



Go Wild Magazine



Doolin, Dingle & Westport

LONG WEEKEND-AWAY CHOICES

Perfect Staycation

OPTIONS FOR EVERY COUNTY

The Wild Atlantic Way

YOUR IDEAL BUCKET LIST

Featured Interviews

Joshua Nueva filmmaker, photographer,

Mickela Mallozzi, Travel Bare feet

Gabe Saglie's Ireland

Alice Mansergh, Tourism Ireland

Michelle Walsh Jackson, The Novel Traveller



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Publisher's Statement



Where waterfalls drop from the sky, where mountains reach high into the clouds and where gigantic waves crash on rugged headlands and sweeping beaches.

Here's to living in the most extraordinary place in the world!

A pretty apt description of the Wild Atlantic Way and one that I found written somewhere some years ago. The Go Wild Tourism Wild Atlantic Way title is our baby title and the one that first launched the Go Wild brand in 2014.

11 years later, this has been followed by the launch of another nine Go Wild titles, each focusing on different tourism regions as well as Food experiences, Whiskey and Gin and of course, Christmas.

In this April 2025 issue we have interviews with Travel influencer Joshua Nueva, Travel Bare Feet founder Mikela Mallozzi, Gabe Saglie of Travelzoo, Tourism Ireland CEO Alice Mansergh, The Novel Traveller Michelle Walsh Jackson and a focus on Travel Counsellor Norma Hoban.

We are certain that there is something for every person looking for a perfect Staycation or simply for a weekend break across the beautiful Emerald Isle.

Finally, As we embark on our 11th year of publishing Go Wild Magazines, we were recently truly honoured to be voted 'Number 41' in their 'Top 70 Travel Magazines Worldwide' by FeedSpot, in January, 2025.

Here's to the next ten more years of Tourism Adventures with Go Wild...

Bobby Power

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Next on our List - On Sale Dates

Go Wild East Coast: May 17

Go Wild Dublin: June 17

Go Wild Staycation Ireland (July): July 17

Go Wild Northern Ireland: August 17

Go Wild Irish Spirits & Food Experience: September 17

Go Wild Christmas: October 17



JOIN THE FUN!



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For all the latest news, visit www.gowildmagazine.com – your official guide to the Wild Atlantic Way and Ancient East

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Inside our Store

The Avoca Village store offers our full range of mill product, showcasing the craftsmanship that takes place in this historic location. There are colourful woven throws in mohair, Donegal wool and cashmere, as well as beautiful scarves, clothing, baby blankets and lots more. We also offer a large selection of homewares, women's and men's fashion, beauty, kids and more.

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Keep Discovering



WILD ATLANTIC WAY

SLÍ AN ATLANTAIGH FHIÁIN





DOOLOUGH VALLEY



Doolough-Valley, Clashame, Co. Mayo, Ireland

Looking at Ireland through a different lens

Born in the Philippines, Joshua Nueva has been living in the West of Ireland since he was four years old. Meg Walker chats to the filmmaker, photographer, content creator and all-round adventurer about his passion for shining a light on Ireland's unique landscapes and hidden treasures.

At the age of four, Joshua Nueva and his family – his parents, two older brothers and baby sister – moved from the Philippines to their new home in Co. Mayo in the West of Ireland. It was a massive change. Nueva didn't speak a word of English and began senior infants soon after their arrival. "I was one of the youngest in the class. I had to adapt so quickly and take English lessons on the side while I was in primary school. Also, I don't look Irish, and that was something I struggled with a bit in secondary school," says the 27-year-old. "But I love it here. I live in Westport, which I honestly think is one of the best towns in Ireland. I used to take it for granted, but sometimes it takes travelling away and seeing other places for you to realise just how good a place really is."

In his teens, Nueva developed an interest in bodybuilding, nutrition and fitness and decided to pick up the camera, aged 19, to record videos of his journey to share on YouTube. "I fell in love with the whole process of creating videos and showing the way I saw things. Then Covid hit in 2020 and it made me think about how I could combine my love of travelling with videography and filmmaking. I started hiking Croagh Patrick, which is five minutes from my home – I can see it from my backyard, and this was



while we had the five-kilometre-radius travel restrictions. It's almost unheard of to bring heavy camera gear up a mountain but I brought my camera with me because I wanted to show how I saw the outdoors and how I wanted to travel through photography and videography. I then started posting my adventures on TikTok, and it became a hub for people who wanted to explore Ireland. It was perfect timing and changed my career – although, if I had a desk job, I'd still spend my spare time exploring Ireland and recording my adventures because it's what I love."

One of Joshua's most iconic photographs is "Land and Sea", a shot he took above the shoreline with the green ocean waves foaming white onto the golden sand – creating the three shades of the Irish tricolour – the national flag. The image went viral and his framed prints have since sold all over the world to people who wanted this beautiful image of a place they love as much as Nueva does.

Another striking photograph is "Northern Lights at Downpatrick Head", which captured a rare moment in May 2024 when the Aurora Borealis lit up the sky in rich purples, greens and yellows around the magnificent coastal heritage site in Co. Mayo. It vibrantly illustrates the passion for the Irish landscape that Joshua clearly holds in his heart.

Does he have a list of hiking spots he feels should be on everyone's bucket list? "It all depends on the mood you're in. Different heights provide different views and feelings. Croagh Patrick has one of the best views you can get in the country because you're overlooking Clew Bay, which is said to have 365 islands – one for every day of the year (it actually has around 120). The water is crystal-clear blue. You get that shade of green that people associate with Ireland, and it's just incredible. At the top is a chapel. It's a stunning hike, and really well laid out, you won't get lost on the mountain. Another one I love, which is completely different from that, is Coumshingaun Lough down in Waterford. It's a horseshoe-shaped, glacial lake. You have an incredible view of the lake below you, but you're also overlooking Waterford town."

When it comes to less charted territory, Joshua says he'd like to further explore Ireland's east and northeast. "County Down and the Mourne Mountains are high on my list this year. Because I live on the west coast, I get to explore that a lot so I need to give the east a fair shot."

As an experienced hiker, what's his



advice on day-bag essentials before heading out? "I always pack a light, windproof or rainproof jacket to put on if I'm feeling cold at the top – it stops the wind from getting in, which makes you colder. And a first aid kit, not just for myself – you never know when you might meet somebody who'll need it. Once, my friends and I were coming down from the summit at Croagh Patrick at sunset and I saw a man in his seventies wearing a vest, climbing up. It was getting cold, and I had that feeling in my stomach that told me I should stick around to make sure he got down safely. An hour and a half later, I hadn't seen him return, so I started to make my way back up. I saw him in the distance and walked over. He looked a bit frail and slow, and said he slipped at the top, and was lying there for 20-30 minutes. He was shivering so I took out the foil blanket from the first aid kit to warm him up. That was one of those important moments where it was someone else that needed those essentials."

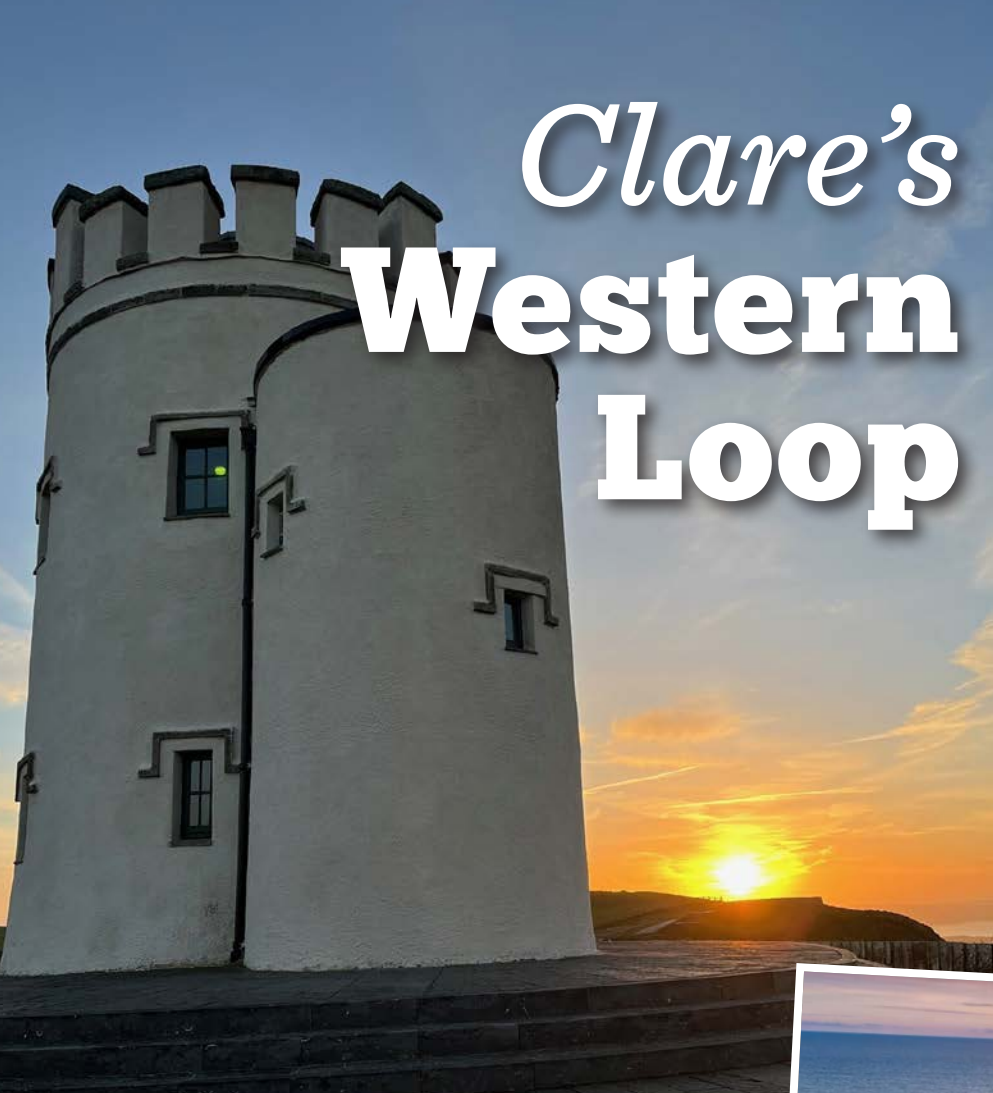
What other lessons has he picked up from his years of travelling? "Your perspective defines your experience.

Sometimes you could have preconceived opinions of a place before you go there, and that'll affect how you see it. My approach is to go somewhere with an open mind, no expectations, and just see what I find. If you're always on the lookout for little positive moments and things that make a place tick, you're going to have a great experience."

Last year saw Joshua travel in a campervan along the Wild Atlantic Way, from the top of Donegal in the northwest down to Cork in the south, in three weeks. "It was one of the best road trips I've ever done. What really struck me was just how different each county is. Little things like in Donegal, on most of the beaches, there were litter-picking kits for people to use if they wanted. That trip opened my eyes to the fact that every county has its own attractions: Donegal has an incredible landscape, loads of beaches and headlands, and Mayo has a lot of wonderful food places." Speaking of which, does he have any local favourites he likes to recommend people visiting his home county? "Living in Westport, I'm spoiled for choice when it comes to cafés. **This Must Be the Place** is one of my favourites. **Servd** is another. A lot of people miss **The Creel**, but that's one of my favourite bunch spots. My girlfriend, Annie, and I recently went to a tapas place in Claremorris called **La Casa**, which was delicious, so I'd recommend that, too."

Joshua's framed prints are available to order from joshuanueva.com. Follow Joshua on Instagram and TikTok @joshuanueva

Clare's Western Loop



tour of the iconic Loop Head Lighthouse Tower. After soaking in the views, drive to Spanish Point for a refreshing dip in the Atlantic. Drop into the Design Bank in Miltown Malbay to immerse yourself in a celebration of Clare creatives. Here you will find local craftspeople displaying their wares, some even giving demonstrations. Some local food producers will be offering you a taste of Clare! You might be lucky enough to happen upon a traditional Irish music session on your visit!

Next, explore the charming town of Ennistymon. Visit the many galleries, browse local shops and immerse yourself in the vibrant arts scene. A historic town walk to the Cascades will enrich your understanding of Ennistymon's past.



Prepare to embark on an unforgettable journey through the enchanting landscapes of the Western Loop in West Clare. This picturesque route, dotted with charming towns like Lahinch, Miltown Malbay, Kilkee, Kilbaha and Kilrush, offers a delightful mix of natural beauty, historical landmarks and local culture that promises to captivate your senses and leave you with lasting memories.

Start your adventure with a night at the newly renovated Lighthouse Attendant's Cottage at Loop Head Lighthouse. Here, you can wake up to breathtaking views of the wild Atlantic waves. After breakfast, take a leisurely stroll around the tranquil surroundings before heading to your first destination, Kilrush.

From Kilrush Marina, set sail to Scatterry Island, one of West Clare's hidden gems. A short ferry ride across glistening waters takes you to this mystical isle, where historical ruins and stunning vistas await. Guided tours offer rich insights into the island's past, making it a must-visit for history buffs and nature lovers alike. From the Marina, you can also venture out on a dolphin discovery trip!

Back in Kilrush, the Vandeleur Walled

Garden & Visitor Centre provides a perfect spot for lunch. This serene garden, nestled in Kilrush Wood, offers a botanical haven where you can enjoy a

delicious meal. A guided tour of the garden and visitor centre will introduce you to its rich history and diverse flora and fauna.

In the late afternoon, make your way to Kilkee. Enjoy a walk along the 1.5km International Blue Flag beach or opt for the Kilkee Cliff Walk for dramatic coastal views. The rugged cliff paths provide panoramic vistas that are truly mesmerising.

As evening approaches, head to the traditional fishing village of Carrigaholt or Kilbaha for dinner. The local restaurants are renowned for fresh local fare, friendly service and plenty of banter.

Return to your Loop Head Lighthouse accommodation to unwind. Share stories of your day's adventures over a cup of tea or a glass of wine. A leisurely evening stroll around the lighthouse offers a splendid view of the sunset, painting the sky in hues of crimson and gold.

Begin the next day with a complimentary



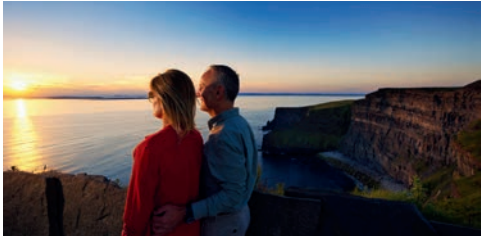
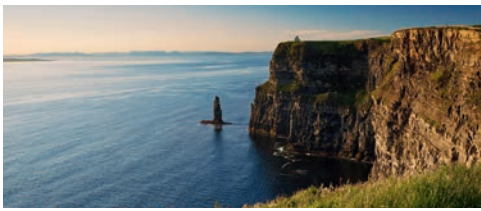
No visit to County Clare is complete without experiencing the Cliffs of Moher Experience. Evening visits are ideal, offering the best light for panoramic views and a serene atmosphere. The

visitor centre provides insights into the delicate ecosystem surrounding these majestic cliffs. Enjoy the new 4D Ledge Experience, the first of its kind in Ireland.

As the sun sets, reflect on your journey through the Western Loop. Each moment, each destination, leaves you with a deeper appreciation for the region's beauty and charm. The Western Loop is more than a route; it's an invitation to explore, experience, and fall in love with Clare.

To make your journey easier, purchase a Western Loop ticket to take in the three attractions of the Cliffs of Moher Experience, Vandeleur Walled Garden & Visitor Experience and Loop Head Lighthouse.

Tickets available on www.loopheadlighthouse.ie, where you can also book a stay in the Lighthouse Attendant's Cottage. Enjoy making memories to last a lifetime...



Cliffs of Moher • Vandeleur Walled Garden • Loop Head Lighthouse

DISCOVER CLARE'S WESTERN LOOP

Journey Around Clare's Wild Atlantic Way

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Dancing her way into people's hearts



Mickela at the Giant's Causeway

Mickela Mallozzi, the New York-based host and executive producer of PBS travel series Bare Feet with Mickela Mallozzi, chats to Meg Walker about the importance of supporting the arts and why she'll never run out of reasons to revisit Ireland.

Everyone's so joyful and nobody takes themselves too seriously. I did cry once while in Belfast, talking to these two female musicians – Catriona Gribben and Miadhachlughain (Múlu) O'Donnell – who are part of an all-female trad session collective at Cultúrlann, a space where they're keeping the Irish language alive." Mickela goes on to explain the connections between Cultúrlann and the Irish hip hop band Kneecap, whose film ("it's amazing," says Mickela) has garnered massive praise the world over since its release last year, and just won a BAFTA award. Kneecap bandmember Móglaí Bap's father, Gearóid Ó Cairealláin, who passed away in December, was an Irish language activist and founding member of Cultúrlann as well as Raidió Fáilte, which began as an Irish pirate radio station. But back to the women who made Mickela weep: "Catriona was talking about growing up not having that opportunity to learn the language, and here was this space where she could, and now it's a safe space for her to perform with other women."

Season 8 lands in October and premieres with Cuba, followed by two episodes in New Zealand and finishing with Taiwan. "In Taiwan, we met with two indigenous communities. I don't think people realise how many indigenous communities there are worldwide, especially in Asia. We were in Tainan, which is the oldest city in Taiwan. It was colonised by the Dutch, Japanese, then the Chinese so it has all those influences. Taiwan was really beautiful and the food's incredible."

Despite Ireland's relatively small geographic size, Mickela is adamant there are countless things to keep her coming

It was 15 years ago that Mickela Mallozzi came up with the concept for her award-winning travel series, where her passion for music, dance and travel would take her all over the world, meeting diverse communities to learn about their cultures, hear their stories and dance together.

I'm catching Mickela while on yet another busy trip to Ireland, this time in the West, a combination she says of "work and leisure", with a stop in Galway and Dingle in Co. Kerry, to meet with collaborators to discuss the return of Bare Feet Tours, set for May 2026, where visitors get an opportunity to dance with the presenter. She's also working on another season of her hugely popular TV series.

Season 7 of *Bare Feet* airs on PBS in the US in May and GoTraveler globally, with the premiere episode set along the northern part of the Wild Atlantic Way, followed by Lafayette, Louisiana, for Festivals Acadiens et Créoles. "Then we have our Accessibility in the Arts episode, featuring professional companies and arts education for people with disabilities, where we ask the question, 'What does accessibility mean?'" It's a topic close to Mickela's heart. "My sister has cerebral palsy, so I grew up in the disability community."

The last two episodes of the season are set in Northern Ireland, taking in Derry and the Giant's Causeway before the season finale in Belfast. "We only meant to do two episodes in Ireland and Northern Ireland, but we found so many amazing stories in Belfast we thought, let's just do a whole separate episode in Belfast."

The promotional video for Seasons 7 and 8 – a total of ten episodes split into two seasons – shows a teary-eyed Mickela in different settings, leading me to wonder if this was a particularly emotional season. "I cry a lot in the show, just because I feel so connected to people. This season was especially emotional for a lot of reasons. On one occasion, I'm with the Māori people in Auckland, New Zealand, dancing the haka on the pitch of Eden Park. Sometimes I'm emotional just thinking, I can't believe this is real. Other moments I feel overwhelmed, spiritually and emotionally. I still experience those pinch-me moments that I get to continue to connect with people, through the universal language of dance and music."

Ireland has its own unique vibe, she admits. "I don't tend to get too emotional in Ireland because it's just so much fun.

back. On this latest trip, she met dancer and co-founder of Céim Arts, Jonathan Kelliher. “He’s learned these old steps that have been passed down to him from previous generations. The dances are similar to sean-nós or Irish dancing, but it’s all about the history, the culture, and the stories are always different. I’ve been drawn to Ireland for 14 years, and I always find more stories and new places to explore. I tend to go back to places I feel connected to, and the dance and music is such an integral part of the culture here. And in Belfast, there’s so much new art coming out, and all these cool contemporary artists. Like the ‘tradronica’ band, Huartan – their music is very pagan influenced. Or Kíla, who started singing in Irish in the ’80s, collaborating with world musicians and not just keeping to strict Irish trad music.”

Mickela’s currently filming Season 9, which will highlight the Gombey Festival in Bermuda, and Bomba, plena and salsa dancing in Puerto Rico. “We also want to show New Orleans’ rich history of dance and music outside of Mardi Gras. Then we’re heading up to the indigenous community in Quebec, near Montreal.” She’s also returning to Dublin in March to once again co-host the St. Patrick’s Day parade. “I always plan to come back to Ireland – I can’t stay away,” she laughs.

When she’s looking to go off-grid and take some time away from the camera, Mickela – the daughter of two Italian immigrants – heads to southern Italy. “My family still has this little farmhouse there. It was our location for the pilot episode of *Bare Feet*. Nobody speaks English, and I’m related to half the town. It’s a special place. I feel connected to the earth there. I’ll walk along the beach and harvest olives from the trees my great-grandparents cultivated.”

I wonder what life lessons she’s learned in all the years she’s been working on the show. “Everybody’s the same, no matter what language we speak, what religion we follow, what colour our skin. Everybody wants the same things – food, shelter, love, family, joy... The beautiful thing about dancing with people is, that comes out. You don’t have to speak the language to understand that.”

There are those lost in translation moments that crop up now and again, she asserts. “It is a unique show, no one does what we do. I’ve never done these dances before and sometimes that message is lost and we’ll show up and they think it’s a performance, but it all works out. Cuba is a beautiful place with warm,

welcoming people, but there are people there who are starving. We didn’t have power for a couple of days, we ran out of gas, we couldn’t find water... There are things happening in that place that are detrimental but people still got together, celebrated and made music.”

What are some of the things she’s most proud of? “The fact that the show is still around, at the calibre it is now... I don’t think viewers understand that we’re a completely independent show. We’re funded through grants, foundations and sponsors. I don’t have to answer to the head of a network. Our Accessibility in the Arts episode – two years ago, when we started



From top: Taking part in a trad session at CultúrIann; dancing with Off the Rails in Belfast; cycling near Malin Head, Co. Donegal; enjoying the Sligo Oyster Experience

pre-production, no one would have greenlit that. And now, the timing is amazing for it to come out, because of the retraction of DEI in the US. Last season, we did an episode on this Arab-American community in Brooklyn. This was before what had happened in Palestine. Everything takes about two years, so when it came out, it was just after the first major attack. People asked, ‘Are you going to pull that episode?’ And I was like, ‘No, this is a story that needs to come out now more than ever, to show these are real people. They’re families, neighbours, they celebrate joy just like you do, and food, music and dance. I’m really proud of what we do.’

“The arts are invaluable,” she continues. “You don’t have to want to become a professional dancer or musician for the arts to help you become a better doctor, lawyer, bus driver, politician, whatever it may be – just to have a sense of empathy, a well-rounded place in your community and a way of expressing yourself. But unfortunately, in the States, the arts have always been the first thing that’s cut from budgets, and now we don’t know the future of the arts or of public media, of PBS. Things like the New York City Ballet or the Met, institutions that heavily rely on government funding could potentially disappear. It’s scary, and we’re all bracing ourselves. For now, all I can do is continue to try and get the show on air. We have teachers telling us they use the show to inspire students to learn about another culture. That’s what I am hoping to add to this landscape. We’re trying to be part of the solution.”

Mickela’s advice to anyone travelling anywhere is simple: “Whatever you love to do back home – whether that’s dance, cooking, singing, bird watching, photography, running – do that when you’re travelling because you’ll find that community. The reason *Bare Feet* works is because I love to dance. When I hear music, I can’t keep my feet still. And when I meet people who are as enthusiastic as I am about dancing, there’s this connection. In Ireland, there are local theatres and dance troupes or you can just go to a pub and hear trad music. If you’re on your own, you’re going to make friends. People are so open and willing to chat. I think that’s why I fell in love with this place.”

Season 7 of *Bare Feet* with Mickela Mallozzi is available to stream from May 1 on the PBS app, [PBS.org](https://www.pbs.org), Amazon Prime Video and on the GoTraveler app; travelbarefeet.com.



WAW Spotlight: Sligo

By Gabe Saglie

The Wild Atlantic Way really is a dream drive – a sweeping stretch along Ireland’s west coast that I’ve been lucky to navigate, in stretches, over the last several years. My latest stop: Sligo, a stunning spot along a beautiful bay that’s craved craggily into the emerald island. Here are five of my favourite Sligo discoveries.

Queen Maeve Square

What was once a parking lot along the Garavogue River is now a town square, a brand-new epicenter for events that doubles as a great spot to meet new people and catch pretty views of Sligo’s city centre. Queen Maeve Square, named for the beloved warrior queen in Irish mythology, was dedicated just last year and has a standing capacity of 4,500 people – it buzzes during concerts and public events around holidays like St. Patrick’s Day. The plaza features outdoor cafes and an iconic “Sligo” sign that’s a perfect backdrop for those IG selfies.

The Link to Yeats

Sligo’s connection to W.B. Yeats, Ireland’s national poet, is inescapable here. The man who became the first Irishman to ever win a Nobel Prize, spent his childhood here, and he loved the area for its stunning natural beauty, which became a muse of sorts for much of his moving poetry. To Yeats, Sligo was “the land of heart’s desire.” The Yeats Building, run by the Yeats Society Sligo, is in the heart of town; it houses several signed copies of Yeats’ publications, hosts literary events year-round and welcomes Yeats aficionados from all over the world to its summer academic seminars. The graveyard at Drumcliffe Church, just five miles north of Sligo, is worth the visit to see Yeats’ gravesite but also to experience

a spot teeming with legends of battles and heroes that date back to the 6th century; the Café

Pink Clover onsite is a lovely respite for coffee drinks and gifts.

