

# Ireland

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## AMAZING PLACES

TAKE THE TRIP OF A  
LIFETIME ALONG STUNNING  
WINDSWEPT COASTS

GREAT FOOD EXPERIENCES  
FROM MARKETS TO FESTIVALS

10 TOP THINGS TO DO IN  
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– Rosemary and Mike, NY

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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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# PICTURE THIS

## Titanic Belfast

Belfast, Titanic Town: builder of the Ship of Dreams. It's here that Titanic's soul, story, and sorrow are etched, and at the very place where the ship was launched, you'll find the world's largest Titanic visitor experience. Step inside Titanic Belfast and be wowed with nine galleries that trace the story from creation to tragic sinking. There are gantry rides, stunning cabin recreations, and a cinematic adventure that brings you to the ocean's depths. To finish, treat yourself to Sunday Afternoon Tea by a replica of the famous staircase. ☯





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## IRELAND IN SEASON

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

Fall colors 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 the great outdoors, with many of the island's estates opening their gates after a quiet winter. Delve into a riot of color and beauty at one of the island's glorious gardens, such as the world-renowned **Mount Stewart** in County Down, where delicate snowdrops give way to primroses as the season progresses. Or take a walk through the subtropical **Kells Bay Gardens** in County Kerry, with 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 March 17 – don some shamrocks, feel the vibes, and join one of the most enjoyable festivals in Europe!



Bluebells, Glenariff County Antrim



Foyle Maritime Festival Derry~Londonderry

### Summer

Stand on a golden beach on the stunning County Antrim coastline and you'll realize there's a good reason why 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, harbors, and beaches turn into ideal locations for celebrations of literature, food, music, art, and even horse racing. Try the **Westport Folk and Bluegrass Festival** (June) in the beautiful town of Westport, County Mayo; enjoy the immersive artistic events at the enjoyable **Carlow Arts Festival** (June); or soak up the summery vibes of the **Foyle Maritime Festival** (July) in Derry~Londonderry, a magnificent celebration of all things maritime, with sail boating, tall ships, kayaking, markets, and music.

### Ireland In Season

### Fall

Burnished golds and reds flame through the hills of places such as **Wicklow National Park**, pubs are warm and cozy, and if you head to a west coast beach, you'll probably have it all to yourself. Fall in Ireland is a real treat: many walking routes are at their finest, and it's a perfect time to go whale-watching off the coast of **West Cork**. Dublin roars into the fall festival season from September with world-class festivals including the **Dublin Theatre Festival** and the entertaining, Dracula-themed **Bram Stoker Festival**. And keep your ears open for things that go bump in the night on October 31. Halloween has its roots in Ireland and can be traced back to the ancient Celtic festival of "Samhain," making it an extra-special event here. Head to Derry~Londonderry for the world-renowned **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!



Killarney County Kerry

### 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 boasting dramatic scenery. Winter's 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**, which often can be gloriously quiet. You can also be sure of an authentic local atmosphere at great winter festivals 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 lovely local Christmas markets, quirky traditions, and huge New Year's Eve celebrations in both Dublin and Belfast. ☘



# Unforgettable vacations start in a Bed and Breakfast in Ireland



Wicklow Head Lighthouse County Wicklow



Ashford Castle County Mayo

## UNIQUE PLACES TO STAY

A round-up of great places to stay on the island of Ireland, from delightful cottages along the coast, to amazing castles where you can enjoy the very best Irish hospitality



Anna's House B&B County Down



Ballygally Castle County Antrim



Self-catering, Cnoc Suain County Galway



Ballyvolane House County Cork

### B&Bs

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

### 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 paneling, and windows that boast peaceful views over woodland, parkland, and glassy lakes. And with many castle hotels located on vast estates, you'll have the chance to enjoy everything from clay-pigeon shooting, to archery, to wandering through Victorian walled gardens.

### Cottage stays

Whether you're after 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 comforts you require.

### 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 make very enjoyable places to stay, and you can choose from cozying up in a lightkeeper's cottage in counties Antrim or Cork to staying in an actual lighthouse itself in County Wicklow. Soak up the views, breathe in the fresh air, and watch nature do its work with panoramic views and elemental beauty.

### Country houses

Ireland's great houses are like chapters of history cast in stone, and are imbued with culture, character, and an abundance of charm. Many of these gracious historic mansions are still inhabited by the descendants of the original families who built them, and a stay in one of them opens a window into a bygone era of architectural grandeur, antique furnishings, and sumptuous glamour. Take walks through beautiful estates, relax in traditionally furnished drawing rooms, and sleep in rooms that transport you back in time. ☘

Ireland offers inspiring beauty and magical charm. The best way to experience this is through a Bed and Breakfast holiday. Our premier collection of over 800 independently owned, quality assured Bed and Breakfast homes located in town, city, country and farm locations, offers you the perfect way to see and capture the true spirit of Ireland, and the Irish people.

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# IRELAND GETS CINEMATIC

From Star Wars stunners in County Kerry along the Wild Atlantic Way, to a wonderland of Westeros locations in Northern Ireland, we present the island of 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 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. 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** (Kingsroad) 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** (Dothraki Sea), which boasts panoramic views from the summit.

## Star Wars on screen

Movies evoke the magic of travel, transporting viewers on an otherworldly 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: 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. Stand amid the majestic scenery of **Loop Head**, or book ahead for a journey out to **Skellig Michael**, a 6<sup>th</sup> century monastic island, and experience the cinematic beauty of this wild terrain.

## 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. Coumeenoole Beach on **Slea Head** was a location for the film, 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 impressive locations on the east coast, including **Sally Gap** and the picturesque lakeside village of **Lacken**, the characters find themselves smitten by the heather-flecked landscape and enchanting views of the Wicklow Way. And Braveheart might be Mel Gibson's movie, but **Trim Castle** is the real star. This Norman stronghold in County Meath is hard to miss, 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 city locations that include **Grafton Street**, **Temple Bar**, **St Stephen's Green**, and **Killiney Hill** in beautiful south County Dublin.

 [ireland.com](http://ireland.com)

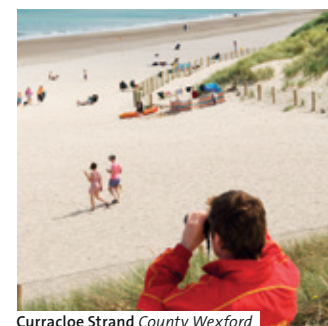
Ireland On Screen



Dark Hedges County Antrim



Malin Head County Donegal



Curragloe Strand County Wexford

## Look out for:

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

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



Sally Gap County Wicklow



# GREAT TASTES OF IRELAND

**Boasting fresh homegrown ingredients, innovative chefs, and warm hospitality, the island of Ireland is an epicurean paradise. Unearth the history of Ireland's finest whiskies in captivating distilleries, meet friendly local producers, and enjoy seafood at the ocean's edge with six of the best food experiences in Ireland**

## Visit a market

Fresh 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 Irish 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 tantalizing range of Irish foods in stunning 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century surroundings. These famous covered markets certainly attract the crowds, but many towns and cities on the island also support a thriving weekly market, where you can meet the very people who have grown the food. Browse **Kilkenny Farmers' Market** every Thursday in front of the city's 12<sup>th</sup> 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 led by an expert guide. For an experience to nourish both body and soul, **The Sligo Food Trail** (sligofoodtrail.ie) is a spectacular scenic journey of local 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 stunning Causeway Coast in Northern Ireland for a culinary tour of artisan producers. Each trip with **Causeway Coast Foodie Tours** (causewaycoastfoodietours.com) provides exclusive tasting sessions and behind-the-scenes access to introduce you to new 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 (August) and the **Carlingford Oyster Festival** (August) in County Louth boast great tastings, music, and demos. 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 **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 shows, and more.



Carlingford Oyster Festival County Louth



Old Bushmills Distillery County Antrim



Octopussy's Seafood Tapas Howth, County Dublin

## Liquid favorites

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 and their great tours. 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 restored St James's Church. Other great distilleries around the island include the **Walsh Whiskey Distillery** in County Carlow, **Tullamore DEW** in County Offaly, and the iconic **Old Bushmills Distillery** in County Antrim.

## A cooking experience

A cooking class is a fun way to learn new skills and explore local ingredients and techniques. Want to know how to craft a traditional brown soda bread, how to make some fluffy Irish scones, or how to cook seafood to perfection? Then check out one of the quality cooking schools, which offer a range of bespoke classes to suit all tastes. Famous chef and Irish food champion **Neven Maguire** runs a purpose-built cookery school in County Cavan, which offers small cooking 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 Strangford Lough mussels.

