



Go Wild Magazine

Featured Interviews

Catherine Toolan, CEO Guinness Storehouse
Christine Murphy, Urban Aran
John Cashman, Powerscourt Distillery

18 Family Staycations Choices

The Best for 2025

Glamping & Camping

Your Outdoor Escape

Long Weekend's Away

We've got you covered

Greenways & Trails
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Publisher's Statement



I would like to warmly welcome you to the Annual Edition of Go Wild East Coast & Hidden Heartlands for 2025 — your essential guide to Ireland's most enchanting staycation, weekend getaway and holiday experiences.

As Publisher, it is a genuine pleasure to introduce you to this truly remarkable region. From the rugged cliffs of the Ancient East that meet the wild Atlantic waves, to the storybook villages nestled in the heart of Ireland's lush midlands, this is a journey that invites you to slow down, take a breath and reconnect with the magic of the land.

Along the way, you'll find mystical woodlands, rolling green pastures, ancient castles and tranquil lakes that seem to whisper stories of the past. Every corner is rich with culture, from ancient myths and folklore to vibrant traditions that are still celebrated today. Whether it's a fireside chat in a cosy pub, a stroll through a charming heritage town or a hike along a remote cliffside trail, there is an authenticity here that leaves a lasting impression.

Our goal, with this magazine, is to be your personal travel companion — offering insider tips, local secrets

and hidden gems that only those who truly know the land can share. Whether you're a passionate hiker, a curious historian, a devoted foodie or simply someone looking to escape the routine and rediscover joy in the journey — you'll find inspiration and adventure in every page.

So, pack your bags, grab your camera and get ready to experience Ireland like never before. The East Coast and Hidden Heartlands await — and with them, memories that will stay with you forever.

Bobby Power

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Next on our List - On Sale Dates

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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A special thank you to Fáilte Ireland & Ireland.com for their support with content and imagery.



Keep Discovering



Ireland's Hidden
HEARTLANDS





Blessington Lakes, National Park, Co. Wicklow



Cheers to an IRISH SUMMER

Meg Walker catches up with Catherine Toolan, MD of Diageo Irish Brand Homes, to find out what's in store this season at the Guinness Storehouse, Guinness Open Gate Brewery, Roe & Co Whiskey Distillery, and the Smithwick's Experience Kilkenny, and the power of a warm Irish welcome.



Since opening in December 2000, the Guinness Storehouse has welcomed over 20 million visitors. This year marks the attraction's 25th anniversary, and 'Alive at 25' is a year-long programme created to bring dynamic experiences to life through culture at the Home of Guinness. During the St. Patrick's Festival in March, Seanchóiche hosted a night of storytelling and contemporary all-female trad group BIIRD performed. We also worked with artist Leah Hewson, who created a vibrant installation for the Storehouse. We have an exciting summer programme lined up, working with many partners in the local community; so, watch this space.

Sporting events have been a huge boost for Dublin. Events like the Aer Lingus College Football Classic have brought a new wave of visitors – we'll be hosting our own celebrations this August. We also recently launched our first ever match day experience in **Gravity Bar** as part of the global Guinness partnership with the Premier League and have lots more sporting events like that planned.

There's so much to discover at all our Irish Brand Homes attractions this summer. At **Roe & Co Whiskey Distillery** in Dublin, we're excited to bring back the summer garden experience featuring local food collaborators, cocktail making and dining outside. In Kilkenny, the **Smithwick's Experience** – home to Ireland's oldest ale, we'll have over 30 homegrown artists bring alive our cosy, outdoor bar: **Barrel Yard** on weekends.

Ireland is renowned for its exceptional hospitality, vibrant culture and landscapes. Seven out of ten overseas holidaymakers are interested in visiting Ireland. To remain competitive as a world-class destination, it's crucial we continue to enhance our visitor experiences and promote value for money. We're seeing the tourism landscape being reshaped by Gen Z and Gen Y visitors, who crave spontaneity, adventure and experiences that feel unique and authentic. We're seeing that shift in people looking for cool things to do,



planning their holidays around concerts, live performances and sporting events. Underpinning those trends is a strong desire for belonging and community. And so, at all Irish Brand Homes destinations, we're dialling up experiences where people are more involved. We've launched a midweek experience in the **Storehouse** that's fully guided, giving visitors the benefit of a brand ambassador and beer specialist sharing stories about our history and innovation before they get to pour their own pint. On the third floor, we introduced a new cinematic journey in our immersive cinema room, which brings to life the timeline of Guinness's most iconic advertisements. **STOUTie** continues to be hugely popular, where guests are served a pint of Guinness or Guinness 0.0 with their selfie printed on the head, which adds that sense of personalisation. It's really important that we make sure to extend that warm welcome we're known for.

All the hospitality spaces in the Storehouse have been upgraded this year. Food is such an important part of being able to enjoy a pint of Guinness or Guinness 0.0, and we want to celebrate the amazing ingredients in our culinary heritage. **Arthur's Bar** offers authentic bar food, **1837 Bar & Brasserie** showcases seafood and grilled meats, while our new **Market Street Restaurant**, formerly Brewer's Dining Hall, is about blending Irish ingredients with global flavours in a casual setting.



All four Irish Brand Homes are now accredited by autism charity AsIAM. The Guinness Open Gate Brewery is the first tap room in Ireland to be accredited by AsIAM. On the first Wednesday of every month, we host our sensory-friendly hours at the **Storehouse** for neurodiverse visitors, and for World Autism Day this year, we opened our doors for a full-day sensory experience with a harpist performing at the gates. We're looking at curating other ways to make our Irish Brand Homes experiences more enjoyable for neurodivergent people, while exploring other areas where we



can work to bring our experience to life for everybody and have an inclusive environment for all visitors.

Holidays are really important for me to recharge my batteries, and getting away provides an opportunity to experience other cultures. I have a staycation planned this year, staying in my native Sligo and seeing other parts of Ireland, too. I was really lucky earlier this year to visit Kenya, which has been on my bucket list. I was struck by the incredible conservancies, where endangered species are protected – I got to see the last two northern white rhinos in the world and the care they're given. I'm currently training for a Camino Walk this year in Spain so I've been walking everywhere – the Ballycotton Cliff Walk in Cork, Killarney National Park in Kerry, the Ladies Brae in Sligo, the Howth Summit in Dublin. It's given me this huge sense of growing



curiosity and love for all the walks in Ireland, whether it be a hike, Greenway or trail. There's nothing nicer than stopping off for a sandwich and coffee in a gorgeous pub or café at the end of a wonderful trek.

At home, I'm looking forward to catching a few festivals and cultural events in Dublin this summer, like The Liberties Festival, July 21-27; Flavours of Fingal, July 5-6; and plays at the Abbey Theatre, like *The Cave*, a new Kevin Barry play running June 6 to July 18.

Discover more at: diageo.com
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Urban *legacy*

Jennifer McShane chats to Christine Murphy, founder of Waterford-based knitwear label Urban Aran, about blending art with local heritage, building a brand from scratch and what she's learned along the way.

I studied knitted textiles in Limerick at the School of Art and Design before COVID, one day a week while working in the luxury hotel industry. I worked in senior management roles in the luxury hotel industry for 22-years, in places like the Sheraton in Belgium, the Westbury, and the Ritz-Carlton. I was very involved in interior design projects and the day-to-day running of hotels. I had a good understanding of fabrics, colours and textiles. And it's amazing how everything interrelates with fashion — the design process, light, simplicity — and it all connects. I launched my first fashion collection in October 2021 during the pandemic and was invited by CREATE in Brown Thomas to show my collection the following year. I have been there four years in a row. My fashion collection is full-time in Arnotts Dublin and 11 other independent stores.

While studying, I walked around Waterford and looked at all the street art murals. That's how Urban Aran came about. I was so inspired by how unattractive buildings and forgotten corners were being completely transformed by murals, by Irish and international artists. Suddenly, people were standing around looking at them and admiring them. I thought we're always talking about the Wild Atlantic Way or the Copper Coast, but we're not looking at urban Ireland and how towns and villages are being revived throughout the country through art. I greatly respect how graffiti has gone from ghetto-style to becoming a free art gallery on our walls. I wanted to bring that spirit into my knitwear

using some Aran stitches, some of my drawings and designs and bold colour.

Although based in Waterford now, I travel a lot. I've worked all over Belgium, the UK and the US. I ended up settling here and this became home. I have two girls but I still travel regularly. I was in Paris this year showing my Autumn collection and I'm off to Canada soon. I still design luxury blankets for hotels. I have designed and made luxury hotel blankets in Ireland for Adare Manor, Hayfield Manor, The Merrion Hotel Spa, Ashford Castle, among others.

Currently, my full collection is designed and made in Ireland using only natural fibres. The wool is from Northern Italy; it's a soft Merino from the underbelly of the sheep. It's natural, hypoallergenic and biodegradable. The dyes are FSC certified. I knit everything fully fashioned as much of the garment as possible is made without cutting or sewing, so there are very few seams. Many people with sensory challenges wear my pieces, which I hadn't expected, but it makes sense. The cropped bomber did really well last year. It's colourful and warm and I use up to four colours of double-twisted wool, which gives great texture. I also do a pure wool 'coatigan' that's really insulating. None of my pieces contain synthetics; it's all pure wool, no acrylics.

Not everything I make will appeal to everyone. And that's not my goal. I'm building something with a unique aesthetic. I'm not interested in designing

plain navy jumpers. There's nothing wrong with them but they don't fulfil my purpose. For others starting, I always say: You're not a charity. That's the advice I always give. You're entitled to earn a living. Know your numbers and your costs and margins. There's real pressure to be everything — designer, bookkeeper, PR but knowing the numbers keeps you going.

I joined Network Waterford early on. It took me a while, but it was one of the best things I did. I met my accountant, a business mentor, and a local printer there. Everyone's eager to learn and help each other. The Local Enterprise Office was a huge help too. You just have to go in, have a coffee and see what's on offer. It's hard and lonely at times, especially when you've been used to managing a big team. Now you're the boss and it's just you.

Being stocked in Adare Manor, Ashford Castle and Arnotts has been a highlight. Seeing Urban Aran in the window at Burnt Orange was a real moment, too. We've shown in Paris and Beijing and I've started building export relationships. It's taken time, but it's happening.

Discover more at: urbanaran.com





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A Toast to Wicklow's Finest:

Powerscourt Distillery Celebrates Global Recognition and Local Pride



In the lush heart of County Wicklow, tucked beneath the majestic Sugarloaf Mountain, something truly special is maturing — and it's not just the whiskey.

This year, **Powerscourt Distillery** is raising a well-earned glass to a momentous milestone, as their whiskeys—and the people behind them—have been honoured on the world stage.

The distillery proudly brought home ten prestigious awards at the **2025 World Whiskies Awards**, including the coveted title of **World's Best Grain Whiskey** for their **Fercullen 15**. It marks the first time a Wicklow whiskey has received this global honour — a proud moment not just for the distillery, but for all of Wicklow.

And while the spirits are winning accolades, so too are the spirits of the people behind them.