A Hiking Haven

My son Gabriel and I spent a morning on a glorious hike in the foothills of Benbulbin – the stunning flat-topped mountain of rock is impossible to miss from most any spot in Sligo. The drive out to the Devil’s Chimney Forest Walk, skirting the glistening lake known as Glencar Lough, is breathtaking. And, the moderate roundtrip trek offers spectacular views of bright green hillsides that are dotted with grazing animals and fertile forests. This whole area is a haven for any outdoor adventurer, offering several natural wonders, including the Devil’s Chimney waterfall, and a wide network of walking and cycling trails.

Seaweed Foraging

The shores of Sligo are teeming with myriad types of seaweed. The algae have given rise to several local industries, including wellness and beauty, and, thanks to my time foraging across the coastline with Lucianne Hare of **Nourish in Nature**, I am now aware of all its culinary potential, too. With scissors in hand, and timing it around a dramatic low tide that revealed a spectacular network of rock formations, we spent more than an hour carefully harvesting various seaweed strands, all the while discussing the plethora of vitamins and minerals that make the sea plants the ultimate health food. We headed back to



Ms. Hare’s Kitchen

inside quaint Bregahwy Hill Lodge, a three-minute drive away, where we were joined by her husband Rob, a local organic farmer, and prepared a midday feast featuring seaweed cooked several ways – from raw to crisped in the air fryer to folded into local goat’s cheese and slathered on home-baked soda bread. Delicious and nutritious at once. Find Nourish in Nature on Instagram to book a seaweed foraging adventure for groups of one to 20.

The Pub Scene

Like anywhere in Ireland, the night scene in Sligo offers a buzzy pub scene where the cold beer, like the live traditional music, flows all night long. **The Swagman**, run by Australian ex-pat Dale Barber, is a local’s favourite; under Mr. Barber’s supervision, I perfected my knack for pouring a perfect pint of Guinness – patience, it turns out, is key. And I enjoyed some high-end Irish whiskey at **Thomas Connolly**, Sligo’s oldest traditional pub, while tapping my feet to a live trad session led by local musician Padraic Collins. The pubs sit alongside several fantastic restaurants, too, including elegant **Eala Bhan** on the riverfront, and **OTTO**, serving delicious pizza and wines by the glass; in nearby Rosses Point, the seafood at **Fish and Bean** is delicious. When you come, I recommend **The Address**, a newish hotel in the heart of town that served as home base for my son and me, and which features a wonderful staff of hospitality pros.

See you in Sligo!



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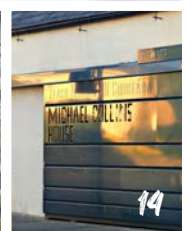
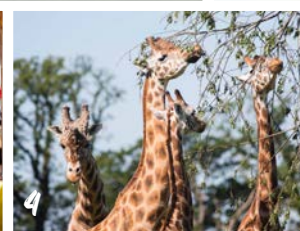
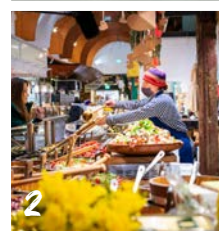
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Top things to see and do in Cork City



- 1** Visit St. Fin Barre's Cathedral, a beautiful Gothic style cathedral in the heart of Cork City.
- 2** Take a walk along the River Lee and see the famous "Cork Butter Museum" and the "English Market", which is a covered market dating back to 1788.
- 3** Explore the city's many museums & Galleries, including the Crawford Art Gallery and Cork City Gaol
- 4** Visit Fota Wildlife Park, located on Fota Island, just outside Cork City.
- 5** Visit the Blarney Castle and kiss the Blarney Stone, which is said to bestow the gift of eloquence.
- 6** Take a day trip to the nearby towns of Kinsale and Cobh, which offer a wealth of history and beautiful scenery.
- 7** Take a tour of the Jameson Irish Whiskey Distillery in Midleton.
- 8** Sample the local cuisine, which is known for its seafood and traditional Irish dishes like bacon and cabbage.
- 9** Take a scenic drive through Cork's beautiful countryside, including the Beara Peninsula and the Sheep's Head Way.
- 10** Experience the vibrant nightlife in Cork, with a wide range of pubs, clubs and live music venues to choose from.
- 11** Visit the lovely village of Castlemartyr and discover the Castlemartyr Resort & Golf
- 12** Pop-out to Cobh and see the Cobh Heritage Centre
- 13** Check the West Cork Model Railway Village in Clonakilty
- 14** Discover Michael Collins House Museum also in Clonakilty



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A Long Weekend in DOOLIN

Nestled on Ireland's rugged west coast, Doolin is the ultimate destination for those seeking natural beauty, cultural experiences and a touch of adventure. Known as the gateway to the Cliffs of Moher, Doolin offers much more than breathtaking views.



DAY 1: Soak Up the Scenic Beauty

Begin your long weekend with a visit to the Cliffs of Moher, one of Ireland's most iconic natural wonders. Towering over the Atlantic Ocean, these cliffs offer unparalleled views and make for a fantastic hiking experience. Be sure to walk along the cliff paths for the panoramic views—don't forget your camera or at least your mobile phone!

After a morning exploring the cliffs, head to the nearby **O'Connor's Pub** for a hearty lunch. Known for its live traditional music sessions, this pub has long been a favourite among locals and tourists alike. Enjoy a pint of Guinness while tapping your foot to lively tunes—it's the perfect way to unwind after a scenic hike.

For dinner, book a table at **Oar**. This intimate, award-winning restaurant is renowned for its locally sourced ingredients and innovative dishes. With a menu that reflects the best of modern Irish cuisine, Oar is a must-visit for foodies.



DAY 2: Take a trip with Doolin Ferries

Start your second day with a ferry trip to Clare Island. The ferries leave regularly from Doolin Pier and the short journey offers stunning views of the Atlantic. Once on dry land, you can explore the island's beautiful beaches, ancient abbeys and stunning coastal hikes. Clare Island is also a great spot for birdwatching, so keep your eyes peeled for puffins and other seabirds.

After your island adventure, it's time to explore Doolin's local pubs. Head to **McGann's Pub**, where you'll find a cosy atmosphere and a friendly crowd. With a great selection of Irish whiskeys and a traditional bar feel, it's the perfect place to relax. Don't be surprised if you find yourself joining in on a conversation with locals or even a spontaneous music session! As the evening draws in, dine at **Homestead Cottage**, a Michelin-starred restaurant known for its creative take on classic Irish dishes. The warm and welcoming setting, combined with their farm-to-table philosophy, makes it a top choice for a memorable dinner in Doolin.

DAY 3: Cultural and Historical Highlights

No trip to Doolin would be complete without exploring its cultural and historical roots. Begin your day with a visit to **Doolin Cave**, home to the Great Stalactite, one of the longest free-hanging stalactites in the world. The tour is fascinating and provides a unique glimpse into Ireland's natural history.

After the cave, stroll through the village, taking time to explore the local shops offering handmade crafts and art. Doolin is also known for its connection to Irish folklore and mythology, so don't miss out on hearing some local legends. For your final meal, return to Oar or Homestead Cottage, or explore some other nearby eateries to round out your culinary experience in Doolin.



Seasonal Highlights

If you visit in the summer, you'll catch Doolin at its liveliest. The annual Doolin Folk Festival, usually held in June, draws in some of Ireland's best musicians, making the village buzz with excitement. During the winter, Doolin offers a quieter charm—perfect for a cosy escape. Either way, Doolin's atmosphere is warm, welcoming and filled with the spirit of Irish hospitality.

Plan Your Visit to Doolin, Co. Clare

A weekend in Doolin is the perfect combination of adventure, relaxation and culture. Whether you're hiking the cliffs, enjoying traditional Irish music in local pubs or tasting some of the finest food Ireland has to offer, Doolin never disappoints. For more information on ferry services to Clare Island, visit Doolin Ferries. To plan your visit to O'Connor's Pub, check out their website: www.oconnorspubdoolin.com and book your dining experience at Oar via their site: www.oardoolin.com.

Discover the Aran Islands and Cliffs of Moher *with Doolin Ferry*

Set sail on an unforgettable adventure with Doolin Ferry, your gateway to the magical Aran Islands and the breathtaking Cliffs of Moher.

Step back in time on the Aran Islands, where ancient stone forts, medieval ruins, and shipwrecks tell tales of the past. Stroll along sandy beaches, swim in crystal-clear waters, or cycle through breathtaking island landscapes. And with Doolin Ferry's fastest ferry service, you'll spend less time travelling and more time exploring.

Experience the Cliffs of Moher from the sea on our standalone cruise, sailing beneath the towering cliffs past iconic landmarks like Hags Head, O'Brien's Tower, and the Harry Potter Cave. Witness thousands of seabirds soaring above, breathe in the fresh Atlantic air, and immerse yourself in the folklore and history with our captivating onboard commentary. (Multilingual guide for international visitors). Want the ultimate adventure? Combine your Aran Island visit with a Cliffs of Moher Cruise for an unforgettable day.



In 2025, we introduce our brand-new, state-of-the-art flagship vessel - the Cliffs of Moher Express. Featuring a cutting-edge stabilisation system, solar power, retractable canopy, climate-controlled interiors, and emissions reduction technology, it sets a

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CLIFFS OF MOHER

Breathtaking Views of
Ireland's Most Famous Cliffs

The Best Road Trips in County Galway



1. THE SKY ROAD

Coastal Views Like No Other

If jaw-dropping coastal scenery is what you're after, then The Sky Road near Clifden is the perfect road trip for you. This 16-kilometer loop offers breathtaking views over the Atlantic Ocean, nearby islands, and the rugged landscape of Connemara. The elevated road gives you a panoramic perspective, with sweeping vistas that are sure to fill your camera roll.

Start your journey in the town of Clifden, known as the "Capital of Connemara," before heading towards the coast. Along the way, stop by Clifden Castle, the ruins of a 19th-century estate that adds a touch of history to your scenic drive.

Go Wild Pro Tip: The best time to drive the Sky Road is just before sunset when the light softens and the views are at their most magical.

2. THE CONNEMARA LOOP

A Drive Through Ireland's Wild Heart



If you want to experience the rugged beauty that Galway is famous for, then the Connemara Loop is an essential road trip. This 80-kilometer route takes you through some of Ireland's most stunning

natural landscapes, from shimmering lakes to towering mountains and quiet boglands.

Highlights along this route include Kylemore Abbey, one of Ireland's most picturesque landmarks, nestled at the base of a mountain and overlooking a tranquil lake. The Abbey's Victorian walled gardens are a must-see, offering a peaceful retreat after your scenic drive.

Drive through the Twelve Bens Mountains for some of the most dramatic landscapes you'll find in Ireland. Connemara's raw beauty is complemented by charming villages like Letterfrack and Leenane, where you can stop for a pint or explore local craft shops.

3. GALWAY TO ROUNDSTONE

A Picturesque Coastal Escape

If you're craving a mix of coastal beauty and village charm, the road trip from Galway City to Roundstone offers the best of both worlds. Start your journey in the lively Galway City, known for its rich cultural scene, traditional music, and bustling pubs. Once you've explored Galway's famous streets, including Shop Street and The Spanish Arch, hit the road and head west toward Roundstone.

This road trip will take you past Coral Beach at Carraroe, a unique beach made of crushed coralline algae, creating a stunning white shore. Further along, stop by Dog's Bay, an arc-shaped beach with crystal-clear waters, perfect for a peaceful stroll or a quick dip.

Arrive in the village of Roundstone, a charming fishing village that's popular with artists and creatives. Don't miss the opportunity to visit local craft shops and galleries, or enjoy some fresh seafood at one of the traditional pubs.



4. THE INISHBOFIN ISLAND DRIVE

An Island Adventure



For those looking for a road trip with a bit of adventure, consider the journey to Inishbofin Island. Start by driving through the Connemara landscape until you reach

Cleggan Pier, where you'll hop on a ferry to Inishbofin.

Inishbofin is a haven for nature lovers and those looking to escape the hustle and bustle of daily life. Visit Dún Grainne, a 13th-century castle associated with the legendary pirate queen Grace O'Malley, or explore the island's quiet coves and beaches for some peaceful solitude.

5. THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

Galway's Section of the Iconic Route

No list of Galway's road trips would be complete without mentioning the Wild Atlantic Way, one of the longest-defined coastal routes in the world. The Galway section of the Wild Atlantic Way offers some of the most dramatic seascapes, taking you from the cultural buzz of Galway City to the remote beauty of Connemara and beyond.

Drive along the coast, stopping at highlights like the Salthill Promenade in Galway City, the famous Claddagh area, and the Aran Islands, which are accessible by ferry. For those with more time, the journey can continue along the coast through the rugged beauty of Connemara, past secluded beaches and into Ireland's heartland.





THE LODGE
AT ASHFORD CASTLE



YOUR PERFECT ESCAPE ON THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

The Lodge at Ashford Castle offers a warm Irish welcome and the perfect blend of luxury and relaxation along the Wild Atlantic Way. Immerse yourself in elegant comfort, indulge in award-winning dining at Wilde's Restaurant, and explore a world of outdoor adventures - from lake cruises to horse riding.

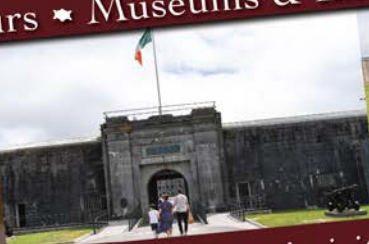
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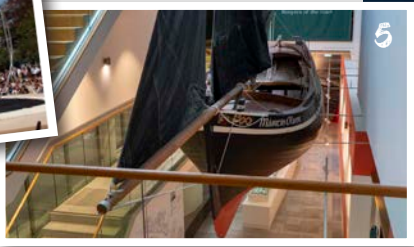
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Top 20 things to see and do in Galway

- 1 Visit the Cliffs of Moher
- 2 Explore the Burren National Park
- 3 Take a walk along Salthill Promenade
- 4 Visit Galway Cathedral
- 5 Explore the Galway City Museum
- 6 Take a boat tour of Galway Bay
- 7 Visit the Galway Atlantaquaria National Aquarium
- 8 Explore the Connemara National Park
- 9 Visit the Galway Arts Centre
- 10 Take a day trip to the Aran Islands
- 11 Explore the Galway Market
- 12 Stroll around the Spanish Arch
- 13 Take a horseback ride on the beach
- 14 Visit the Galway Crystal Visitor Centre
- 15 Explore the Coole Park and Gardens
- 16 Take a surfing lesson at one of Galway's many beaches
- 17 Take a trip on the Corrib Princess
- 18 Explore the Moycullen Heritage Centre
- 19 Take a day trip to Dunguaire Castle
- 20 Visit the Galway City Centre for a night out on the town



10



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The Best Road Trips in County Donegal



A Scenic Drive Like No Other:

THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

First stop? The world-famous Wild Atlantic Way. Donegal boasts some of the most stunning stretches of this iconic coastal route. Starting at Inishowen Peninsula, Ireland's largest peninsula, you'll be greeted by Malin Head, Ireland's most northerly point. The crashing waves and dramatic cliffs are worth every second spent on this journey.

Take a pause at the Five Fingers Strand, where you can walk along some of the tallest sand dunes in Europe. Keep your camera ready—there are breathtaking views around every corner.

History and Heritage IN DONEGAL TOWN

No road trip through Donegal is complete without a stop in Donegal Town. Rich in history, this town offers more than just picturesque streets. Visit Donegal Castle, a stunning fortress that tells the tale of local Gaelic lords and centuries of Irish resilience.

Hungry? Stop by The Abbey Hotel, a local favourite known not only for its great food but also for some of the best live entertainment around. Whether you're into traditional Irish music or looking to catch a lively session, this spot has you covered. Make a night of it and let the rhythm of Donegal's culture fill your soul.

The Magic of GLENVEAGH NATIONAL PARK

If you're craving a mix of coastal beauty and village charm, the road trip from Galway City to Roundstone offers the best of both worlds. Start your journey in the lively Galway City, known for its rich cultural scene, traditional music, and bustling pubs. Once you've explored Galway's famous streets, including Shop Street and The Spanish Arch, hit the road and head west toward Roundstone.

This road trip will take you past Coral Beach at Carraroe, a unique beach made of crushed coralline algae, creating a stunning white shore. Further along, stop by Dog's Bay,



an arc-shaped beach with crystal-clear waters, perfect for a peaceful stroll or a quick dip.

Arrive in the village of Roundstone, a charming fishing village that's popular with artists and creatives. Don't miss the opportunity to visit local craft shops and galleries, or enjoy some fresh seafood at one of the traditional pubs.

Charming Villages Along the Way:

ARDARA AND GLENCOLUMBKILLE

No Donegal road trip would be complete without visiting some of its quaint villages. Ardara is the perfect stop for lovers of traditional crafts. Known for its tweed production, you can visit local shops where centuries-old techniques are still used to create Donegal's famous textiles. It's a great place to pick up a unique souvenir or two!

Heading southwest, you'll find the village of Glencolumbkille. Steeped in history and tradition, this area is home to an authentic Irish culture and offers a glimpse into what life was like centuries ago. Stop by the Glencolumbkille Folk Village, an open-air museum that transports you back in time to old Irish cottages and customs.



FANAD HEAD LIGHTHOUSE: A Beacon of Beauty

For something truly postcard-perfect, a visit

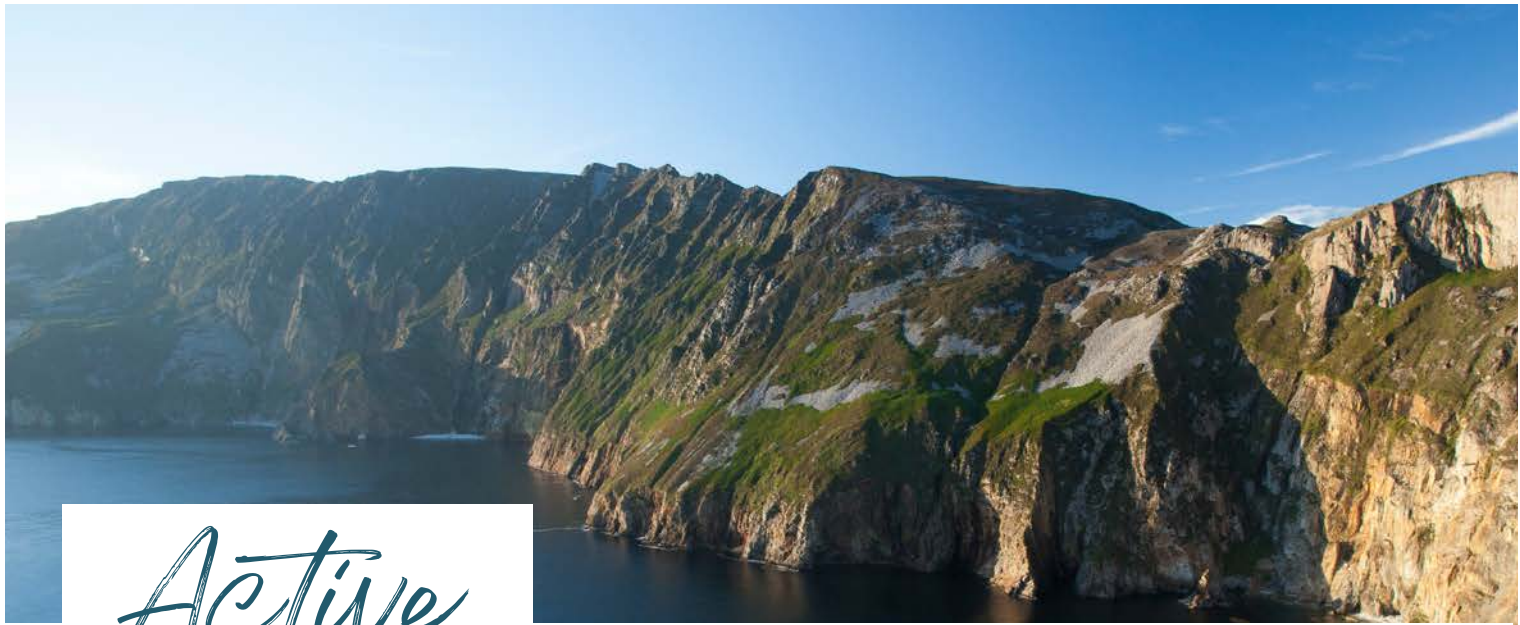
to Fanad Head Lighthouse is a must. Situated on a dramatic headland, this lighthouse is one of the most photographed in Ireland. Take a tour, climb to the top, and soak in the stunning views of the Atlantic Ocean. Fanad Head is a peaceful spot, ideal for those seeking quiet contemplation and awe-inspiring vistas.

Seasonal Highlights and Festivals

If you're planning your road trip in the summer, make sure to time it around some of Donegal's vibrant festivals. The Donegal Bay and Bluestacks Festival, held in September, is a celebration of music, arts, and culture. And if you love seafood, the Taste of Donegal Food Festival in August is a culinary dream come true!

Time to Hit the Road

Donegal road trips promise more than just incredible landscapes; they offer an immersive journey through Ireland's rich history and culture. Whether you're soaking in the coastal beauty, exploring historical castles, or relaxing with live music at The Abbey Hotel, Donegal's roadways are filled with treasures waiting to be discovered.



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As we open our doors for the 56th year we are delighted to welcome you to the Glencolmcille Folk Village. Glencolmcille Folk Village is located in one of Donegal's most idyllic valleys, situated along the dramatic coastline of Glen Bay with its spectacular views of Glen Beach and Glen Head.

We stock the best variety of local hand crafts in the County. When you visit the Folk Village, you will experience a genuine Irish welcome with the thatched cottages offering an authentic glimpse into rural Ireland from 1750 onwards.

Tour booklets are available in several languages.

The Folk Village is an ideal attraction to visit on your excursion to Sliabh Liag cliffs we are only 20 minutes along the coast. Tá fáilte an Ghleanna romhat nuair a thugann tú cuairt ar Chlachán Ghleann Cholm Cille.

Inisítear scéal an phobail stairiúil seo agus cuirfidh tú aithne ar bhunadh na háite atá ag obair anseo chomh maith le fios a fháil ar scéal saoil an Athair Mhic Daidhir.



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The 10 best things to do in DONEGAL

From rugged mountains to wave-hewn sea cliffs, Donegal is one of Ireland's most memorable counties. Donegal has 1,134-km of sandy beaches, cliffs and craggy inlets to explore. Here are ten of the best places to visit in Donegal.

1. Slieve League (Sliabh Liag)

Blow away the cobwebs with a visit to some of the highest sea cliffs in Europe at Slieve League (Sliabh Liag). This holy mountain was a Christian pilgrimage site for over 1,000-years and it's easy to see why it was regarded as a sacred place. Pop in and say 'hi' to Mary in Sliabh Liag Visitor Centre and tell her Go Wild sent you.

2. Fanad Head Lighthouse

One of the most beautiful lighthouses in the world, a visit to Fanad Lighthouse is a perfect way to finish off a trip to Fanad Head, where the views are unbeatable. Perched on a rocky outcrop at the mouth of Lough Swilly, the lighthouse has helped seafarers to negotiate the local waters since 1817.



3. Tory Island

Steeped in ancient myths and legends, Tory Island is a magical place with a rich heritage, deep culture and a real sense of community. The island's remote location has probably helped the locals to preserve old Gaelic customs, such as the appointment of an island king. From its renowned trad musicians to the catch-your-breath scenery, a trip to Tory is a chance to experience a unique way of life.

4. Ards Forest Park

With over 481-hectares of woodland and beaches, the lush green reserve at Ards Forest Park is a perfect place for a romantic walk or a fun day out with the family. This biodiverse park offers a rare combination of landscapes and habitats teeming with all sorts of local wildlife.

5. Glencolumcille Folk Village

This thatched-roof replica of a rural village offers a glimpse into daily life as it was during past centuries. The Folk Village Museum is a cluster of several small cottages, called a 'clachan', perched on a hillside overlooking the sandy curve of Glen Bay Beach in the Gaeltacht (Irish-

speaking area) of South West Donegal. Designed, built and maintained by the local people, it is one of Ireland's best living-history museums.

6. An Grianán of Aileach

One of Ireland's most distinctive megalithic sites, the stone ringfort of Grianán of Aileach dates back to 1700BC and it's said to have been built by the Tuatha de Danann. The hilltop structure has been very well-preserved, and you can climb up on its walls to take in glorious, panoramic views of the surrounding countryside.

7. Errigal

Climbing the magnificent Errigal is a rite of passage for Donegal natives and visitors can join their ranks with a couple of hours of effort.

8. Glenveagh National Park and Castle

In the shadow of Errigal, deep in the Derryveagh Mountains, the 16,000-hectares of Glenveagh National Park are a haven for wildlife and visitors should keep an eye out for its large herd of red deer.

9. Narin-Portnoo Strand

Where else but Donegal would you find such a ravishing coastline as the one at Narin-Portnoo? This super-sized, white sand beach seems to go on forever and it's just as spectacular in the winter.

10. Arranmore Island

Combining the peace of its outdoor attractions with buzzing nightlife, the Gaeltacht island of Arranmore, near Burtonport Harbour, is the largest inhabited island in Donegal. A trip to Arranmore is a chance to immerse yourself in local culture and relax at a different pace in nature.