## Great seafood

From sumptuously crafted dishes to tasty street food, Ireland is justly famous for its delectable fresh 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 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 Irish food!**

### Boxty

A traditional Irish savory pancake made of mashed and grated potatoes, which is often eaten at breakfast.

### Dulse

A dried seaweed that is eaten as a snack or added to dishes like 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 wheaten 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  
SNAPSHOTS

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

Trinity College Dublin

Ha'penny Bridge 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 Archeology, Natural History, and Decorative Arts & History. Explore Europe's finest collection of prehistoric gold artifacts and exquisite Celtic jewelry at the Archeology 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 the historic Collins Barracks. [museum.ie](http://museum.ie)

02  
The Little Museum of Dublin

Friendly experts will guide you through Dublin's remarkable history at this great

little museum, rated as the city's "best museum experience" by the Irish Times. With over 5,000 objects – many donated by Dubliners themselves – you'll get an insight into subjects as diverse as James Joyce and U2! [littlemuseum.ie](http://littlemuseum.ie)

03  
Kilmainham Gaol

A monument to the long struggle for Irish independence, the restored Kilmainham Gaol offers a compelling glimpse into 19<sup>th</sup> 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, hardship, and brutal conditions. A definite don't-miss. [kilmainhamgaolmuseum.ie](http://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 discovering 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](http://guinness-storehouse.com)

05  
Iconic cathedrals

Renowned for its beautiful architecture and exquisite floor tiles, Christ Church Cathedral has been a place of pilgrimage for over 1,000 years and boasts a fascinating crypt. Afterwards, walk down to St Patrick's Cathedral, which was founded in 1191 and hosts regular concerts and events. [christchurchcathedral.ie](http://christchurchcathedral.ie)

06  
The Book of Kells/Trinity College

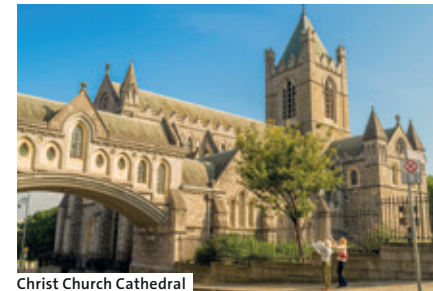
In the heart of the city, one of the world's most illustrious universities, where Swift, Wilde, and Beckett studied, hosts one of Ireland's true treasures, The Book of Kells. After wandering the campus' lovely cobblestones, step into the Old Library to enjoy the astonishing beauty of the 9<sup>th</sup> century gospel manuscript at the Book of Kells Exhibition. [tcd.ie](http://tcd.ie)

07  
Dublin Bay Cruises

Get a unique perspective on Dublin, sailing past seals, lighthouses, and beautiful islands 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, the city center, and the fishing village of Howth. [dublinbaycruises.com](http://dublinbaycruises.com)



Little Museum of Dublin



Christ Church Cathedral



Howth Head County Dublin

08  
Great Dublin pubs

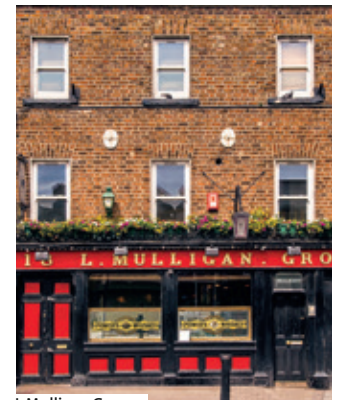
Why are Dublin pubs the world's best? See for yourself at gems such as Doheny & Nesbitt, McDaid's, and the ancient Brazen Head. Tour the fashionable Temple Bar area (Dublin's pub hub) or take in traditional music at welcoming pubs such as O'Donoghue's and the Cobblestone. Finally, be sure to soak up the beauty of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Long Hall, Stag's Head, and Palace Bar.

09  
Dublin's great green spaces

Whether you seek a small urban oasis, or somewhere more expansive to explore, Ireland's parks are a sight to behold. See wild fallow deer at Phoenix Park, Europe's largest walled city park, enjoy a pocket of green in the hub of a bustling city at St Stephen's Green, or visit the heart of Georgian Dublin at idyllic Merrion Square, home to a statue of Oscar Wilde.

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.



L Mulligan Grocer

Flavors  
of Dublin

From tempting artisan fare at 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 restaurants such as the lovely Winding Stair, which overlooks the River Liffey, or gastro pubs such as the charming L Mulligan Grocer in Stoneybatter.



# visit Belfast



MAC 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 recreated as if the crew were still on board. There's also a dramatic film about the ship's history and a café recreating the sailors' mess hall. [nmrn.org.uk](http://nmrn.org.uk)

## 06 City Hall

Sumptuous City Hall reflects the grandeur of Edwardian Belfast; its spectacular reception halls are overlaid with marble from the quarries that supplied ancient 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 City Hall and its finest features. [belfastcity.gov.uk/leisure](http://belfastcity.gov.uk/leisure)

## 07 St George's Market

As one of Ireland's oldest covered markets, the award-winning St George's Market is a foodie's paradise where you'll find all kinds of artisan foods, fresh seafood, fine Irish cheeses, organic meats, gourmet sausages, and even local seaweed. Saturday is the main day for food and you might even get a bit of jazz as you wander around this late 19<sup>th</sup> century gem.



HMS Caroline



City Hall



Hillsborough Castle County Down

## 08 Cathedral Quarter

Taking its name from beautiful St Anne's Cathedral, the historic warehouses of Belfast's cobblestoned cultural and entertainment hub host some of the city's best pubs and liveliest clubs, as well as wonderful eateries. Look out for the MAC (Metropolitan Arts Centre), home to cutting-edge exhibitions and more.

## 09 Tours with a local

Get to know the city's history on a black cab tour of the murals of West Belfast or try the visual feast of the Street Art Walking Tour of the Cathedral Quarter. The Belfast Food Tour offers specialized 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.

## 10 Day trips from Belfast

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

# BELFAST

Vibrant culture, gripping history, and super-friendly locals are what Belfast is all about. No wonder Lonely Planet named Belfast and the Causeway Coast Best in Travel for 2018. 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 see the legendary ship it produced at Titanic Belfast by the slipways from which Titanic was launched. Voted the world's leading tourist attraction in 2016, it features nine interactive galleries. Nearby is SS Nomadic, the tender that took first-class passengers to Titanic. [titanicbelfast.com](http://titanicbelfast.com); [nomadicbelfast.com](http://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 of Egypt, and the most complete dinosaur fossil



St George's Market



Crumlin Road Gaol

in Ireland. Stroll art galleries and get an unrivaled insight into Belfast's famous industrial history. It's free too! [nmni.com](http://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 19<sup>th</sup> century and you will discover the stories of many former inhabitants, including Irish President Éamon 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](http://crumlinroadgaol.com)

## 04 Great Belfast pubs

The energy of Belfast can be felt within its great pubs. With exquisite tiling and delightful snugs, the Crown Liquor Saloon is surely the world's finest 19<sup>th</sup> century bar. For a modern touch, try the Observatory Bar at the Grand Central Hotel, the tallest on the island of Ireland. Or seek out other venerable Belfast gems, including White's Tavern, Kelly's Cellars, and the Dirty Onion, which is known for its traditional music. [visitbelfast.com](http://visitbelfast.com)



Belfast Castle &amp; Belfast Zoo

Belfast Port &amp; Ferries, Belfast International Airport, Port of Larn, Derry-Londonderry &amp; the North

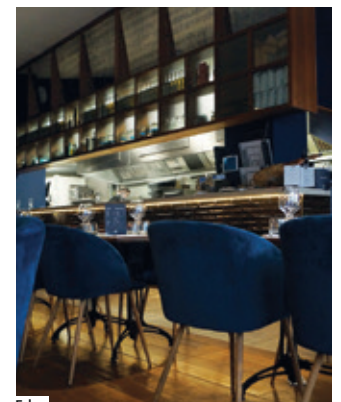
Titanic's Dock &amp; Pump House

George Best Belfast City Airport, Stormont, Ulster Folk &amp; Transport Museum

St Peter's Cathedral, Clonard Monastery &amp; Cultural Centre

To Dublin, the South &amp; West

Queen's Quarter



Edo

## Belfast flavors

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



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PRODUCED BY  
MOYA DOHERTY

DIRECTED BY  
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## GALWAY

Galway has a bohemian flavor that is typical of the west of Ireland psyche: laid back, relaxed, and ready to party. In 2020, the city will celebrate its year as European Capital of Culture, with a calendar that reflects the richness and diversity of this creative urban hotspot on Ireland's majestic Wild Atlantic Way.