Local legend and whiskey visionary **John Cashman** was recently inducted into the **Whisky Magazine Hall of Fame**, becoming the 100th person ever to receive this recognition. A familiar face to many in Wicklow, John's 27-year journey through the Irish whiskey industry has

taken him from Tokyo to Montreal, spreading the word and the warmth of Irish whiskey to the world. And yet, he's never strayed far from home. When he's not crafting award-winning whiskeys, John's coaching local GAA and rugby teams, championing food and drink producers as Vice Chairman of **Wicklow Naturally**, and helping to build a thriving, sustainable future for the region he loves.

"It's an incredible honour," John said of his induction. "But more than anything, I'm proud of the people I've worked with and the community that's supported me every step of the way."

It's that same community spirit that drives **Powerscourt Distillery's** commitment to sustainability, earning them the **Icons of Whisky – Sustainable Distillery of the Year** award. They're leading the way



in environmentally responsible distilling—using local ingredients, reducing waste, and giving back to the community through festivals, talks, and charitable work.

Visitors to Powerscourt not only get to taste some of Ireland's finest whiskey, like the smooth and complex **Fercullen Falls**, recently named **Ireland's Best Blended**, but they also experience the hospitality and heart that make this place truly unique.

Whether you're a whiskey connoisseur or simply looking for an unforgettable day out in Wicklow, **Powerscourt Distillery** offers more than just a tasting—it offers a story of passion, place, and people worth celebrating.

So next time you find yourself on the scenic trails of **Powerscourt Estate** or gazing out over the gardens, make sure to stop by the distillery. Raise a glass, take a tour and savour the spirit of Wicklow — in every sense of the word.



Get the facts. Be DRINKAWARE



AN *Award Winning* EXPERIENCE AWAITS



Fercullen Falls from Powerscourt Distillery, Co. Wicklow, Ireland, has been crowned Ireland's 'Best Blended Whiskey', solidifying the distillery's status as a premier Irish whiskey producer. Powerscourt Distillery took home a total of nine awards at the 2025 World Whiskies Awards. Committed to sustainability and also named 'Sustainable Distillery of the Year', Powerscourt offers an enriching visit for whiskey enthusiasts and eco-conscious travellers alike.

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Things to see and do in DUBLIN



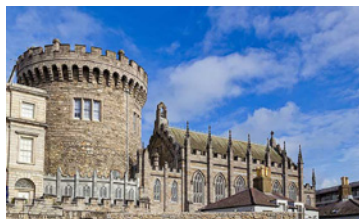
Dublin, Ireland's vibrant capital, offers a captivating mix of history, culture and modern charm. Be it that you're strolling down its bustling streets, discovering its literary history or enjoying its world-class dining, Dublin is a city that knows how to leave a lasting impression. With iconic landmarks, cosy pubs and an exciting food scene, there's plenty to explore for all types of tourists.



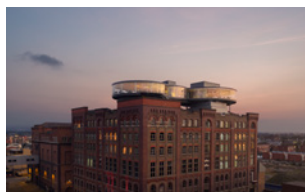
College Dublin, home to the world-renowned *Book of Kells*.

Dating back to the 9th century, this beautifully illuminated manuscript is one of the most important historical artefacts in Ireland. Don't forget to take in the stunning architecture of the Long Room at the Old Library, which houses thousands of rare books and manuscripts.

Next, head over to *Dublin Castle*, a cornerstone of Irish history since the 13th century. Explore its State Apartments, medieval undercroft and beautiful gardens.



Nearby, *St. Patrick's Cathedral*, Ireland's largest cathedral, is another must-visit. Its towering Gothic structure and peaceful gardens make it a perfect spot for reflection.



Guinness Storehouse Experience

Savour the sights, sounds, tastes and aromas of Guinness. Join us beyond the gates at the home of the black stuff. Learn how to pour a pint of Guinness

and see your face come to life on the head of a creamy pint.

GPO Museum

The GPO Museum is a permanent visitor attraction located within the historic GPO (General Post Office) building on O'Connell Street, Dublin. The experience is one of the newest Dublin Museums and it is one of the top attractions to explore.

Enjoy Dublin's Culinary Delights

Dublin is becoming a foodie haven, with incredible restaurants offering delicious bites for every palate. If you're in the mood for some authentic Italian cuisine, you can't miss *Rosa Madre Italian*. Known for its fresh seafood and authentic Italian dishes, it's one of Dublin's top dining spots.

Looking for a more casual bite? Try *Dublin Pizza Company*, where the wood-fired pizzas are made with the freshest local ingredients. Their artisan pizzas, baked to perfection, are a true taste of Italy right in the heart of Dublin.

For a sweet treat, *Dolce & Sicily* is a fantastic spot to indulge in some traditional Sicilian pastries and desserts. Whether you're craving a decadent cannoli or a rich espresso, this charming café brings a taste of Sicily to Dublin's busy streets.

If you're exploring Temple Bar, the cultural heart of Dublin, stop by *Brogan's Pub* for a traditional pint of Guinness. It's one of the oldest family-run pubs in the city and offers an authentic Irish pub experience with live music and a lively atmosphere.

For a delightful evening meal, *Toscan Restaurant* on Dame Street offers fine Italian cuisine with a relaxed ambience. Enjoy their extensive menu featuring everything from pasta to perfectly cooked steaks.

Dive into Dublin's Cultural Scene

Dublin is famous for its literary heritage, and a walk around the city will take you through the footsteps of some of the world's most celebrated writers, like James Joyce, Oscar Wilde and W.B. Yeats. Take a stroll through Merrion Square to see the Oscar Wilde Memorial Sculpture and the charming Georgian townhouses that line the park.

If you're a fan of literature, you can't miss *The James Joyce Centre*, which offers fascinating insights into the life and works of this famous Dubliner. For those interested in the city's history, the *EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum* is an interactive experience that explores Ireland's global impact and the stories of those who left its shores.

Outdoor Adventures in the City

Fancy a break from the urban bustle? Dublin offers plenty of green spaces to relax and unwind. *Phoenix Park*, one of the largest enclosed parks in Europe, is home to *Dublin Zoo* and offers miles of scenic walking and cycling trails. It's also a great place to spot some wild deer.

For a more coastal experience, head out to Howth, a charming seaside village just a short train ride from Dublin city centre. Enjoy the fresh sea breeze as you walk along the cliffs or treat yourself to some freshly caught seafood at one of the many waterfront restaurants.

Festivals and Seasonal Highlights

No matter when you visit Dublin, there's always something going on. If you're here in March, you can't miss the city's legendary St. Patrick's Festival, where the streets come alive with parades, music and plenty of Irish cheer. In the summer, the Dublin Horse Show at the Royal Dublin Society (RDS) is a prestigious event that attracts visitors from all over the world.

For music lovers, TradFest Temple Bar is a winter festival that celebrates traditional Irish music in some of the city's most historic venues. It's a great stop for anyone looking to experience the authentic sounds of Ireland.



Castles, Cottages & Country Charm:

Indulge in a Kildare Getaway with Ireland's Blue Book



Ireland's Blue Book is a collection of luxurious country houses, castles and restaurants located throughout the island of Ireland, ideal for weekend escapes or midweek getaways.

Cliff at Lyons, Co. Kildare

Cliff at Lyons in Kildare offers a luxurious retreat amidst the stunning countryside. The property features beautiful rooms, charming cottages and lush gardens, with complimentary access to Village Thermal, including Finnish saunas and hot tubs under a canopy of greenery.

Enjoy breakfast in the Victorian-style **The Orangery** or seasonal dishes at **The Mill Restaurant** with views of a serene waterfall. For a lighter bite, stop by **The Pantry at Trellis Café** by the canal. Unwind at **The Well in the Garden**, offering luxurious spa therapies using the **Well at Cliff** range.

Located in the heart of Kildare, **Cliff at Lyons** is a perfect blend of luxury, nature, and hospitality.

Barberstown Castle, Co. Kildare

Barberstown Castle, a historic 13th-century castle in Straffan, Co. Kildare, offers a rich history and a unique, timeless atmosphere.

Privately owned, it offers personal service tailored to your needs. Dine at **Barton Rooms**, relax in the **Garden Bar & Restaurant**, or enjoy signature Afternoon Tea. Stay like royalty in one of their four-poster bedrooms.

Located in County Kildare, it's the perfect base to explore attractions like the **Irish National Stud, Kildare Village**, and **Newbridge Silverware**.

Experience the charm of Kildare at **Barberstown Castle**, where history meets luxury.

Experience unforgettable moments with an Ireland's Blue Book getaway.

Ireland's Blue Book Gift vouchers can be used at any of their 64 unique properties for overnight stays, fine dining, afternoon tea, spa treatments, and more.



CORK:

A Guide to the Rebel County



When you think of Ireland's must-see destinations, Cork might just be one of the first places that spring to mind, and so it should be!

Cork City: Where History Meets Modern Vibes

Start your exploration at the English Market, one of the oldest municipal markets in the world. It's a food lover's paradise, with stalls brimming with fresh produce, artisan cheeses and baked goods. Don't leave without trying some local specialties like spiced beef or fresh seafood.

For a dose of culture, head to St. Fin Barre's Cathedral or if you're a fan of art, don't miss the *Crawford Art Gallery*, showcasing both classical and contemporary Irish works. A visit to Cork wouldn't be complete without a trip to Shandon Bells. Climb to the top of the tower for panoramic views of the city and don't forget to ring the famous bells on your way up—a quirky Cork tradition!



For those looking to get closer to nature, *Fota Island Resort* is a fantastic choice. Situated on a private island, this five-star resort features

championship golf courses, a relaxing spa and easy access to the nearby Fota House & Gardens, where you can stroll through the impressive grounds or visit the historical house to delve into Ireland's aristocratic past.

After a day of exploring, unwind at the luxurious *Kingsley Hotel*, a riverside retreat that combines modern comfort with serene views. Its spa is a perfect place to relax, with thermal suites and a pool offering a tranquil escape from the city buzz.

Venturing into Cork County: Scenic Beauty Awaits

Take a trip to Kinsale, often regarded as the gourmet capital of Ireland. Wander its colourful streets, dine in one of the many award-winning seafood restaurants, or embark on a harbour cruise to get a unique view of the area's beauty. Don't miss *The Greyhound*, Kinsale, a fantastic pub for soaking in the local atmosphere.

Nature enthusiasts will love exploring Gougan Barra, a picturesque forest park nestled in the mountains. Whether you're into hiking, cycling or simply enjoying the tranquil surroundings, this off-the-beaten-path gem is worth the trip. For history buffs, Blarney Castle is an absolute must. Famous for the Blarney Stone, legend has it that kissing the stone will grant you the gift of eloquence. But even if you don't



fancy smooching a piece of rock, the castle's gardens are lush, expansive and full of hidden corners to explore.

After your outdoor adventures, you'll need to refuel. Stop by *Cronin's* in Crosshaven for a relaxed pub experience. For burger lovers, *Roasted in Midleton* is a must-visit spot.

For another dose of military history, head to Camden Fort Meagher, perched on the cliffs overlooking Cork Harbour. This partially restored fort is considered one of the finest examples



of a coastal artillery fort in the world. Walking around its underground passageways and tunnels offers a unique perspective on Cork's strategic importance over the centuries.

Cork's Festivals and Cultural Highlights

No visit to Cork would be complete without diving into its vibrant cultural scene. If you're visiting in the summer, make sure to time your trip for the Cork Midsummer Festival. This annual celebration of arts, theatre, music and dance takes over the city with spectacular performances and events. Another highlight is the Cork Jazz Festival, which brings world-class musicians to the city every October for a long weekend of unforgettable music.