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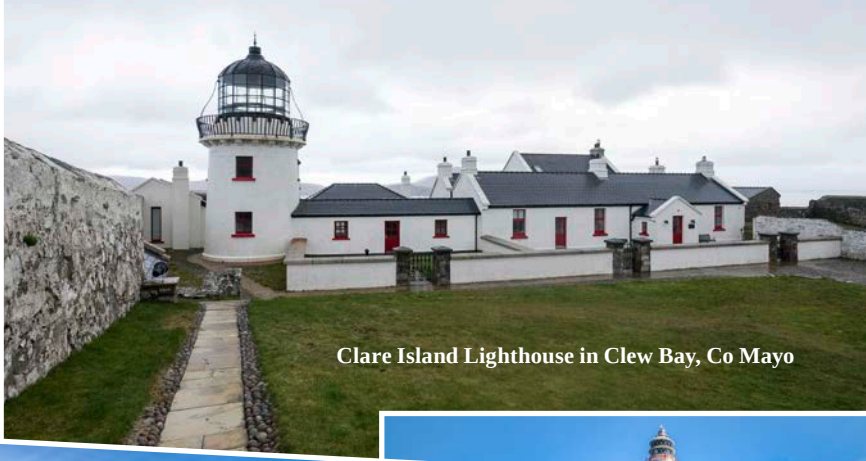
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Fanad Head Lighthouse, Co Donegal



Clare Island Lighthouse in Clew Bay, Co Mayo



Black Head Lighthouse



Fastnet Lighthouse, Mizen Head, Co. Cork



Blacksod Lighthouse



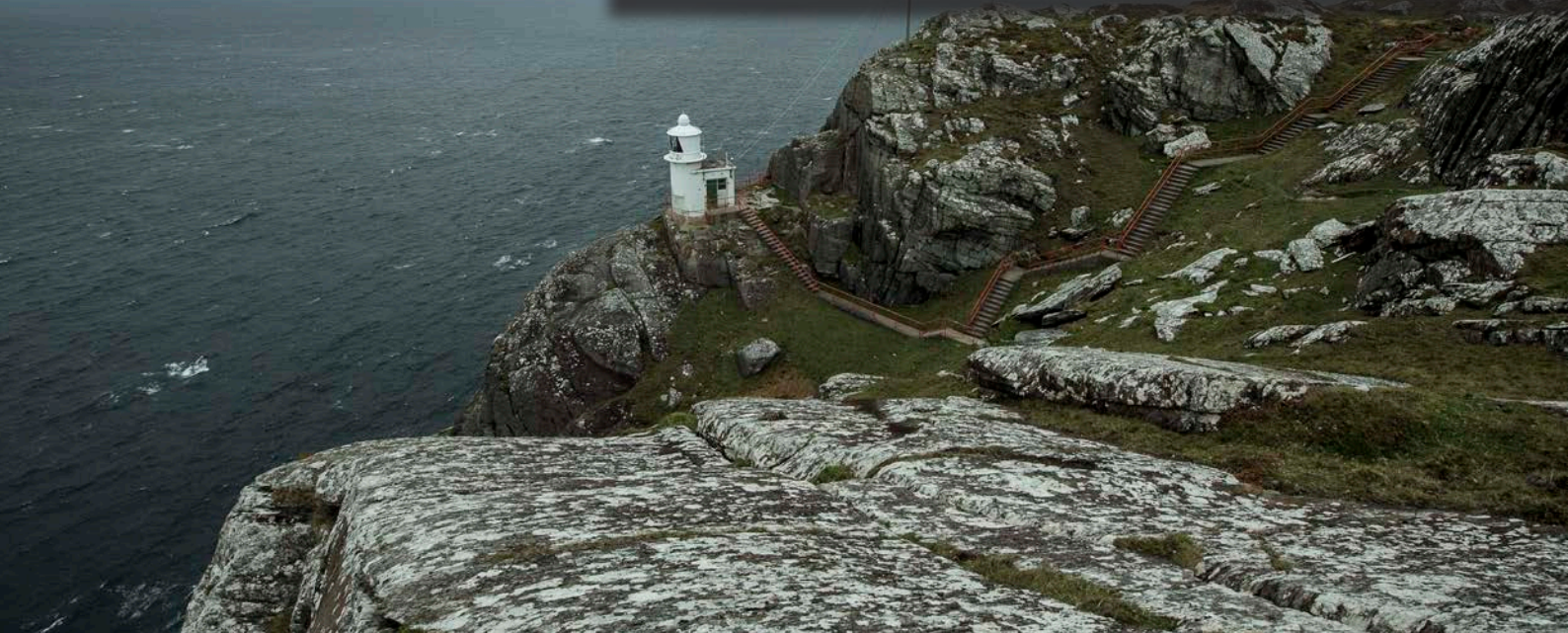
Ballyglass Lighthouse



Galley Head Lighthouse, Rosscarbery, Co Cork



Sheep's Head Lighthouse, Co. Cork





Welcome to Castle Dargan Estate, Co. Sligo.

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Perfect for romantic escapes, golf getaways, and wellness retreats, Castle Dargan is where nature, history, and relaxation come together for an unforgettable stay.



Start your journey at the **Official Sliabh Liag Visitor Centre** where you will always find a friendly welcome. Visit our "on the edge" café for light refreshments and gather information regarding Sliabh Liag hiking routes with access to local tour guides.

Book online, or call
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Captivating SLIGO



Nestled in Ireland's enchanting west coast, Sligo offers a captivating blend of natural beauty, cultural history and gourmet experiences. From its windswept beaches and rugged mountains to its lively town streets filled with culinary gems, Sligo is a treasure trove of exciting activities for every tourist.

Dine in Style at Eala Bhán

Food lovers will not want to miss Eala Bhán, one of Sligo's finest restaurants located on the banks of the Garavogue River. Renowned for its high-quality ingredients and creative menus, Eala Bhán specializes in contemporary Irish cuisine with a focus on seafood and locally sourced produce. From fresh oysters to slow-cooked lamb, each dish is prepared with artistry and attention to detail, making it the perfect spot for a special meal.



Casual Dining at Hooked

For something a little more casual but equally delicious, stop by Hooked, a local favourite known for its laid-back vibe and mouthwatering dishes. Run by the same team behind Eala Bhán, Hooked delivers a cozy, quirky dining experience where you can feast on hearty burgers, fresh seafood and locally-inspired comfort food. Their famous fish and chips are a must-try!

Stay in Comfort at The Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa

Looking for a luxurious place to rest your head after a day of exploring? The Radisson Blu Hotel & Spa offers just that, with its spacious rooms, elegant décor and fantastic leisure facilities. Located just a short drive from Sligo town centre, the hotel offers stunning views of Benbulbin and is a stone's throw away from the wild Atlantic coastline. Guests can unwind in the spa, take a dip in the pool or enjoy a cocktail in the hotel's stylish bar. With its relaxed atmosphere and top-notch service, it's the ideal base for your Sligo adventure.



National Surf Centre

The development of Ireland's first state-of-the-art National Surf Centre along the Wild Atlantic Way will see Strandhill emerge as a world-class surfing destination.

Located in the village of Strandhill, Sligo the newly developed centre will solidify Sligo's reputation as a must-visit outdoor adventure destination and provide a premium experience that will extend the season for surfing and outdoor activity for visitors to Strandhill and the local surfing community, in a premier location overlooking the waterfront.

Explore the Scenic Beauty of Benbulbin

Towering over the landscape like a giant, Benbulbin Mountain is one of Sligo's most iconic landmarks. Part of the Derry Mountain range, Benbulbin offers fantastic hiking opportunities for those looking to get outdoors. The Benbulbin Forest Walk is an easy trail that takes you around the base of the mountain, offering stunning views of the Sligo countryside. More experienced hikers can tackle the steep slopes for a chance to stand atop the flat summit and take in panoramic views of the Atlantic coast and the surrounding land.

Soak Up the Culture at the Yeats Memorial Building

Sligo is often referred to as "Yeats Country," thanks to its association with the famed Irish poet, W.B. Yeats, who spent much of his childhood in the area. Literature lovers should visit the Yeats Memorial Building, located in the heart of Sligo town. The centre hosts a variety of exhibitions, events and workshops that celebrate Yeats' life and work. From there, you can also take a Yeats-themed tour, visiting landmarks like Drumcliffe Church, where Yeats is buried, or Lough Gill, which inspired some of his most famous poems.

Hit the Waves at Strandhill

If you're looking for adventure, head to Strandhill, a coastal village just outside of Sligo town that's famous for its great surf. Whether you're a seasoned pro or a beginner, the waves at Strandhill Beach offer the perfect conditions for surfing. And when you're done catching waves, treat yourself to a seaweed bath at the Voya Seaweed Baths, a local spa where you can relax in hand-harvested seaweed and hot seawater, known for its rejuvenating properties.



Discover History at Sligo Abbey

No visit to Sligo would be complete without stopping by Sligo Abbey, a 13th-century Dominican friary in the heart of the town. Though much of the abbey is now in ruins, it's an atmospheric place to explore, with its stone cloisters, Gothic windows and ancient tombstones. The abbey also houses a well-preserved high altar and some of the finest stone carvings in the country, making it a fascinating spot for history buffs.

From gourmet dining at Eala Bhán to hiking the rugged slopes of Benbulbin, Sligo offers an array of experiences for every tourist. Whether you're drawn to its rich cultural heritage, thrilling outdoor activities, or simply want to relax in a luxury hotel like the Radisson Blu, there's no shortage of things to see and do in this magical corner of Ireland. Pack your bags, hit the road, and get ready to explore all that Sligo has to offer!

Eala Bhan

Eala Bhan, the winner of many regional and national food awards and accolades year on year including “Best Restaurant Connaught 23/24” and “Top 5 Restaurants Ireland” is located in an attractive riverside premises in the heart of Sligo town with two especially desirable window tables peacefully looking out on the Garavogue. Immaculate customer service with general manager Claudine Harnesse gives a beautiful compliment to this award-winning, fine dining restaurant. World class creations by Head Chef Rafal Chimiak and his team. Menus include a well-priced early evening Pre-Theatre Dinner Menu, locally sourced lunch and evening dinner dishes and an exclusive 8 course tasting menu.



Bookings can be made online at www.ealabhan.ie or by calling 071 914 5823

H∞KED



Hooked Restaurant on Tobergal Lane is listed regularly on Irelands Hot “Must visit foodie spot lists” and the first choice of Sligo dining location for many travel influencers and hospitality experts. The vibe is funky and eclectic, inspired by the traditional butcher’s shop which owner Anthony’s father Joe had in Sligo for many years.

Hooked also made it to the Top 100 Restaurants in Ireland and was voted “Best Casual Dining” Connaught.

On a daily basis Anthony with Head Chef Becca Sweeney and a wonderful talented team perfectly deliver the tastes of Sligo and the North West of Ireland.

Bookings can be made online at www.hooked.ie or by calling 071 913 8591

TASTE OF SLIGO

Taste of Sligo Food Tours was voted Top 10 food tours in Ireland by RTE. Taste the best of Sligo. The Ultimate Food Tour

Visit 5-7 of Sligo’s finest foodie venues in one afternoon for €85 pps groups of 6 or more. Eating and tasting Sligo’s finest culinary delights.

This foodie tour of Sligo’s finest food and beverage venues with a tasting variety to suit many demographics. Tours can be customized for tourists, corporate groups, golfers and special occasions offering 2 hours and 30 minutes of culinary delights.

Booking can be made online at www.tasteofsligo.ie or by calling 071 9138591





Unleash Your Inner Warrior at HELL & BACK 2025

Get ready for the ultimate test of strength, endurance and grit! **On Saturday, June 7th 2025, HELL & BACK takes over the iconic Killruddery Estate in Bray, Co. Wicklow for Ireland's biggest and boldest adventure challenge yet!**

This is more than just an obstacle course - it's an exhilarating journey through mud, mountains, rivers and pure madness! Whether you're tackling it solo, rallying your crew or bringing the whole family, HELL & BACK 2025 will challenge, reward and leave you with epic memories that last a lifetime.

Following the sell-out success of HELL & BACK Winter Warriors in March, anticipation for this summer's event is through the roof - and for good reason! This year's course is packed with new challenges, jaw-dropping obstacles and fresh surprises designed to push you beyond your limits and keep that adrenaline pumping from start to finish.

An Epic Day for All Ages & Abilities

HELL & BACK is Ireland's toughest one-day endurance challenge, but it's built for everyone!

Choose between:

13KM Course - The ultimate challenge for those ready to push their physical and mental limits.

8KM Course - Perfect for first-time Hellraisers looking to embrace the madness at a slightly shorter distance.

This event welcomes **adults, teens and families** for a wild day of adventure, teamwork and mud-drenched fun! Whether you're a seasoned athlete or just up for a crazy, unforgettable day out, HELL & BACK guarantees an electric atmosphere and a massive sense of achievement once you cross that finish line!

New For June 2025!

Brand New Heart-Pounding Obstacles as HELL & BACK raises the stakes for June!

- **Monkey Mayhem:** Swing, climb, and grip your way through the towering Killruddery Forest, testing your upper body strength like never before!
- **Army Attack:** Feel like Bear Grylls is on your tail as you take on a military-style endurance mission designed to push your limits.
- Plus all the legendary obstacles you love - Think Heartbreak Ridge, Splash Zone, Ice Baths, Valley of Pain and Hell on Earth!

Rustic Hot Showers Now Available!

No, it's not The Ritz, but they'll warm you up and wash off the mud just fine!

Brian Keane Joins the Action

This year, we're bringing in the big guns! HELL & BACK is teaming up with renowned fitness coach Brian Keane, whose high-energy motivation will get you fired up and ready to crush the course. If you need extra fire in your belly, Brian's got your back!

- Award-winning author, podcaster & trainer
- Expert in fitness, nutrition & mental resilience
- HYPE TEAM leader - bringing next level energy to every wave!

Why HELL & BACK Stands Out

HELL & BACK combines stunning natural beauty with meticulously designed obstacles that push you to your limits. Set against the magnificent backdrop of Killruddery Estate, the course weaves through rivers, forests, mountains and bogs with breathtaking views of Dublin Bay and the Little Sugar Loaf. Expect teamwork, camaraderie, resilience and legendary moments that will have you reminiscing long after the mud has dried. Enjoy an atmosphere like no other and join thousands of like-minded adventurers, soaking up the energy of the electric event village and revel in a post-run high that's truly unmatched.

The Countdown Is On

The biggest adventure event of 2025 is nearly here, and spots are filling fast! Don't miss your chance to be part of this iconic event.

Sign up now at www.hellandback.ie and be part of the biggest HELL & BACK yet!

Are you ready to unleash your inner warrior?



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DISCOVER THE STORY BEHIND IRELAND'S FAVOURITE BLACKPUDDING



Clonakilty Food Co. make Ireland's favourite blackpudding, using a secret recipe that dates back to the 1880s.

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This is a family friendly experience, everyone is welcome.



Book tickets online now via www.clonakiltyvisitorcentre.ie or call **023 883 4835** or email visit@clonakiltyblackpudding.ie



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Senior/Student	€4
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Open All Year Round

Tues-Sat
10am to 5pm

Last Entry 4pm

Book Online at:

www.michaelcollinshouse.is



Comhairle Contae Chorcaí
Cork County Council

Head West to

COUNTY MAYO

County Mayo, located in the wild and wonderful west of Ireland, offers a diverse range of experiences. Whether you're an outdoor enthusiast, a history buff or a foodie, Mayo has something special waiting for you.

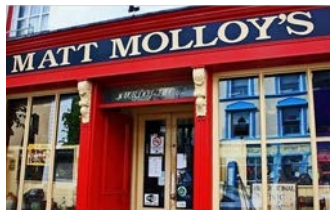
Discover History at Westport House

Nestled in the scenic town of Westport, Westport House is one of Ireland's finest stately homes. The estate dates back over 300 years and offers a fascinating glimpse into Ireland's aristocratic past. Explore the beautifully preserved rooms, stroll through the sprawling gardens or take part in the many activities on offer, including kayaking, archery and guided tours. Families will love the Pirate Adventure Park, which is sure to keep younger visitors entertained.



Experience Traditional Music at Matt Molloy's

No trip to Mayo is complete without experiencing a live traditional Irish music session and Matt Molloy's Pub in Westport is the place to do it. Owned by Matt Molloy, the legendary flautist of The Chieftains, this cosy pub is known for its nightly sessions that draw both locals and visitors alike. Settle in with a pint of Guinness, soak up the lively atmosphere and enjoy the sounds of authentic Irish music filling the air.



Enjoy a Pint at Johnny Moran's Pub

For a more laid-back but equally charming pub experience, head to Johnny Moran's Pub in Foxford. This traditional Irish pub is famous for its warm atmosphere, friendly locals and great drinks. Whether you're stopping by for a quiet pint or staying for the evening, Johnny Moran's is a hidden gem embodying rural Ireland's spirit.

The Great Western Greenway

The Great Western Greenway – Ireland's first greenway – is a walking and cycling trail in County Mayo on the Wild Atlantic Way. Running 49km around the Eastern and Northern stretches of Clew Bay in Co Mayo.

It begins in the popular seaside town of Westport and traverses through the quaint towns and villages of Newport and Mulranny before coming to a gentle finish at Achill Sound.

Offering mild gradients courtesy of its initial beginning as a railway line and with magnificent landscape



backdrops such as Clew Bay, Clare Island, the mythical holy mountain Croagh Patrick and the Nephin Beg Mountains which forms Part of Wild Nephin National Park.

You will travel through bogs, woodlands and active farmland, while spotting wildlife and flora, the Greenway has something unique for each and every visitor.

Explore Mayo North's Scenic Beauty

If you want to experience Mayo's natural beauty, Mayo North is the ideal destination. This unspoiled region offers a mix of rugged coastlines, charming villages



and stunning inland landscapes. Take a scenic drive through the region's winding roads, stopping off to explore Lough Conn and Lough Cullin or visit Ballina, where you can fish for salmon in the famous River Moy. Mayo North is also home to many walking and cycling trails, offering breathtaking views around every corner.

McDonnell's The Lobster Pot

McDonnell's (The Lobster Pot) is one of the most renowned pubs in Erris, and has been named by the locals as The Lobster Pot – once you get in, there's no getting out! This is a unique place because it is also a national bus stop and an undertaker. Regular live music gigs, a roaring turf fire and great craic with Pádraig (one of the owners) – a very popular spot!

From the lively music sessions at Matt Molloy's to the serene beauty of Mayo North, County Mayo is a destination



that offers something for everyone. Whether you're hiking along the coast, discovering hidden historical gems or enjoying a delicious meal in a quaint café, this part of Ireland will capture your heart and leave you longing to return.

Wild Nephin National Park

COUNTY MAYO



BALLYCROY VISITOR CENTRE

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ADMISSION FREE

Open Daily | March - October | 10.00am - 5.30pm

WHAT TO SEE & DO

- ✦ Stunning panoramic views of the Nephin Beg Mountains, Achill Island and surrounding seascapes
- ✦ Interactive Exhibition on Wild Nephin National Park
- ✦ Tóchar Daithí Bán nature trail with pond, viewing point, meadow & sculpture trail
- ✦ Mayo Dark Sky Park Viewing Point
- ✦ Information Desk & Education Centre
- ✦ Ginger & Wild Café serving delicious homemade food
- ✦ Special events including guided walks, children's activities, and special interest talks & workshops

See website for up-to-date info: www.nationalparks.ie/wild-nephin

GETTING HERE

Visitor Centre is located in Ballycroy village on the the N59.

GPS: 54.02429, -9.82320 Eircode: F28 RX77

CONTACT US

Visitor Centre: +353 (0)98 49888

WildNephinNationalPark

ballycroyvisitorcentre@npws.gov.ie

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www.nationalparks.ie/wild-nephin

WildNephin



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- Embrace stunning Wild Atlantic Way landscapes in North Mayo & West Sligo.
- Explore 6,000 years of history at sites such as Downpatrick Head & Céide Fields.
- Enjoy wildlife sea safaris & boat trips to the deserted Inishkea Islands.
- Thrilling outdoor adventures: stand-up paddling, surfing, hiking & stargazing under Mayo's dark skies.
- Relax on secluded Blue Flag beaches.
- Enjoy Irish culture with music & festivals like:
 - Fleadh Cheoil Mhaigh Eo (3rd-11th May, Ballina)
 - Ballina Salmon Festival (13th-19th July, Ballina)
 - Belmullet Festival (10th-17th Aug, Belmullet)
- Experience versatile accommodations, award-winning dining & warm hospitality.



www.mayonorth.ie



Charming

COUNTY CLARE

When you think of County Clare, you likely imagine sweeping coastal views, lively Irish music and hidden gems waiting to be discovered. This captivating county offers visitors a perfect blend of natural beauty, cultural charm and culinary excellence. From world-famous landmarks to some lesser-known treasures, there's no shortage of exciting things to see and do in Co. Clare.

The Iconic Cliffs of Moher

You can't visit County Clare without witnessing the spectacular Cliffs of Moher. Towering 700 feet above the Atlantic Ocean, these majestic cliffs offer panoramic views that will leave you in awe. If you're feeling adventurous, hop aboard a Cliffs of Moher Cruises boat tour to marvel at these natural wonders from the sea.

A Family Adventure at Moher Hill Open Farm

Just a stone's throw away from the Cliffs of Moher, Moher Hill Open Farm is a fantastic spot for families. Kids will love interacting with friendly farm animals like alpacas, goats and donkeys.



A Michelin-Starred Experience at Homestead Cottage

For food enthusiasts, a trip to Homestead Cottage is a must.

Tucked away in the scenic Burren region, this Michelin-starred restaurant offers an exquisite dining experience that showcases the finest local ingredients

Savour Local Flavours at Burren Smokehouse

Continuing the culinary theme, visiting the Burren Smokehouse is a treat for seafood lovers. Known for its expertly smoked salmon, this family-run smokehouse in Lisdoonvarna has been a staple of the Clare food scene for decades. While you are there pop in next door for a great Guinness and get to meet the legend that is Peter Curtin.



Stay in Style at Carrygerry Country House

For those seeking a more tranquil stay, the elegant Carrygerry Country House offers a charming retreat. Located near Shannon Airport, this 200-year-old country house combines luxurious comfort with a cosy, homely atmosphere.



Explore the Burren's Unique Landscape

The Burren, with its lunar-like limestone landscape, is one of Clare's most unique natural attractions. Explore ancient tombs, wander through wildflower-strewn fields or hike its rugged trails for a glimpse of Ireland's geological wonders. Whether you're an avid hiker or a history buff, the Burren offers endless possibilities for discovery.

Ennis, Co. Clare and Taylor's Bar

After a day exploring the Burren, head to Taylor's Bar, a traditional pub with a classy, modern twist, situated right in the heart of Ennis, Co. Clare. Pop in and join them for a pint, a glass of wine or something from the top shelf and experience the wonderful, cosy atmosphere! Great staff, even better drinks and lots of craic.

Coffee and More at The Coffee Hatch

If you need a caffeine fix, The Coffee Hatch in Ennistymon is your go-to spot. This quirky, small-batch coffee stop is known for its strong brews and locally sourced snacks.

Ireland's Natural Attraction

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Michelle Walsh Jackson

The Novel Traveller

Why Michelle considers The Wild Atlantic Way to be out of this world

The Wild Atlantic Way conjures up images of lashing waves and stunning coastline. Running 2,600km along Ireland's western shoreline, it rivals the Pacific Coast Highway and other scenic routes around the world. Let's start at the top on the Inishowen Peninsula in County Donegal. Did you know the epic film The Last Jedi was made at Polfreann, also known as Hell's Hole, at the most northernmost point of the county at Malin Head?

I found a great base to explore Ireland's largest peninsula at **The Redcastle Hotel**, set in a stunning location overlooking Lough Foyle. The Redcastle Hotel has a luxurious swimming pool and facilities and is right beside **Inish Adventures**, for anyone who loves watersports or kayaking. www.redcastlehoteldonegal.com

Nearby, **The Wild Alpaca Way** is a terrific experience. Brainchild of John McGonigle and his wife Patricia, the Alpaca farm is based up at the Knockamany Bens, towering above the un-spoilt golden sands and ultramarine sea. Gentle by nature, each of John's 25 Alpacas are lovingly given names such as Badger, Benji, Salt and Pepper. Although they are typical to Peru, they love our Irish Climate. Just being around these gorgeous animals is a therapy session and the two-hour walk is fabulous family fun. www.wildalpaway.com costs €22.50 per person but a family ticket that includes three children U14 is only €45.

Doagh Famine Village, a little further along the peninsula, is a fascinating look at life in the 19th century in Donegal. Pat Doherty has turned his ancestral family home into a living museum showing what life was like, how people farmed, fished and caught rabbits. He tells about the famine and the Land Wars from different perspectives. This is a self subsidised museum so every person who visits makes a difference in keeping it going. Open from 17th March to 12th October, Daily from 10am until 5pm. Adults €12.50. Children Under 16 €6.50. Children Under four are free plus they offer Wheelchair access and parking. www.Doaghfaminevillage.com

At the other end of the WAW, in the southwest corner of Ireland, is the stunning Dingle Peninsula, in County Kerry. Once home to the famous **Dingle Dolphin Fungi**, where his legacy lives on at the fabulous adventurous **Dingle Sea Safari**. You'll get to explore hidden sea caves and soaring cliffs and spend the time spotting dolphins, seals, puffins and occasional whales, while learning about the rich history and folklore of the region. Be sure to wear warm layers on this rip-roaring adventure. Tours depart from Dingle Pier and last 2.5 to 3 hours. Each trip accommodates a maximum of 12-passengers, ensuring a personal experience. Visit www.dingleseasafari.com for tour details and online booking.