### 01

#### European Capital of Culture 2020

Hosting hundreds of events, Galway's stint as European Capital of Culture kicks off with an ambitious opening ceremony on January 20, 2020. Expect a whirlwind program that covers arts, sport, theater, circus, film, architecture, and literature on a scale the city has never seen before. The European Capital of Culture is one of the biggest cultural events in the world, and Galway is most definitely stepping up to the mark.

### 02

#### Creative city vibes

Home to the renowned Druid Theatre Company, as well as being a permanent UNESCO City of Film, the arts scene in Galway attracts visitors from all over the world. A whirlwind calendar of annual events includes the much-lauded Galway Food Festival (April), SeaFest maritime festival (June), and the lively Galway International Oyster and Seafood Festival (September).

### 03

#### Traditional music

Galway has a reputation for the quality of its music scene, and on nearly every night of the week, there's something going on. Keep an eye out for sessions in pubs such as Monroe's, Taaffes, and Tíg Coilí.

### 04

#### Great tastes

Fresh from a stint as European Region of Gastronomy in 2018, Galway is one of the island's top food hubs. Eat at Michelin-starred Loam or Aniar; enjoy creative cooking at Ard Bia and Kai; or go for fish and chips at city favorite McDonagh's.

### 05

#### Beyond the city

For outdoor enthusiasts, Connemara – a 45-minute drive from the city – is unlike anywhere in the world and a place that Oscar Wilde once described as "a savage beauty." Or take to the ocean on a ferry to enjoy the tranquility, serenity, and rich heritage at the heart of the Aran Islands.



Claddagh Quay Galway



Traditional music session Galway



Peace Bridge Derry~Londonderry



The Guildhall Derry~Londonderry

## Ireland Cities

## DERRY~LONDONDERRY

Sitting at the point where the Causeway Coastal Route meets the Wild Atlantic Way, the Walled City of Derry~Londonderry is cultured, cosmopolitan, and full of character. Enjoy traditional music in cozy pubs, walk the 400-year-old city walls, and hear stories of times past in city museums.

### 01

#### Museum of Free Derry

Derry~Londonderry's fascinating past 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](http://museumoffreederry.org)

### 02

#### The Guildhall

Located between the mighty walls and the winding River Foyle, the striking red sandstone 19<sup>th</sup> 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 400<sup>th</sup> 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! 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 center over the River Foyle to Ebrington Square, home to sporting and cultural events.

### 05

#### The Craft Village

Wander through a recreated 18<sup>th</sup> century street and 19<sup>th</sup> century square, checking artisan craft shops, intimate eateries, and live music. It's a wonderful place to seek unique Irish gifts. ☘

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# 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 artifacts 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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The Saint Patrick Centre

Downpatrick, Co. Down



## 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 and Grill and 4 Vicars, making this a spot to be savored.

### Cork

Centered on the River Lee, Cork is a pleasant mix of quaint side streets, broad thoroughfares, and artistic districts. You could lose several hours to the English Market, which dates back to 1788, as you sample local cheeses, lunch at the Farmgate Café, and browse the food stalls. But keep some time for Cork's other attractions. Explore Cork City Gaol, enjoy art at the Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, or take a trip out to "Ireland's Alcatraz," Spike Island.

### 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 and design studios, as well as a great brewery tour at 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 13<sup>th</sup> century King John's Castle.

### Waterford

Waterford feels more small town than big city, with a friendly atmosphere and easy-going vibe. Founded by the Vikings and located within Ireland's Ancient East, the city boasts a fascinating history that can be uncovered within the Viking Triangle, which contains the Medieval Museum, Bishop's Palace, and Reginald's Tower. Visit the House of Waterford Crystal; taste a "blaa" (bread roll) at the Granary Café; or take a walk along the historic quays.

ireland.com

Ireland Cities



The English Market Cork



St Patrick's Cathedral Armagh



Kilkenny Castle Kilkenny



King John's Castle Limerick

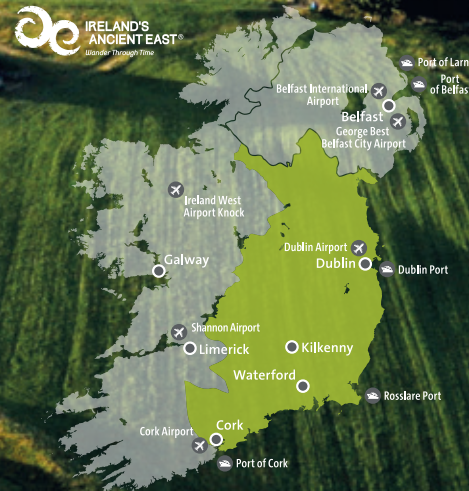


Reginald's Tower Waterford





# IRELAND'S ANCIENT EAST



Hill of Tara County Meath

Embark on an exciting road trip from Dublin, Cork, and Shannon, and experience the exceptional history, mesmerizing beauty, and compelling tales that swirl through Ireland's Ancient East

## Ancient wonders

**Start:** Dublin

Setting off west across the River Liffey from **Celbridge** in County Kildare, the history of this majestic part of the island soon becomes clear.

For starters, there's **Trim** in County Meath, which offers the opportunity to 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. Constructed in the 12<sup>th</sup> century, it is the largest Norman castle in Ireland and boasts a huge 20-sided tower.

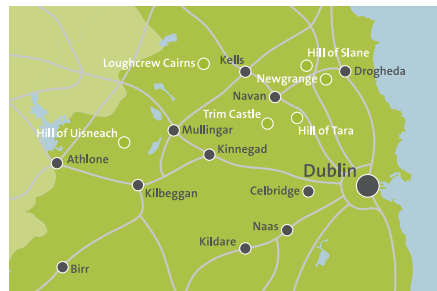
Further west over the Westmeath border lies the **Hill of Uisneach** where the Ail na Míreann (or "Stone of Divisions") marks the very spot where the five original kingdoms of Leinster, Munster, Connacht, Ulster, and Meath met in ancient times. It's staggering how close it stands to Ireland's actual geographical center. Close your 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**, the ancient seat of Ireland's high kings, 50 miles east.

Onwards, heading northeast for 30 miles or so, you'll 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 fall equinoxes, while further east at the iconic **Newgrange** you'll find one famously lined up with the winter solstice. How is it that these ancient people were so in tune with the magnificent secrets of the sun and stars?

Pay your respects to these wise old souls amid the grassy shadows of what was once the **Royal Palace** at Tara. North is the **Hill of Slane**, where St Patrick chose to light the Paschal fire and introduce Christianity to Ireland back in the 5<sup>th</sup> century.

End your journey standing by the **River Boyne**, where an epic battle was fought in 1690. The battle 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

## A land of castles

**Start:** Shannon

Traveling east towards the **Glen of Aherlow**, it's easy to 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.

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 **Linguan River Valley**; these ecclesiastical gems are the subject of a fabulous and fascinating 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. You'll find remnants of the family, right through the area, from the mighty **Kilkenny Castle** to **Ormond Castle** in **Carrick-on-Suir**, County Tipperary.

Other castles and big houses offer fascinating tales. There are architectural ones at **Emo Court** in County Laois, a



Rock of Dunamase County Laois



Rock of Cashel County Tipperary



Birr Castle County Offaly

neoclassical mansion; spooky ones at **Leap** and inspirational ones at **Birr**, both in County Offaly. Interestingly, Birr is also home to a vast telescope, the world's largest for over 70 years.

Dominating the landscape in this part of the island is the **River Shannon**. Along its banks, you'll find the round tower and temples of the 6<sup>th</sup> 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. Enjoy a pint in **Seán's Bar**, one of the oldest pubs in the world, before spinning onward 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 in the 12<sup>th</sup> 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 sky.



## 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 off-road cycling or walking trail. It may seem long, but it can also be visited in smaller sections, and the 6.2-mile section from Dungarvan to Durrow is known for its idyllic scenery. Afterwards, head to O’Mahony’s pub in Durrow for some restorative 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 6<sup>th</sup> century monastery site of **Clonmacnoise**, on the banks of the River Shannon in County Offaly, is with **Viking Tours Ireland**. Captain Michael McDonnell is brilliant for bringing the area’s history to life as you sail along the same route the Vikings would have taken.

## A maritime adventure

**Start:** Cork

Laying claim to the title of second largest natural harbor 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 colorful coastal spot became known as the “Town of Tears.” Monuments to the Titanic and Lusitania ocean liners also serve as reminders of the perils of the sea.

From Cobh, head east to **Midleton** where a beautiful sculpture honors the generosity of the Choctaw Indians of Oklahoma at the height of the Great Irish Famine. A visit to the **Jameson Distillery** will set you up for the journey to **Youghal**, home to many fine medieval buildings, including the **Clock Gate Tower**, a unique building 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. These settlers will spring to mind during a drive along the **Copper Coast** from **Dungarvan** to **Stradbally**; the sliver of land running by the sea to the south is stuffed with secret sandy coves.