For those looking to unwind with a pint, check out some of Cork's best bars. *The Lodge Pub*, *Sin É - Impala* are local favourites offering a mix of traditional charm and vibrant nightlife.

Spring is another fantastic season to visit, with flowers blooming across the countryside and festivals like the Cork International Choral Festival bringing a lively buzz to the city.



PURE CORK

FÍOR-CHORCAIGH



BEARA PENINSULA

The Beara Peninsula in southwest Ireland is one of Ireland's most compelling and beautiful locations. The Miskish and the Cahah mountains form the rugged spine of the Beara peninsula which pokes out into the wild Atlantic Ocean



BANTRY

Bantry is a beautiful and modern harbour town in West Cork, one of the most picturesque parts of Ireland. It is located along the renowned Wild Atlantic Way touring route and is the perfect base to explore these stunning lands



CORK CITY

Built on a series of islands this ancient merchant city is steeped in maritime history and a rich artistic culture. Ireland's second city, Cork is the best place in the world to relax, unwind and soak up the atmosphere.

Cork is a small and compact City where you can get from the airport to the city centre in less than 10 minutes, but don't let that deter you because within that small space you will find historical buildings and a vibrant arts and cultural scene



NORTH CORK

Marvel at stunning houses, castles and gardens or experience the thrill of mountain biking, rock climbing, archery, fishing and kayaking in this often overlooked, but certainly worthwhile region of Cork County



MIDDLETON

Nestled at the centre of East Cork, Midleton boasts an ever-enhanced culinary reputation with wonderful restaurants, farmers market, specialist food shops and the internationally famous Jameson Midleton Distillery

FOR A TASTE OF WHAT'S AVAILABLE IN CORK VISIT WWW.PURECORK.IE



WEST CORK ISLANDS

Seven inhabited islands and one garden paradise – strung like jewels along Ireland's southwest coastline. They're the perfect places to explore the landscapes, seascapes, and heritage of beautiful West Cork



SKIBBEREEN

Skibbereen is the 'hub' of West Cork and an ideal base from which to discover the delights that the area has to offer. This bustling market town has so much to offer including world class food, unique shops, live music and nearby beaches



CLONAKILTY

Clonakilty is a multi-award winning, cosmopolitan, and friendly seaside town at the heart of West Cork, in the South of Ireland. A vibrant town, Clonakilty also boasts beautiful beaches, green surrounds and a mix of activities to suit everyone



KINSALE

Located at the start of the Wild Atlantic Way, Kinsale is famous for its colourful streetscapes and rich history and foodie culture. Kinsale is a vibrant coastal town with an energetic personality to keep you entertained all year round!



COBH

Overlooked by the renowned Cobh Cathedral and famous for its colourful exteriors. Cobh's history is entwined with the sea being the last port of call for the doomed 'Titanic' and the departure point for many millions of Irish emigrants



YOUGHAL

Youghal, the gem of Ireland's Ancient East, a truly unique place with miles of sandy beaches and a rich ancient history. Youghal, an impressive medieval town and one of the last walled towns of Ireland



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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!

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KILKENNY:

Ireland's Ancient East



Kilkenny, a medieval gem in Ireland's Ancient East, is a city brimming with history, charm and character. Famous for its stunning architecture, lively cultural scene and top-tier dining experiences, Kilkenny offers visitors a perfect mix of the old and the new.



Discover Kilkenny's Medieval Marvels

Start your Kilkenny adventure by visiting *Kilkenny Castle*, one of Ireland's most iconic landmarks. This

12th-century fortress, perched above the River Nore, is not only stunning to look at but also offers a fascinating glimpse into the city's medieval past. Take a guided tour to explore the beautifully restored interiors and wander through the lush gardens, perfect for a relaxing afternoon stroll.

Next, visit *St. Canice's Cathedral*, another architectural masterpiece dating back to the 13th century. If you're up for a bit of a climb, the cathedral's round tower offers breathtaking views of Kilkenny and the surrounding countryside. A stroll around the cathedral grounds provides a peaceful respite from the bustling city streets.

For those with a keen interest in history, *Rothe House & Garden* is a must-see. This beautifully preserved Tudor merchant's house gives visitors an insight into Kilkenny's rich mercantile history and features an idyllic walled garden that's perfect for a quiet escape.

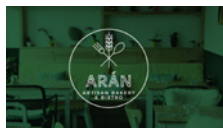


Savour the Culinary Delights

Kilkenny's food scene is something to write home about, with incredible eateries serving up fresh, local fare. For a memorable dining experience,

book a table at *Noinin Restaurant*. Nestled in the heart of the city, this elegant eatery specializes in seasonal Irish cuisine with a modern twist. Whether you're indulging in their seafood dishes or sampling some of their delicious vegetarian options, Noinin is a must-visit for food lovers.

If you're in the mood for something sweet, don't miss *Arán Bakery*, a favourite among locals and visitors alike. Known for its artisanal breads and pastries, Arán is the perfect spot for a leisurely breakfast or coffee break. Their fresh, locally sourced ingredients make every bite a delight, and the cosy ambience will make you want to stay all day.



When it comes to pizza, Kilkenny has its very own wood-fired gem – *Blasta Wood Fired Pizza*. This local favourite serves up delicious pizzas with a wide range of toppings, all cooked to perfection in a wood-fired oven. Whether you're craving a classic Margherita or something more adventurous, *Blasta's* pizzas are sure to satisfy.

Experience Kilkenny's Pub Culture

A trip to Ireland wouldn't be complete without visiting a traditional pub, and Kilkenny has no shortage of lively spots where you can enjoy a pint of Guinness. *Cleere's Pub* is a local institution, famous for its cosy atmosphere and perfectly poured Guinness. It's the kind of place where you can relax with friends, enjoy some live music, and experience the warmth of Irish hospitality.

For a more laid-back vibe, *The Left Bank*, located in a former bank building, offers a chic mix of history and modernity. It's a great spot for casual drinks or a more sophisticated evening out.

Embrace Kilkenny's Arts and Culture

Kilkenny is often referred to as the cultural capital of Ireland, and it's easy to see why. The city is home to several arts festivals,



including the *Kilkenny Arts Festival*, which takes place every August. This internationally renowned event brings together artists, musicians and performers from around the world, filling the streets with colour and creativity.

For a year-round cultural fix, pay a visit to *The Butler Gallery*. Located within the restored Evans' Home, this contemporary art museum showcases both local and international artists and offers an intriguing mix of exhibitions and events. It's a great place to spend a few hours, especially for art enthusiasts.

Enjoy Kilkenny's Outdoor Adventures

If you're looking for a bit of fresh air, Kilkenny's countryside has plenty to offer. Just a short drive from the city, *Castlecomer Discovery Park* is a fantastic destination for outdoor enthusiasts. Whether you're zip-lining through the treetops, enjoying the scenic walking trails or exploring the interactive mining museum, you'll find it in this adventure-packed park.

Highbanks Orchard

Highbank Orchards is home to the original innovative and multi-award-winning Highbank Orchard Syrup and Treacle. They also produce several delicious Apple juices, including their acclaimed non-alcoholic Drivers Cider as well as Highbank Proper Cider and Medieval Cider, matured on their wild yeasts with no added sulphites. 2014 brought the addition of Dodonus - the smallest Distillery in Ireland, which was built in the old Highbank Dairy and now produces Highbank Organic Apple Spirits - the first Irish and Kilkenny Organic Apple gin known as Highbank Crystal Gin (out of the rocks of Kilkenny), Highbank Orchard Spirit, Highbank Orchard Liqueur Brandy, apple Dark Doyle Rum and Highbank Organic Apple Vodka.

Another must-visit spot for nature lovers is *Jeninstown Park*, located a few kilometres north of Kilkenny. This peaceful woodland area is perfect for a leisurely walk or picnic and if you visit in spring, you'll be treated to the beautiful sight of blooming bluebells carpeting the forest floor.

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Relax and regenerate

IN IRELAND'S HIDDEN HEARTLANDS



In the tranquil beauty of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, the journey is more important than the destination.

With miles of uncongested waterways that are perfect for cruising, countless biking, hiking and walking trails and endless castles and romantic ruins to explore, Ireland's Hidden Heartlands is the ideal place to slow down and reconnect with nature and yourself. It's a region of Ireland that's often overlooked by visitors but one that rewards with idyllic scenery, welcoming communities and excellent slow travel experiences.

Running through the heartlands is the mighty River Shannon, stretching 360km from source to sea and one of Europe's premier cruising destinations. Hiring a cruiser is the best way to navigate the heartlands, with numerous town and village stop-off points along the Shannon's length as well as a range of habitats where diverse flora and fauna can be seen. And with the Irish Boat Rental Association announcing that from next year it will transition its stock to sustainable HVO fuel, the experience is

now as eco-friendly as it is enjoyable.

The Shannon passes through three loughs in which water-based activities abound. So those who enjoy being active in nature can have a go at everything from kayaking to paddleboarding and wild swimming.

On land, multiple well-developed tracks and trails enable exploration of the heartlands at a leisurely pace. The Royal Canal Greenway, Old Rail Trail and National Famine Way enable visitors to connect with Ireland's history and heritage, discover cultural gems and engage with local communities. Mountain bike enthusiasts will find excellent trails at Ballyhoura and Slieve Blooms and these are also locations for annual walking festivals. The 64km Lough Derg Way, which follows a mix of riverbank, canal bank, forest track and road is also a great cycling or walking route and passes important heritage sites such as Portumna Castle and Holy Island.

Ireland's Hidden Heartlands aims to be one of Europe's leading regenerative

tourism destinations within the next 10-years. That means that visitors seeking sustainable experiences will find an increasing number of choices there, as new experiences are developed.

Among the key developments is the peatland rehabilitation project, currently the biggest nature conservation project in Europe. It is working to restore Ireland's peatlands, exploited for fuel over hundreds of years, to their natural state. They will become absorbers of carbon dioxide helping to create a greener environment and become homes for rare and endangered flora and fauna.



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Discover WATERFORD AND IRELAND'S OLDEST CITY

Discover County Waterford, a captivating destination on Ireland's southeastern coast, where history, nature and culture intertwine to create a truly memorable experience.

From the ancient streets of Waterford City to the rugged landscapes of the Comeragh Mountains, each corner of this diverse county offers something unique to explore. Immerse yourself in the rich heritage of Ireland's oldest city, meander along the scenic Waterford Greenway or marvel at the geological wonders of the Copper Coast.

Whether you're seeking adventure in the great outdoors or craving a taste of traditional Irish hospitality, County Waterford has something for everyone.

Join us on a journey through this enchanting region, where every discovery is a delight waiting to be uncovered.

County Waterford Things to See and Do

1. Waterford City: Explore the historic streets, visit attractions like Reginald's Tower, Bishop's Palace and the Medieval Museum.

2. Waterford Greenway: Enjoy a scenic bike ride or walk along this 46km off-road trail, passing through picturesque countryside and charming villages.