Running all along the Wild Atlantic Way are idyllic islands steeped in culture in history. Stunning Achill in Mayo is also

the setting for Oscar nominated movies. Beside Achill, Clare Island is where the legacy of the Pirate Queen, Grace O'Malley lives on. To become immersed in the Irish language pop over to the Aran Islands and see the epic **Dún Aonghasa Fort** while learning the *cupla focal* of Gaelige.

If you're looking for a culinary treat stop off in Sligo Town and soak up the essence of poet WB Yeats in the fabulous surroundings at **Eala Ban** and delicious food too. Another favourite of mine is **Hooked** – both offerings from award winning chef Anthony Gray. For something completely different just two miles outside Galway you can enjoy the thrill of dining on **The Orient Express**. The historic **Pullman Restaurant at Glenlo Abbey Hotel** and Estate features two original carriages and has reopened after a stunning refresh and an elevated dining experience led by Head Chef, Angelo Vagiotis. It boasts magnificent views overlooking Lough Corrib on a 138-acre estate. The family lodges are terrific value offering 5-star stays without 5-star prices and great for family get togethers. www.glenloabbeyhotel.ie

I hope I've given you plenty of food for thought and if you don't get around The Wild Atlantic Way this time – like me – you'll just have to keep going back..

For more from Michelle see www.thenoveltraveller.com and www.novelireland.com





Escape to Carrygerry Country House for a Relaxing Getaway with Someone Special



Carrygerry Country House,

Near Newmarket-on-Fergus and just minutes away from Shannon, is a 200 year old Manor tastefully restored to its former glory, set in a idyllic mature country setting. On arrival, you will experience a relaxed and unique country house atmosphere with open fires and antique furniture. There are 11 bedrooms, all individually styled in keeping with the house.



Our Conservatory Restaurant is open Thursday, Friday & Saturday evenings for dinner from 5.00pm-8.30pm. Sunday Lunch served from 1pm-3.30pm. Our dishes offers fresh, locally sourced produce and a complete well balanced menu

Set Dinner Menu for €40 (3 courses plus Tea/Coffee) is served

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Whet your appetite

There are a great many delicious foods that visitors to Ireland should include on their culinary bucket list. Ingredients and dishes worth travelling for include unctuous artisan butter from grass-fed cattle, slathered on soda bread; any of the country's farmhouse cheeses and the meaty richness of a beef and Guinness stew.

For shellfish lovers, that bucket list needs to also feature native Irish oysters. World-class and world famous, these real Irish delicacies offer a sensory experience and a fresh taste of Irish coastal waters.

A brief history of oysters in Ireland

Since prehistoric times, oysters have been consumed in Ireland. Shell middens – archaeological sites of domestic waste are found around the Irish coast – dating from the Bronze Age and containing rich deposits of oysters are historical proof of their popularity. It's estimated that oyster cultivation in Ireland began in the 13th Century and native oysters were regarded as a key food, available in abundance. Fast forward to the mid-17th Century and oysters were so popular that artificial oyster beds were being created off Irish shores. Considered to be one of the first 'fast foods', by the end of the 19th Century, the native oyster was almost extinct due to overfishing and disease. In the 1970s, the Irish government introduced the Pacific oysters (gigas), generally known as the Irish rock oyster, which unlike natives are not seasonal and are less prone to disease.



What makes them so special?

Let's start with the wild Atlantic waters and freshwater rivers and unspoilt landscape, which all contribute to their unique taste. Oysters grown in different bays have different flavour profiles. On the west coast, the Kelly Galway native flat oyster for example, beloved of chefs and gourmets, has a rich buttery taste and filters up to 11-litres of pure water an hour from the tide and the Clarinbridge and Kilcolgan rivers.

When to eat them

The rule when it comes to the native oyster is that because it only spawns in the summer, it is only available in months with an 'R' in them. The Irish rock oyster is available all year round.



How to eat them

Oyster purists might prefer them 'au naturel' but there's no shame in adding a classic mignonette or lemon juice to temper them. Treat your raw oyster as you would a grape – you wouldn't swallow that whole – because a little chewing will release the flavour. And of course they can be cooked in myriad dishes. Stout is a natural pairing or alternatively a crisp white wine.

Where to celebrate Irish oysters

The legendary Galway International Oyster Festival (September 27 – 29) has been running since 1954 and it's a shellfish lover's delight with live music, the World Oyster Opening Championship and an array of well-known chefs, as well as the thousands of visitors who descend on the city. Another option is to visit an oyster farm, such as DK Connemara Oysters in Letterfrack, Co. Galway, which runs daily tours, with private tours and gourmet dining also available. When it comes to seafood restaurants, visitors are spoiled for choice. Moran's Oyster Cottage in Kilcolgan, Galway, is a thatched cottage restaurant renowned for its fresh seafood, pints and of course, its wild oysters.



Go behind the scenes with a tour of the National Theatre of Ireland



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Department of Tourism, Culture,
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Ireland's Dry Stone Walls achieve

UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE STATUS

Striking emblem of the Irish countryside is fifth cultural heritage practice added to prestigious list, joining uilleann piping, hurling, harping and falconry.

An ancient method of construction that can be found dotted across the Irish landscape has been added to the prestigious **UNESCO list of protected cultural heritage practices**.

Dry stone walls are an almost ever-present sight around rural Ireland, with some stunning examples dating back thousands of years having stood the test of time for centuries. In fact, the long-standing farming tradition dates to the Neolithic Period some 5,000 years ago.

The walls' apparent simplicity belies their ingenuity; dry stone walls are handmade without any mortar or concrete and so their construction requires

great skill and attention to detail - with each stone carefully measured, cut, and prepared to ensure stability.

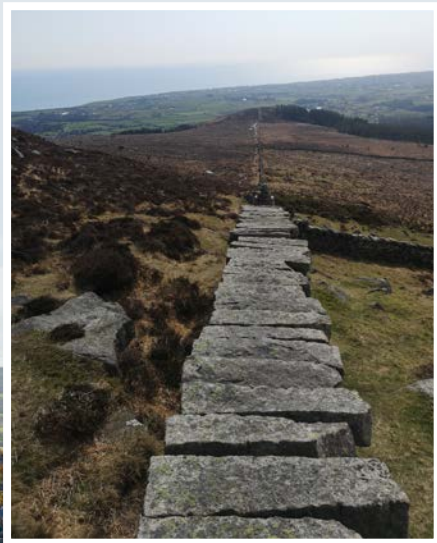
The longest continuous length of dry stone wall in Ireland, known as the Mourne Wall, is located in County Down and snakes an astonishing path 35km long across the rugged countryside. It passes over 15 summits of the tallest mountains in the region, known as the Mourne Mountain range, including the majestic Slieve Donard - the highest peak in the north of Ireland at 850 metres. The impressive wall is constructed entirely from local granite and took eight years to complete, with construction beginning in 1904.

Now, visitors can now experience the unique and enduring tradition of dry stone wall building firsthand at **Mourne Stone Walling**. Surrounded by the Mourne Mountains, passionate hosts **Jenny and Mark Hanna** bring guests on a magical woodland walk across the scenic County Down landscape, before master craftsman Mark brings the story of this ancient

custom to life. Mark has restored over 400 metres of original dry stone walls using granite from the Mourne Mountains, first sourced more than 300 years ago.

Working alongside him, visitors immerse themselves in the timeless tradition - measuring and gauging stones while learning the local language - and constructing a part of a stone-wall to preserve the historic craft for future generations. The experience allows visitors to witness this ancient craft in action while connecting with the land and history of Ireland - gaining a deeper appreciation for the craftsmanship and timeless beauty of these iconic structures, which continue to shape Ireland's stunning landscapes today.

The day concludes with a charming picnic of tea and cake enjoyed in the great outdoors while guests can sit back and admire their work. Guests can wrap up the day with a cozy overnight stay in one of the nearby **Green Holiday Cottages**, which provide a charming hideaway to relax and soak in the peaceful riverside views.



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The Best Road Trips in County Kerry:

SCENIC ROUTES, ICONIC STOPS AND ADVENTURE



Here are our best road trips in County Kerry that will leave you speechless.

1. THE RING OF KERRY

Ireland's Most Iconic Drive

The Ring of Kerry is undoubtedly one of the most famous road trips in Ireland, and for good reason. This 179-kilometer loop around the Iveragh Peninsula takes you past some of Ireland's most breathtaking views—from rugged coastlines to serene lakes and ancient ruins. As you drive along the route, you'll encounter lively towns like Killarney, Kenmare, and Cahersiveen—each with its unique charm.

One of the highlights of the drive is Ladies View, where you'll enjoy a panoramic vista over the Lakes of Killarney and the surrounding mountains. For history enthusiasts, a stop at Ross Castle and Muckross House & Gardens in Killarney National Park is a must.

Go Wild Pro Tip: Start your trip early in the day to avoid the crowds and soak in the peaceful beauty of Ireland's countryside.

2. SLEA HEAD DRIVE

Dingle Peninsula's Coastal Beauty

For those looking to venture a bit off the beaten path, the Sleat Head Drive on the Dingle Peninsula is a must. This 46-kilometer loop offers dramatic coastal views and fascinating historical sites. As you drive along this route, you'll encounter ancient bee-hive huts, the famous Blasket Islands, and the scenic Dunquin Pier, one of the most photographed spots in Ireland.

Go Wild Pro Tip: Catch a sunset at Dunmore Head—the westernmost point of Ireland—for an unforgettable moment.



3. THE SKELLIG RING

Off the Beaten Path Adventure

If you're looking for something even more remote and dramatic, the Skellig Ring is a must. This 18-kilometer route loops off the main Ring of Kerry Drive and takes you to some of the most breathtaking, less-explored areas of Kerry. The highlight of this drive is undoubtedly the view of Skellig Michael, a UNESCO World Heritage site, famous for its ancient monastic settlement and more recently as a filming location for Star Wars.



Go Wild Pro Tip: If you have time, take a boat trip from Portmagee to Skellig Michael for an up-close look at the island.



4. THE GAP OF DUNLOE

A Journey Through Mountains and Valleys

The Gap of Dunloe is a narrow mountain pass nestled between the MacGillycuddy's Reeks and Purple Mountain, offering one of the most picturesque road trips in County Kerry. Start your journey in Kate Kearney's Cottage, where you can either walk or take a jaunting car (horse-drawn carriage) through the pass. This winding route will take you past crystal-clear lakes, rocky landscapes, and steep mountain slopes.

This is a great trip for adventurers who love nature and want to experience the quieter side of Kerry. The pass is best visited in the morning to capture the soft light of the rising sun.

Go Wild Pro Tip: End your day with a boat ride across the Lakes of Killarney, where you can fully appreciate the region's tranquility.

Spring 3 for 2

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A Long Weekend in DINGLE

If you're seeking the perfect blend of adventure, culture and stunning scenery, a long weekend in Dingle, County Kerry, is for you. Nestled on the dramatic Wild Atlantic Way, Dingle is a charming, coastal town, bursting with history, natural beauty and warm Irish hospitality. Whether you're wandering through its colourful streets or exploring the surrounding landscapes, this corner of Ireland offers endless ways to enjoy your stay.



DAY 1: Outdoor Adventures and Luxurious Relaxation

On your final day, it's time to get active! If you're visiting in the warmer months, take to the waters for some kayaking around Dingle Bay. Alternatively, lace up your hiking boots and trek along the Dingle Way, a long-distance trail that provides magnificent views of the Atlantic Ocean and the mountains surrounding the peninsula.

For the ultimate relaxation after your outdoor pursuits, treat yourself to an afternoon of luxury at **Sheen Falls Lodge**. Although a short drive from Dingle, this five-star hotel and spa in nearby Kenmare offers the perfect place to unwind in style. Whether you're indulging in a rejuvenating spa treatment, dining on gourmet local cuisine, or simply enjoying the tranquillity of the surrounding estate, Sheen Falls guarantees a blissful retreat to round off your trip.

DAY 2: Discover Natural Wonders and Irish Whiskey

Dingle is home to some of Ireland's most spectacular scenery, so make sure to pack your camera for an exploration of the Sleah Head Drive, a scenic route that loops around the tip of the Dingle Peninsula. With panoramic views of rugged cliffs, distant islands and ancient beehive huts, Sleah Head Drive is the perfect way to see the breathtaking beauty of Ireland's west coast.

For lunch, why not sample the fresh seafood for which Dingle is renowned! Try out one of the town's seafood shacks or restaurants along the harbour. The day wouldn't be complete without experiencing a taste of local craftsmanship at **Skellig Six 18** Distiller. Located a short drive from Dingle, this boutique distillery offers guided tours and tastings of its premium whiskey and gin, crafted using locally sourced ingredients and pure Kerry water.

DAY 3: Immerse Yourself in Dingle's Local Cultures

Start your adventure by diving into Dingle's rich artistic heritage at **Louis Mulcahy Pottery**. Located just outside Dingle, this iconic pottery studio is the perfect place to see traditional Irish craftsmanship in action. Whether you're browsing the beautiful ceramics in the showroom or taking part in one of their hands-on workshops, you'll gain a deep appreciation for this time-honoured art form. Take home a handcrafted piece to remind you of your time in this special part of Ireland.

Afterwards, head back to Dingle town for a stroll along its vibrant harbour, where fishing boats bob gently in the water and seafood restaurants line the streets. In the evening, visit the legendary **Dick Mack's Pub**. With over a century of history, this beloved pub doubles as a leather shop and boasts a cosy atmosphere with walls filled with trinkets and photos from days gone by. Grab a pint, enjoy the live traditional music, and soak up the friendly vibe that makes Dingle pubs famous worldwide.





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A Long Weekend in **KINSALE**

Kinsale, located on the southern coast of County Cork, is a picture-perfect seaside town known for its vibrant atmosphere, delicious dining options and rich history. Whether you're here for a romantic getaway or a family adventure, a long weekend in Kinsale is just the ticket. Let's dive into what makes this coastal gem a must-visit destination.



DAY 1: A Taste of Kinsale's Culinary Delights

Start your Kinsale adventure with lunch at the **OHK Café**, a cosy spot where you'll find fresh pastries, artisan coffee and delightful brunch dishes. Whether you're grabbing a quick bite or lingering over a cappuccino, OHK's warm and inviting atmosphere will set the perfect tone for your weekend.

For dinner, head to **The Bulman Restaurant**, one of Kinsale's most iconic dining spots, located in the village of Summercove, just outside the town.

Enjoy a meal with stunning sea views, indulging in locally sourced seafood and hearty Irish dishes. If you're in the mood for a wine bar experience, **The Black Pig Wine Bar** offers a vast selection of organic wines paired with artisan cheese boards and local delicacies.

Afterwards, stroll over to **The Spaniard Bar**, a lively pub steeped in history. Its unique blend of old-world charm and upbeat atmosphere makes it a perfect spot to end the evening with a pint of Guinness or some live music.

DAY 2: Explore Kinsale's Scenic Beauty and History

Begin your day with a refreshing coffee from **Wild & Tame Coffee**, a small local favourite known for its speciality brews and freshly baked goods. Once energized, embark on a leisurely walk through the historic streets of Kinsale, or better yet, join one of the famous **Kinsale Ghost Tours** to learn about the town's rich past.

In the afternoon, indulge in a seafood lunch at **The Good Fish Shop**, where you can sample the freshest catch of the day. This no-frills, authentic fish market offers high-quality seafood, perfect for seafood lovers looking for a casual yet delicious meal.

After lunch, it's the perfect time to tour **Charles Fort**, one of the most well-preserved star-shaped forts in Ireland. The fort offers fantastic views of the coastline and a fascinating insight into Ireland's military history. History buffs will appreciate a visit to **James Fort** as well, another key site that played a vital role in protecting the harbour.

DAY 3: Relax and Unwind in Style

Enjoy a leisurely morning in Kinsale with breakfast at **Perryville House**, a luxurious guesthouse where you can savour homemade granola, fresh fruit and a variety of breakfast delights while overlooking the tranquil Bandon River.

Spend the rest of the day exploring the bustling market scene at **The Market Bar**, known for its great selection of food stalls, or treat yourself to a late afternoon cocktail at **Oscar Madissons**, a chic, contemporary bar that serves up unique cocktails with a flair.

Before leaving Kinsale, stop for one last drink at **The Greyhound**, a classic Irish pub that feels like stepping back in time. With a laid-back vibe and a warm welcome, it's the perfect spot to reflect on your weekend in this unforgettable town.

WHERE TO STAY

For a luxurious stay, check into **Actons Hotel**, a waterfront hotel with excellent amenities, including an indoor pool and spa. It's the ideal place to relax after a day of exploring.

Another wonderful option is the charming **Perryville House**, where old-world elegance meets modern comfort, perfect for couples looking for a romantic escape.

Whether you're sipping wine at The Black Pig, wandering through historic forts, or enjoying fresh seafood by the harbour, Kinsale will captivate you with its beauty, hospitality, and unforgettable charm.





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Discover

THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

By Keith Nicol

I have been lucky enough to explore many beautiful destinations around the world but few have captivated me quite like the Wild Atlantic Way in Ireland. This stunning 2,500 km route stretches along Ireland's rugged west coast, taking in some of the most spectacular landscapes and seascapes you are ever likely to see. With so much to see and do along the way, here are just a few of the top attractions that I would recommend for anyone planning a trip to Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way.

1. THE CLIFFS OF MOHER

No visit to the Wild Atlantic Way would be complete without a stop at the iconic Cliffs of Moher. These towering cliffs rise to a height of 214 metres and offer breathtaking views over the Atlantic Ocean.

2. THE RING OF KERRY

One of the most popular driving routes in Ireland, the Ring of Kerry is a 179 km circular route that takes in some of the most picturesque towns and villages in the country. Along the way, visitors can enjoy stunning views of the Atlantic coastline, visit ancient monastic sites and experience the traditional Irish way of life.

3. KILLARNEY NATIONAL PARK

Located in the heart of County Kerry, Killarney National Park is a must-visit destination for nature lovers. With its rugged mountain ranges, pristine lakes and ancient woodlands, the park offers visitors a chance to escape the hustle and bustle of modern life and reconnect with nature.

4. DINGLE PENINSULA



Another popular driving route, the Dingle Peninsula offers visitors a chance to explore some of the most remote and rugged landscapes in Ireland. Along the way, visitors can enjoy stunning views of

the Atlantic coastline, visit ancient archaeological sites and experience the traditional Irish way of life.

5. CONNEMARA NATIONAL PARK

Located in the heart of County Galway, Connemara National Park is a haven for nature lovers. With its rugged mountains, pristine lakes and wild bogs, the park offers visitors a chance to explore some of the most spectacular landscapes in Ireland. There are several walking trails and viewing points in the park, allowing visitors to experience the beauty of Connemara at their own pace.

6. THE SKELLIG ISLANDS

Located off the coast of County Kerry, the Skellig Islands are a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of the most unique destinations on the Wild Atlantic Way. Visitors can take a boat tour to the islands to explore the ancient monastic settlements and observe the rich wildlife, including seals, dolphins and seabirds.



7. THE BURREN



Located in County Clare, the Burren is a unique and otherworldly landscape that is unlike anything else you will find on the Wild Atlantic Way. The area is characterized by its limestone pavements, which are

home to a diverse array of flora and fauna. Visitors can explore the area on foot, taking in the unique landscape and learning about the fascinating geology and natural history of the region.

8. ACHILL ISLAND

Located off the coast of County Mayo, Achill Island is a rugged and unspoiled destination that offers visitors a chance to escape the crowds and reconnect with nature. The island is home to some of the most spectacular beaches in Ireland, as well as several walking trails and cycling routes that take visitors through some of the most scenic landscapes on the island.



9. DONEGAL

Located in the far north of Ireland, Donegal is a wild and remote destination that is perfect for anyone looking to escape the crowds and experience the rugged beauty of the Wild Atlantic Way. Visitors can explore the stunning coastline, hike in the rugged mountains or experience the unique culture and traditions of this ancient part of Ireland.

10. GALWAY CITY

No visit to the Wild Atlantic Way would be complete without a stop in Galway City. Known as the cultural heart of Ireland, Galway is a vibrant and bustling city that is steeped in history and tradition. Visitors can explore the city's winding medieval streets, enjoy live music and entertainment in its many pubs and restaurants, or take a stroll along the banks of the River Corrib.



11. THE CLIFFS OF SLIEVE LEAGUE

Located in County Donegal, the Cliffs of Slieve League are among the highest sea cliffs in Europe, rising to a height of 601 meters. Visitors can take a guided tour of the cliffs or explore the area on foot, taking in the stunning views over the Atlantic Ocean and the rugged coastline of County Donegal.

12. THE ARAN ISLANDS

Located off the coast of County Galway, the Aran Islands are a group of three islands that offer visitors a chance to experience traditional Irish culture and hospitality. Visitors can explore the islands on foot or by bicycle, taking in the stunning views over the Atlantic Ocean and visiting the ancient monastic sites and traditional Irish villages that dot the landscape.

13. THE GREAT WESTERN GREENWAY

Located in County Mayo, the Great Western Greenway is a 42 km off-road cycling and walking trail that takes visitors through some of the most scenic landscapes in Ireland. The trail follows the route of an old railway line and takes visitors through ancient woodlands, past pristine lakes and along the rugged coastline of County Mayo.

14. THE BEARA PENINSULA

Located in the southwest of Ireland, the Beara Peninsula is a hidden gem that is often overlooked by visitors to the Wild Atlantic Way. The area is characterized by its rugged mountain ranges, picturesque fishing villages and stunning coastal scenery. Visitors can explore the area on foot or by car, taking in the unique landscapes and traditional Irish way of life.

15. FINALLY...

Don't miss out on experiencing the Signature Discover Points along the Wild Atlantic Way. These are 15 key destinations that have been identified as must-see attractions for anyone exploring the Wild Atlantic Way. These include the Cliffs of Moher, the Skellig Islands, the Burren and the Dingle Peninsula, among others.

In addition to these top attractions, there are countless other hidden gems and off-the-beaten-path destinations that are waiting to be discovered along the Wild Atlantic Way. From remote beaches and hidden coves to quaint fishing villages and traditional Irish pubs, the route offers something for everyone.

Whether you are a nature lover, a history buff, or simply looking for a chance to escape the stresses of modern life, the Wild Atlantic Way is an unforgettable destination that is sure to leave you with memories that will last a lifetime. So pack your bags, hit the road and get ready to experience the wild and rugged beauty of Ireland's west coast.



LAND OF FOOD, SCENERY AND CULTURE

CEO of Tourism Ireland, Alice Mansergh, on the many reasons why the island of Ireland is on visitors' bucket lists.

In conversation with Meg Walker



*Arranmore Island, Co. Donegal @
Garath Wray/Fáilte Ireland*

We're excited to elevate brand Ireland in 2025. Typically, people who are thinking of coming here are also thinking of Scotland, Iceland or Norway, so it's about highlighting why visitors should choose this island. We'll be making the most of big sporting moments, such as the 153rd Open at Royal Portrush in July and the American College Football Classic in August, or 'Farmageddon' as it's Iowa State vs Kansas State (a reference to the agricultural roots of both colleges); and

we've got our first NFL game with the Pittsburgh Steelers playing in Croke Park in Dublin. Then there are lots of festivals to get behind, starting with the St. Patrick's Day celebrations, and we'll continue building on our Home of Halloween campaign, which highlights another major Irish festival at the other end of the year. Over 200 million people around the world saw the campaign, learning that Halloween originated in Ireland over 2,000 years ago, and last October saw a boost in



overseas visitor spend. It's a partnership between us telling that story, with Fáilte Ireland and Tourism NI working with local councils on wonderful festivals like Púca or Derry Halloween.

Slow Tourism Month will be kicking off in June. Sustainability is increasingly on people's minds. They're willing to fly here but once they're on the island, 50% of potential visitors say they'd pay more for sustainable experiences, transport and accommodation once here. Car hire companies are offering EVs to a greater extent, while one of the most visited pages on our website is the 'How to Travel Ireland by Rail' page and there are wonderful itineraries you can do. For example, from Belfast Grand Central Station, which is now connected to Dublin hourly, you can get to Derry, Mussenden Temple and Castlerock. Michael Palin called the Coleraine to Derry route one of the world's greatest train journeys. Then in the south, you can get out to Galway, and from there by boat to the Aran Islands, or down to Waterford and along the greenways. So, it's about helping people unlock all those alternative ways to get around and spend a little bit longer in communities and nature.

We love our ambassadors sharing their own stories and connections.

Dermot O'Leary's Taste of Ireland aired last year and is still available on ITV Player. O'Leary is a well-loved TV presenter in Great Britain but not everybody knows he has Irish roots. The diaspora story is told with such pride in places like the USA and Canada, but there's a huge population in Great Britain with Irish connections. Dermot was a perfect ambassador because his parents moved from Wexford to Essex decades ago and he grew up with those strong Irish connections. The five-part series sees him travel from Cork to Wexford, Dublin and Belfast and he's exploring the culture, scenery and culinary scene. His dad played hurling for Wexford and Dermot tries out the sport there.

Looking at our competitiveness is important, particularly when it comes to how we're viewed in European markets. Seven out of ten US visitors think a holiday here will be good value and that's partly driven by exchange rates and their own experience of travel costs within the US. But it's a slightly different picture if

you go to markets like Great Britain or Germany. There, people are more value conscious. While it's hard to change the costs of doing business, we do need to dial up how much people want to come here. You want people to feel that while Ireland may not be the lowest cost destination, they'll get huge value from it as a place where a lifetime of memories are made and put it high on their bucket list. Then there are complexities like the Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) being introduced. This is a UK-wide government policy related to immigration but it applies to Northern Ireland. If you're coming from the EU or North America, and you land into Dublin, to travel into Northern Ireland, you now need this ETA. So, there are concerns around introducing that extra step.