At **Tramore**, turn north for **Waterford**, once the largest Viking settlement outside of Scandinavia, where Georgian architecture and pints of stout in **Geoff’s Bar** settle the soul. At **Reginald’s Tower**, learn of a wedding that sealed the deal for



Cobh County Cork



The Waterford Greenway County Waterford



Copper Coast County Waterford

the Norman invaders, and marvel at the handsome medieval vestments on show at the city’s **Medieval Museum**.

Head east on a ferry across the **River Suir** into County Wexford. Stories of chivalry, crusades, and castle-building abound from **Hook Head Lighthouse** to the town of **New Ross**, where you’ll find the **Dunbrody Famine Ship** and **Irish Emigrant Experience**, a reproduction 1840s emigrant ship.

Traveling here, you’ll quickly realize that the history of this part of the island is spliced with tales of emigration, not least the forebears of President John F Kennedy and the huge numbers of Wexfordians that settled in Savannah, Georgia. Daniel Robertson, architect of **Johnstown Castle**, which is now home to the **Irish Agricultural Museum**, was born in Savannah.

But there is immense beauty in this area, too, from the whitewashed, thatched cottages in the fishing village of **Kilmore Quay**, to the seabirds of the **Wexford Slobs**, the **Saltee Islands**, and the basking sharks that swim around them. It’s a perfect place to finish. ☘

## Need to Know

Ireland’s Ancient East highlights the immense wealth of more than 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 are contained within part of the island, including the monastic village 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 can travel around Ireland’s Ancient East by public bus (coach) on Bus Éireann’s Expressway Coach Service or local bus service. A full map of public bus transport in the area is available at buseireann.ie. Rail travel between some destinations is an option (irishrail.ie), and both guided tours and car rental are also widely available.

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# THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

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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 cliff edges 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 color 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, escaping 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 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.

Not to be missed are the exceptional



Mullaghmore County Sligo

cliffs at **Slieve League**, majestic craggy precipices that plunge into the Atlantic 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** in County Sligo, look out to sea – the massive waves here are famous with surfers from around the world. Stop off for a look at **Classiebawn Castle**, a vast country house owned by Viscount Palmerston on a gorgeous estate near the village of Cliffoney.

Sea air means big appetites, so head to **Eithna's By the Sea** restaurant in Mullaghmore, where the menu is built around seaweed and seafood. You can work it off with a stroll around

**Creevykeel** court tomb, which dates back to the Neolithic period between 4000-2500BC, or try an easy looped walk around the 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 town beckons with great bars and restaurants, as well as **Sligo Abbey**, which was founded in the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century and includes a beautiful cloister and 15<sup>th</sup> century high altar. Pamper yourself afterwards with a relaxing seaweed bath at **Voya** in Strandhill, or book with **Wild Atlantic Way Cultural Tours** for a foraging course.

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 15<sup>th</sup> 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 center.



### Strandhill

This little seaside village is bursting with energy, and makes a great base for exploring the area. Walk Strandhill Beach, take in a round of golf, or relax at Shells Café.



Keem Strand Achill Island, County Mayo



## 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 center before marveling 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 white-sand beaches.

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 soft 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 horseback riding down the beach near **Cleggan**; or visit the astounding **Kylemore Abbey** and Victorian walled garden, set beside

a rippling lake. 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. Food-wise you're in for a treat in this part of the island – enjoy 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**, where **Fitzpatrick's** and **McGann's** host legendary traditional music sessions. And after a night listening to cracking tunes, you can clear your head with a trip to the 702-foot **Cliffs of Moher**, where blasts of Atlantic air mix with astonishing views of the coastline. Book online for the best deals on tickets.

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 19<sup>th</sup> 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 relaxing cycling tour with **Ecotrek** to explore the myths and the megalithic monuments between Ballybunion and **Bromore Cliffs** under the guidance of a historian. Finish with a seaweed bath at the **Ladies Beach** in Ballybunion. Bliss.





The Kerry Cliffs



Skellig Michael County Kerry



Killarney National Park County Kerry



Dunquin Harbour County Kerry



Kinsale County Cork

## SOUTHERN PENINSULAS AND HAVEN COAST

Travel through exciting 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 modern Irish cuisine. Traditional ways live on in this region. In the summer, you might 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 fueled by tea and scones beside the fire.

The gorgeous town of **Dingle** is jam-packed with excellent restaurants and pubs, but keep some room for a Murphy's ice cream, it's a real treat. 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 6<sup>th</sup> century. Sitting 6.8 miles out into

the Atlantic Ocean, the dramatic outline of the islands is just visible, but if the weather is fair, 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 **Skelligs Chocolate Centre**, where you can see and sample the local chocolate treats being made. **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 beauty of the County Kerry landscape seems to reach a pinnacle in the **Killarney National Park**, with its ancient oak woods, meandering streams, and epic mountain vistas. Take a tour around the late 15<sup>th</sup> century **Ross Castle**, a typical example of a stronghold used by an Irish chieftain in the Middle Ages. Fast forward a few centuries to the beauty of **Muckross House**, which was completed in 1843 and is set within one of the most picturesque corners of the national park. You can tour the house, stroll the gardens, and visit the traditional farms.

To the south and heading east into **County Cork**, the warm sea's influence softens the land. Pretty lanes are lined with fuchsia hedges, flowers bloom

around elegant houses, and little coves welcome explorers and kayakers. The arts and food scenes are buzzing, but there's also horseback riding, golf, and the gardens of **Bantry House**, **Garnish Island**, and **The Ewe Experience**.

In this part of the world you'll find great places to eat around every corner. **Scannell's Bar** in **Clonakilty** has delicious lunches and music at night, or head to nearby **Ring** and **Deasy's Seafood Restaurant**. In beautiful **Kinsale** at the end of the Wild Atlantic Way, food is king. At least 10 restaurants and cafés work wonders with local ingredients, and there are some great food festivals in April and October. 🍷



### Glenbeigh

Along the famous Ring of Kerry driving route, the pleasant village of Glenbeigh is a great base for outdoor activities, such as walking, fishing, golf, and horseback 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 in a beautiful harbor full of bobbing fishing boats.

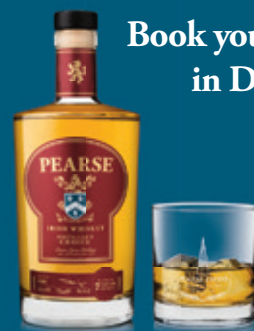
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# NORTHERN IRELAND'S GIANT BEAUTY

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 gloriously undiscovered landscapes. And with friendly locals, an incredibly compact size, 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



Mussenden Temple County Londonderry



Blackhead Lighthouse 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 the **Walled City of Derry~Londonderry**, the route was on Lonely Planet's Best in Travel list 2018. It's no surprise either, with sights such as the UNESCO World Heritage Site, the **Giant's Causeway** – 40,000 hexagonal basalt columns that tumble to the sea – and the **Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge**, which wobbles over the crashing ocean below.

There are 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 for every show-stopping exploit along the Causeway Coastal Route, there's a quiet one, too... a post-touring pint in **Mary McBride's pub** in Cushendun; a walk through the **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 beautiful **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 very different perspective.

This is the other side of Northern Ireland, where you can cruise into Belfast via the **River Lagan**, and where loughs (lakes) contain mysterious islands, each with their own story. A good place to start is with the huge lake of **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.

Different in character yet no less beautiful is **Upper and Lower Lough Erne** in County Fermanagh – two connected lakes dotted with islands that bask in serene beauty. 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 forests and alongside the water; step into the 18<sup>th</sup> century glory of **Florence Court**, one of the most important Georgian houses in Northern Ireland; or visit one of the many islands, from the monastic beauty of **Devenish to White Island**, with its carved stone figures.

Just beyond Lower Lough Erne, you'll find the **Belleek Pottery Centre** in the charming village of Belleek. A visit here is a great way to get an insight into the craftsmanship involved in what is Ireland's oldest working fine china pottery. Take a tour before enjoying some fresh scones served on beautiful Belleek tableware in the visitor center tea room.

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 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 out into a wonderland of slow-travel experiences, where you can connect with locals and soak up some authentic culture, heritage, and nature. Whether you fancy a fascinating slow-food tour, or you want to learn about an indigenous craft, there's something to suit everyone's sense of adventure.



Mount Stewart County Down



Strangford Village County Down

How about a Nature Connections Tour of the **Sperrin Mountains** in County Tyrone in the company of a local ecologist, or a visit to the **Steensons Écomusée** in County Antrim, where you can watch goldsmiths at work.