3. Lismore Castle: Visit this stunning castle, which is set amidst beautiful gardens and overlooks the River Blackwater.

4. Dunmore East: Relax on the sandy beaches, go sailing or fishing and explore the charming fishing village.



5. Comeragh Mountains: Hike or drive through this scenic mountain range, offering breathtaking views and plenty of outdoor activities.

6. The Copper Coast Geopark: Discover the geological wonders of this UNESCO Global Geopark, featuring stunning cliffs, coves and coastal landscapes.

7. Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre: Take a guided tour of the world-famous Waterford Crystal factory and see skilled craftsmen at work.

8. Tramore Beach: Enjoy a day at one of Ireland's most popular beaches, known for its golden sands and excellent surfing conditions.

9. Mount Congreve Gardens: Wander through these magnificent gardens, renowned for their collection of rare plants and stunning floral displays.

10. Reginald's Tower: Explore this historic tower, which dates back to Viking times and now houses a museum showcasing Waterford's heritage.

11. The Waterford and Suir Valley Railway: Take a scenic train ride through the picturesque countryside along the banks of the River Suir.

12. Dungarvan Castle: Visit this well-preserved medieval castle overlooking Dungarvan Bay, now home to a museum showcasing local history.



13. Mahon Falls: Hike to this picturesque waterfall nestled in the Comeragh Mountains, offering stunning views of the surrounding landscape.

14. Clonea Strand: Relax on this Blue Flag beach, known for its soft sand and clear waters, perfect for swimming and water sports.



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TRIATHLON NATIONAL SERIES

The highly anticipated Triathlon National Series returns in May 2025, bringing another summer of racing around Ireland with 16 events running from May to September. Set against some of the country's most stunning backdrops, this year's series promises something for everyone - from first-timers to seasoned competitors.



With races in all four provinces, athletes of all levels can choose from a range of distances, unique courses and scenic locations to suit their goals. Ambitious triathletes will aim for the competitive National Series title, which is awarded at the annual Triathlon Ireland Awards.

The calendar features some of the best triathlon courses in Ireland, with the return of iconic triathlons, including the Skerries Triathlon and Dublin City Triathlon. Hundreds of participants make their way to Skerries every year for a scenic beach start, coastal cycle and a run through the charming marina town. Now in its 42nd year, Skerries is one of the longest-running and historic triathlons in Ireland - a true cornerstone of the sport's legacy. The highly popular Dublin City Triathlon returns in August, with the swim kicking off in the



River Liffey next to Phoenix Park. The scenic cycle is followed by a run, weaving through the famous park, providing a unique course in the heart of the city.

Many participants travel to races with family, friends, and their local clubs, creating a lively and supportive race day atmosphere. Local clubs provide a welcoming community, offering encouragement and motivation from the start line to the finish with supportive weekly training and motivational cheers. Clubs are at the heart of the triathlon community, adding an extra layer of

connection and encouragement. For many, the friendships and shared achievements become just as meaningful as crossing the finish line itself.

For the competitive triathletes, National Championship titles are up for grabs across various distance triathlons as well as aquabike and aquathlon. This year's Sprint National Championships will take place in July, hosted by Two Provinces Triathlon in County Longford on the banks of the River Shannon.

The 2025 Triathlon National Series is the perfect way to experience the spirit of triathlon while exploring the very best of Ireland.



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Five fun, rainy-day activities, in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands



The weather in Ireland is often unpredictable but rather than see this as a stumbling block, discover all the fun rainy-day activities, you can do instead.

1. Shannonbridge Fortifications

Journey to Shannonbridge, Offaly and travel back in time on a visit to the Shannonbridge Fortifications, a Napoleonic fort that dates back to 1810. Follow the self-guided walk around the fort and spend some time at the free exhibition in the main building, which explains why the fortifications were built in this setting on the River Shannon. Before leaving Shannonbridge, stop off to see the magnificent sixteen-arch bridge, which gives this scenic village its name.

2. Athlone Castle

Dive deeper into the history of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands with an afternoon at Athlone Castle. Despite much of the original structure being destroyed by warring armies and natural disasters, visitors can still see the remains

of the magnificent 13th Century walls that were incorporated into the existing building. Wander the interactive exhibitions, including an immersive experience on the Siege of Athlone, and take in the views over the Shannon.

3. The Planet Athlone

Leave the rain behind and head indoors for some epic entertainment at The Planet Athlone. Get competitive with a family game of bowling, play some pool on the full-size snooker tables or have a kickaround on the astroturf pitches. The hurricane simulator is a must for thrill-seekers while a game of energetic laser tag is always a hit with groups.



4. Arigna Mining Experience

Book in with the Arigna Mining Experience in Roscommon and listen to a former coal miner explain the inner workings of the mines on an underground tour.

Check out the permanent exhibition that traces the story of 400-years of mining in the Arigna Valley with a collection of photographs, documents and early mining equipment. Don't miss the short film that includes original mining footage and brings this key period of local history to life.

5. The National Famine Museum, Strokestown Park

Take a rainy day trip to the National Famine Museum, Strokestown Park, where you can learn more about this important period of Irish history. During the Great Irish Famine of the 1840s, over two-million people died when the potato crop failed. Pour over the archive of letters written by evicted tenants and see some of the original photographs and documents.

Find the National Famine Museum on the grounds of Strokestown Park House, an excellent example of Palladian architecture. Book ahead and take a guided tour to see some of the estate's original features, including the galleried kitchen, the vaulted stables and the lodge.





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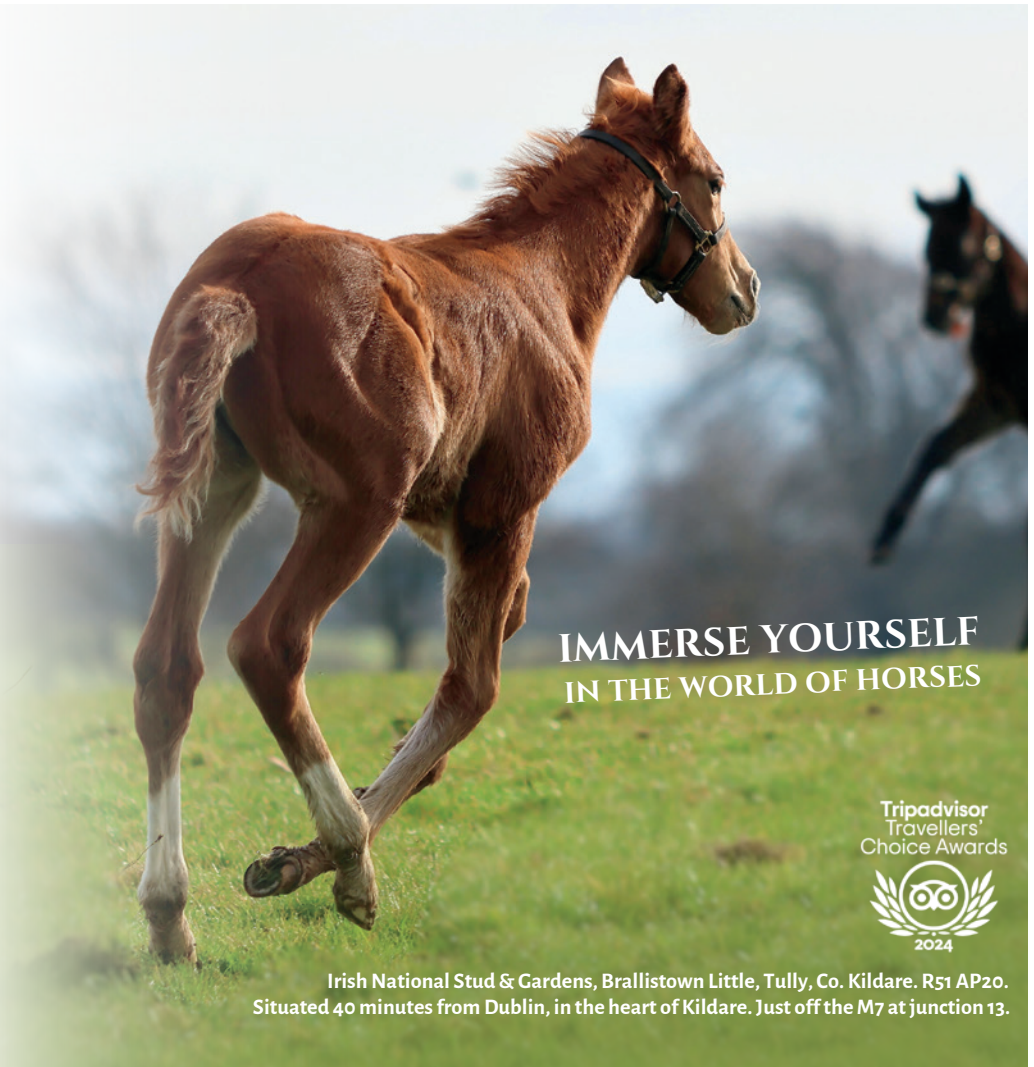
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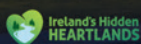
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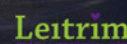
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Greg O'Shea's adventure in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands



As a rugby player, Olympian and influencer, Greg O'Shea has travelled all around the globe – but he holds firm in his belief that Ireland is “the most beautiful country in the world.” And after three days exploring Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, he realised that there's plenty more for him to discover right on his doorstep, from remote waterfalls and lakes to storied castles and exceptional dining.

With his sister Laura by his side, Greg set off for an adventure in Leitrim and Roscommon, trying his hand at e-biking and zip lining over a lakeside forest.



JUST A SIP

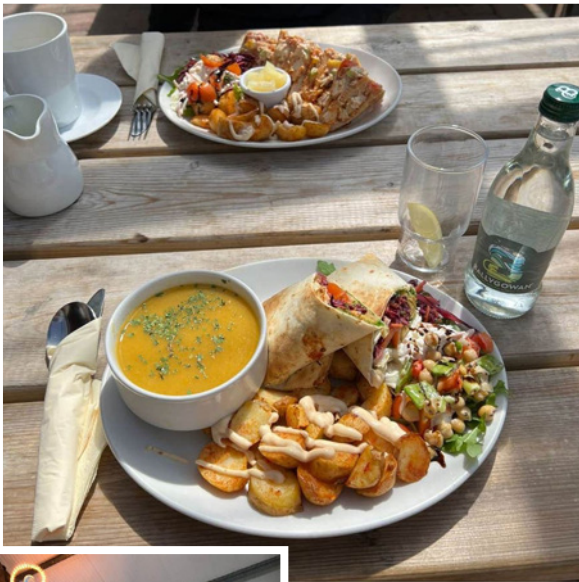
Just a 15-minute walk from the Shannon Blueway trailhead is **The Shed Distillery Experience**, where Greg stopped by for a tour and a tasting of the iconic Drumshanbo Gunpowder Irish Gin.

“I couldn't get over the fact that every single bottle of Gunpowder Gin is made there and sent around the world. Plus, the bar at the end of the distillery tour is just gorgeous. The experience is so well done and, it's a family affair. It's so local but such a strong brand.”

DISCOVERING THE LOCAL FOOD SCENE

Another surprising element of the Hidden Heartlands is the food scene, which Greg says completely surpassed his expectations. One evening, Greg and Laura travelled to the village of Dromahair for dinner in the **Riverbank Restaurant**, which sits on the curve of the River Bonet. “Dinner in the Riverbank was gorgeous,” says Greg. “It has a pub feel to it but with food that was top-notch. We were amazed at how well-rounded the menu was. There's a nice and Irish feel to it.”





an estate that dates back to the 18th century.