Every area of the island, if you just slow down, there are wonderful things to see and do.

Taking the time to find a walk through nature or finding a place that's going to unlock the history of that area for you, is so worthwhile. There isn't an area of the island I've been to where there wasn't something jaw-dropping to learn about or enjoy and it's just about making sure you're not speeding along a motorway, never getting to stop and experience it fully or talking to local people.

There are incredible food experiences around Ireland that are a joy to discover. Ireland isn't immediately associated with food in the minds of people overseas in the way that France or Italy might be. But if you

consider what people do associate with Ireland, they tend to think about rolling green pastures and waves lashing in. Making that connection between our landscape and the food that comes from it and the amazing producers all across the island, is really inspiring. There's the **Burren Smokehouse**, the Michelin-starred Homestead Cottage in Doolin, and NearyNógs on the Mourne Coast making chocolate from cocoa beans, incorporating things like gorse or seaweed from the local environment. I've enjoyed discovering some of those culinary experiences.

The islands offer unique scenery and experiences. You've got everything from the Skelligs up to Tory Island on the Wild Atlantic Way, with over 100 islands in Clew Bay alone. Then Rathlin on the north coast, the Saltees off Wexford with their puffins and from Dublin you can get out to Dalkey Island, where there's a church that's more than 1,000 years old. Inland, we have beautiful little islands with castles on them in Roscommon and Cavan and along the inland waterways.

I have a couple of staycations planned. I'll be heading to the Mourne Mountains and to Mayo later in the summer with family. I'm always inspired to see the professional surfers at Mullaghmore in Sligo or Donegal. I'm not particularly sporty but I have two kids, aged seven and eleven, and at some point, we must try surfing, maybe at the **National Surf Centre** in Strandhill in Sligo or somewhere on the northern part of the Wild Atlantic Way.



Malin Head, Co. Donegal
@Gareth Wray/Fáilte Ireland

9 bucket-list experiences on the Wild Atlantic Way

Wild lighthouses, majestic cliffs and some of the best oysters in the world, here are nine unmissable Wild Atlantic Way experiences

Snaking down the entire length of the western coast of Ireland, the Wild Atlantic Way is like a highlight reel of all that's great about Irish scenery, with dazzling white sand beaches, dramatic cliffs soaring over the ocean and sparkling clear waters as far as the eye can see. But while the Wild Atlantic Way makes for a perfect road trip, there are plenty of adventures to have along the way, whatever time of year you visit. Here are some incredible experiences to add to your bucket list.

1. GO STARGAZING IN MAYO

There's nothing quite like the night skies in Mayo. When the weather is clear, you're met with a blanket of twinkling stars and galaxies in the sky overhead, with no light pollution to impede the view. The best place for stargazing is at Mayo Dark Sky Park, set among the wilds of the Nephin Mountains in Ballycroy. In the winter months, they run a weekly guided dark sky walk, so you can take a stroll with an expert guide, who can point out the constellations and planets above.

2. SURFING FUN IN STRANDHILL, COUNTY SLIGO

Feel like chasing some waves? Ireland has become one of the most popular big-wave destinations in the world with massive swells drawing experienced surfers every autumn.

Beginners, though, should head for Strandhill in County Sligo, where the long sandy beach offers gentler waves that ideal for novices. Learning to surf here is great fun and the Sligo Surf Experience offers lessons that are fully guided by trained instructors. Afterwards, warm yourself up with hot tea and a classic Irish stew at Shell's Café.



3. FORAGE FOR SEAWEED IN KERRY

The Wild Atlantic Way is a treasure trove for seaweed, whether you are soaking in a seaweed bath in Sligo or sipping a kelp gin in West Cork. But edible seaweed is prolific all along the shoreline, and it's delicious to boot. Take a seaweed discovery walk with Atlantic Irish Seaweed and you'll stroll along some beautiful beaches such as Derrynane on the Kerry coast, learning how to identify the native Irish seaweed and enjoying some nibbles along the way.

4. A WILD RIDE OUT TO A LIGHTHOUSE, COUNTY CORK

The Wild Atlantic Way is studded with lighthouses perched on the edge of dramatic peninsulas along the route, but one that you won't want to miss is Fastnet Rock. This tiny jagged island was known as "Ireland's Teardrop" as it was the last sight emigrants would glimpse of Ireland on their journey across the Atlantic. The lighthouse here is the wildest and tallest rock lighthouse in Ireland and can be visited on a day trip with Fastnet Tour from Baltimore or Schull in County Cork. You can't land on the island, but the trip is an adventure in itself and whales and dolphins are frequently spotted en route.





5. FLY BETWEEN THE SEA STACKS IN DONEGAL

All along the western shore there are incredible sea stacks, from the towering pile of Downpatrick Head in County Mayo up to the jagged peaks of Malin Head in County Donegal. And it's there, in the northernmost county on the Wild Atlantic Way, where you can experience the sea stacks up close on a zip-lining adventure with Unique Ascent. On a Tyrolean traverse, you'll glide between the rocky outcrops for an unbeatable adrenaline rush, with epic views to boot. But if that's not your speed, you can still enjoy these geological marvels from the shore, on a picturesque stroll along the cliffs.

6. LEARN HOW TO SHUCK OYSTERS AT THE FLAGGY SHORE

Oysters taste their best when eaten with the scent of the sea in the air, the salt of the ocean pairing with the salinity of these delectable little treats. But why not go one step further, and learn how to shuck them yourself? At Flaggy Shore Oysters in County Clare, you can learn all about how oysters are grown before mastering the art of shucking them, just steps from the crystal-clear water. Then comes the best part – enjoying the freshest oysters you'll ever eat with a specially selected glass of organic wine.

7. SEE SLIEVE LEAGUE FROM THE WATER

Sure, the soaring cliffs of Donegal's Slieve League are impressive when you see them from above. But the views

are breath-taking from below, where you can really get a sense of their sheer scale on a boat trip that takes you right underneath these towering sea cliffs. Head out with **Sliabh Liag Boat Trips** and you'll sail along the base of the cliffs, hearing about the myths and legends associated with the area and possibly spotting some dolphins, too. If you're feeling brave, you can even take a dip in the dazzling blue waters – just wear a wetsuit in the cooler months.

8. CYCLE THE GREAT WESTERN GREENWAY

There are hundreds of stunning islands off the west coast of Ireland, but Achill in County Mayo is one of the few that you can reach by car. And it's even better when you approach it on two wheels, by cycling the Great Western Greenway all the way from Westport to Achill, skirting along the edge of Clew Bay. The route is 30 miles in total but you don't have to bike the whole thing – the final nine mile stretch from Mulranny to Achill is a joy, with mesmerising views of the mountains and the sea keeping you company as you cycle.

9. TAKE A CABLE CAR TO DURSEY ISLAND

Travel on Ireland's only cable car and you'll be met with County Cork's spectacular views, whether you're gazing down at the swirling waters of Dursey Sound or looking out over the lush green hills of the island itself. Once you're on Dursey Island, you can walk over the wild slopes, passing the resident sheep as you go, before finding the most scenic spot for a picnic. Keep an eye on the water, though – this area is a hotspot for dolphins and whales, and there are plenty of seabirds flitting around too.

www.ireland.com

Charm and culture in **LIMERICK**



Limerick is a vibrant city and county brimming with history, culture and stunning landscapes that capture the heart of every visitor. Nestled along the majestic River Shannon, Limerick offers a delightful blend of medieval charm, modern culture and outdoor adventures.

The Texas Steakout Restaurant

The Texas Steakout Restaurant holds the distinction of being one of the longest continually running eatery in Limerick City, a testament to their unwavering commitment to quality and exceptional dining experiences. Over the years, they have cultivated an outstanding culinary team that boasts the finest and longest-serving chefs in the area, ensuring that every dish is crafted with expertise and care.

The Hunt Museum: A Treasure Trove of History

The Hunt Museum is home to an extensive collection of ancient and modern artefacts. From Egyptian antiquities to works by Picasso, the museum offers an eclectic mix of treasures that are sure to intrigue any history lover. Located in a grand Georgian building by the river, the Hunt Museum provides a fascinating journey through time with objects that span centuries and continents.



Limerick City Gallery of Art: A Cultural Feast

For art enthusiasts, the Limerick City Gallery of Art is a must-visit. Located in the People's Park, this gallery showcases a diverse collection of Irish and international art, including contemporary and classical pieces. The gallery frequently hosts rotating exhibitions, making each visit a unique experience. Afterwards, relax in the picturesque People's Park, a perfect spot for a leisurely afternoon picnic or a stroll.



St. Mary's Cathedral: A Spiritual Landmark

One of the oldest buildings in Limerick, St. Mary's Cathedral, dates back to 1168 and is still an active place

of worship today. With its towering spire and impressive Gothic architecture, this cathedral is not only a place of spiritual significance but also a window into Limerick's medieval past. The interior features beautiful stained glass, a tranquil atmosphere and ancient tombs that tell the stories of Limerick's bygone days.

Outdoor Adventures: Explore the Shannon Region

For those who enjoy the outdoors, Limerick offers plenty of opportunities to explore the surrounding landscapes. The Great Southern Greenway is a 40-kilometre walking and cycling trail that passes through charming villages and beautiful countryside, making it a perfect way to experience rural Limerick.

If you're visiting during the summer, a trip along the River Shannon on a kayak or boat tour is an ideal way to discover the region's natural beauty. For golf enthusiasts, **Adare Manor** offers a world-class golf course, which has hosted many prestigious tournaments and its beautiful grounds make it worth a visit even for non-golfers.

Lay your Head Down

Relax, indulge and reward yourself with a stay in Limerick City's only 5-Star hotel, **The Savoy**. Boasting unrivalled hospitality in the very heart of this special city, this is a peerless address for luxury, a perfect setting for business and a treasured retreat for chic city breaks.



Food and Drink: A Taste of Limerick

No visit to Limerick is complete without indulging in its culinary delights. For a true taste of the city, head to The Milk Market, an open-air market offering fresh local produce, artisan foods and handmade crafts. It's the perfect spot to sample everything from traditional Irish breads to freshly caught seafood.



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TAKING TO THE SEAS AROUND IRELAND for an Ambitious Challenge



Irish Adventure Athlete Daragh Morgan, who swims in the Atlantic Ocean throughout the year, will attempt to swim all around the Island of Ireland, accompanied by support boat and crew, in a major sea-swim challenge this summer called 'SWIM EIRE 2025'.

Daragh is undertaking a rigorous training programme in preparation for this challenge. He has previously completed significant endurance challenges both on land and at sea including long distant swims:

- Forty Foot to Greystones
- Galway Bay (twice)
- Round Howth Head Swim
- Clare to Galway Memorial Swim
- and successfully completed Triathlons and IronMans.

He has also undertaken significant solo running challenges - RUN EIRE - running coast to coast from The Spanish Arch in Galway to The Samuel Beckett Bridge in Dublin in August 2023, raising awareness and funds for his chosen charity The Soar Foundation. This was followed by a full length- of-Ireland run, from Mizen Head in West Cork to Malin Head in Donegal, in Summer 2024.

Besides being a very ambitious endurance challenge SWIM EIRE will be all about raising awareness for the beauty of Irish Coastal waters and seas through

videography and photography. It will also be highlighting the need to keep them plastic free.

The Swim hopes to shine a light on the great work of both Simon Communities of Ireland and the RNLI and raise funds and awareness for these charities.

In the weeks leading up to the swim, a series of short talks are planned at key locations around Ireland to highlight the health benefits of sea swimming and the importance of preserving our oceans for future generations. Our seas and oceans play an important role in regulating the climate, protecting biodiversity and also in adding to the vibrancy of our coastal towns and communities all around Ireland. The Atlantic Ocean and Irish Sea around Ireland are home to an abundance of dolphins, seals, whales, puffins, seabirds, marine life and ocean plants.

However many seas around the world are under threat due to plastic pollution and SWIM EIRE hopes to highlight this issue and the importance of keeping them plastic free. It is so important that we look after them for future generations.



SWIM EIRE is actively looking for support for this challenge.

Anyone who would like to come onboard as a supporter or friend of the swim to help us spread the word, assist with logistics and support boat arrangements, or businesses for corporate sponsorship, are invited to reach out to us at info@swimeire.ie or www.swimeire.ie. You can follow follow Daragh's progress and updates on facebook, linkedin or instagram/@daraghmorgan98 /@swimeire

Donations to the gofundme page <https://gofund.me.com/f/swim-eire> are very much appreciated.

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5 of the best weekend road trips

ON THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY



Ireland is fortunate to have some of the most magnificent landscapes on the planet. Take to the open road and drive the Wild Atlantic Way, a true bucket list trip packed with stretches of vast coastline, golden strands and majestic landscapes, check out the amazing views on the Wild Atlantic Way.

Check out these five amazing weekend road trips on the Wild Atlantic Way.

1: BEAUTIFUL DONEGAL

Take the road less travelled from the tawny-coloured sands of Rossnowlagh to charismatic Kilcar and explore the delights of beautiful Donegal on a three day trip. Visit the bustling fishing town of Killybegs, it's the perfect place to try a spot of angling.

Weave your way through the picturesque Glengesh Pass and on to Fintra Bay, see if you can spot the distinctive peak of Sligo's Benbulbin in the distance. Soak up the stunning scenery and appreciate the tranquil atmosphere.

2: SCENIC WEST CORK

Far-flung West Cork is an explorer's paradise. Drive along the epic coastline and bask in the beautiful views. Start your trip at the Old Head of Kinsale, stretch your legs on the looped walk and afterwards head for a bite to eat in Kinsale, the gourmet capital of Ireland. Stroll through the colourful streets of Clonakilty and step into the not so distant past at Cobh's Lusitania Museum, there's so much to see and do in picturesque West Cork.



3: VISIT GALWAY AND MAYO

Breathe in the salty sea air as you travel the rugged coastline between Galway and Mayo. Take a boat trip to the Aran Islands, discover its ancient ruins and unspoiled scenery. Next up, it's the stunning Sky Road of Connemara; admire its towering mountain ranges and outstanding natural beauty. Stop off in picturesque Clifden for a coffee in one of the charming cafés before heading on to Westport, the towns and villages in this part of the country seem plucked from the pages of storybooks.



4: STUNNING KERRY



Enchanting castles, beautiful beaches and dramatic cliffs, Kerry is a magical must-see on the Wild Atlantic Way. Bring the camera or use your mobile phone, as you

follow the mountain roads from Killorglin to Caherdaniel, capturing gorgeous gardens and impressive islands, the makings of a gorgeous Instagram feed. Pay a visit to Kells Bay Garden on the way to Cahersiveen and drive the Skellig Ring for sensational views of the Skellig Islands.

5: CHECK OUT SLIGO AND MAYO

Check out two of Ireland's most photogenic counties with a road trip along the Sligo and Mayo coastline. Discover ancient secrets at the megalithic tombs



in Carrowmore, Sligo and later, head to Downpatrick Head in Mayo and explore the stunning sea stacks, blowholes and Atlantic caves. Book a wild food foraging tour, take a surf lesson and catch one of Strandhill's famous sunsets. From pretty Enniscrone to the buzzing heritage town of Ballina, plan this epic trip now.



MIZEN HEAD WILD ATLANTIC WAY



"One of the best attractions in Ireland..."
"... spellbinding"



Pic: John Eagle



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Some of Ireland's top beaches

to explore for fresh invigorating walks

Silver Strand Beach, Sherkin Island, Cork: Silver Strand Beach is an absolute must-see on Sherkin Island, accessible by ferry from Baltimore. The sandy beach is one of Sherkin Island's most beautiful spots, with magnificent views of Cape Clear Island and the Atlantic Sea.

Keem Bay, County Mayo: This secluded beach is often ranked as one of the most beautiful in the world. It's a crescent-shaped stretch of golden sand, surrounded by towering cliffs and dramatic rock formations. Towering cliffs and dramatic rock formations surround the beach, creating a sense of secluded beauty.

Curracloe Beach, Wexford: Curracloe Beach is situated in Wexford. It's no surprise that the sandy beach scored so highly, with it being featured in the 1998 film Saving Private Ryan as well as being known for being one of the cleanest and longest beaches in Ireland, backed by grassy dunes.

Portsalon Beach: Portsalon Beach, County Donegal: This stunning beach is located on the Inishowen Peninsula, with panoramic views of the surrounding mountains and coastline. Stunning beach with panoramic views of the surrounding mountains and coastline, soft white sand, and clear turquoise water.



Fanore Beach, located in the little village of Fanore, also has much to offer, with it being on the southern shore of Galway Bay

Sligo's Enniscrone Beach is a hidden gem described as a 'walker's paradise' on the shores of Killala Bay.

Burrow Beach, or the Hole in the Wall in Dublin offers spectacular views of Ireland's eye and is a twenty-five-minute drive from the city centre

Inchydoney Beach, County Cork: This long, sandy beach is located on the west coast of Cork, with views of the Atlantic Ocean and the Seven Heads Peninsula. The beach is popular with families, thanks to its calm waters and lifeguard supervision. Inchydoney Beach is also a great spot for surfing and windsurfing.



East End Beach, Galway: Galway's East End Beach is one to tick off the bucket list as long you're happy to clamber over some rocks to find the blissful, secluded cove on the Island of Inishbofin.



Dog's Bay, County Galway:

Escape the crowds and find your own slice of paradise at Dog's Bay. This secluded beach is located on the Connemara coast, surrounded by rolling hills and lush green scenery. The beach has a mix of sand and pebbles and the water is crystal-clear.

Barleycove Beach, Cork: Barleycove Beach is based close to the villages of Crookhaven and Goleen on the Mizen Peninsula and is about two hours from Cork City.

Banna Strand, Kerry: Banna Strand always proves to be popular with its beautiful views and crystal clear waters. Stretch out on the soft sand of Banna Strand and gaze at the Slieve Mish Mountains and the Maharees Islands in the distance. The waves are perfect for surfing, and the beach is a great spot to watch the birds. After a day at the beach, enjoy a traditional Irish meal at one of the many nearby pubs.

Streedagh Beach, Sligo: The site of three shipwrecks, Streedagh Beach is a 3km sandy strand linking Streedagh Point to Connor's Island, which makes for gorgeous views of the Sligo coastline.



Ballymastocker Bay, Donegal:

The pure white sands at Ballymastocker Bay is also on this list of the best hidden beaches in Ireland.

Killiney Beach, Dublin: Killiney Beach in Dublin can be viewed from Killiney Hill, with a 4.5 Google rating, and over 13,000 Instagram hashtags.

Dunmorán Strand, Sligo: Dunmorán Strand is a beautiful secluded beach, providing an easy 4km stretch for a stroll and sits just under 30 minutes from Sligo town.

Howth Secret Beach is one of Dublin's worst-kept secrets, sitting 45 minutes from the city centre, and providing somewhere more private for reflection and swimming

Tramore Beach in Waterford: The panorama of Tramore Bay, with the protecting arm of Brownstown Head beyond, is truly magnificent. The town itself is built on a hill that slopes down to the strand. The long, rolling waves in Tramore make it popular with water sports enthusiasts.



KERRY:

a visitor's paradise

Killarney National Park: A Natural Wonderland

One of the most iconic spots in Kerry, Killarney National Park is a true haven for nature lovers. Spanning over 26,000 acres, this park is home to the stunning Lakes of Killarney.

Don't miss Muckross House & Gardens, an elegant 19th-century mansion where you can step back in time and admire beautifully preserved interiors. For those up for a hike, Torc Waterfall offers a scenic walk through the woods and the climb up Torc Mountain rewards you with panoramic views of the park.



The Ring of Kerry: A Scenic Coastal Drive

Arguably one of the most famous drives in Ireland, the Ring of Kerry is a 179-kilometre loop that showcases the rugged coastline and spectacular views of Kerry's landscapes. The journey takes you through charming towns such as Kenmare and Cahersiveen, with plenty of opportunities to stop and admire the vistas along the way.



Dingle Peninsula: A Blend of Nature and Culture

The Dingle Peninsula offers a mix of wild beauty and rich Irish culture. Begin your journey in Dingle Town, a vibrant hub

of traditional music, cosy pubs and artisan shops. A visit to **Curran's Bar** and **Dick Mack's Pub** offers an authentic Irish pub experience, with great drinks and even better company.

From Dingle Town, venture out along Sleat Head Drive, a coastal route that offers awe-inspiring views of the Atlantic. You'll pass dramatic cliffs, ancient ruins and beaches like Coumeenoole Beach, often featured in films. For the more adventurous, a boat trip to the Blasket Islands provides a chance to explore a nature reserve and hike through uninhabited landscapes.

Skellig Michael: A UNESCO World Heritage Site

History and film enthusiasts alike will be captivated by Skellig Michael, a remote island off the Kerry coast. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, this island was once home to a 6th-century monastic settlement and more recently featured as a filming location for **Star Wars: The Last Jedi**.



Sheen Falls Lodge

If you're in search of luxury, Sheen Falls Lodge near Kenmare is a five-star retreat surrounded by 300 acres of woodland and waterfalls. Offering exceptional dining and access to golf, hiking and fishing, it's an idyllic getaway for those who want to combine nature and relaxation.



Louis Mulcahy Pottery

For nearly 50 years, Louis Mulcahy Pottery in Dingle has been crafting distinctive Irish pottery. Visitors can explore the workshop, watch artisans at work and purchase one-of-a-kind pieces. Mulcahy's pottery is known for its strength and vibrant, natural colours that reflect the Dingle landscape.

Skellig Six18 Distillery

For whiskey lovers, a visit to Skellig Six18 Distillery in Cahersiveen is a must. This distillery draws inspiration from the sixth-century monks who inhabited Skellig Michael. Take a tour of the distillery, sample their spirits, and learn about the process behind their unique blends, all set against the wild beauty of the Skellig Coast.



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Go Wild Magazine

Here's what our Clients have to say about us



Catherine Toolan, MD, Diageo

Irish Brand Homes, Guinness Storehouse, Guinness Open Gate Brewery, Roe & Co Whiskey Distillery

Heartfelt congratulations to Bobby and the entire Go Wild team on a decade of excellence! Go Wild Magazine consistently showcases the best of what Ireland has to offer for both international and domestic visitors. At Diageo Irish Brand Homes, we are proud to have you as a trusted partner in championing Irish tourism. Here's to another decade of success and beyond!

Catherine Toolan, Managing Director, Diageo Ireland Brand Homes

Waterford Crystal

'We have been a client of Go Wild Magazine for a number of years and it forms a key part of our yearly domestic marketing plan. Bobby's helpfulness and support has been fantastic and we are delighted to be part of Go Wild. Congratulations on 10 years of Go Wild Magazine and we wish you many, many more successful years.'

Clare Barrett & Shauna Kenneally Marketing Team

RIVERDANCE

Go WILD publications are a perfect medium to showcase Riverdance. The high quality and impactful imagery and the in-depth and personable interviews, engaged and delight readers. Bobby and the team's knowledge of and insights into the tourism market and their collaborative approach to sharing our stories has helped us achieve successful seasons with Riverdance at the Gaiety Theatre, Dublin.

Mary Keatley O'Donnell,
Riverdance, Abhann Productions,

Texas Steakout Restaurant Limerick

A Decade of Excellence: Celebrating Go Wild Magazine

For ten years, Go Wild magazine has been a paragon of elegance, an exemplar of fine writing, and a beacon for businesses like ours. Their meticulously curated content resonates with a readership that appreciates the finer things in life, a mirror reflecting the very clientele we at the Steakout endeavour to serve.

Our partnership with Go Wild has been nothing short of transformative. Their advertising acumen and consultative approach have not only heightened our marketing endeavours but have been instrumental in expanding our reach and enhancing our brand's prestige. We've had the privilege of growing alongside Go Wild, witnessing their ascension as a distinguished publication, and benefiting immensely from the association.

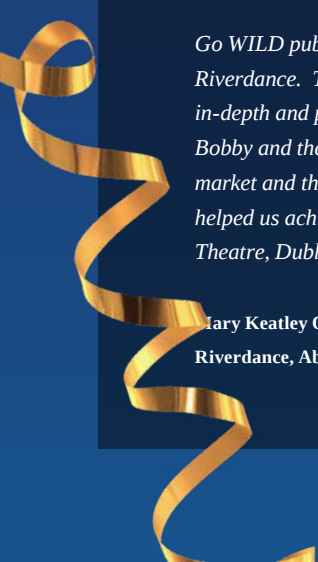
As Go Wild commemorates a decade of distinguished service, we extend our heartfelt gratitude for their support and collaboration. Their insightful advice and dedication to quality have helped shape our narrative within the community we proudly serve. Here's to Go Wild — may the next ten years be as wild and wonderfully successful as the last.