Immerse yourself in local culture on walking trails around **Lough Foyle** and the **Lower Bann**, or head for the **Faughan Valley** of County Londonderry, where the **Beech Hill Country House** makes an elegant base for a spot of horseback-riding through fragrant woodland.

To keep the dream going, grab the rare chance to spend a night in a most unforgettable, otherworldly location. Without a doubt, waking up somewhere 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.



Finn Lough Forest Domes County Fermanagh



Devenish Island County Fermanagh



## Captivating museums

It's impossible to visit Northern Ireland and not feel a connection to those that have gone before. Whether you can trace your family tree back to this enchanting land or not, the stories, struggles, and successes of the people whose lives are represented throughout its museums strike a chord with all who visit. Take **Titanic Belfast**: voted the world's leading tourist attraction. The harrowing tales behind the "Ship of Dreams" are brought to life through nine interactive galleries, artifacts from the White Star Line, and a tour of the very spot where Titanic was launched. Ask around and the city's characteristic wit – and resilience – 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



Titanic Belfast



Murlough Beach County Down

Bellaghy area of County Londonderry. The center's **Helicon** theater hosts events year round, along with permanent exhibitions on the poet's life. The 18<sup>th</sup> century **Robinson Library** in Armagh has a similarly literary theme, and counts Jonathan Swift's very own copy of Gulliver's Travels among 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 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



Seamus Heaney HomePlace County Londonderry

reservoir, fringed by mountains and surrounded by walking and biking trails. To facilitate its construction in the 1920s, the picturesque village of **Watertown** sprang up, complete with a hospital, school, and movie theater.

Today, an information center remains, complete with information on local wildlife, trail maps, and abandoned artifacts 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**.

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 across sparse valleys that were hewn during the Ice Age; but if you're looking for a more relaxing trip, it's worth noting that National Geographic also named the Sperrins one of the Top 101 Scenic Drives in the World.

## Northern Ireland on a plate

With spectacular flavors, 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: from waters teeming with an abundance of fish and shellfish, to fields filled with 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.

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

## Five experiences to try in Northern Ireland

**01 Belfast Traditional Music Trail**  
Promising "ceol agus craic" (music and fun) in equal measure, the Belfast Traditional Music Trail is a great way to get a taste of the city's trad music scene. [belfasttradtrail.com](http://belfasttradtrail.com)

**02 Tour Lough Neagh**  
Led by a local historian, this fascinating tour will bring you along the western shores of Lough Neagh and its intriguing fortifications. [loughneaghtours.com](http://loughneaghtours.com)

**03 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](http://discovernorthernireland.com)

**04 Newry Canal Way**  
This scenic towpath can be enjoyed on bicycle or on foot as it weaves along a 20-mile route from Portadown to Newry. It also skirts the borders of counties Down and Armagh from Lough Neagh to Carlingford Lough. [cycleni.com](http://cycleni.com)

**05 The Gobbins Cliff Path**  
The Gobbins Cliff Path snakes along the coast of County Antrim, past smugglers' caves and over bridges. [thegobbinscliffpath.com](http://thegobbinscliffpath.com)

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# CASTLE CHARMS

From the craggy beauty of cliff-edge ruins to the sumptuous style of 19<sup>th</sup> century haunts, Ireland's castles offer mystery, drama, and storybook romance

In Ireland, you don't have to look far to find a castle. Dotted around the island are incredible battlements, dramatic fortifications, and mysterious fortresses brimming with legend, lore, and lavish design. From small fishing villages to the biggest towns, these castles harbor tales of violence, drama, mystery, and even a ghost or two, making them fascinating places to explore.

Take the sprawling Gothic revival ruin of Duckett's Grove in County Carlow with its strange paranormal happenings, or Carrickfergus Castle in County Antrim, one of the best-preserved medieval castles on the island of Ireland.

And with over 3,000 castles, you're sure to find at least one you'll adore, whether it's a craggy stronghold on a dramatic headland overlooking the crashing Atlantic ocean; an island beauty perched in the middle of a glassy lake; or a crumbling cliff-top marvel... Here are six to discover.



Blarney Castle County Cork



Dunluce Castle County Antrim

## Blarney Castle

*County Cork*

One of the most famous castles on the island, Blarney is a romantic partial ruin set in the glorious County Cork countryside. Built on the site of a 10<sup>th</sup> century wooden structure, the castle grounds are filled with wooded hollows and a sleepily flowing river that lends a sense of mystery. If there is one place that can seamlessly mix fairytale charm with real-life drama, this is it. Thomas Crofton Croker, a 19<sup>th</sup> century writer, described it as "indeed a fairy scene... I know of no place where I could sooner imagine these little elves holding their moonlight revelry." At the heart of the castle, you'll find one of the island's quirkiest attractions. Kissed by world statesmen, literary giants, and movie stars, the huge Blarney Stone is said to impart the gift of eloquence, or as they like to say in Ireland "the gift of the gab." Have a go, and see if it works...



Trim Castle County Meath

## Dunluce Castle

*County Antrim*

Sitting at the tip of the Antrim coast in a location that boasts incredible panoramas over the ocean is Dunluce Castle. Once home to the feuding McQuillan and MacDonnell clans, this is the quintessential medieval castle, replete with tumultuous tales of rebellion and disaster, mermaids, and banshees (mythical female spirits who foretell death.) And if it looks like Dunluce may topple into the water at any moment, that may be because it once did! According to local legend, on a stormy night in 1639, parts of the castle kitchen tumbled down the sheer basalt cliffs and into the sea below! If you should be so lucky as to visit near sunset, as the sun smolders into the ocean and the castle walls turn to silhouettes, you'll be treated to one of the most beautiful sights on the island of Ireland – no wonder this place is thought to have inspired CS Lewis to create the fictional Narnia castle of Cair Paravel.

## Trim Castle

*County Meath*

Overlooking the green fields of County Meath and the rippling waters of the River Boyne is the impressive Anglo-Norman castle of Trim. You may notice that Trim has a certain cinematic quality; Mel Gibson chose this huge 12<sup>th</sup> century fortification as a location for his film Braveheart and it's been a scene-stealer ever since. Built over a 30-year period by Lord of Meath Hugh de Lacy and his son Walter, Trim's most impressive feature is its "keep" – a 20-sided tower that was protected by a ditch, curtain wall, and moat. To get the most out of this impressive site, immerse yourself in the history of the castle with a guided tour, but leave some time to enjoy the scenic grounds, which are filled with interpretative panels for self-guiding.

## King John's Castle

*County Limerick*

An ancient city located where the majestic River Shannon meets the Wild Atlantic Way, vibrant and utterly individual Limerick mixes medieval history with cosmopolitan restaurants and cafés, and right at the heart of it is King John's Castle. Detailing over 800 years of local history, the castle boasts stunning views out over the River Shannon from its towers, and mixes 21<sup>st</sup> century technology with medieval tales. Touch-screen points bring to life tales of dramatic sieges and warfare, along with ghostly projections and 3D models. In the busy courtyard, you'll discover a medieval campaign tent, a blacksmiths forge, and scenes from a 17<sup>th</sup> century siege. The sights, scenes, and sounds of King John's Castle and its environs all combine to recreate the atmosphere of the era. After enjoying the visitor center, head to the castle café for a quiet coffee with sensational views of the city.



King John's Castle County Limerick





Castle Coole County Fermanagh

## Castle Coole County Fermanagh

Sometimes on the island of Ireland, a castle isn't a castle but rather a lavish country mansion instead! Such is the case with Castle Coole, set within a stunning landscaped estate on the edge of the town of Enniskillen. Basking in stately grandeur, this exceptional 18<sup>th</sup> century home of the Earls of Belmore was designed to impress, with its neoclassical facade, flamboyant Regency interior, a grand oval saloon, and a "state bedroom" originally decorated for a visit of the self-indulgent 19<sup>th</sup> century monarch, King George IV. Castle Coole still retains much of the vast 700-acre estate it was built on during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and a tour of the house brings all its stories to life. A real highlight when you visit are the beautiful estate grounds, featuring delightful bluebell-filled woods.