“The grounds at Kilronan Castle are beautiful,” says Greg. “Our room looked out over the lake, which was absolutely stunning. It’s really old school – there’s a great sense of history, but then you can sit with a drink by the fire in the lounge in the evening. It’s absolutely beautiful.”

GETTING THE ADRENALINE PUMPING

With so much of the local landscape dominated by hills, lakes and rivers, there are plenty of opportunities to get out and get active. Greg and Laura set off for a hike from the **Organic Centre** up to **Fowley’s Falls**, a multi-level cascade waterfall, which Greg couldn’t resist leaping into.

“I jumped in and it was so refreshing. You can swim straight in underneath the waterfall, too. It’s freezing, so it’s not for the faint hearted! But it’s a lovely little treat at the end of a walk.”

Things were a bit more adrenaline fuelled at **Lough Key Forest Park**, where the pair strapped on harnesses and helmets to have a go at ziplining.

“You’d definitely want to have your wits about you!” says Greg. “But it was really good fun. You get taught how to do everything and then you’re let off on your own.”



Greg was also impressed by **Osta W8** in nearby Manorhamilton, which he describes as a “chilled café with really good food, like soup and falafel sandwiches, and great coffee.”

They also ate at the **Red Bank Restaurant**, in Carrick-on-Shannon. “It’s absolutely beautiful,”

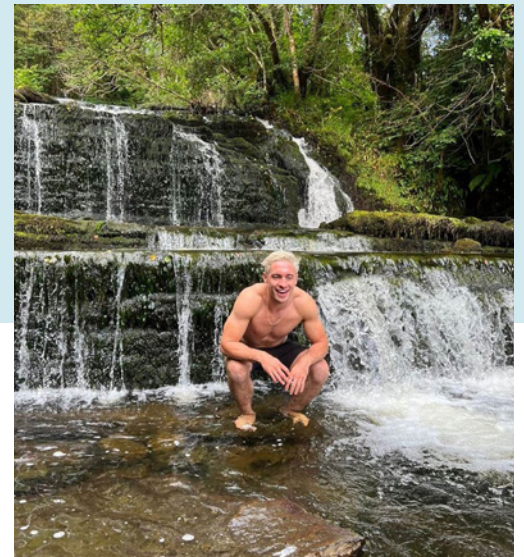
says Greg. “They have this outdoor canopy set up so you can sit outside, and there’s a big tree through the middle of the space with fairy lights all over it. It was a bit of a mixture of fine dining and pub grub, with dishes like burgers and chips in a really nice setting.”

DELVING INTO LOCAL HERITAGE

There are points of historical interest all around Leitrim and Roscommon, but one of the more unique attractions is the **Arigna Mining Experience**. Admitting that he knew nothing about it before visiting, Greg set off to Ireland’s first coal mining museum to learn about the men who worked there for hundreds of years.

“The tours are led by former miners, which is really cool,” says Greg. “We had a guy named Gerry leading us around and he was so knowledgeable. He gave us first-hand experience of what it was like and told us all the stories about the mine shaft. Seeing what these guys had to do back in the day really made me realise that life isn’t that bad now!”

Life seemed even sweeter for the pair when it came to their accommodation. Greg and his sister stayed at **Kilronan Castle**,



The Novel Traveller's

Novel Ireland

Michelle Walsh Jackson



Laced through Ireland's Ancient East and Hidden Heartlands you'll discover an abundance of treasures to visit. These famous landmarks make Ireland unique and one of the best places to start your exploring is in the beautiful Boyne Valley. Encompassing all of county Meath and a smattering of neighbouring counties, the River Boyne weaves a rich tapestry of stories through the region.

The Brú na Bóinne is home to **Newgrange**, one of the most impressive Neolithic Tombs in the world and one of my personal favourites. This important site doubles as an astronomical centre for measuring the season's cycles. On the winter solstice each year, the central chamber is illuminated with sunlight flowing in from the roof box above the entrance stone. Visitors are taken on an intriguing journey through time at The Interpretive Centre before visiting the monument. Tickets to Newgrange are highly sought so the best time to book is online and 30 days in advance. www.brunaboinne.admit-one.eu

History buffs can immerse their passions all over this region and discover tales from the Early Christain Era at **Monasterboice** and Medieval Ireland at the cloisters of **Melifont Abbey**. An abundance of ancient architecture is only part of what this region has to offer.

I met with Derek Smith from **Custom Irish Tours** who took me on a guided tour of his home town, Slane. The Boyne Valley is bursting with local craft makers and bespoke experiences are becoming available to the public. We spent a mindful creative morning with **Boann Irish Felt** in a workshop at the home of Caoimhe Tuthill. Here I was given the option of making a brooch or a piece of art to hang on the wall. Caoimhe is a warm and inviting host who filled us with cups of tea and homemade cinnamon buns, while waiting for the art to dry. Her felt art and clothing are available for purchase at her studio and you can book a tour on the Boyne Valley *Info: www.discoverboynevalley.ie*

We stopped off in the centre of the town for lunch at the delightful, **Conyngham Arms Hotel**. This quaint town was also home to the Great War Poet, Frances Ledwidge. His legacy has been carefully and beautifully restored at his ancestral family home, a short walk outside of the village. In a small two-bedroom labourer's cottage, the Ledwidge family lived with nine children. It has been the work of a handful of locals to maintain the memory of this poet who died on the battlefields of Belgium in 1917. There is a huge sense of pride and community in this little museum and entry is only €4.

Slane Castle is a landmark with a history in making memorable concerts. From the first concert in 1979 with Rock Group **Thin Lizzy**

and the newly formed U2 playing support, many more massive acts have performed over the decades – from Bruce Springsteen to Madonna and Guns and Roses. On site in the converted stables is **Slane Distillery** and it's only possible to explore it on a guided tour so pre booking is essential. I was taken around the distillery by Barry Farrell, who gave an in-depth tour of the whiskey making process following an Irish Coffee demonstration. The tour finished with a tasting of the three whiskeys that the distillery offers. Inside the distillery are rooms and bars to facilitate private parties and it's a popular venue for weddings.

There are many wonderful grand houses and boutique hotels in the area. Among the best are **Tankardstown** and **Bellinter House**. I'm excited to be visiting the **Station House Hotel** in Kilmessan soon as they have recently been included in the prestigious Ireland's Blue Book. For families, **Causey Farm and Emerald Park** are firm favourites. With many other attractions it's worth considering The Boyne Valley for your next adventure..

For more from Michelle visit www.thenoveltraveller.com or visit [The Novel Traveller on social media.](#)



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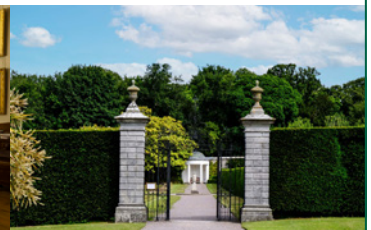
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Discovering Hidden

ROSCOMMON

Looking for an off-the-beaten-path Irish adventure? A Roscommon staycation might be exactly what you need. Often overlooked in favour of more tourist-heavy destinations, Roscommon offers stunning natural beauty, fascinating historical sites and vibrant local culture.

Unwind in Scenic Roscommon

Start your staycation by soaking up Roscommon's breathtaking countryside. Located in the heart of Ireland's Lakelands, Roscommon is known for its rolling hills, tranquil lakes and unspoiled landscapes. If you enjoy the outdoors, a visit to *Lough Key Forest Park* is a must for its expansive woodland walks, adventure playgrounds and boat tours on the lake. Take the Tree Canopy Walk, one of the most popular attractions, where you can stroll high among the treetops and enjoy panoramic views.

Another gem in Roscommon's crown is *Mote Park*, ideal for scenic hikes, picnics and spotting local wildlife. The park is steeped in history, with Mote House ruins adding an atmospheric touch to your wanderings.

For those seeking a peaceful retreat, the shores of Lough Ree are perfect for kayaking, fishing or simply relaxing with a view. The area is rich in mythology and history and you can explore the tranquil island of Inchcleraun, home to ancient monastic ruins.

Historical Highlights of Roscommon

Roscommon's history runs deep, with fascinating landmarks scattered throughout the county. *Roscommon Castle*, built in the 13th century, features imposing ruins that are free to explore and you'll be transported back to medieval times as you walk through the remnants of this once-mighty fortress. The surrounding parklands make for a great picnic spot too.

Next, pay a visit to the *Roscommon County Museum*, located in an old courthouse building. Here, you'll find artefacts from the county's rich past, including relics from the Bronze Age and the Irish War of Independence.

If you're looking for something truly unique, stop by the *Strokestown Park House*. This beautifully preserved Georgian mansion offers a window into Ireland's social history. The house is also home to the *Irish National Famine Museum*, which provides a poignant look at one of Ireland's most tragic periods. It's an experience that will stay with you long after you leave.



Best Bars and Restaurants in Roscommon

No trip to Roscommon would be complete without indulging in the local food and drink scene. Whether you're after a traditional Irish pub or a fine dining experience, Roscommon has it all.



Start your culinary adventure at *Hannon's Hotel* in Roscommon Town, known for its hearty Irish breakfasts and delicious evening meals. For a touch of elegance, *The Abbey Hotel* offers a superb menu featuring locally sourced ingredients, including fresh seafood and succulent meats. This historic building is set on beautifully landscaped grounds and provides an upscale dining experience.

If you're after a cosy pub atmosphere, head to *JJ Harlow's*, a well-loved spot in Roscommon Town that features live traditional music on the weekends. Known for its friendly vibe, excellent craft beers and welcoming ambience, this pub will have you feeling like a local in no time.

For great dining in an intimate setting, check out *Regan's Gastro Pub* in the heart of Roscommon. With its contemporary take on Irish classics, this is the place to enjoy delicious local fare with a modern twist. The slow-cooked lamb and fresh seafood dishes are a must-try!

Top Pubs for Trad Music and Relaxation

Roscommon's pub scene is as charming as it gets. *The Forge Bar* in Strokestown is perfect for those who love a traditional Irish pub setting. With its wooden interiors and live trad music sessions, it's the ideal place to unwind after a day of exploring.

If you're in the mood for more live music, head to *Keenan's Bar & Restaurant* on the banks of the River Shannon. With its inviting fireside snug, excellent food and regular music nights, it's the perfect spot to enjoy the local craic and a pint of Guinness.

Staycation Tips: Seasonal Highlights

Each season brings a unique charm to Roscommon. Spring and summer are perfect for exploring the outdoors, whether it's hiking through Suck Valley Way or boating on Lough Key. In autumn, the forests come alive with vibrant colours, making it an ideal time for nature walks and photography. Winter brings a quieter, more intimate feel to the county and there's nothing quite like enjoying a pint by the fire in one of Roscommon's traditional pubs.