With warmest congratulations, The Steakout Team

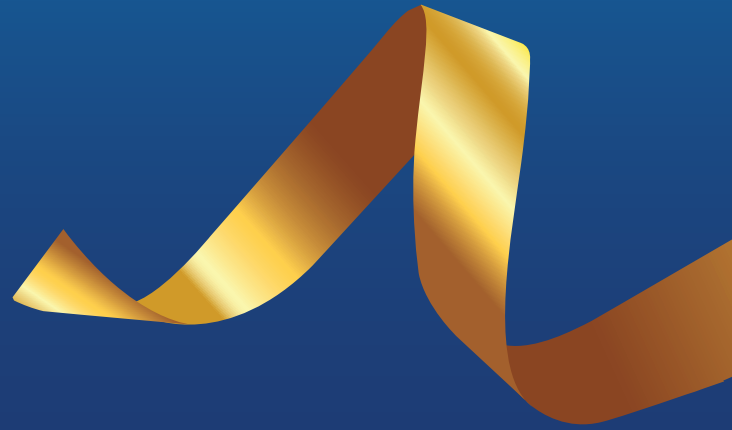
Ashford Castle

Firstly, we would like to congratulate Bobby and the team on an amazing 10-year journey. The concept of introducing a "Go Wild" series was inspiring, given Failte Ireland's introduction of The Wild Atlantic Way. We are delighted to be proud partners in success over all the 10 years and look forward to continuing our partnership for many years to come.

Regina O'Donoghue, Director of Marketing and Revenue



10 Years ANNIVERSARY



Malahide Castle

Bobby and the team go over and above for their clients – they have been instrumental in helping us reach a tourism audience that wants storytelling, new discoveries and adventures in Ireland – showcasing beautifully our 3 heritage attractions to an Irish and International audience.

Bobby is also a good sounding board and has his finger on the pulse of what the global tourist wants in this ever-evolving industry. Readers have “heart eyes” for destinations after reading Go WILD!

Pauline Matijasevich, Marketing & Communications Manager
Aramark | Malahide Castle | Newbridge House and Farm | Casino Model
Railway Museum

Shannon Ferry Group

“We are delighted to have been associated with Go Wild Magazines from the start. Quality publications that provide the perfect channel advertising for our company”.

Eugene Maher
Chief Executive Shannon Ferry Group

Powerscourt Distillery

We have been working with Bobby and the Go Wild team for several years now, both on editorial and advertising. We get great support from Go Wild throughout the year, get good traction on any advertising we do across the publications and are always happy with the results. Well done to Bobby for 10 years of quality production and service – here’s to the next ten years!

Roger Duggan
CEO, Powerscourt Distill

Dromoland Castle

We have been working with Bobby and the Go Wild team for several years now, both on editorial and advertising. We get great support from Go Wild throughout the year, and are very happy with the publications and the publications audience. Congratulations on the last 10 years of production and looking forward to continuing our cooperation into the future.

Fiona Gielty Sales Manager

Avoca

I have been advertising and working with Bobby and his Go Wild team for the last 10 years and safe to say has been a staple in my marketing plans over that time. It has to be said, Bobby goes above and beyond and has personally ensured the brands I’ve represented got prominent exposure across Go Wild print & digital platforms. Bobby is not only passionate about what he does but invested in his clients to deliver the best. It’s been a pleasure to know and work with Bobby and his team...here’s to the next 10!

Joanne Pollard
Tourism & Partnerships Manager

iNUA Hospitality Group

‘I have been a client and a friend of Bobby’s for over 20 years and a client of Go Wild Magazine for the past 10 years with the different brands that I have worked with Go Wild magazine has always played a key part in our yearly domestic marketing plans Bobby’s creativeness and ingenuity has always been fantastic to me as a good friend first and a client second and I wish him and the Go Wild team continued success for 10 more years

Brenda Murphy
Group Director | Sales & Marketing



7

JAW-DROPPING WONDERS *of the Wild Atlantic Way*

Get in gear for some of the most spellbinding destinations on the 1,500 mile/2,500 km wave-lashed, Wild Atlantic Way



SKELLIG MICHAEL COUNTY KERRY

Skellig Michael lies over 11-km off the coast of Kerry's Iveragh Peninsula, a shard-like rock capped by a UNESCO World Heritage Site with a difference. Close to its peak sit several beehive-shaped huts in a monastic site that dates back to the 6th century, with sensational views of the Irish coast. As seen in *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*, history, myth and stunning scenery collide with monumental effect at this wilderness site but come prepared with food and water as there are not any facilities on the Island. Boats, both to the island and around the island, run from May to October and are weather-dependent. There are also wonderful views of the islands to be had from the Kerry Cliffs.

What is there to do nearby?

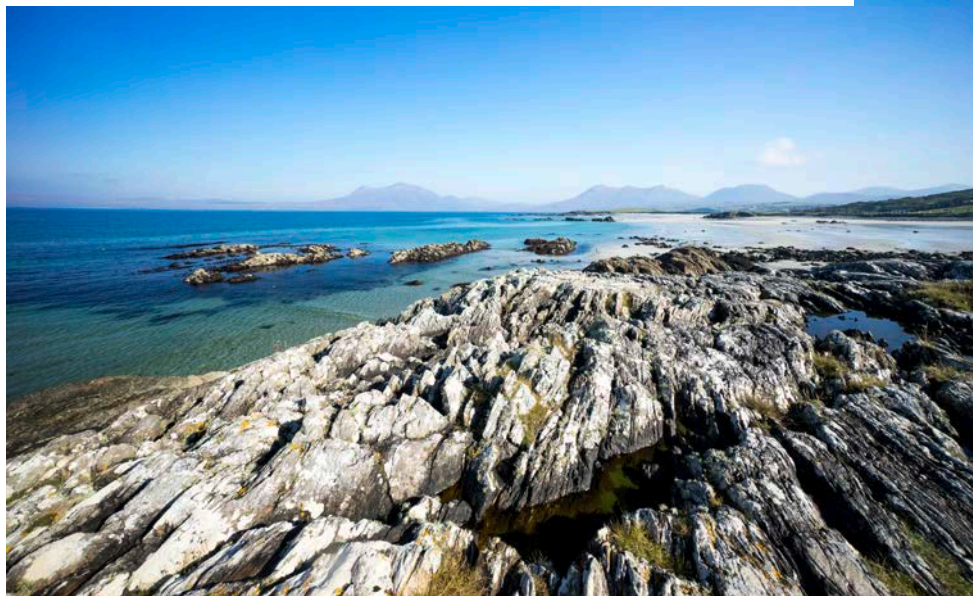
The Ring of Kerry is Ireland's iconic touring loop around the Iveragh Peninsula or try the Dingle Peninsula for seafood, the Sleat Head Drive and a celebrity dolphin called Fungie.

THE ISLANDS ALONG THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

Unique, friendly and steeped in traditional culture, Ireland's islands are full of exceptional landscapes, prehistoric forts, Irish-speaking communities and a real sense of escape. There are those that can be easily accessed, connected by bridges to the mainland, such as Achill, County Mayo, and Valentia, County Kerry or abandoned gems such as Inishmurray off County Sligo and the Blasket Islands off County Kerry.

Which island should I visit?

There's an Irish island for every taste. Fancy a thrill? Take the cable car to West Cork's Dursey Island, where the resident population is said to be just three! Clear blue waters meet secluded beaches on Inishturk, County Mayo; culture vultures can try a few words of Irish on Tory, County Donegal; and Inis Mór in County Galway is perfect for families.

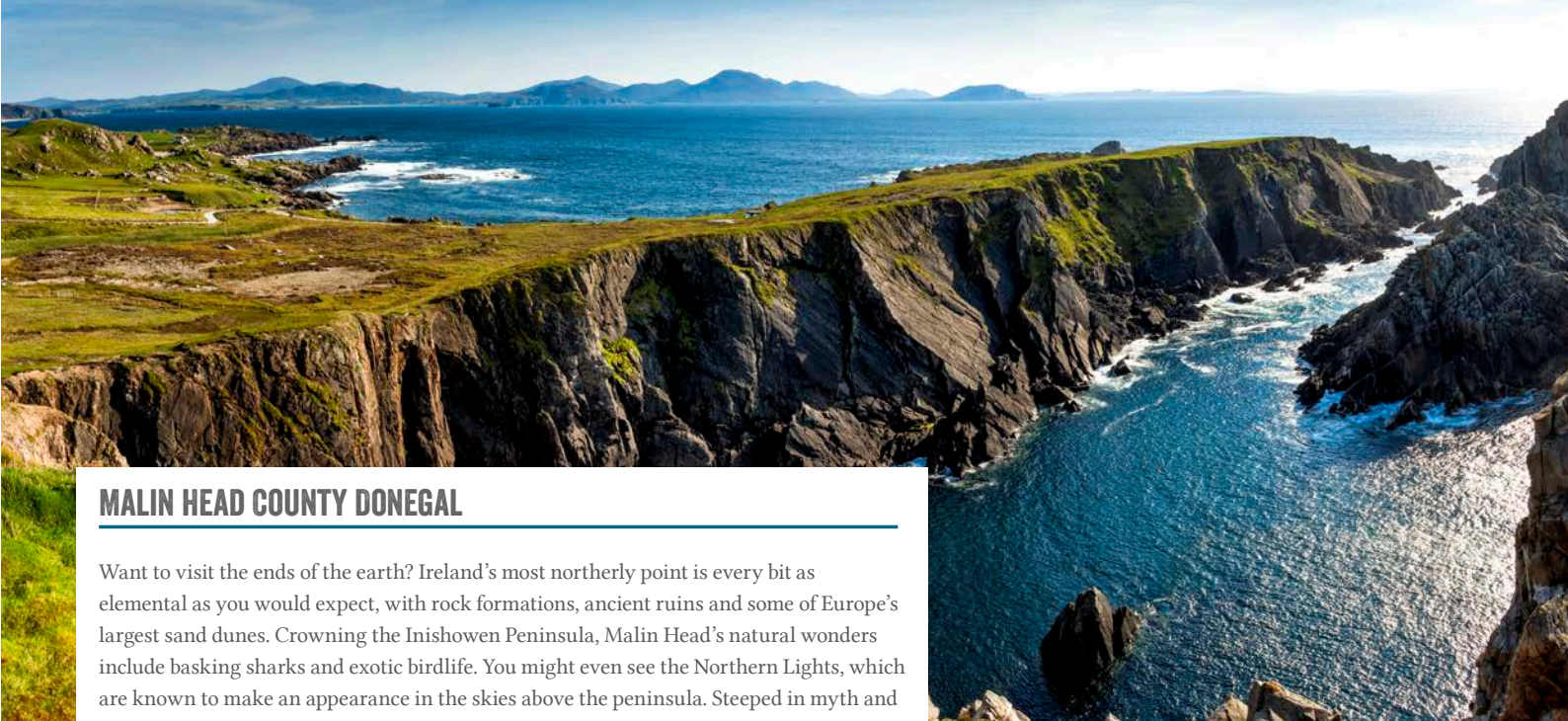


THE CLIFFS OF MOHER COUNTY CLARE

Towering 702 ft/214 metres above the crashing Atlantic waves, County Clare's iconic cliffs offer incredible views out over the ocean. The cliffs are more than 300 million years old and the walks they offer, the teeming birdlife and the interactive visitor centre make for an unforgettable few hours.

What is there to do nearby?

The Cliffs of Moher are close to the Burren National Park, a wonderland of karstic limestone formations. On your coastal drive, plan a stop in the lively music town of Doolin (where you can also catch a ferry to the Aran Islands) and, for a more remote Atlantic experience, take a car or bike around Loop Head, an awe-inspiring headland where you can spot dolphins and whales, as well as the Loop Head Lighthouse, which dates back to 1854.



MALIN HEAD COUNTY DONEGAL

Want to visit the ends of the earth? Ireland's most northerly point is every bit as elemental as you would expect, with rock formations, ancient ruins and some of Europe's largest sand dunes. Crowning the Inishowen Peninsula, Malin Head's natural wonders include basking sharks and exotic birdlife. You might even see the Northern Lights, which are known to make an appearance in the skies above the peninsula. Steeped in myth and history, the area also boasts Banba's Crown, a clifftop tower dating from 1805, and the ominously titled Hell's Hole, where the Atlantic waves dramatically crash against cliffs.

OLD HEAD OF KINSALE COUNTY CORK

Stretching nearly 3-km into the Atlantic off the coast of West Cork, this dramatic headland is one of Ireland's most exceptional geographical formations. Although the tip of Old Head is now a private golf course, visitors can still take a stunning 4 mile/6.5 km walk around the base of the peninsula or discover your adventurous side with a sea-kayaking tour. In 1915, German U-Boats famously torpedoed the Lusitania offshore and the area also features a 30-metre lighthouse that guides ships to Kinsale Harbour.

What is there to do nearby?

Explore the foodie town of Kinsale (bring an appetite), which is packed with craft shops, pubs and seafood restaurants; take a tour of the star-shaped Charles Fort, dating from the late 17th century; or travel west for a mosey around Clonakilty. Its colourful shops, restaurants and nearby Inchydoney beach make this a firm favourite with visitors.



KILLARY HARBOUR COUNTY GALWAY

Located within the wilderness of Connemara, Killary Harbour stretches 16 km inland from the Atlantic to its head below the Aasleagh Falls and serves up some of the most dramatic views in Ireland. Cleaving the border between counties Galway and Mayo, activities in Killary range from sea kayaking to sightseeing boat tours. There's a stunning 19th century road here too, the Green Road, that hugs the coastline tight above the waters of the fjord and is a leap into breathtaking scenery. Take a drive to Westport through the awe-inspiring Doolough Valley, set between the Connemara mountains; visit the charming villages and towns of Cleggan, Clifden, Letterfrack and Roundstone; and don't miss Kylemore Abbey. This Benedictine Abbey, which casts a breathtaking reflection in its lake, is set on a 1,000-acre estate and is home to Ireland's largest walled garden.



DOWNPATRICK HEAD COUNTY MAYO

Downpatrick Head is one of the wildest, most glorious places on the island of Ireland. It may look modest on the map, but those who venture out from nearby Ballycastle, County Mayo, are rewarded with stunning views of the Dún Briste sea stack, rugged coastal scenery and wildlife. Dún Briste means "broken fort" in Irish and this piece of rock is believed to have broken away from the mainland in 1393. St. Patrick is also said to have founded a church on a headland where you'll find a holy well and stone cross perched above the mighty Atlantic Ocean.

What is there to do nearby?

Visit the oldest known stone-walled farmlands in the world at Céide Fields; view the Staggs of Broadhaven – a set of five rocky islands off the shore of Mayo's Benwee Head; take a walk around Sligo's Mullaghmore Peninsula (in winter, watch the big wave surfers); or catch a wave yourself at Strandhill Beach.



Unearthing the ancient mysteries of the Burren

Dig up an authentic piece of Irish history by taking part in an exclusive archaeological excavation in the stunning Burren landscape.



The history of human settlement in the Burren in Ireland's rugged west stretches back thousands of years and is revealed in the artefacts and sites that have been excavated there by archaeologists.

Now Ancient Odysseys is offering the unique chance to join an exclusive archaeology excavation of an important fortress complex within the Burren in July 2024. It's the first time that archaeology fieldwork at this location has been made available to travellers.

A five-day vacation option focuses on carrying out archaeological fieldwork at an ancient royal settlement called Caherconnell, which is a well-preserved, multi-period complex, rich in sites and

artefacts. The excellent preservation of its archaeological remains, which to date include four forts, means there is much work to be done to assist the researchers in excavating as many of Caherconnell's component sites as possible.

Working with the archaeologists on-site, participants will get hands-on experience of archaeological discovery, uncovering artefacts and structures that have lain hidden for millennia. They will also be contributing to enriching Ireland's heritage.

A second Ancient Odysseys vacation option offers a further five days of exploring significant archaeological and historical sites in the area. These include Dun Aonghasa, an Iron Age fort on the Aran islands, beautiful Kylemore Abbey in Connemara and the sights and sounds of Galway city.

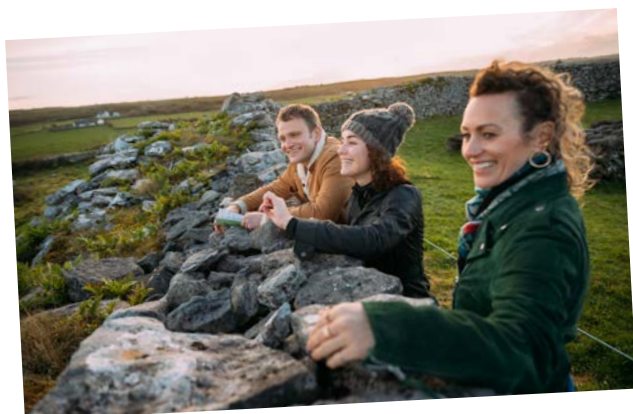
Also in the west of Ireland, the Achill Archaeological Field School will run a one-week introduction to Irish archaeology in August providing a first taste of field methods for

anyone with an interest in archaeology, anthropology and local history.

Achill is a beautiful island lying off the coast of County Mayo, which has spectacular beaches as well as a fascinating history. It was one of the key filming locations for the movie *The Banshees of Inisherin*.

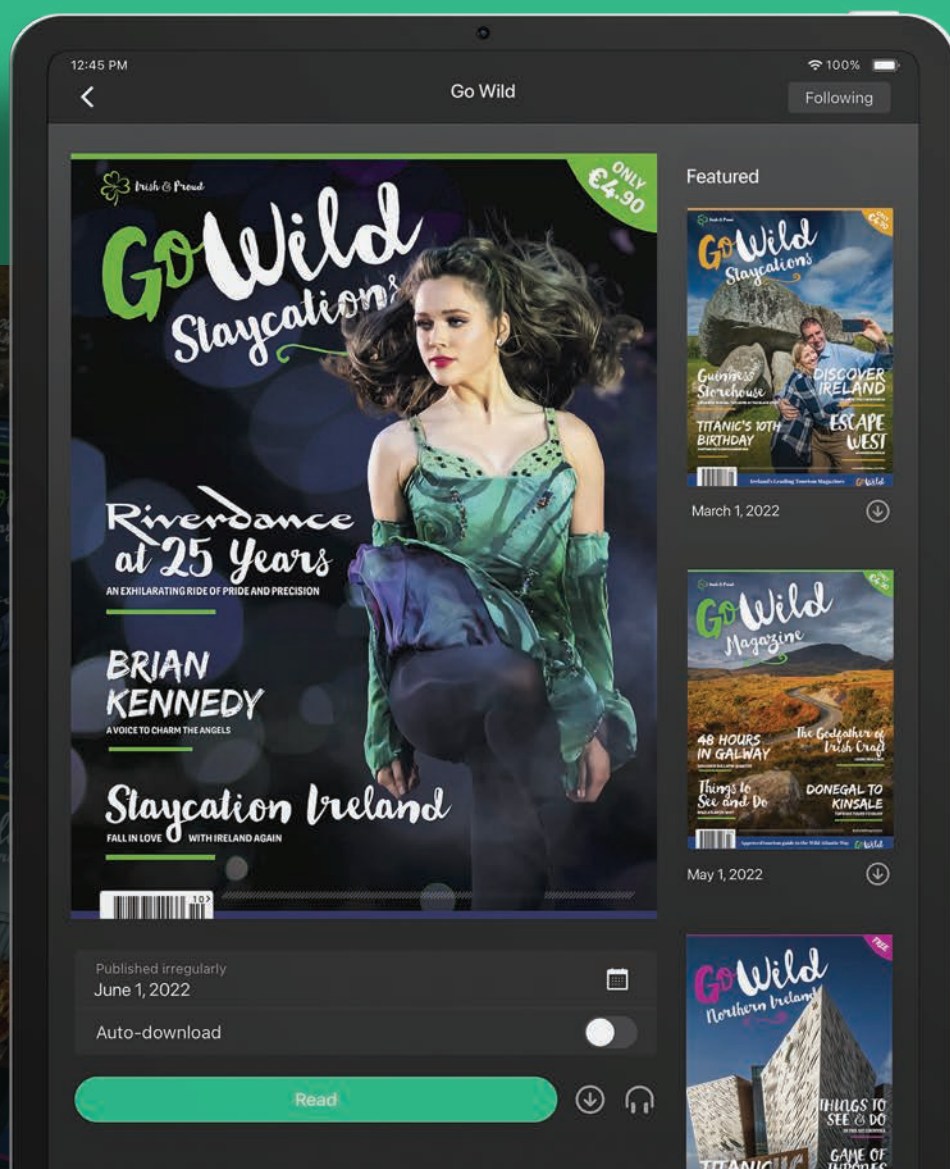
Ireland's story is revealed through hundreds of significant archaeological and historical sites to be found across the island. Those interested in its ancient heritage should not miss visiting Brú na Bóinne in County Meath, a UNESCO World Heritage site and home of the 5000-year-old Newgrange tomb and the largest collection of megalithic art in Europe. The sacred Hill of Tara, once the seat of power for the high kings of Ireland, is also in County Meath.

There are also a number of important and fascinating early Christian ecclesiastical sites including the sixth-century monastic settlements at Glendalough, County Wicklow, Clonmacnoise, County Offaly, Devenish Island, County Fermanagh and the otherworldly Skellig Michael, an island off the coast of County Kerry where the stone beehive houses built by monks 1,500 years ago still stand.



Visiting Ireland? Go Wild Magazine is now available on PressReader!

English not your first language?
Use PressReader's translation feature to read
Go Wild articles in 21 different languages!



The Wild Atlantic Way Covers 2,500 Km, goes through six regions, nine counties, three provinces and consists of more than 180 discovery points. That is an awful lot of sites to visit and things to see while you travel along the worlds longest defined coastal drive. There are however, 15 signature discovery points along the way that have been chosen as they showcase all aspects of the way and because of their undoubted beauty and ruggedness.

MULLAGHMORE HEAD

Visitors to Mullaghmore Head in county Donegal can take in panoramic views of Sliabh Liag or watch the waves crash under Classiebawn Castle. This area is known to have some of Europe's best waves and surfers are common on the sandy beach.

MALIN HEAD

Malin Head lies on the Inishowen Peninsula in County Donegal, at the most northerly tip of Ireland. It is the start or the end (depending on direction) of the Wild Atlantic Way. Visitors can investigate some of the largest sand dunes in Europe at the famous Five Finger Strand from Knockamany Bens and at low tide, you may be able to spot the wreck of the Twilight, which sank in 1889 on its voyage to Derry. You can also ask the locals about the time when Chewbacca and the millenniwn falcon parked in the area.

FANAD HEAD

Fanad Head lies on the north coast of County Donegal between Lough Swilly and Mulroy Bay. Its claims to fame include one of the world's most beautiful lighthouses and the famous Flight of the Earls, which took place here in 1607. Fanad Head lighthouse sits on the western shore of the Peninsula and was voted the world's 2nd most beautiful lighthouse 2013. From the lighthouse carpark you can stroll along the headland in awe of the high waves and the Wild Atlantic Way's most rugged stretch of coastline. With the backdrop of the lighthouse it's an ideal photo opportunity for the holiday album.

SLIABH LIAG

Sliabh Liag is situated on the south west coast of County Donegal, the cliffs in this area are the highest and finest marine cliffs in Europe. To fully enjoy the spectacle of Sliabh Liag it is best to leave your car at the car park and walk the few miles to the cliffs so as not to miss the exciting scenery of the area. There are terrific views of the Atlantic Ocean, the Sligo Mountains and Donegal Bay as you walk towards the terrifyingly high top of Sliabh Liag, where the cliff face of Bunglas rises over 600m above the raging ocean. Although less famous than the Cliffs of Moher in County Clare, Slieve League's cliffs reach almost three times higher.

DOWNPATRICK HEAD

Downpatrick Head is located 3 miles north of Ballycastle village in County Mayo, standing 126ft above the sea with fantastic views of the Atlantic, the Staggs of Broadhaven and high cliffs along the shore. Living 50 metres off the north Mayo coast at Downpatrick Head sits the 45-metre-high flat-topped sea stack Dúr. Briste (the Broken Fort). This is a relatively new sea stack as it was only separated off mainland Ireland in 1393 when monster seas svered it from Count Mayo in an overnight storm.

KEEM BAY

Keem Bay is a rural and sheltered beach surrounded by cliffs on Ireland's largest island - Achill Island in county Mayo. It can be found at the head of a valley between the cliffs of Benmore to the west and Croaghaun Mountain on the east on Achill Island. This is one of the most westerly points in Europe - Keem Bay is more than worth the journey over a breathtaking cliff-top road. It features a perfect horseshoe bay, with a beautiful sandy beach flanked by dramatic cliffs and at the head of a spectacular valley.

KILLARY HARBOUR

Killary Harbour forms a natural border between counties Galway and Mayo and provides Ireland with one of its three fjords. The 16-kilometre fjord formed about 20,000 years ago when a massive natural fault line that reaches all the way from Scotland caused the westward movement of mile-deep ice. The view of Killary from the shore is certainly a spectacular one, but taking to the water here gives you a whole new perspective.

DERRIGIMLAGH BOG

Derrigimlagh Bog is a spectacular blanket bog near Clifden in county Galway. It is a mosaic of tiny lakes and peat rich in flora and fauna. The Derrigimlagh/Marconi walking loop provides visitors with a five-kilometre trail through an area of outstanding natural beauty within the Derrigimlagh bog complex. Visitors can discover the stories of this famous site and its past history. The walk is made all the more interesting by a number of engaging and attractive features along the route, which are designed to engage visitors and encourage them to interact with the history of the location.

CLIFFS OF MOHER

One of the jewels in The 'Wild Atlantic way crown, the cliffs of Moher in County Clare are one of Irelands most visited tourist sites. The cliffs have been moulded over 320 million years and rise at their highest 702ft out of the Atlantic Ocean. Visitors can peer over these perilous cliffs and enjoy one of the best views that the world has to offer.