Dunguaire Castle County Galway

## Glenveagh Castle County Donegal

Designed to emulate an idyllic Highland retreat, Glenveagh Castle rests within one of the most beautiful areas in the northwest – Glenveagh National Park, a remote and hauntingly beautiful wilderness of rugged mountains, pristine lakes, and tumbling waterfalls. Bathed in romance and surrounded by picturesque panoramas at every turn, this delightful granite castle dates back to 1873 and charms all who visit. Overlooking the navy-toned waters of Lough Veagh, the castle has been at the heart of high society since it was first built. Originally owned by John George Adair, a wealthy landowner from County Laois, the walls of this castle could no doubt tell a story or two. Guests are rumored to have included Greta Garbo and Marilyn Monroe! Enjoy a touch of aristocratic glamour yourself by strolling around the castle's interior and wandering through the stunning grounds. 🍷



Glenveagh Castle County Donegal



Enniskillen Castle County Fermanagh

## Five more to explore

### For beautiful gardens

Stroll the grounds of **Tullyally Castle** in County Westmeath to enjoy a walled flower garden, grotto, a Chinese plant collection, woodlands full of exotic trees, and a vast kitchen garden with two Regency glasshouses.

### For unusual delights

A treasure-trove of oddities, **Huntington Castle** in County Carlow is home to a sprinkling of ghosts, strange tales, and even has a temple to the Egyptian goddess Isis in the basement. No wonder the current owner Alexander Durdin-Robertson calls it "a kooky original."

### For a night at the banquet

Step into the 16<sup>th</sup> century surrounds of **Dunguaire Castle** in County Galway and you'll be treated to fine foods, wine, music, and theatrics – all with a medieval twist. The Dunguaire Castle Banquet is served up in the stunning Banquet Hall and creates memories that will last forever.

### For fascinating history

Situated on the banks of the River Erne, **Enniskillen Castle** was built nearly 600 years ago by the ruling Maguire family. Today, it houses two museums – the **Fermanagh County Museum** and the **Inniskillings Museum**, detailing the history of the town's two regiments.

### For pure beauty

Surrounded by an estate that's simply breathtaking, **Crom Castle** in County Fermanagh overlooks Lough Erne and is still privately owned by the Earl of Erne. Stroll the gorgeous grounds, stay in the "West Wing" or, if you're in a group, book in for a private tour of the castle's interior.

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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, reports award-winning travel writer Peter Ellegard



5<sup>th</sup> hole, Royal Portrush Golf Club County Antrim

Over eight spellbinding days in 2019, from July 14 to 21, 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. It will also be only the second time that golf's most prestigious championship has been staged on the island of Ireland.

The 148<sup>th</sup> 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 to and from nearby parking lots.

As in 1951, the drama will be played out on the links of the celebrated Dunluce Course at Royal Portrush, which was laid out by renowned designer Harry Colt in 1932 and has been recently 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 golfers of all levels – provided you play straight and avoid the punishing marram grass rough and its deep bunkers. The wind is a constant factor as it twists around the dunes and furthermore, 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 course, enjoying an elevated position on the dunes and blending into the picturesque 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

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](http://lahinchgolf.com)



Lahinch Golf Club County Clare



5<sup>th</sup> Green, Royal Portrush Golf Club County Antrim

## Championship courses to try

Actor Bill Murray once said: "My favorite 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 148<sup>th</sup> Open at Royal Portrush 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 beautiful parkland and majestic mature trees, cut through at various points by the River Maigue. The closing hole demands an approach shot over water to a green adjacent to the magnificent, turreted 19<sup>th</sup> century Adare Manor.

[adaremanorgolfclub.com](http://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 River 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](http://ballybuniongolfclub.com)





Whiterocks Beach County Antrim

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

And although in 2019, The 148<sup>th</sup> Open at Royal Portrush is the biggest golfing event in Northern Ireland, it's set to be a bumper year for the game on the island of Ireland, with the Northern Ireland Open taking place at **Galgorm Castle**, only 30 miles from Belfast. A Ladies European Tour event will also 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 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 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 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.

A highlight for whiskey fans is **Old Bushmills Distillery**, in the village of Bushmills. Here they've been producing



Harry's Shack County Londonderry

whiskey since 1608, 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 again by Martin Hawtree in 2018, as well as the 18-hole Ballycastle course. Among inland courses are those at **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 **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" (small glass of whiskey) on the side.

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

**For more information visit**  
**[ireland.com/golf](http://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 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> holes – 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](http://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-foot 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](http://oldhead.com)

### Portmarnock Golf Club

*Dublin*

It is easy to understand why Portmarnock Hotel & Golf Links has emerged as one of Ireland's premier links. First founded in 1894, Bernhard Langer chose it as his first links design in 1995, and it has hosted countless amateur and professional events in its time. Much of this is thanks to Langer's keen eye for detail, which made full use of the surrounding dunes and natural terrain to provide a layout that will delight golf purists, not to mention the characteristic links sea breezes that provide a stern challenge to all who walk its smooth greens. [portmarnockgolfclub.ie](http://portmarnockgolfclub.ie)

### Royal County Down

*County Down*

Royal County Down has to be one of the island's most formidable courses. Golf Digest calls it their "favorite 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 19<sup>th</sup>, the clubhouse. [royalcountydowndown.org](http://royalcountydowndown.org)

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

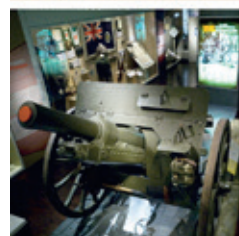


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Blasket Islands County Kerry

# A JOURNEY INTO THE PAST

Embarking on a genealogy journey is fun, exciting and sometimes even life-changing. We look at five great reasons to start



EPIC Dublin

## To preserve your family's memory

People decide to research the history of their ancestors for lots of reasons, but one of the strongest motivators is to preserve the stories and memories that make your family unique. Many people come to regret not connecting with members of their extended family, and genealogy offers a great way of remedying this. When it comes to starting the journey, you'll find that family memories are a crucial first step. Ask questions, and persuade the older generation to dig out any papers, letters, cards, or photos they might have squirreled away in boxes, drawers, and albums.

## To connect with the land your ancestors are from

If your forebears moved to a new country to build a new life, descendants often want to find out where that journey started. What made them leave? Did they ever want to go home? How did they fit into the bigger picture? A country's history really comes alive when you find that your own family was shaped by it. Hardship, crop failure, a chance of a better life far away – all of these things affect real people and change the course of their lives.

## To unearth incredible stories

"Truth is stranger than fiction" goes the saying, and families can be the keepers of the most extraordinary stories. It's important to keep an open mind and not



Ulster American Folk Park County Tyrone

to judge by today's standards. Unexpected political activity, family rifts, marriages abandoned, successful careers built on white lies – you have to be ready for anything when you start digging into the past. It's always fun to find a colorful character in the mix.

## To understand who you are

The question "Who am I?" is one that many people ask. Digging out your family's story can help to define you by providing a sense of history and where you fit into it. Perhaps there's a character trait that piques your curiosity. Were there artists or musicians in the family? Was someone brilliant at math, particularly good with animals or passionate about inventing things? More generally, it can give a real sense of pride to find out what your ancestors went through. These people were survivors. They had drive, optimism, strength, and resilience – and their blood flows through your veins.

## To make a "homecoming"

The key to your search is identifying the town or village where your family originated. Visiting the place, looking at the gravestones and talking to the people who still live there can fill in the blanks. It's not just practical, though; the connection is spiritual, too, and our human need to belong is as strong as ever. Connecting with the land of your ancestors brings a deep sense of belonging. Making a homecoming to the island of Ireland can change your life and your sense of self. 🍀

## Helpful resources

There are many resources to help with your genealogy journey. There are free advisory services and census records at the **National Library and National Archives** in Dublin. At the **Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI)** and **General Register Office for Northern Ireland (GRONI)** there's free access to all public records, and registers of births, deaths, marriages, and adoptions in Northern Ireland. The **Ulster Historical Foundation**, **Ulster American Folk Park**, **Dunbrody Famine Ship**, and **New Ross Genealogical Records** are also excellent resources. **Glasnevin Cemetery** holds burial records for 1.5 million people and a **Genealogy Research Centre** ([glasnevintrust.ie](http://glasnevintrust.ie)), and the **Military Archives** offers diverse information ([militaryarchives.ie](http://militaryarchives.ie)). County genealogy centers have useful information, and there's a list on [rootsireland.ie](http://rootsireland.ie). And don't miss the **Irish Family History Centre** at **EPIC** in Dublin, which features family history records and interactive displays.