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A Long Weekend in CARLINGFORD

A Coastal Getaway You'll Never Forget

Nestled on the shores of Carlingford Lough, Carlingford is one of Ireland's best-kept secrets for a weekend getaway. With its charming medieval streets, stunning coastal views and a lively social scene, it's no wonder visitors are flocking to this picturesque village for a taste of both adventure and relaxation



DAY 1: Exploring Carlingford's Medieval Charms

Start your weekend off by exploring the rich history of Carlingford. The village boasts several medieval landmarks that transport you back in time. The first stop should be **King John's Castle**, an impressive fortress that has stood watch over Carlingford since the 12th century. The panoramic views of Carlingford Lough from the castle walls are simply breathtaking and Instagram-worthy!

Stroll down the narrow streets to **Taaffes Castle**, another gem that offers a glimpse into Ireland's medieval past. After soaking up some history, head to **Ma Bakers** pub for a refreshing pint. This cosy spot has a lively atmosphere, perfect for mingling with locals and warming up to the weekend.

Make sure to grab a bite at one of Carlingford's beloved restaurants. If you're looking for hearty Irish food with a modern twist, **The Bay Tree Restaurant** is highly recommended. Fresh, locally sourced ingredients and a welcoming atmosphere will set the tone for a great weekend.

DAY 2: Outdoor Adventures and Stunning Views

Day two is all about exploring the stunning natural beauty surrounding Carlingford. Hop aboard the **Carlingford Ferry** and enjoy the scenic route across Carlingford Lough. It's an easy and scenic way to experience the beauty of this coastal area and you'll feel like you're truly escaping the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

Once back on land, take a hike up **Slieve Foye**. The climb is well worth it, with sweeping views of the village, the lough and beyond. You might even catch a glimpse of some local wildlife along the way. If hiking isn't your thing, rent a bike and cycle along the Greenway—another fantastic way to enjoy the stunning landscape at your own pace.

After a day of outdoor fun, reward yourself with some of Carlingford's nightlife. **Lily Finnegans** is a must-visit bar, offering traditional Irish music and a welcoming crowd. If you're in the mood for something a bit livelier, **The Anchor Bar** is the place to be, with its lively atmosphere and fantastic selection of drinks.

DAY 3: Relaxation and Farewell Pints

On your final day, slow things down a little. Treat yourself to brunch at **Ruby Ellen's Tea Rooms**, where you can enjoy delicious homemade scones and cakes, along with a pot of tea. Afterwards, take a leisurely walk through the village, browsing through its quaint shops for some souvenirs or handcrafted Irish goods.

For a relaxing end to your weekend, visit **Carlingford Adventure Centre** if you're in the mood for some last-minute excitement—whether it's kayaking, zip-lining or trying your hand at archery. If you'd prefer to unwind, a gentle stroll along the shoreline will offer a tranquil experience, with the sound of the waves lapping at the rocks providing the perfect soundtrack.

As the weekend winds down, head back to **Taaffes Bar** for a final pint or two. Whether you choose to enjoy a Guinness by the fire or mingle with friendly locals, it's the perfect way to say goodbye to Carlingford.

SEASONAL HIGHLIGHTS AND BEST TIMES TO VISIT

Carlingford is a great destination year-round but each season brings its magic. In the summer, the town buzzes with festivals and the warm weather makes it ideal for outdoor activities. In autumn, the surrounding woodlands and hills burst into colour, creating picture-perfect landscapes.





**LOUGH
FOYLE FERRY**



**CARLINGFORD
LOUGH FERRY**

EXPLORE

IRELAND'S COASTAL ROUTES INTO NORTHERN IRELAND THIS SUMMER.

Connecting the Wild Atlantic Way to the Causeway Coastal Route

If your staycation is taking you North along the Wild Atlantic Way route, then Lough Foyle Ferry is the perfect way to continue your coastal journey to Northern Ireland. The service offers a twenty-minute car ferry service across the iconic Lough Foyle, connecting the Wild Atlantic Way with the Causeway Coastal Route, from its terminals located at Greencastle, Co. Donegal and Magilligan Point in Northern Ireland. Whether you're walking, cycling or driving, you can experience Wild Atlantic Way destinations like Malin Head, Ireland's most northerly point and filming location for Star Wars, or Greencastle itself with its own Northburgh Castle and Planetarium.

Book online: loughfoyleferry.com

Greencastle, Co Donegal to Magilligan, Co Derry / Londonderry

Take the scenic route to the Majestic Mournes across the Lough of Legends

Located just one hour from Dublin on the East Coast, Carlingford Lough Ferry departs from Greenore in Co. Louth, just 3km from the medieval town of Carlingford with its many visitor attractions. The 20-minute car ferry crossing departs every hour and offers a fantastic opportunity to soak up the panoramic mountain views of the Cooley peninsula. If you're lucky, you'll get to see the Lough's resident, 'Finn' the Dolphin as your travel! On arrival to Greencastle, Co. Down, you are right at the foot of the majestic Mourne Mountain region, with its popular mountain walks and family friendly forest parks.

Book online: carlingfordferry.com

Greenore, Co Louth to Greencastle, Co Down



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WESTMEATH

If you're dreaming of a staycation that combines history, scenic beauty and the warmest Irish hospitality, look no further than Westmeath. Situated in the heart of Ireland, this charming county offers everything from ancient castles to outdoor adventures and lively local pubs.

Day 1: Discover Athlone's Rich History and Culture

Start your staycation in the bustling town of Athlone, a lively hub brimming with history and culture. Your first stop should be *Athlone Castle*, a beautifully restored fortress perched on the banks of the River Shannon. Step back in time as you explore the interactive exhibits, uncovering stories of ancient battles, medieval life and the strategic importance of this iconic castle. Whether you're travelling solo, with family or as a couple, the castle offers an engaging journey through Ireland's past.

A trip to Athlone wouldn't be complete without a visit to *Sean's Bar*, Ireland's oldest pub, which dates back to 900 AD. As you sip a pint in this historic watering hole, you'll not only enjoy the lively atmosphere but also a taste of Irish history—literally. Sean's Bar has been serving up drinks and tales for over a thousand years, making it an unmissable stop on your Westmeath itinerary. Be sure to check out the memorabilia on display, which includes coins from various periods and even walls built from ancient wattle and daub.



Day 2: Outdoor Adventures and Scenic Views

After soaking in Athlone's rich history, it's time to get out into the fresh air and enjoy Westmeath's natural beauty. Start your day with a

leisurely boat trip on *Lough Ree*, one of Ireland's largest lakes, which is dotted with small islands and teeming with wildlife. Many local companies offer boat tours or you can even rent a kayak if you're up for a bit of adventure on the water.

In the afternoon, take a scenic drive through the rolling countryside to *Belvedere House and Gardens*. This grand 18th-century estate is perfect for a peaceful afternoon stroll through its beautifully manicured gardens, lush woodlands, and along the shores of Lough Ennell. Be sure to explore the fascinating Victorian walled garden and the Jealous Wall, a quirky, Gothic-style folly that adds an air of mystery to the grounds.

For dinner, return to Athlone and enjoy some fine dining at *The Fatted Calf*, a Michelin Bib Gourmand restaurant known for its modern Irish cuisine using locally sourced ingredients. Indulge in dishes that celebrate the best of Irish food while savouring the relaxed, warm atmosphere.



Day 3: Hidden Gems and Scenic Drives

On your final day, explore some of the hidden gems that make Westmeath special. Begin with a visit to *Clonmacnoise*, a famous monastic site located just a short drive from Athlone. Founded in the 6th century, Clonmacnoise is a must-see for history lovers, featuring ancient stone churches, high crosses and a round tower. The stunning location on the banks of the River Shannon only adds to its mystical allure.

If you're looking for more outdoor adventure, take a spin along the *Royal Canal Greenway*, which stretches through Westmeath and beyond. This flat, easy-going trail is perfect for walking or cycling and offers peaceful views of the canal, charming locks and quiet villages along the way.



Before heading home, treat yourself to one last meal at *Thyme Restaurant* in Athlone, a cosy spot that's ideal for those who appreciate a modern twist on Irish classics. End your staycation on a high note with their delicious seasonal dishes and friendly service.





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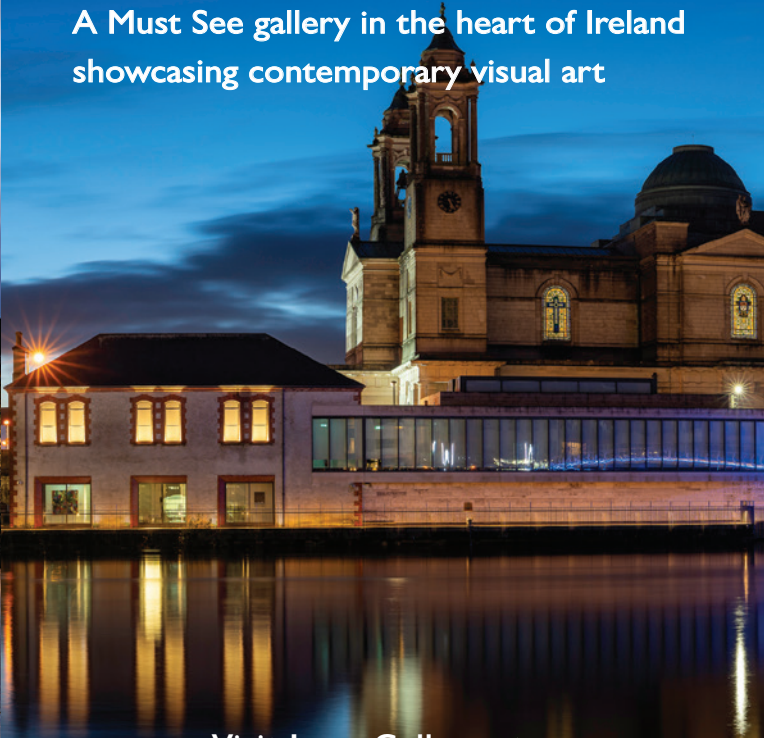
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athlone
at the heart of it

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Discover

18 FAMILY THINGS TO DO IN IRELAND'S HIDDEN HEARTLANDS

Explore magical fairy trails, take a family bike ride across the water, and spend quality time with the kids slipping on mudslides and strolling through the woods.

Here are 18 wonderful activities to check out on a family trip to Ireland's Hidden Heartlands.

1. DISCOVER CAVAN'S GEOLOGICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL WONDERS

With five marked trails countless geological, archaeological, mythological, and cultural features, Cavan Burren Park is bound to excite adventurous children. Have a family picnic after exploring the great outdoors and spend time in their engaging visitor centre.



2. LEARN ABOUT THE LEGEND OF THE SHANNON

While in Cavan, visit the source of the majestic River Shannon, The Shannon Pot. The longest river in Ireland, kids love hearing about the story of this magical place, which dates to ancient Irish mythological times.

3. ENJOY OODLES OF WATER-BASED FUN WITH THE FAMILY

Travel to **Cavan Adventure Centre** for a jam-packed day out on the water. Led by local instructors, play canoe water polo, glide across the water in kayaks or plan an adventure to Erne Island Waterpark.



4. COOL AS A CANOEIST

Canoe with **Adventure Gently** in Leitrim as you journey down Ireland's wonderful waterways. Suitable for all ages and abilities, see the northwest's most beautiful landscapes from the comfort of your canoe.



5. BRING THE KITCHEN OUTDOORS

Bring your kids back to basics at the **Organic Centre** and find out how to build your very own cob pizza oven.