LOOP HEAD

Loop Head is a slender finger of land pointing out to sea from the most westerly point of County Clare. Cinched between the ocean on one side and the Shannon Estuary on the other, this tiny peninsula would be an island but for a meagre mile of land connecting it to the rest of Co. Clare. Loop Head epitomises what the Wild Atlantic Way is about: panoramic cliff views, abundant local seafood, your choice of aquatic activities, and plenty of quiet beauty spots where you can pause and wonder at this unforgettable part of the world.

THE BLASKET ISLANDS

The Blasket Islands are a group of islands off the coast of Kerry. The islands, in particular, the Great Blasket, are renowned for their wild ruggedness and beauty. The Great Blasket was inhabited by islanders until 1953, but a decline in their population and turf, their only source of fuel became scarce and caused their departure. The people of the island left behind an impressive legacy of critically acclaimed literature, some of the islanders dictated or wrote their stories down, and from these came great works. The views of the islands from the mainland are hauntingly beautiful due to the barren nature of the islands.

“The Wild Atlantic Way covers 2,500km, goes through six regions, nine counties, three provinces and consists of more than 180 discovery points.”



SKELLIG MICHAEL

In a galaxy far far away, or 11 kms of the coast of county Kerry lies Skellig Michael. This picturesque crag has recently been the homeplace of Luke Skywalker on the big screen, Rising majestically from the sea, Skellig Michael towers 714ft. (218 metres) above sea level. On the summit of this awe-inspiring rock you will find a remarkably well preserved sixth century monastic settlement and on the diffsidies you can view the beautiful puffins during the summer months.

DURSEY ISLAND

Durseley Island is one of the few inhabited islands that lie off the southwest coast of Ireland. It is situated at the western tip of the Beara Peninsula in the west of County Cork. The island is separated from the mainland by a narrow stretch of water called the Dursey Sound which has a very strong tidal race, with a reef of rocks in the centre of the channel which is submerged at high tides. This peaceful island, with only a handful of semi-permanent residents, is connected to the mainland by Ireland's only cable car.

MIZEN HEAD

Located at Ireland's most southernly point in County Cork is Mizen Head. Mizen Head stretches out dramatically into the swirling Atlantic Ocean, amidst sea cliffs and crashing waves. But in testament to man's determination, the Mizen Head Signal Station has stood strong against the forces of nature for over 100 years. To get to the signal station you must trek down the famous 99 steps and some of Ireland's most dramatic coastal paths. Then you must embrace the elements as you cross the arched bridge that links the station to the mainland.

OLD HEAD OF KINSALE

The Old Head of Kinsale in County Cork is one of Ireland's most spectacular coastal areas. This large promontory juts out into The Atlantic Ocean, rising hundreds of feet above the water with towering sea cliffs. On this stretch of coastal bliss, it feels like you've left the world behind. It's just you and the ocean.

A Day in the life of **Norma Hoban** Travel Counsellor



Having spent my 26 year career working in a Limerick based travel agency, I decided it was time to try something different, yet use the skills that I have grown during that time. So, in September 2024, I took a massive leap of faith and became a Travel Counsellor. It was a decision filled with trepidation but I can honestly say six months in that I have never been more content and happy.

The move means that I run my own travel business under the franchise of Travel Counsellors, a multi-country organisation with bases in Ireland, UK, Netherlands, Belgium, South Africa and the UAE. The technology, global buying power and the support of the head office team in Cork and Manchester has made it a lot easier to get going and building my business.

I'm flat out but it's so satisfying to know that I can look after my customers at a time that suits them, and I love the choice of suppliers, destinations and products that I have available at my fingertips, so I can create amazing bespoke itineraries for them.

Being a travel agency owner is a whole different level of responsibility. It's not just about booking holidays and helping clients plan their trips, there's

a lot of behind-the-scenes work, strategic decision-making and business management involved. Here's a look at what a typical day in my new life involves:

I usually start my day with what I like to call the "Golden Hour". This is where I check emails and attend to any urgent matters that came in overnight. I plan my day and create a checklist of what I need to do.

I schedule calls with customers well in advance, so in any given day I might have 2-3 Teams or Zoom calls pre-arranged with people who want to talk about their next trip. I leave time immediately after the call to begin the research based on what we chatted about on the call. It's really important to me to have these calls, and I would never send a quote to anyone without having the consultation first. Some of my clients prefer a face-to-face meeting and I can arrange that locally too.

At least twice a week, I allocate an hour or two to my Marketing and Social Media, where I can schedule posts for the next few days. If I receive direct messages, I'd usually check in on those once or twice a day.

I also map time for admin, follow up, making sure I know who's travelling when, so that I can check in with them

prior to departure. I like to be sure that my clients have everything they need. It's too late at that point to ask about passport expiry dates. I do that in the very first call.

The great thing about working for myself, is that I can be available for school runs, extracurricular activities of my two children and also meet friends on a whim for coffee.

Other things I need to do during the busy week is

- Stay up to date with industry news
- Talking to clients who have just returned to find out how they got on. Although sometimes I'd be in touch while they are away; just to check in.
- Learn about new destinations
- Check in with my colleagues
- Attend trade functions
- Manage the accounting side of my business.

Running a travel business requires business acumen, travel expertise and a love of looking after customers. I specialise in Cruise, Long-haul, Honeymoons, Multi-generational trips and anything that is complicated about travel. I also work with some Corporate Accounts and Travel Counsellors for Business brand allows me to be very competitive in this space.



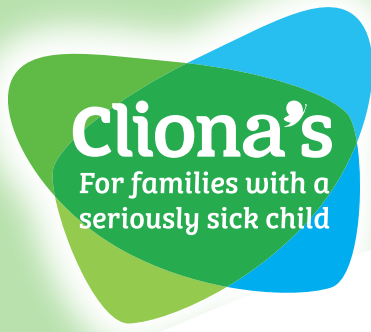
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Linkedin: [norma_hoban_tc](#)



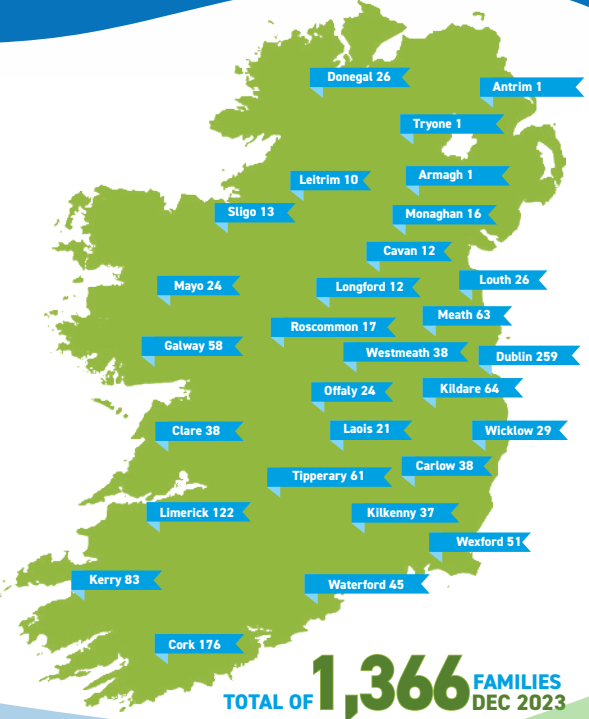
Did you know there are 4000 families on the island of Ireland with a seriously sick child?



Cliona's provide financial assistance to families caring for a seriously sick child to help with the non-medical costs-transportation, parking, accommodation, funeral costs etc.

The foundation was set up by Brendan and Terry Ring, following the death of their daughter Cliona, from an inoperable brain tumour in 2006, aged just 15. They witnessed firsthand the financial burden faced by families with seriously sick children. Since its launch, Cliona's Foundation has supported over 1300 families across 31 counties, and they expect at least 200 families will apply for financial assistance in 2024 equating to €500,000 in family grants.

LOCATION of FAMILIES we have ASSISTED over the past 16 years.

Families all over Ireland are in a crisis right now and need your help!



Cliona's Foundation
 Unit 22, Groody Business Centre,
 Castletroy, Co. Limerick, V94YA07, Ireland.
Tel: 061 331 333 | **Email:** info@clionas.ie | **web:** www.clionas.ie

TOTAL OF 1,366 FAMILIES DEC 2023

A Relaxing Weekend in **WESTPORT**

Nestled along the rugged west coast of Ireland, Westport, Co. Mayo, is a vibrant town that offers the perfect blend of adventure, cultural exploration and relaxation.



DAY 1: History, Heritage, and Laid-Back Vibes

Kick off your trip with a visit to **Westport House** (westporthouse.ie), a grand estate that combines history with family fun. Dating back over 300-years, this magnificent Georgian mansion offers guided tours, where you can explore its period rooms, beautifully manicured gardens and learn about the fascinating history of the Browne family. The estate also features a Pirate Adventure Park for those travelling with kids, making it a family-friendly stop.

Next, enjoy a leisurely lunch at **Cronin's Shebeen**, a charming pub set along the shores of Clew Bay. Known for its cosy atmosphere, hearty food and stunning views, Cronin's is the perfect spot to sample local seafood and unwind. Try their famous seafood chowder or the day's fresh fish for an authentic taste of Mayo.



DAY 2: Adventure on The Greenway and Iconic Croagh Patrick

On day two, immerse yourself in the natural beauty that surrounds Westport by taking on **The Great Western Greenway** (greenway.ie), one of Ireland's most scenic cycling and walking routes. Stretching 42 kilometres from Westport to Achill Island, this converted railway line offers a smooth and safe path for cyclists and walkers, showcasing some of the most stunning coastal views in the region.

If you're not up for the entire trail, you can easily rent a bike in town and cycle a shorter segment. Be sure to stop in **Mulranny**, where you can catch your breath and admire the breathtaking views of Clew Bay, or take a break at the luxurious **Mulranny Park Hotel** (mulrannyparkhotel.ie) for a delicious meal or even a spa treatment.

In the afternoon, set your sights on one of Ireland's most iconic peaks—**Croagh Patrick**. Rising 764 meters above sea level, this sacred mountain has been a pilgrimage site for centuries, with stunning panoramic views from the top. While the climb is moderately challenging, it's a rewarding experience, especially if you're lucky enough to have clear skies at the summit.

Don't forget to visit the **Tavern in Murrisk** (tavernmurrisk.com) afterwards for a well-deserved pint and some of the best pub grub in the area. Located at the foot of Croagh Patrick, it's the ideal spot to rest your legs and indulge in hearty Irish cuisine.

DAY 3: Relax and Explore More of Westport

After a couple of days filled with exploration and adventure, spend your final day savouring the relaxed atmosphere that Westport is known for. Take a stroll through Westport town, with its colourful streets, charming shops and lively cafés. If you're visiting on a Saturday, don't miss the **Westport Market**, where local artisans, farmers, and food producers showcase their best goods.

As the evening draws in, head back to town and grab a table at one of the many cosy pubs to toast your unforgettable long weekend in Westport.

PLAN YOUR WEEKEND

With its mix of cultural heritage, outdoor activities, and fantastic food and drink options, Westport is an ideal destination for a long weekend. From exploring the historic Westport House and cycling The Greenway to hiking the majestic Croagh Patrick and enjoying traditional Irish hospitality at Cronin's Shebeen and The Tavern in Murrisk, Westport promises a memorable Irish getaway that will leave you longing for more.

MATT MOLLOY'S, THE BEST OF LIVE TRADITIONAL MUSIC : SEVEN NIGHTS A WEEK

Probably Westport's most famous pub. The proprietor, Matt Molloy, is a flautist with one of Ireland's most famous traditional music bands, **The Chieftains**. Regular trad sessions take place in the 'back bar', with appreciative patrons hopping along beside a crackling fire – often with Matt himself supplying the airs.

ELEVEN14 COFFEE ROASTERS

founded by Keith Earls



Our Story

"Throughout my 15-year professional rugby career I have been lucky to travel the world, witnessing and experiencing vastly different cultures. But no matter what continent we were on, no matter what team was playing, coffee was the commodity that bound us together."

www.eleven14.ie

The Roastery

Take a trip to Eleven14 and experience the roasting process for yourself, while enjoying a cup of our finest coffee.

All of our 6 origins on offer are served, roasted, ground and packaged under one roof in Annacotty, Limerick.

Limericks only coffee roastery, open Monday to Friday 8am to 3pm.

Retail

Visit www.eleven14.ie for more information



A woman with long, braided hair, some of which is dyed yellow and green, is playing a violin on stage. She is wearing a black top. In the background, other musicians are visible, including a man playing a guitar and another man playing a violin. The scene is lit with warm, stage lights.

FESTIVALS ALONG THE WAY

A feast of festivals on The Wild Atlantic Way

Throughout the year on this little island, there are numerous festivals that celebrate all types and things. The Wild Atlantic Way has a feast of festivals to choose from, from the tongue-in-cheek ‘Tedfest’ on the Aran Islands, a festival that sees hundreds of people dress as characters such as priests and milkmen from the Irish TV show *Father Ted*, to the streets of Killarney, where the iconic Rose of Tralee is crowned each year. Let’s take a look at just a small sample of festivals that occur annually on The Wild Atlantic Way.

CORK INTERNATIONAL CHORAL FESTIVAL · MAY

Founded in 1954, the Cork International Choral Festival is held annually over the five days preceding the first Monday in May and today it’s one of Europe’s premier international choral festivals and is noted for its highly competitive standards, excellent organisation coupled with the friendliness of its welcome. Each year some of the finest amateur international choirs are selected to compete for the prestigious Fleischmann International Trophy.

PUCK FAIR · AUGUST

Puck Fair, running from 10th-12th August, is an annual three-day, family-friendly street festival that is like no other! Held in Killorgnan, Co. Kerry, the event starts with the crowning of the King of the Town, a wild mountain goat, by the Queen of Puck, who is traditionally a young local schoolgirl. The goat’s coronation is only the beginning of what Puck Fair has to offer its visitors along with horse and cattle fairs, trade stalls and family events.

LISDOONVARNA MATCHMAKING FESTIVAL · SEPTEMBER

The Lisdoonvarna Matchmaking festival holds a special place in hearts of the Irish. It’s where those who desire companionship and a touch of “The Craic”, go to quench these needs. While the Festival has very much come of age over the years, moving with the times to appeal to people of all ages, its essence remains as a place to “meet and make a life”, remains true. The streets ring out with music and song, buzzing with dance, the craic and most importantly, love for life.

TUBBERCURRY OLD FAIR FESTIVAL · AUGUST

The Tubbercurry Old Fair Festival allows visitors to experience the Ireland of yesteryear and has grown into a five-day celebration with something for both young and old. The Tubbercurry Old Fair Day Festival’s highlight is the Old Fair Day, which is always held on the second Wednesday in August.

DINGLE FOOD FESTIVAL · OCTOBER

The Dingle Food Festival takes place on the first weekend in October every year in the beautiful fishing town of Dingle on the Dingle Peninsula. Locals call it “The Best Weekend of the Year”. Far and away the most popular part of the festival is ‘The Taste Trail’. Festival goers purchase a book of taste trail tickets and can then visit over 70-venues around the town offering tastings of the best food and drink the Peninsula has to offer.

THE GALWAY INTERNATIONAL OYSTER · SEPTEMBER

The Galway International Oyster & Seafood Festival is an annual four-day event held on the last weekend of September in the centre of Galway City. A highlight in the west of Ireland's festival calendar, it is the world's longest running Oyster Festival and one of the most internationally recognised Irish events. During this popular food festival, you can expect to experience a wide variety of tantalising events to enjoy from seafood trails, oyster hot spots, oyster opening (shucking) championships including the Oyster 'Olympics' or World Oyster Opening Championship, foodie talks & tasting events.

RORY GALLAGHER - RORY FEST 2025, BALLYSHANNON · MAY AND JUNE

The Rory Gallagher International Tribute Festival will take place between 29th of May to June 1st 2025 in the town where the world's greatest Guitarist was born - Ballyshannon, Co. Donegal. Born at the Rock Hospital in Ballyshannon in 1948, the festival started in 2002 and celebrates the Music & Life of Rory Gallagher. The Festival was founded by Barry O'Neill and attracts more than 10,000 fans from over 20 different countries, will converge on Ballyshannon for the Festival in Rory's honour, with 30-acts performing on 15 stages over the 4-days.

TEDFEST · FEBRUARY INISHMORE ISLAND, THE ARAN ISLANDS

One of the more unique festivals in Ireland, Tedfest celebrates the iconic Irish TV show, Father Ted. The fictional home of these characters was Craggy Island, an isolated place that sat off the coast of Galway. Each year in February, people religiously travel to Inishmore (an island off the coast of Galway) to celebrate everything Father Ted.

THE ROSE OF TRALEE INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL · AUGUST

The Rose of Tralee International Festival marks its 66 years in 2024 and is a celebration of Irish culture and heritage. This five-day festival culminates in the crowning of The Rose of Tralee. The Roses are women from throughout the world who have Irish heritage and they all descend on Killarney for this week-long event. The festival also includes five-days-and-nights of entertainment, much of which is free to the public.

CORK JAZZ FESTIVAL · OCTOBER

Running since 1978, this is Ireland's largest Jazz festival, over 1,000-musicians take over the city in an extraordinary blend of sounds across the entire jazz spectrum. with loads of free events, heaps of legendary headliners and over 50-venues taking part.

GALWAY INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL · JULY

Probably the largest and most varied arts festival in the country, Galway International Arts Festival started back in 1978 and has just grown and grown. It features almost 200-performances spread over some 25+ venues, ranging from world-class theatre, art and music to spectacular performances on the city's narrow winding streets.

BATTLE FOR THE LAKE ACHILL ISLAND MAY TO SEPTEMBER

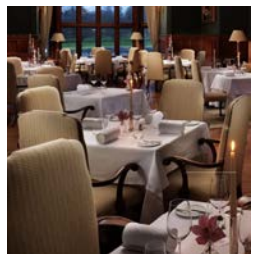
The Pure Magic Battle for the Lake is a unique experience on the beautiful island of Achill Island, For a whole week-end, water-sport and music-lovers from all over the world meet at this incredible location to enjoy the scenery, the people and the Magic featuring live music on the lakeshore, a Kids Zone, fun-fair, food village & restaurant tent.



Why Everyone Is Talking About ADARE MANOR HOTEL AND THE RYDER CUP IN 2027 IN IRELAND!



If there's one place making waves in Irish tourism, it's Adare Manor Hotel. Nestled in the picturesque County of Limerick, Adare Manor is more than just a luxurious getaway—it's set to be the epicentre of international golf when it hosts the 2027 Ryder Cup. Wondering why everyone is raving about this? Well, whether you're a golf fanatic or just someone who appreciates world-class hospitality, you'll want to keep Adare Manor on your travel radar.



The Luxurious Heart of Ireland

Adare Manor is not your typical countryside manor; it's a five-star haven that effortlessly blends old-world

charm with modern luxury. The stunning neo-Gothic architecture, sprawling grounds and opulent interiors make it one of Ireland's most iconic hotels. But it's not just the building that captures hearts—it's the experience.

From the Michelin-starred dining at **The Oak Room** to the state-of-the-art **La Mer spa**, Adare Manor offers a stay that's as elegant as it is unforgettable.

Need some adventure during your stay? Try a falconry lesson or explore the beautiful woodland trails that weave through the estate. And for those who prefer a slower pace, Adare Village is just a short walk away, with its charming thatched cottages and quaint shops waiting to be explored.

The Ryder Cup: Golf's Most Exciting Showdown

Now, the crown jewel in Adare Manor's upcoming attractions is undoubtedly the Ryder Cup 2027. Every two years, the Ryder Cup sees Europe and the USA battling it out in a tournament that's as much about patriotism as it is about golf. In 2027, Adare Manor will be the proud host of this prestigious event, drawing visitors from all over the globe.

The course itself, designed by legendary architect Tom Fazio, is a golfer's dream. Offering 7,509 yards of pristine fairways and challenging greens, it's a course that will test even the best players in the world. But you don't have to be a golf pro to appreciate it—the rolling landscapes and the thrill of the tournament make it an experience anyone can enjoy.

Why the Buzz? The Ryder Cup isn't just a sporting event—it's a festival of culture, competition, and camaraderie. When it comes to the 2027 tournament, Adare Manor Ryder Cup 2027 is already the phrase on everyone's lips, with fans eager to soak up the unique atmosphere that only Ireland can offer. Expect live music, buzzing local pubs and a whole lot of "craic" as spectators from around the world descend on County Limerick.

Seasonal Highlights and Local Delights

No trip to Adare Manor is complete without soaking in the local culture, and luckily, there's plenty to explore. While you're in the area, take a stroll through Adare Village, widely considered one of Ireland's prettiest towns. From the **Adare Heritage Centre** to its medieval churches and vibrant craft shops, it's a fantastic way to experience the charm of rural Ireland.

For those seeking a culinary adventure, **1826 Adare** offers exceptional Irish fare, while **Sean Collins & Sons Bar** is the place to be for a pint and some local banter. And if you're visiting in the summer, you're in for a treat—the local festivals and events breathe life into this already-bustling area.

Why You Can't Miss Out

Adare Manor offers a unique fusion of luxury, history, and sport, and with the Ryder Cup on the horizon, it's only going to get more exciting. Whether you're planning to attend the tournament or simply want to indulge in a lavish escape, Adare Manor Ryder Cup 2027 is the perfect excuse to start planning your next Irish adventure.

With global anticipation growing, it's no wonder this iconic destination is grabbing headlines. From spectacular golfing moments to the ultimate in Irish hospitality, the Ryder Cup at Adare Manor is bound to be an unforgettable experience. And trust us—you won't want to miss it!



BrainStorm

YOUR DIGITAL WORLD IN OUR HANDS: COMPREHENSIVE SOLUTIONS BY BRAINSTORM

Brainstorm Design stands as a versatile digital design agency offering an extensive range of solution-oriented packages tailored specifically to address the individual requirements of our clients. We strive to provide complete solutions that span branding, website design, maintenance, and marketing strategies—all designed to help our clients succeed in today's digital landscape.

Our Core Design Services

Our dedicated team of experts specializes in creating custom branding identity systems that effectively capture a company's essence and connect meaningfully with their intended audience. Our design capabilities extend across all website design formats, including responsive and adaptive designs, e-commerce solutions, and content management systems, ensuring we deliver aesthetically pleasing and intuitive experiences for every project we undertake.

Website Maintenance and Support

We extend our services beyond initial design by offering comprehensive website maintenance and support to ensure our clients maintain a strong online presence. We recognize that

a well-maintained website is crucial for business success, which is why we provide ongoing assistance with security measures, performance optimization, content updates, and other essential maintenance requirements.

Digital Marketing Solutions

As part of our holistic approach, we develop customized digital marketing campaigns that align with each client's specific goals, incorporating search engine optimization, social media management, email marketing initiatives, detailed reporting, and strategic planning. These services help our clients effectively reach their target demographics, increase website traffic, and achieve their business objectives.

Innovative Marketing Automation

One of our premier offerings is our marketing automation service, Brainstorm Automate. This innovative solution helps businesses streamline their marketing processes, enhance customer experiences, and improve conversion rates. Our award-winning platform integrates all necessary marketing tools into a single user-friendly interface, empowering businesses to grow and excel in their respective markets.

Client Communication and Collaboration

We place significant value on effective communication and collaboration with our clients. We engage closely with each client to thoroughly understand and incorporate their vision into the final deliverables. Our dedication to transparency and clear communication fosters enduring partnerships built on trust and mutual achievement.

Our Commitment to Excellence

Brainstorm Design is devoted to delivering personalized solutions for each client, ensuring they have all the necessary tools and support to flourish in the constantly evolving digital environment. Our proficiency in design, website maintenance, and digital marketing enables us to deliver outstanding results and build lasting client relationships.

Visit our website at brainstorm.ie to schedule a complimentary strategy consultation and discover how we can contribute to your business's digital success.

BrainStorm

Things to do on the

Aran Islands



Cycle around the Aran Islands

Cycling is a fantastic way to explore the Aran Islands and bike hire is available on Inishmore, Inisheer and Inishmaan.

Hit the beach

On the northern coast of Inishmore, Kilmurvey Beach is one of Galway's most stunning beaches. Walk barefoot along the strand to feel the powdery white sand between your toes and bask in the

magic of this special place. It's a popular place for birdwatchers with abundant birdlife, see if you can spot the cormorants. The Blue Flag beach has a lifeguard on duty during high season, so it's a safe and scenic spot to take a dip.



diver. With its vibrant underwater life, the Aran Islands have a reputation for being one of the best places to dive in Europe. Spot vibrant sea anemones, colourful coral and spiny dogfish as you explore life on the seabed. Depending on when you visit, you might even spot friendly dolphins and seals.

Walk scenic trails

The Aran Islands is a must-visit for avid walkers. Discover scenic hikes and leisurely walks with incredible views of land and ocean. On Inishmore, Lúb Dún Eochla is a 10km looped walk that kicks off at Kilronan Pier. Follow the green arrows for a challenging, walk across rich green hills and stony roads. Over on Inisheer, Lúb Ceathrú an Locha begins and ends at the pier. Look out for An Loch Mór, the Big Lake and the Plassey shipwreck along the way.

Take a pony and trap tour

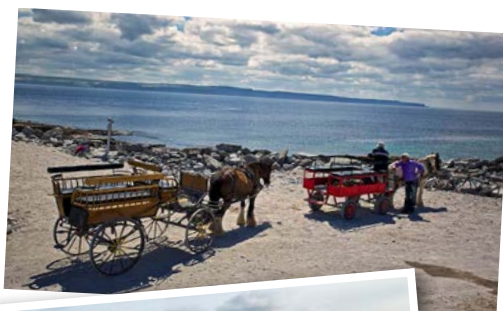
Book a traditional pony and trap tour around Inishmore. You can call ahead so that you're ready to go once you arrive on the island. Along the historic route you'll see monastic sites, the island's famous stone walls and magnificent Dún Aonghasa.

