bakers Dolphin	0193 441 5000	bakersdolphin.com
Barrhead Travel Ltd	0800 484 0310	barrheadtravel.co.uk
Bennetts of Kilwinning	0129 455 1112	bennettskilwinning.com
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Expedia	0800 783 2384	expedia.co.uk
Failte Travel	0169 876 0272	failtetravel.com
GB Tours	0151 652 2222	gbtours.com
GHW Golf Tours	01355 302 721	ghwgolftours.com
Glenton Holidays	0800 024 2424	glentontholidays.com
Glenton Palmer Holidays	0192 489 5849	glentontholidays.com
Golfbreaks.com	0800 279 7988	golfbreaks.com
Golf Escapes	0134 281 1777	golf-escapes.com
Golf Ireland	0138 252 2500	golfireland.com
Golf Par Excellence	0173 721 1818	golfparexcellence.com
Grand UK Holidays	0160 361 9933	grandukholidays.com
Great Days Travel Group	0161 928 3242	greatdays.co.uk
Great Rail Journeys	0190 452 1936	greatrail.com
Harry Shaw Travel	0247 645 5544	harryshaw.co.uk
HF Holidays	0345 470 8558	hfholidays.co.uk
Hirwaun Travel	0168 581 1261	hirwauntravel.co.uk
Hogans Cottages	0124 450 0501	hogansirishcottages.com
Hostelbookers.com	-	hostelbookers.com
Hostelworld	-	hostelworld.com
Hotel Direct	0800 633 8000	hoteldirect.co.uk

COMPANY	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE
Hotelopia	0871 711 9494	hotelopia.com
Hotel Reservation Service (HRS)	49 221 2077 600	hrs.com
Hotels.com	0203 024 8216	hotels.com
Imagine Ireland	0175 670 7720	imagineireland.com
In the Saddle	0129 927 2997	inthesaddle.com
Irish Ferries Holidays	0871 730 0400	irishferries.com
Just Go! Holidays	0843 224 4222	justgoholidays.com
Kirker Holidays	0207 593 1899	kirkerholidays.com
Lastminute.com	0203 499 8517	lastminute.com
Laterooms	0333 014 6269	laterooms.com
Leger Holidays	0170 978 7463	leger.co.uk
Leisure Link Golf Holidays	0170 833 9229	leisurelinkgolf.com
Links Golf St Andrews	0133 447 8639	linksgolfstandrews.com
McKinlay Kidd Ltd	0141 308 8009	mckinlaykidd.com
National Holidays	0844 477 9990	nationalholidays.com
Newmarket Holidays	0330 160 7701	newmarketholidays.co.uk
On Course Travel	0137 245 1910	ireland-oncourse.co.uk
Opodo	0800 026 1626	opodo.co.uk
Osprey Holidays Ltd	0131 243 8098	ospreyholidays.com
PAB Coach Holidays	+353 (0) 1 871 9819	pabtours.com
Parrys International Tours	0192 241 4576	parrys-international.co.uk
Pitchup.com	-	pitchup.com
Rabbi's Small Group Tours	0131 226 3133	rabbies.com/en/tour-ireland
Racing Breaks	0800 193 6646	racingbreaks.com
Rambler's Worldwide Holidays	0170 733 1133	ramblersholidays.co.uk
Responsible Travel.com	0127 382 3700	responsibletravel.com
Saga Holidays Ltd	0800 096 0085	saga.co.uk
Shearings Holidays	0844 824 6351	shearings.com/ireland
Spabreaks.com	0800 043 6600	spabreaks.com
Stena Line Holidays	0844 770 7070	stenaline.co.uk
Superbreak	0190 471 7362	superbreak.com
Take the Family	0203 633 0653	takefamily.com
Tangney Tours	0173 288 6666	tangney-tours.com
Tayleur Mayde Golf Tours	0131 524 9554	tayleurmayde.com
The Camping & Caravanning Club	0247 642 2024	campingandcaravanningclub.co.uk
The Caravan and Motorhome Club	0134 231 6101	caravanclub.co.uk
Thomas Cook	0173 322 4808	thomascook.com
Titan Travel Ltd	0800 988 5823	titantravel.co.uk
Travel Republic	0208 974 7200	travelrepublic.co.uk
Travelling the Fairways	0133 446 0789	ttfgolf.com
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Your Golf Travel	0800 193 6630	yourgolftravel.com

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Visiting the Cliffs of Moher, Powerscourt Waterfall or Dublin Zoo? There's a good chance you'll pass through the M50 barrier-free toll. Look out for the big purple signs between Junctions 6 and 7. You can't miss it!

More importantly, don't forget to pay before 8pm the next day, otherwise you'll be subject to a fine.

Pay via the app, at eflow.ie, in any Payzone outlet or at the eflow kiosk at your car rental.





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MAP & ROUTE MILEAGE PLANNER

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



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

0 20 40 60 80km
0 10 20 30 40 50miles

Whilst every care has been taken to ensure accuracy in the compilation of this map, Tourism Ireland cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions. Due to the small scale of this map, not all holiday centres can be shown. The information on this map is correct at time of going to press. © 2019 Tourism Ireland. Map creation by Michael Schmeling, www.maps-and-roads.com | Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, CC BY-SA



WATERFORD

Where Ireland Begins

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; Kilmacathomas Workhouse; old railway stations and a heritage railway train that still runs along part of the track.

Plan your visit to Waterford Greenway
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