6. STEP ONTO IRELAND'S FIRST FLOATING BOARDWALK

For a peaceful walk with the kids in Leitrim, take the 600m of floating boardwalk at Acres Lake, which has stunning natural scenery as its background.

7. SURF AND SUP ON AN IRISH SAFARI

Head to **Leitrim Surf and SUP Company** and paddle across the glistening waters of the Shannon Blueway. Take a guided safari over the mirror-like waters and admire the lush scenery, which captures the hearts of young explorers.



8. SEE THE WORLD FROM THE TREETOPS

Swing like Tarzan and fly down zip lines at the **Zipit Lough Key Ltd** in Roscommon. Let your mini adventurers cross rope bridges, climb giant walls and more on this family friendly experience. Feel the adrenaline pulsing through your body as you climb high up into the trees, ride a BMX bike across a suspended bridge and swing into cargo nets.



9. EXPLORE UNTOUCHED HISTORICAL SITES

The **Rathcroghan Visitor Centre** in Roscommon is part of the archaeological landscape of Cruachan Aí, the oldest and largest unexcavated royal site in Ireland. Climb to the top of Rathcroghan Mound and enjoy 360 degree views of the surrounding natural scenery.



10. STEP INSIDE THE HEART OF A MOUNTAIN

Pop on your miner's hat in Roscommon and take a trip into the mountainside with **Arigna Mining Experience** one of Ireland's few coal mines. Go on an underground tour with a former coal miner and listen to vivid storytelling and real-life experiences.

11. SEE A DRAMATIC NORMAN CASTLE

Bring the kids to **Roscommon Castle**, a ruined 13th century Norman castle that was once in the hands of the King of Connacht, Hugh O'Connor.

12. MAKE A SPLASH IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS

Go island hopping, fire off arrows, and cruise in kayaks at the **Shannon River Adventure centre** in Roscommon. Getting down and dirty with the mudslides is a family favourite activity as is the exhilarating pier jump into the water.

13. GO BACK TO THE IRON AGE

Relive epic Iron Age history at the **Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre** in Longford. Marvel at the ancient trackway, the largest ever excavated in Europe, that was used thousands of years ago. Learn how people of times gone by lived through murals, displays and artefacts from that period and see the 18-metre stretch of the preserved trackway.



14. FIND YOUR INNER WARRIOR

Take a trip to **Longford's Knights and Conquests Exhibition Centre** and enjoy an interactive journey through time. Discover if you and your family were Gaels or Normans, get to grips with armour and try your hand at weapon training. Climb the 12th century Motte and appreciate commanding views across three provinces.

15. ANCIENT HISTORY MEETS BIODIVERSITY

Spend a fun-filled day out at **Lough Boora Discovery Park** in Offaly. Explore the park by bike, take a looped walk, go birdwatching and see the fascinating Sculpture Park. Kids can discover why the fairies came here on the magical fairy trail. Boora Lake is popular for feeding ducks and geese, try feeding them from a safe perch on the shoreline.

16. EXPLORE A HISTORIC CASTLE

Spread over 50 hectares, the gardens at **Birr Castle Demesne** are a haven for nature lovers, with plenty of wildlife, the tallest box hedges, a waterfall, and a collection of plants and flowers from all over the world. There is even a Giants Grove, the largest collection of giant redwoods outside of California.

17. HAVE SOUL STIRRING OUTDOOR ADVENTURES

Experience the serene beauty of the River Shannon and breathtaking mountain scenery at the **Mid Ireland Adventure & Slieve Bloom Mountain Bike Centre** in Offaly. Enjoy lively outdoor adventures with the kids including SUP safaris, hiking and bike trips in Ireland's largest state-owned nature reserve.

18. SAVOUR A MOMENT OF PURE SWEETNESS

Feast your eyes and taste buds on delicious artisan chocolate at **Wilde Irish Chocolates** in Clare. On the shores of Lough Derg, let your mini chocolate lovers pick their favourite flavours from tasty chocolate bars and caramel slices to mouth-watering fudge and rocky road. Feel like Charlie and the Chocolate Factory on a tour of their premises, watching the chocolate making process from start to finish.





Golden beaches *and* great adventures

get outdoors in Wexford



The Model County is the perfect destination for outdoor adventures, and not just because of its brilliant beaches. Speed through muddy terrain on a quad bike, kayak across clear waters and take a scenic walk across golden sands.

Experience epic outdoor adventures and visit the best beaches in Wexford.

OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES IN WEXFORD

Stunning scenes at Wexford Lavender Farm

Take in the scents at **Wexford Lavender Farm**, just ten minutes from Gorey in north Wexford. Stroll through two acres of fragrant lavender, take a forest walk and pick up some plants to take home. The little ones love a trip on the farm's quad barrel train, he's named Billy the Bull and is a hit with both big and little kids.

Family fun on the farm

Plan a family day out starting with a trip to **Secret Valley Wildlife Park**, where you can explore its fourteen-acres of fun. Bottle feed the kid goats and baby lambs, meet Snowball the pony and stop for a chat with the adorable alpacas. After all, the animal adventures, have fun in the indoor and outdoor areas, or try a round of crazy golf.

Animal lovers should know that **Blackwater Open Farm** is just a thirty-minute drive away. Make friends on

the farmyard, climb the space net climbing frame and zoom across the zipline as the kids jump at the chance to try 'driving' the tractor.

Quad bike adventures

Spread over 80-acres under the scenic backdrop of the Blackstairs Mountains, visit **Quadventure** in Clonroache for a thrilling quadbike experience. Whether you're up for an epic cross-country adventure or simply want to try it out, Quadventure is great craic for all the family.

Kayaking at Hook Head

There's no better way to take in the beauty of Hook Peninsula than from the sea, as you explore secret caves and hidden beaches. In the coastal village of Fethard-On-Sea, go sea cave kayaking, coasteering or stand-up paddle boarding with the **Irish Experience**.

THE BEST BEACHES IN WEXFORD

With golden strands and sparkling waters, the beaches in the Model County are on another level entirely. Here are some of the best beaches in Wexford.

Morriscastle Beach

With its secluded coves and beautiful bay, Morriscastle Beach near the picturesque village of Kilmuckridge is a special place for a staycation. It's said to be one of the longest beaches in Europe and the vast golden strand and glimmering waves, take your breath away.



Carne Beach

On the south east corner of County Wexford, Carne Beach is a beautiful Blue Flag stretch of sand, complete with impressive dunes and Carne Pier jutting out to the Irish Sea.

Curraclloe Beach

Reaching from Raven Point to Ballyconigar near Blackwater, Curraclloe Beach is one of Ireland's best beaches. This stunning coastline is famous for its hilly dunes where the opening scenes of *Saving Private Ryan* were filmed. It's a brilliant spot for surfing too; sign up for lessons at **The Surf Shack**. Public lessons run every day, or book a private, group or family lesson.

Duncannon Beach

Just outside the fishing village of Duncannon, Duncannon Beach is a mile-long golden strand with spectacular views. On a clear day, you might even see out to Hook Head and the Waterford coast.

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— HOTEL —

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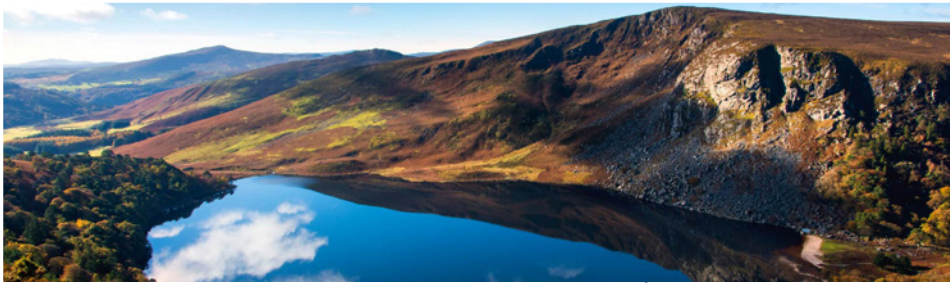


An Ariel view of Clarina Co. Clare



WICKLOW:

The Garden of Ireland Awaits



45-minute drive from Dublin. Indulge in delectable cuisine at our Fairways Restaurant or unwind in our Brasserie, and experience deluxe accommodations with breathtaking views.

Known as “The Garden of Ireland,” Wicklow is a treasure trove of iconic attractions, from serene lakes and mountains to grand estates and quaint villages. Whether you’re a nature lover, a history buff or simply looking for a relaxing break, Wicklow is the place to be.

Discover Wicklow’s Natural Wonders

When you think of Wicklow, Glendalough is likely the first thing that comes to mind. This glacial valley is famous for its breathtaking scenery and its ancient monastic site, founded by St. Kevin in the 6th century. Wander the valley’s tranquil lakes, visit the iconic round tower and take one of the many scenic walks ranging from easy strolls to challenging hikes. Glendalough is the kind of place where you could spend hours getting lost in nature while discovering the remnants of Ireland’s early Christian past. Learn more and plan your visit by checking out the *Glendalough Visitor Centre*.

If you’re seeking more jaw-dropping views, then head over to Lough Tay, also known as the “Guinness Lake” for its dark waters and white sandy beach that resemble a pint of the famous stout. Lough Tay is nestled between rugged mountains, making it one of Wicklow’s most photogenic spots.



Luxurious Escapes and Historic Wonders

For a taste of grandeur, there’s Powerscourt Estate. This 47-acre estate, located in Enniskerry, boasts some of the finest gardens in Ireland. From the meticulously landscaped Italian and Japanese gardens to the breathtaking views of Sugarloaf Mountain, *Powerscourt* is truly a paradise for garden lovers.

Nestled in the picturesque County Wicklow, *Tulfarris Hotel & Golf Resort* is a luxurious 4-star retreat. Located on the banks of Blessington Lakes with the stunning Wicklow mountains as a backdrop, it’s a mere



A visit to *Powerscourt Distillery* visitor centre is a must when visiting Wicklow. Located in Powerscourt Estate, Co. Wicklow, they are the company behind the Fercullen Irish whiskey brand.

The 22,000 square foot fully operational distillery, together with a world-class visitor centre, occupy the converted historic mill house that sits adjacent to the popular tourist attraction of Powerscourt House and Gardens.



For more history wrapped in elegance, visit *Russborough House*, located near Blessington. This stunning Palladian mansion is surrounded by parklands and filled with fine art and period furniture. While touring the house, you’ll learn about its storied past and the fascinating lives of its former owners. The estate also offers plenty of outdoor activities, including a maze and playground for the kids, making it a fantastic day out for all ages. Plan your visit at the *Russborough House* website.






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Camping & Glamping

Ireland offers an abundance of choice when it comes to glamping or camping. Whether you'd like to relax in a luxury yurt or pitch a tent on a remote island, you'll find an impressive array of options across the length and breadth of the island.



Lakeside tranquillity

At Lough Mardal in County Donegal you can choose to stay in a cosy shepherd's hut or a luxury yurt and enjoy wonderful views of the surrounding bogland, lake, mountain and forest as you relax in comfort.

Or pitch up at **Share Discovery Village** in the beautiful Fermanagh Lakelands where you can camp or glamp at a lakeside resort complete with swimming pool and sauna.