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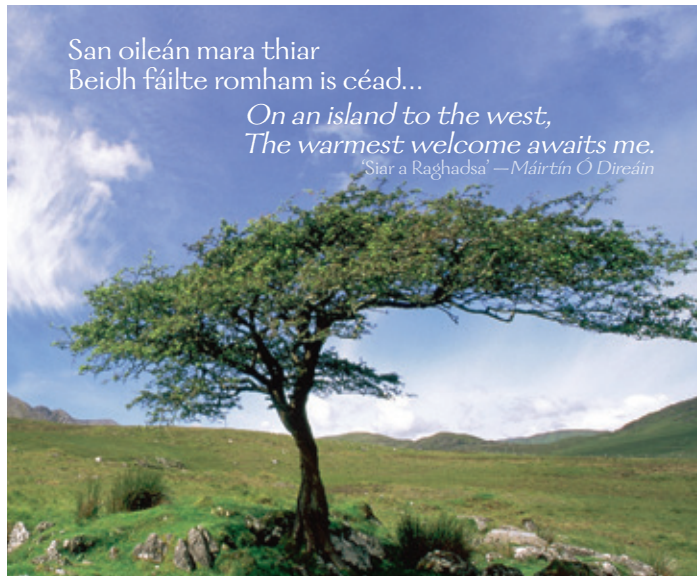
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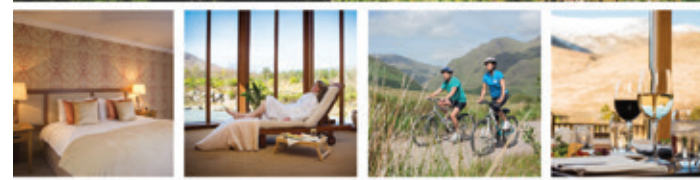


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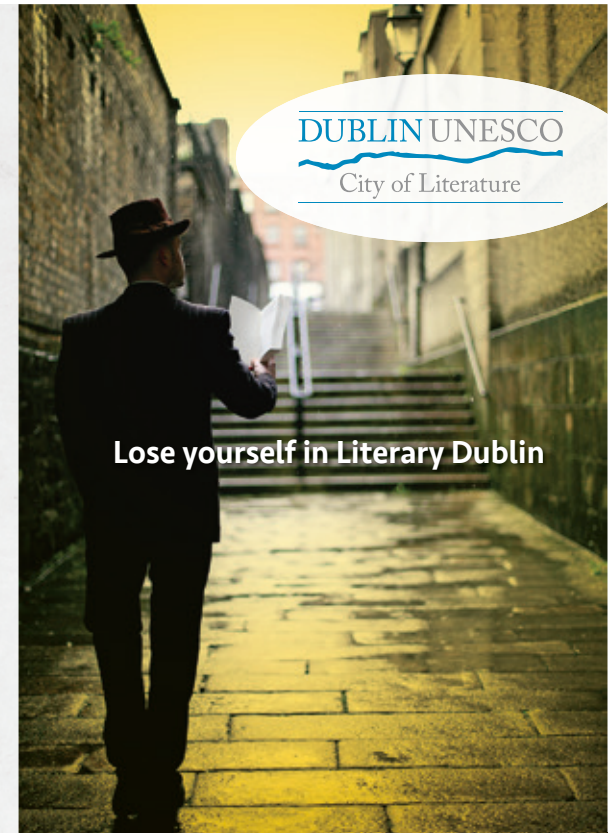
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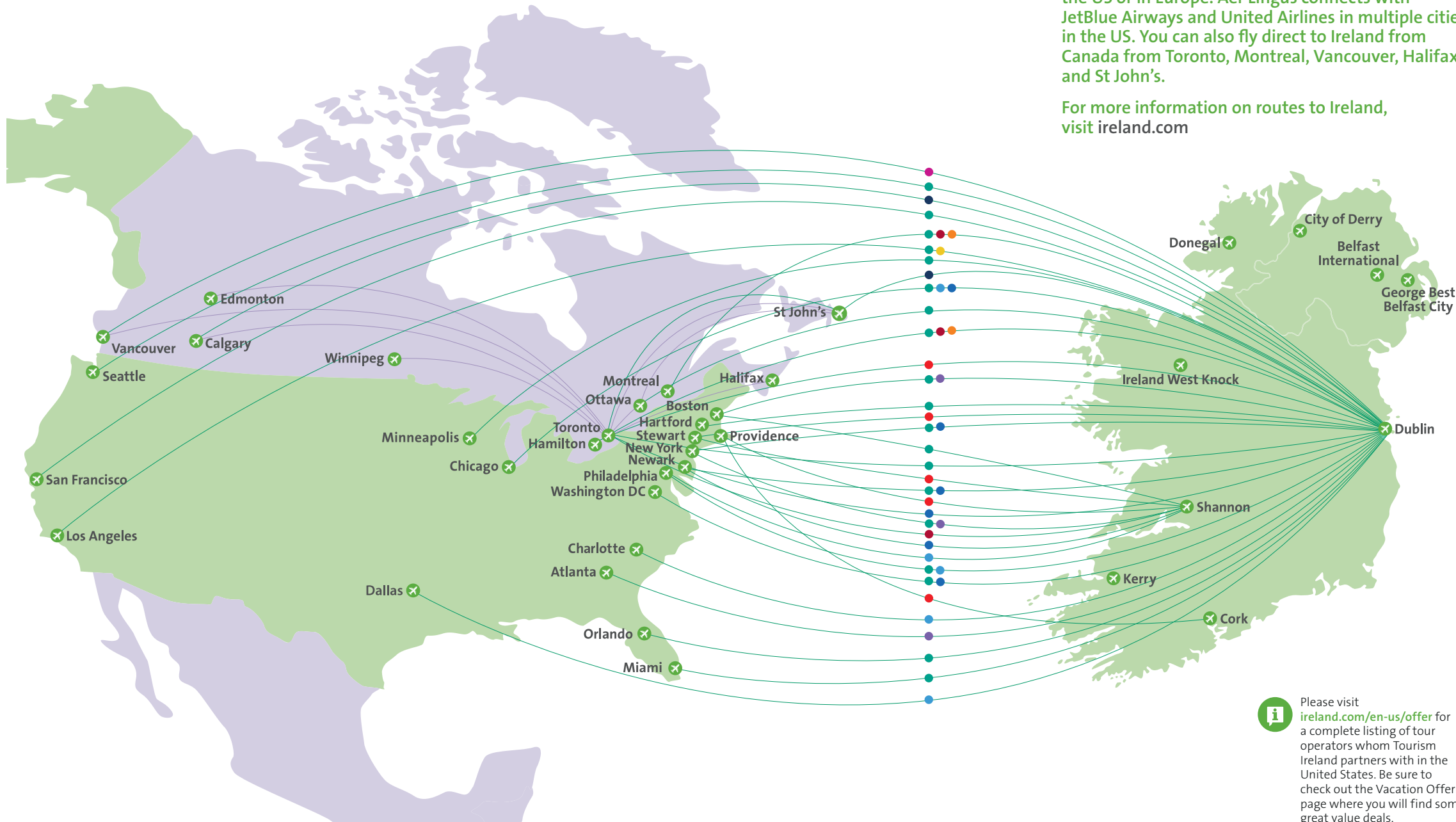
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For more information on routes to Ireland, visit [ireland.com](http://ireland.com)

#### Aer Lingus

[aerlingus.com](http://aerlingus.com)  
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#### American Airlines

[aa.com](http://aa.com)  
 Charlotte (CLT) > Dublin (Seasonal)  
 Chicago (ORD) > Dublin (Seasonal)  
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#### UNITED

[united.com](http://united.com)  
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 Washington (IAD) > Dublin (Seasonal)

#### DELTA

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 Atlanta (ATL) > Dublin (Seasonal)  
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#### norwegian

[norwegian.com](http://norwegian.com)  
 Hamilton (YHM) > Dublin  
 Providence (PVD) > Dublin  
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[ethiopianairlines.com](http://ethiopianairlines.com)  
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[aircanada.com](http://aircanada.com)  
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[westjet.com](http://westjet.com)  
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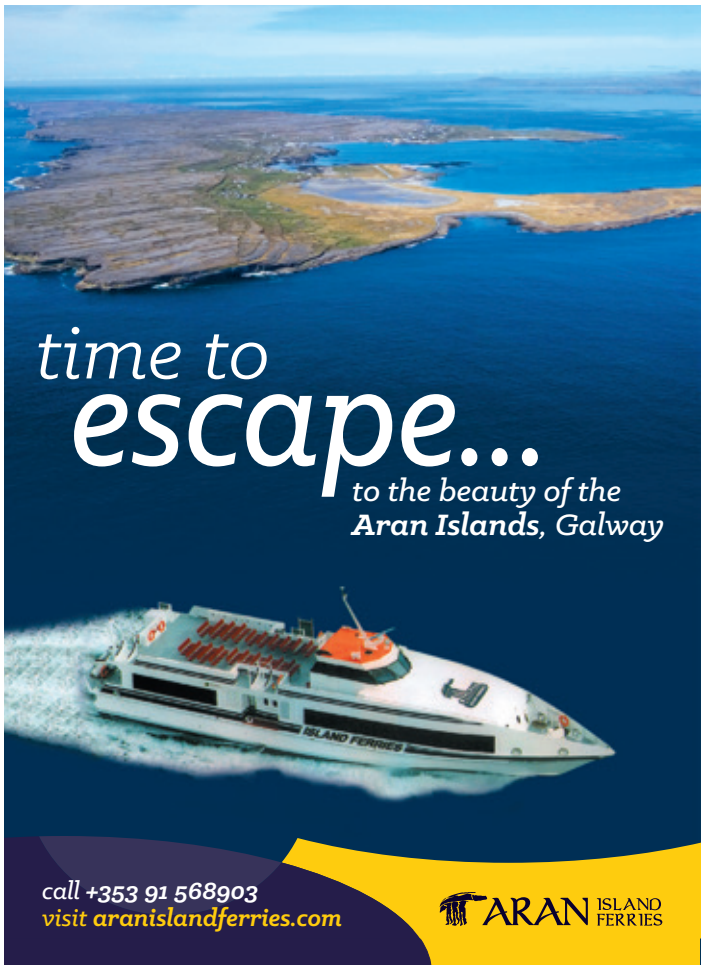
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Valentia Island County Kerry