Go scuba diving

Check out the Dive Academy on Inishmore and book in for a lesson with an experienced

Kick back on a guided tour

Take the road less travelled in a rugged Land Rover Defender jeep through the wild landscapes of Inishmore with Aran Off Road Experience. This off-road machine reaches parts of the island that no other vehicle can, treating you to magnificent views of the Atlantic Ocean along the way. See the Aran Islands from the comfort of a minibus with Adventure Tours Inis Mor. The guided tour brings you to some of the major sights including the seal colony and the Seven Churches. Enjoy unique food on your visit to the Aran Islands. Take a tour of the Aran Goat Cheese Farm or go seaweed foraging with Bláth na Mara.






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Escape, Explore, Experience. Ten years of Wild Atlantic Way



Sliabh Liag (Slieve League) Carrick, Co Donegal

The Wild Atlantic Way stretches for 2,500km along Ireland's enchanting western seaboard, from the rugged cliffs of Malin Head in Donegal to the charming shores of Kinsale in Co. Cork. It's not just a touring route; it's a journey through landscapes sculpted by the mighty Atlantic Ocean, where every twist and turn reveals jagged cliffs, wave-capped inlets, and deserted beaches guarded by majestic islands and lighthouses.

Since the Wild Atlantic Way brand was launched by Fáilte Ireland in 2014, it has become synonymous with Ireland's natural splendour and cultural vibrancy, igniting a sense of wonder and exploration in the hearts of travellers worldwide. This isn't just a travel route; it's a catalyst for local prosperity, fuelling tourism growth and supporting up to 25% of jobs in certain areas along the coast.

Figures from Fáilte Ireland showcase the undeniable allure of the Wild Atlantic Way, drawing an additional 1 million international visitors compared to its inaugural year and injecting a staggering €3 billion into the local economy. From new businesses to established enterprises, the Wild Atlantic Way has transformed coastal communities, offering opportunities for growth and sustainability beyond the traditional tourism season. This scenic stretch of coastline isn't just a destination; it's a thriving hub of creativity, culture, and community.

Whether you choose to tackle it as an epic road trip or to take it in bite-sized slices, the Wild Atlantic Way is a bucket list destination waiting to be explored. If you're not sure where to begin, you can follow the route's whopping 187 designated Discovery Points as a guide, 15 of which are Signature Discovery Points. These discovery points are marked locations dotted along the Wild Atlantic Way and are considered absolute must-sees, from Sliabh Liag and Fanad Lighthouse in Donegal, right down to Dursey Island and Mizen Head in Cork. For those that are snap-happy,

Photo Points have been developed at each Discovery Point, to help you capture the highlights of your Wild Atlantic Way trip, so you can cherish the memories long after you have gone home.

We've curated a list of some of the must-visit spots that capture the essence of this coastal touring route to inspire you to plan your next short break on the Wild Atlantic Way. So, buckle up and get ready to embark on a journey of wild and spectacular scenery as well as great food, refreshing walking and cycling routes, island hopping and so much more.



Derryclare Lough, Connemara, Co Galway

Where Land and Sea Collide

Clogher Strand, Dingle, Co Kerry



Doolin Ferry, Cliffs Of Moher, Co Clare

Begin your journey of the Wild Atlantic Way and step into a world where sandy shores glisten under the sun's golden gaze, and towering cliffs stand sentinel against the roaring fury of the Atlantic. A place where surfers chase the thrill of cresting waves, and where beachcombers lose themselves in the rhythm of the tide's ebb and flow.

Seeing the dramatic cliffs of the Cliffs of Moher or Sliabh Liag from land is breathtaking in itself, but taking the boat tours that go to the foot of these cliffs is a humbling experience. Sliabh Liag Boat Tours in Donegal offer awe-inspiring trips to Bunglas Cliffs and Sliabh Liag, one of Europe's highest sea cliffs. The tour gives you close-up views of the cliffs and opportunities to spot dolphins, whales, seals, and basking sharks. Similarly the Cliffs of Moher become truly majestic when viewed from beneath. Sail below these towering cliffs with Doolin Ferry Co and experience the rockface in truly imposing form. For those of even more adventurous spirit the stark and majestic Fastnet Rock Lighthouse stands as a lonely beacon in the vast expanse of the Atlantic, 13km south of County Cork. A

day trip around Fastnet is an unforgettable and moving experience with Cape Clear Ferries.

If you want to physically embrace the force of the Atlantic then surf schools are for you and are dotted right along the route. The route boasts some of the most exhilarating and breathtaking surf spots in the world. From towering cliffs to hidden coves, there's a diverse range of waves that cater to surfers of all levels. The new National Surf Centre in Strandhill, Sligo, establishes the Wild Atlantic Way as a world class surfing destination and is home to three surf schools - Rebelle Surf School, Sligo Surf Experience and Atlantic Surf School - offering the perfect base to hone your expert skills or start your surfing journey.

Clare Island Adventures, a collaboration between Adventure West, Go Explore Hostel, and Clare Island Ferry Company, invites you to explore Clare Island's wonders. Adventure West specializes in coasteering, snorkelling, rock-climbing, raft building, hiking, and orienteering while Go Explore Hostel,

provides stunning views and traditional entertainment, making it a perfect base for island adventures. Sea Synergy Marine Awareness and Activity Centre in Kerry offer similar outdoor adventures including snorkel tours, kayaking, and paddleboarding, showcasing breathtaking views and diverse wildlife.



Dog's Bay Beach, Co Galway

From hidden coves to epic strands, the route is crammed with spectacular beaches bringing together all the ingredients for an unforgettable break. West Cork claims some of the finest beaches in the country, from the stunning golden sands of Barleycove Beach on the Mizen Peninsula to the vastness of Incheydoney Beach in Clonakilty where you can enjoy bracing walks, take a surf lesson or simply relax and marvel at the waves. Both of these beaches are great for families as they have life-guards during the season. Just beyond Roundstone in Galway you'll find the gloriously sheltered Dog's Bay, perfect for swimming and exploring rock pools. The white sands and turquoise waters will have you mistaken for being on a tropical island right here in Gaeltacht Connemara. And indeed you'll discover glorious beaches right along the route.



Strandhill Surf Experience, Co Sligo

Embrace enchanting Gaeltachts

An Daingean (Dingle), Co Kerry

The Gaeltachts of the Wild Atlantic Way are rooted in Donegal, Galway, Mayo, and Kerry, proudly safeguarding our native language while offering a genuine peek into our vibrant past and culture.

The enchanting **Donegal Gaeltacht** is nestled amidst the mystical mountains of the Derryveagh range and the picturesque Poisoned Glen. Journeying north, you'll encounter Donegal's Gaeltacht Lar, where the stunning landscapes of Gweebarra Bay, Gleann Fhinne, and Glendowen await exploration. Venture further to discover the striking natural beauty of the Rosses, Gaoth Dobhair, and Cloich Cheann Fhaola, culminating at the iconic Fanad Head. As in all Gaeltacht regions, visitors are welcome to try a *cúpla focal* (a few words) with the locals or become more immersed in experiences with Ireland by Bike; The Crolly Distillery and a visit to Teach Solas Fhanada (Fanad Lighthouse) all doing bi-lingual tours to suit everyone's ability.



Keem Bay, Achill Island, Co Mayo

The western half of County Mayo is a real gem, and home to the **Mayo Gaeltacht**, boasting Tuar Mhic Éadaigh (Tourmakeady), Acaill (Achill Island), and Iorras (Erris). These spots are like postcards come to life, with stunning natural beauty at every turn. There are some absolute 'must-see' spots such as the brand-new Solas Visitor

Centre in Eachléim, a real treat for nature lovers, and don't forget about the famous Blacksod Lighthouse which has quite a story, even playing a part in the D-Day landings during World War II. If you're up for a bit of adventure, head over to Glosch Beach, just a quick 15-minute drive from Belmullet on the Erris Peninsula. That's where you'll find Tonn Nua Surf School who offer surf lessons with a sprinkle of Gaeilge, a really cool way to catch some waves and maybe even pick up a few Irish words while you're at it.

As you head westward along Galway's coast, you'll find yourself in **Connemara**, our largest Gaeltacht region. The landscape changes dramatically here, with the mighty Atlantic Ocean on one side and the breathtaking vistas of Connemara on the other. Prepare to be captivated by the majestic landscapes, from the rugged coastline to the tranquil turquoise waters of Dog's Bay and Mannin Beach. And when you need a break from soaking in the natural beauty, make sure to stop by Pota Café along the way. You'll be treated to some amazing artisan produce while immersing yourself in the lively chatter of locals. For those seeking adventure, Carraroe is the place to be. Here, at Spraoi Mara, you can try your hand at kayaking, coaststeering, or even water trampolining.

In Kerry, you'll find a real treasure trove of natural wonders with two Gaeltacht pockets to dive into. First up, you've got the **Gaeltacht Corca Dhuibhne** (Dingle Peninsula), nestled all snug amidst those majestic mountains and epic headlands. And then there's the **Gaeltacht Uíbh**

Ráthaigh (Iveragh Peninsula), perched right along the stunning coastline, offering up dramatic landscapes and a whole bunch of historic sites to boot.



Sean Nós dancing

If you fancy a bit of adventure with a sprinkling of Gaeilge, head to An Daingean (Dingle). Here, Dingle Sea Safari will hook you up with some seriously thrilling ocean experiences. And while you're in the area, swing by Ionad an Bhlascaoid (The Basket Centre) on Sleá Head. The views are out of this world, and you'll get a fascinating rich history of the Basket Islands. If you're more into getting your hands dirty (in a good way, of course), why not give pottery a whirl at Louis Mulcahy Pottery. You can channel your inner artist while taking in inspiration from the exquisite porcelain and stoneware they create on-site. It's the perfect way to add a bit of hands-on fun to your Kerry adventure!



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For information on the many walking, cycling and outdoor experiences, visit:

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CAVAN!**

North Mayo

Experience the heart of North Mayo through its vibrant festivals! From the toe-tapping tunes of Fleadh Cheoil Mhaigh Eo in Ballina (3rd-11th May) to the community spirit of Ballina Salmon Festival (13th-19th July) and the coastal charm of Belmullet Festival (10th-17th August), there's something for everyone. As autumn arrives, enjoy Ballina Fringe Festival (3rd-12th October) and the Mayo Dark Skies Festival (31st Oct-2nd Nov). Plan your festival getaway today at www.mayonorth.ie.



Sheen Falls

Nestled in the heart of Kenmare Bay, Sheen Falls Lodge offers a serene and luxurious getaway. This Two Michelin Key 5-star Lodge is the perfect gateway to the Ring of Kerry, Beara Peninsula, and the southwestern edge of the Wild Atlantic Way. Experience its harmonious environment, where the landscape breathes life into every moment.



Spike Island

Discover the tales of heroes and villains at Ireland's infamous prison island. Located in the heart of Cork Harbour, Spike Island holds a significant place in Irish history, having served as a military fortress and notorious prison. Prepare to be transported back in time as you navigate through centuries of Irish history. Join a guided tour with one of our expert storytellers, explore interactive museums, exhibitions and embark on scenic walking trails.



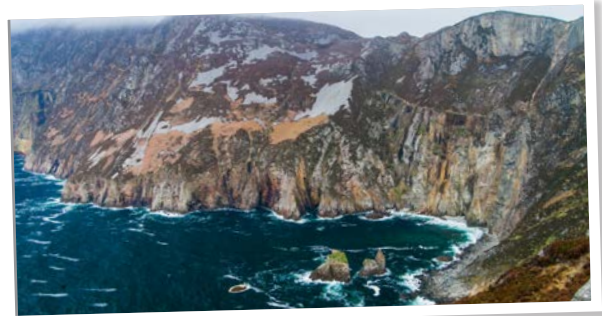
Eccles Hotel

Situated in the quaint village of Glengarriff, overlooking Bantry Bay, Eccles Hotel & Spa is the ideal place for a relaxing getaway. Linger for longer - make the most of your Spring staycation for less with 10% off 2+ nights and 20% off 3+ nights. (Exclusions apply.) Book direct at eccleshotel.com.



Sliabh Liag cliffs

The Sliabh Liag Experience offers visitors a gateway to Ireland's highest sea cliffs, showcasing breathtaking views of the Atlantic Ocean. Located in Donegal's Gaeltacht, it features a visitor centre, guided tours, and cultural insights into the area's rich Irish language and heritage. With pristine boglands, scenic walking trails, and unparalleled coastal beauty, it's a must-visit destination for nature lovers and adventurers alike.



Texas Steakout

For 35 years, Head Chef Stuart Ross has been the driving force behind Texas Steakout, one of Ireland's oldest and most beloved steakhouses. Since its inception, Stuart has crafted exceptional dishes using only the finest local ingredients, partnering with trusted Irish suppliers to ensure every plate reflects quality, tradition, and taste.

Stuart Ross: The Culinary Heart of Texas Steakout.



Waterford Crystal

Each Waterford piece is an exquisite combination of artistic inspiration and technical prowess; capabilities honed and perfected over 240 years of expert craftsmanship. At House of Waterford you can experience the rich heritage, proud passion and elite craft that lie behind every Waterford creation. Discover the personalities, techniques and artistry that go into producing Waterford's beautiful luxury crystal.



Avoca, Molls Gap Killarney

Just 30 minutes from Killarney, overlooking mountains & lush countryside; Avoca at Moll's Gap boasts views over Ireland's highest mountain, Carrauntoohill, to one side, and the Gap of Dunloe to the other. This fabulous location has a beautifully curated retail store as well as an artisanal Foodmarket, with food for take out. Browse around with a coffee as you discover what the Ring of Kerry has to offer.



Shannonferry Group Ltd.

Shannonferry Group Ltd. operates the Killimer-Tarbert Car Ferry linking the main tourist routes of Ireland's Shannon Region on the "Wild Atlantic Way" from Killimer, Co. Clare to Tarbert, Co. Kerry. With scheduled sailings every day, this pleasant twenty-minute journey across the Shannon Estuary will save 137 km from ferry terminal to ferry terminal providing a staging point for the many attractions of Clare, Kerry and adjoining counties. On disembarkation, enjoy the majestic scenery on either side of the Shannon Estuary from Killarney & The Dingle Peninsula to the Burren & the famous Cliffs of Moher.



The Abbey Theatre

Step behind the scenes at Dublin's iconic Abbey Theatre with an exclusive guided tour. Uncover the rich history of Ireland's National Theatre, discover portraits of legendary actors and directors, and stroll the very corridors once walked by literary giants. Marvel at Michael Scott's 1966 Magic Box design and explore a treasure trove of props that have brought 120 years of stories to life. Visit abbeytheatre.ie for what's on this March



OPW

Explore Jewels of History as our seasonal sites re-open for the 2025 season. Explore medieval castles like Aughnanure in the heart of Connemara, or traverse a horticultural paradise at Annes Grove Gardens in Co. Cork. With so much history and beauty on your doorstep, why not visit your local historical gem. Visit heritageireland.ie for further information and details of site specific reopening dates.



Abbey Hotel

Looking for the perfect getaway for your golden years? Look no further than the Abbey & Central Hotels in Donegal Town! Our Active Retirement package is designed with our senior guests in mind, offering a relaxing and affordable two to four-night stay starting at just €180 for two nights.



Model Village

Step back in time and see life as it was in the 1940's at Ireland's only Model Village. Explore the historic West Cork Railway Line in miniature. Enjoy a trip through the award winning town of Clonakilty aboard the Road Train. Facilities include remote control boats, mini diggers and play areas.



Cape Clear ferries

Get immersed in a true Irish experience on Cape Clear Island where Irish-speaking locals will welcome you to their hidden treasure off the coast of West Cork. Why not join us on one of our most popular combi tours which includes a stopover on Cape Clear Island and a tour around the Iconic Fastnet Rock Lighthouse – Fastnet Rock Day Tour. www.capeclearferries.com



Castle Dargan

Stay at Castle Dargan Estate, Co. Sligo, where luxury, golf, and relaxation come together. Enjoy elegant accommodations, a Darren Clarke-designed championship golf course, and the rejuvenating Icon Spa. Savor delicious dining options, offering locally sourced cuisine. Perfect for golf getaways, romantic escapes, and unforgettable stays in Sligo.



Belleek Pottery Visitor Centre

Located along the banks of Lough Erne in Co.Fermanagh, Belleek Pottery is the ideal destination to while away a few hours enjoying all the delights of Ireland's oldest working pottery. If you are planning a day trip with friends, a family day out over the holidays or a group tour, we have something at Belleek for everyone to enjoy.



Clonakilty Black Pudding Visitor Centre

Discover the story behind Ireland's favourite blackpudding in the heart of Clonakilty, West Cork. Experience the history and taste of Clonakilty Blackpudding by taking a self-guided interactive audio tour around the visitor centre and enjoy a delicious plate of Clonakilty samples in the café to finish off the experience.



Michael Collins House

Michael Collins House, Clonakilty, is a museum dedicated to Michael Collins and the history of the fight for Irish independence; offering an insight into the life of 'The Big Fella' and much more. History is brought to life through guided tours, interactive displays, audiovisuals, original artefacts and insightful information boards. An affordable, educational and entertaining experience that is suitable for all the family. For more information contact 023-8858676, email info@michaelcollinshouse.ie or visit www.michaelcollinshouse.ie



Connemara Coast Hotel

Come and visit the Connemara Coast Hotel this year and enjoy a wonderful break with family and friends along the Wild Atlantic Way. Set in a beautiful part of Ireland, offering stunning views of the Wild Atlantic Way, it is the perfect base for those looking to relax by the sea and explore the picturesque surroundings. Check out www.connemaracoast.ie



Aillwee cave

A warm welcome awaits everyone at this Multi Award Winning destination attraction. Aillwee is simply unmissable when visiting



The Burren and County Clare! Explore Aillwee and unlock many secrets of The Burren through unique underground and overground experiences. Be educated, engaged and entertained on your day out at Aillwee Burren Experience!

Kylemore Abbey

Nestled in the heart of Connemara, Kylemore Abbey is a haven of beauty, history, nature & serenity. Visit the restored period rooms and multimedia experience of the Victorian castle, the 6-acre Victorian Walled Garden, and the romantic neo-Gothic Church. For more information and to book your visit, please see www.kylemoreabbey.com.



Ashford Castle

Originally built in 1865, perched atop a hill and situated within the magnificent 350-acre Ashford Estate, The Lodge at Ashford Castle faces shimmering Lough Corrib on the west coast of Ireland, and is set just a stone's throw from the *Wild Atlantic Way*. Stylishly combining warm Irish hospitality with modern creature comforts, The Lodge has a relaxed and contemporary charm. Perfect for multigenerational travel, discover an array of estate activities, including a brand new leisure complex which caters for families. The Lodge is also known as one of Ireland's premier wedding venues, providing an idyllic setting to tie the knot.



Burren Smokehouse

Discover the Lisdoonvarna's unique mini food trail at the Burren Smokehouse and Burren Brewery. Learn the art of smoking salmon, explore the interactive "Taste the Atlantic - Salmon Experience" experience, enjoy craft beer tastings, and listen to captivating stories from owner and master brewer Peter Curtin. A must-visit culinary journey! Visit www.burrenexperiences.ie



Eala Bhan

Anthony Gray is a passionate restaurateur who is committed to showcasing local and seasonal produce. He dedicates his time to being a champion of Sligo, tourism and the Wild Atlantic Way as well as running his own restaurants, Hooked and Eala Bhan and his successful Taste of Sligo Food Tours.



The Kingdom of Kerry Greenways

The Kingdom of Kerry Greenways offer scenic and accessible routes to explore Kerry's hidden gems by bike or foot. The 13.6km Tralee to Fenit route provides stunning coastal views, while the 53km Listowel to Limerick path winds through lush valleys. A third, the 32km South Kerry Greenway, is under development and will offer a true jewel in the Kingdom. www.discoverkerry.com/greenways/



Carrygerry Country House

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The Michael Davitt Museum



The Michael Davitt Museum is located in the picturesque and historic village of Straide in Co. Mayo, on the N58 route between Ballyvary and Foxford. The Michael Davitt Visitor Centre includes the beautiful surrounding grounds of Straide Abbey, which includes a parking and picnic area.

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Cork County Council

Cork County Council has launched the 'Explore Cork' app, a one-stop shop tourism app with over 850 things to see and do in Cork. With 19 categories of activities, 'Explore Cork' will help you plan your trip. The free app, which is available in 4 languages, is available to download on Android or iPhone



Tulfarris Estate

Nestled in the Garden of Ireland, County Wicklow, Tulfarris Hotel & Golf Resort is the perfect retreat for a memorable staycation. Located only 45 minutes from Dublin, the stunning 200-acre resort boasts panoramic views of the Wicklow Mountains and Blessington Lakes, an ideal destination for



those seeking both relaxation and adventure.

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Ballycrooy

Connect, learn and be inspired at Wild Nephin National Park; with a little something for everyone! Enjoy the free exhibition at Ballycrooy, walk the coastal trail at Claggan Mountain and get out in the wilds of Letterkeen, with the setting sun revealing the wondrous Mayo Dark Sky Park.



www.nationalparks.ie/wild-nephin

Glencolmcille Folk Village

Glencolmcille Folk Village is a thatched cottage coastal village in South West Donegal. Established in 1967, it tells the story of Glencolmcille through the ages. Original artefacts are on display in the cottages, which were constructed from stone taken from period cottages throughout the parish. The tours are currently self-guided and are available in more than eight languages. There are three audio-visual programs that tell the story of Father McDyer, the local fishing tradition and cinefilm from the 1950's. They have adapted a beautiful outdoor dining area and have a great family orientated eating area within this, with a safe area for children to play. They are world renowned for their beautiful vegetable soup and Irish breakfast. On special occasions you can Meet local crafts people and have a go at making a St. Brigid's Cross or mending a fishing net.





The Pirate Queen

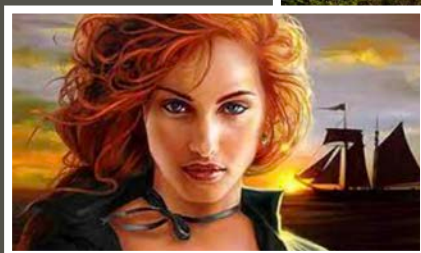
Born almost five hundred years ago, the Pirate Queen, Grace O'Malley, continues to fascinate to this day

She was fearless, ferocious and she led a life unlike most other women in 16th Century Ireland. The story of Grace O'Malley might sound like the plot of a Hollywood blockbuster but this fierce woman was a real-life trailblazer, who continues to enthral.

Grace, or Gráinne Ní Mháille to use her Irish name, was born in 1530 to a noble seafaring clan. The O'Malleys ruled over Clew Bay in Mayo and were feared pirates. The story has it that the young Grace asked her father if she could accompany him to a trading exhibition to Spain; he refused and told her that her long hair would get caught in the ship's ropes. When he returned from sea the next time, he found his daughter had shorn her hair, which led to her Irish nickname of Gráinne Mhaol (anglicised as Granuaile) or 'bald Grace'.

When her father died, she took over the O'Malley dynasty. Marrying Dónal an-Chogaidh (Donal of the War) O'Flaherty brought her immense wealth, including a 1,000 head of cattle and horses. When her husband was killed in battle in the 1560s, she commanded the loyalty of his men.

For decades, Grace plundered the seas around Ireland, even allegedly while pregnant. Grace would go on take lovers, marry again, divorce and bear four children in all. She conducted pirate raids; vigorously defended her lands, and her revenges, when she was wronged, were ruthless.



There are many tales that attest to her spirit and her bravery. It's reported she once tried to visit Howth Castle in Dublin and was told that the family were at dinner and the gates remained closed. As a reprisal, she kidnapped Lord Howth's grandson, who was only released once the family had promised that the gate would remain open to visitors and that an extra place would always be set at the table for a guest, a promise that Lord Howth's descendants keep to this day. Famously, Grace sailed to England to visit Queen Elizabeth 1, to plead for the release of her captured son and half-brother, after they were arrested for conspiracy against and murder of the English.

The English queen and the Pirate came face to face in 1593, with the event documented in Elizabethan state papers. Elizabeth, no doubt amazed at this mould-breaking pirate queen, granted clemency, released the prisoners and promised to let Grace to keep her lands and carry on, unimpeded.

Grace lived to approximately 1603 and died at the age of 72, most likely at Rockfleet Castle, near Newport in Co. Mayo, with the family's traditional burial place being the Cistercian Abbey on Clare Island, off the coast of Mayo.

Although English state papers record Grace and her life, she was curiously absent from Irish annals. In more recent times, interest in her life has grown. Author Anne Chambers, who wrote *Grace O'Malley: The Biography of Ireland's Pirate Queen 1530-1603*, first published in 1979, is credited as the catalyst for Grace's restoration to history. She has been the subject of a song-suite, a musical and has even bestowed her name to a whiskey. Today, visitors to Mayo can enjoy the Granuaile Loop walk on Achill, where the Pirate Queen had a castle, a four storey tower house, in nearby Kildavent. Clare Island where she grew up, and is possibly buried, is a short ferry trip from the mainland, and Rockfleet Castle, where she spent her final years, also still stands.



"The immersion and quality of this tour will amaze you. I am a fan of the series but my wife was not, until now. We spent over three incredible hours here and are binging GOT now that we are home. Do it!"



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