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facility at Terminal 2 in Dublin Airport is a purpose-built facility that allows US-bound passengers to undertake all immigration, customs, and agriculture inspections in Dublin prior to departure. Shannon Airport also has pre-clearance facilities available.

### WEIGHTS AND MEASURES

The metric system is used in the Republic of Ireland (not strictly enforced at times) and Northern Ireland.

### Ireland Information

### CURRENCY

Higher denomination notes such as €100, €200, and €500 will not normally be accepted in retail outlets, so bring cash in lower denominations when you're coming to Ireland.

### CREDIT CARDS

Visa and Mastercard are widely accepted throughout the island of Ireland; American Express is accepted in some places but not all. Credit cards can be used for purchases and also to access money from ATMs (although this usually is accompanied by a high fee). You can also withdraw money from ATMs with your US debit card, fees will still be charged but they are not as high as credit cards and the money will come directly from your US checking account. Each ATM has a list of card symbols that can be used. Ireland uses a "chip and pin" system for debit and credit card purchases, which means you key your pin into a pinpad. If your card doesn't have a chip, most retailers will still accept it and you can just sign for your purchases.

### VAT (SALES TAX) AND REFUNDS

Visitors to Ireland from non-EU countries can claim back sales taxes on purchases made in Ireland; shopping in Ireland is subject to a sales tax of 23%. Always look for the "Tax-Free Shopping" sign in the windows of participating stores. To avail of your tax refund, complete a valid tax refund document, which you can get from participating stores. Present this and ➤

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OPEN ALL YEAR ROUND



## Ireland Information

goods to customs on departure from the EU, and you can receive your refund on the spot at some airports; otherwise, you can mail your tax refund document to the store and a refund will be issued. Select shopkeepers will offer you the Horizon Tax-Free Shopping card, a new paperless method of getting tax refunds brought to you by FEXCO Tax-Free Shopping. With each purchase, the card is swiped and tax-free eligible items are logged. At the end of your trip, hand in the card to the FEXCO Tax-Free Shopping desk at Dublin or Shannon Airport. You can apply for a card online at [www.shoptaxfree.com](http://www.shoptaxfree.com)

For details on how to claim tax back on goods bought in Northern Ireland, please visit [gov.uk/tax-on-shopping/taxfree-shopping](http://gov.uk/tax-on-shopping/taxfree-shopping)

### LANGUAGE

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

### CLIMATE

Ireland has a mild, temperate climate with summer temperatures generally ranging from 60°F to 70°F. Temperatures in spring and autumn are generally 50°F, and in winter between 40°F and 46°F. Snow is rare but rain showers can occur at any time of the year. For up-to-the-minute weather reports visit [met.ie](http://met.ie)

### PASSPORT/VISA REQUIREMENTS

A valid US passport is required to visit the island of Ireland and no visa is required. However, if you are traveling on a passport issued by another country (although a resident in the United States), please check visa requirements with the embassy.

### PERSONAL SAFETY

The Irish Tourist Assistance Service (ITAS) provides immediate support and assistance, seven days a week for visitors to the country who become victims of crime or other traumatic incidents. The service operates from Pearse Street Garda Station in Dublin and can be contacted on 01-666-9354 / 1-890-365-700 or [info@itas.ie](mailto:info@itas.ie)



The Antrim coast

### DRIVING IN IRELAND

American visitors to Ireland must bring a valid American driver's license with them. Driving in Ireland is on the left of the road and seatbelts must be worn at all times in the front and back of the vehicle. Drivers should note that they are obliged by law to carry their driver's license at all times. Motorcyclists and their passengers must wear helmets. There are very strict laws on drinking alcohol and driving, and the best advice is simply "don't drink and drive." The measurement of speed limits on roads in the Republic of Ireland is kilometers per hour (km/h). The measurement of speed limits on roads in Northern Ireland is miles per hour (mph). Drivers are urged to remember the change of driving laws between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland.

### CAR RENTAL

Most of the major car rental companies have desks at airports, ferry terminals and cities across Ireland. Some companies do not rent cars to drivers under 21 years or over 70 years, but please check with your car rental company before making a reservation. All drivers must hold a valid license. It is advisable to book in advance, especially if you are traveling during the high season, as it is generally cheaper. The majority of rental cars are standard shift but automatic cars are available, if booked in advance, for an additional charge. Child seats should also be booked in advance. To avoid misunderstandings, it is recommended that you always check the detailed terms and conditions of your rental booking in advance. Even if you book through a third party (broker, agent, tour operator) you will be required to sign a rental agreement with the car rental company, so spend

some time in advance selecting the various insurances, waivers, and other options appropriate to your needs, and understand the costs involved. For insurance reasons, you should advise the car rental company if you intend to travel between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland.

The trade organization for the car rental industry in the Republic of Ireland is the **Car Rental Council**. [carrentalcouncil.ie](http://carrentalcouncil.ie)

In Northern Ireland contact the **British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association**. [bvrla.co.uk](http://bvrla.co.uk)

### ACCESS

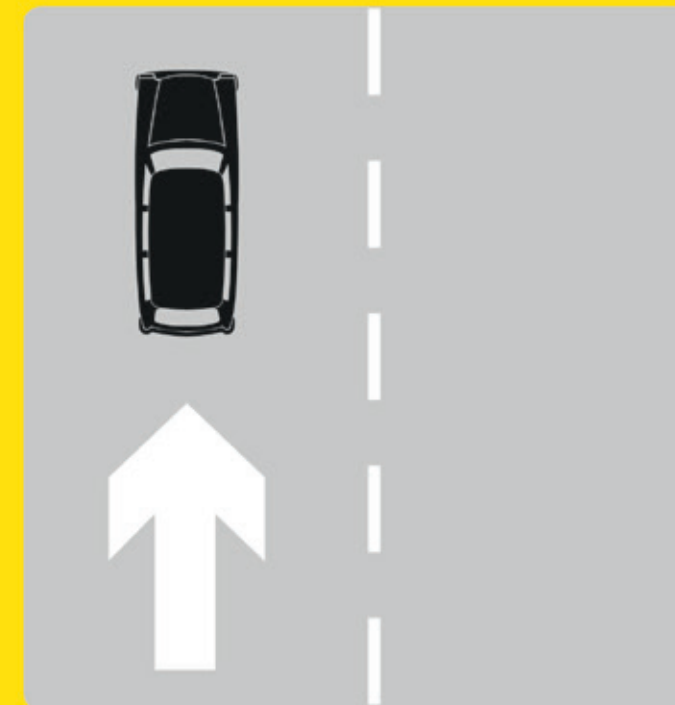
For details on airline services to Dublin, Belfast, Cork, and Shannon, please see map on page 46.

### PUBLIC HOLIDAYS 2019

New Year's Day Holiday	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 stores and businesses are closed.

# ATTENTION / ACHTUNG



## Drive on left Conduire à gauche Links fahren



Ólaidís Dóir Sábaidh/Don't Drink and Drive  
Road Safety Authority



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try our fresh range\*  
always fresh - never frozen

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\* See instore for details

SUPERMAC'S VOTED TOP 10 FAST FOOD RESTAURANTS IN THE WORLD WORTH TRYING BY FOX NEWS

ALSO AVAILABLE



PAPA JOHN'S  
BETTER INGREDIENTS.  
BETTER PIZZA.





# 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.



While 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 locations 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.aridocan.com | Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, CC BY-SA, Ireland.com



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### HAVE A HOOLEY

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

From Presidents to Prime Ministers, from film icons to farmers, from sporting greats to singing legends, the pub has become famous for its guests and its true 'Céad mile fáilte'.

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