Mountain vistas

Gaze at the stars as you lie in a luxury glamping pod with a specially designed viewing window at **Sperrin View Glamping**, County Tyrone. Located at the foothills of the Sperrin Mountains, the site is in a dark sky area affording magical views of the constellations.

Ox Mountain Glamping, County Sligo, offers glamping with a quirky twist with accommodation options including a cabin, treehouse, barn, boat and even a double-decker bus. The site is a great base for hikes in the picturesque Ox Mountains.

Island getaways

The islands along the Wild Atlantic Way offer multiple camping and glamping locations but Inis Mór, the largest of the three Aran Islands off the coast of Galway, must rank among the most beautiful. At **Aran Island Camping & Glamping** you can relax in a spacious glamping pod on the beachfront or pitch up a tent on the well-serviced campsite.



Ireland's most southerly inhabited island is tiny Cape Clear, County Cork. At **Chléire Haven** you can camp in your own tent or glamp in a hired bell tent or a yurt. The scenery is gorgeous and you can explore the island's rich history through its monuments that include a castle and a Napoleonic signal tower.

Woodland peace

Get a bird's-eye view of the forest with a stay in a luxury **Burrenmore Nest treetop lodge** in County Derry. With panoramic views

through floor to ceiling windows, and an outdoor whirlpool bath, it's glamping heaven.

In Ireland's Ancient East, Wicklow Way Camping provides the perfect base for exploring the beautiful Wicklow Mountains. Situated along the 130km Wicklow Way, the campsite is an ideal overnight stop-off along one of Ireland's most popular walking trails.

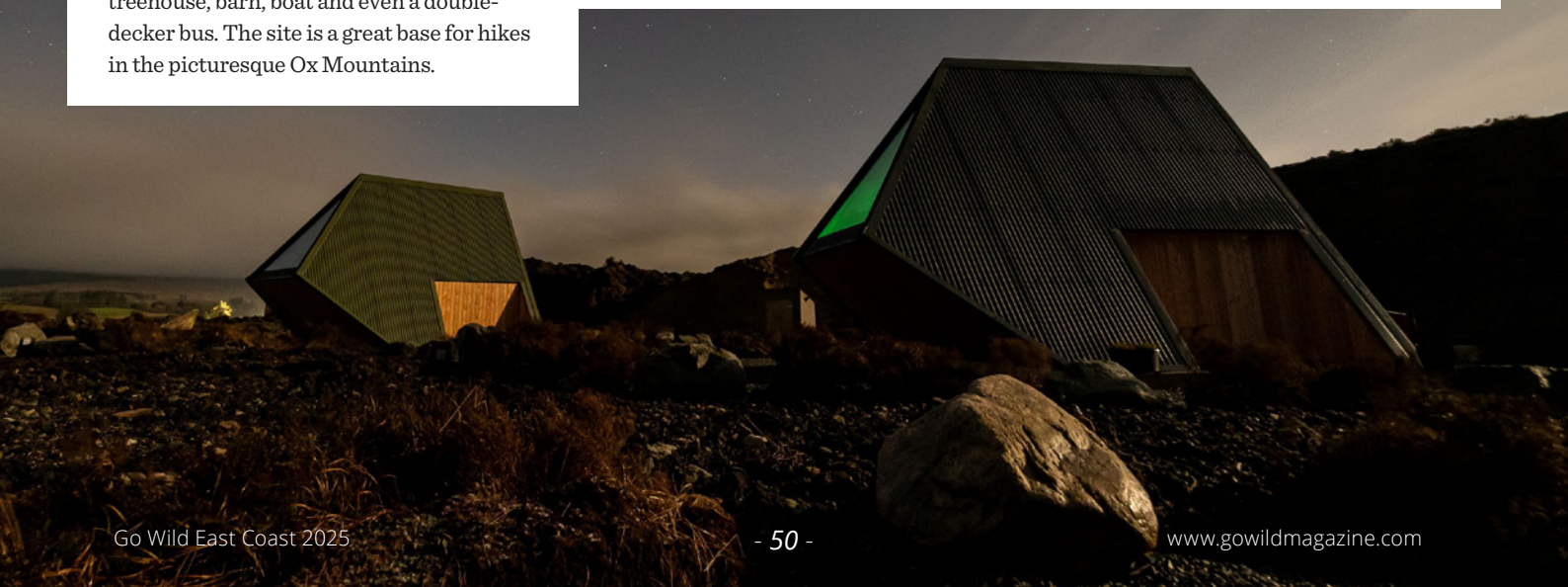
Ocean views

Combine great sea views with a historic setting at Glenarm



Castle on the Causeway Coast. **The Ocean View Pods** are just two minutes' walk from **Glenarm Castle Estate** with its charming woodland walks, and minutes from the water's edge providing a first-class glamping experience.

For a completely eco-friendly camping experience head to **Clifden Eco Beach** in County Galway. On this private beach you can enjoy semi-wild camping and really get back to nature surrounded by spectacular scenery. www.ireland.com



Huntington Castle

Clonegal, Co. Carlow



One of Ireland's historical gems, this amazing Castle is still lived in by descendants of the original builders. The guided tour (approx 45 mins) features the world famous Temple of Isis in the dungeons as well as Castle rooms and ghost stories. With formal gardens, an adventure playground, tearooms and giftshop, Huntington Castle is the perfect place for a day out.

Visiting



Contact
Huntington Castle
Clonegal, Co. Carlow
Tel: 053-937 7160
info@huntingtoncastle.com
www.huntingtoncastle.com



SatNav: Latitude/Longitude
52.6905,-6.6492



Opening Times
Open daily May to Sept
plus school holidays etc.
& weekends all year round
except Jan



Admission Rates
Gardens only:
€6/€5/€3 Adult/concession/child
Castle guided tour & Gardens:
€13.50 / €12.50 / €6.00



Parking
Ample free parking (including Coaches)
on site



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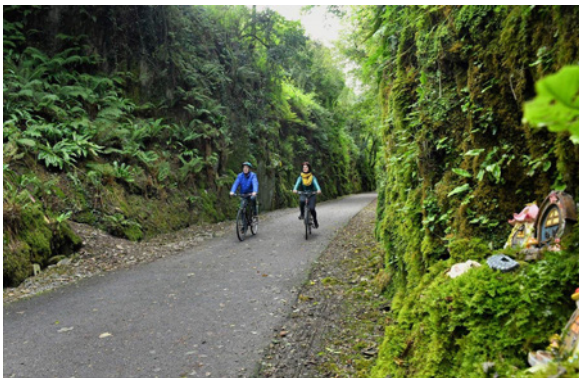


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Discover greenways and trails in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands



Stretching across nine-counties, the rich, rural landscapes of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands are both rugged and beautiful and can be explored on one of the many amazing greenways.

Visit charming towns, explore historical sites and enjoy delicious food. Set off on a leisurely journey with friends and family and truly explore this beautiful region.

Journey along one of the great greenways and truly experience Ireland's Hidden Heartlands.

THE ROYAL CANAL GREENWAY

Head to Ireland's Hidden Heartlands and explore our country's newest and longest Greenway. The Royal Canal Greenway starts in Maynooth but some of the most scenic stretches and idyllic spots are found between Mullingar and Longford.

The Royal Canal Greenway is flat throughout, making it a great option for walkers and cyclists of all ability levels. Enjoy the 90-minute walk between Coolnahay Harbour and Ballynacarrigy, stopping to watch boats navigate their way through the lock.

Cycle the Royal Canal Greenway from Mullingar to Longford for a day out that the whole family will enjoy. The 53km route takes experienced cyclists just under three hours to complete but the rest of us can hop on at any of the seven trailheads or access points on this stretch. Spend the day alongside the Royal Canal freewheeling under bridges and zipping through the countryside on the old towpath.



PORTUMNA FOREST PARK, GALWAY

Travel along the Beara Breifne Way to reach the leafy, sanctuary of Portumna Forest Park. Swoop down to Lough Derg and watch the gentle interactions of nature by the trailside, keeping an eye out for the majestic antlers of the herd of fallow deer.

Let the sprawling ruins of Portumna Abbey, with its ancient stone arches and columns, take you back to the 15th century. Or step into the more regal setting of Portumna Castle, with its spectacular gardens and magnificent manor house reminiscent of the Renaissance.



OLD RAIL TRAIL GREENWAY, WESTMEATH

The Old Rail Trail Greenway begins in Athlone and meanders along for 40km to the market town of Mullingar. Naturally, the scenery and length, taking just over two-hours, make it a perfect route for cyclists of all levels. As part of the Midlands Great Western Railway route, you cycle past flourishing small towns and lush countryside.

When you're in Athlone, make sure you stop by the world's oldest pub, **Sean's Bar**, for a tippie and a touch of history. Athlone Castle is well worth a visit for a fully interactive experience that brings the castle's history to life.

CAVAN BURREN PARK, CAVAN

Find peace on the trails under the misty shadow of Cuilcagh mountain and simply pause to take in the 340-million-year-old, pre-glacial landscape. Touching the megalithic tombs of our ancestors is a primal experience that links you back to your roots. Unearthing the hidden treasures of the Burren, its barren sinkholes, fairy forts and breathtaking viewpoints out onto the Lost Valley, will leave you with a new found appreciation of this beautiful place.

CORLEA TRACKWAY, LONGFORD

This 2,200 year old oak timber trackway is one of the most unique paths in Ireland. This well-trodden walkway, preserved in a bog has been left exactly where it was found with the Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre constructed around this amazing archaeological find. After soaking in the local knowledge, set out on a journey across the mosses and heathers of the boglands of Longford to follow this ancient road left by the Iron Age people.



EAST CLARE WAY, CLARE

Experience an epic and remote walk or cycle on the quiet country roads and forest trails of the East Clare Way. The enormous 180km long loop has options for walkers and hikers of all ability levels. Stroll along the edge of Lough Derg outside of Killaloe, climb the foothills of the Slieve Aughty Mountains to Flagmount and explore the forests near Broadford on a mountain bike. Although the entire route takes eight-days to complete, the East Clare Way can be broken up into smaller sections to suit your needs.



NATIONAL FAMINE WAY, ROSCOMMON

Learn about one of the most important periods of our history on the National Famine Way in Roscommon.

Start your journey at the monumental Strokestown House. Displaying one of the world's largest archives of letters, images and artefacts, the **National Famine Museum**, Strokestown Park gives you a deep insight into life at the time.

Follow the route from Strokestown House and enjoy the 18km stretch to the edge of the River Shannon. Keep an eye out for bronze sculptures along the way, paying respect to the people who walked the route in hope of finding a better life.



THE BALLYHOURA WAY

Part of the longer O'Sullivan Beara Trail, the Ballyhoura Way is a 90km waymarked trail that showcases the beautiful landscape of the region. As you head from John's Bridge in North Cork to Limerick Junction in County Tipperary, you'll take in stunning views of lush pastureland, forest trails, and river banks.

As you travel along the Ballyhoura Way, you'll be able to appreciate charming villages like Kilfinane, Ballyorgan, Ballylanders and Galbally. You'll have access to several facilities and services near the trail's seven trailheads if you'd like to take a break and enjoy a hot drink.



TIPPERARY:

Heritage, Whiskey and Culture

Planning a staycation in Ireland this year? Tipperary, nestled in the heart of the country, offers a rich tapestry of history, culture and delicious food to satisfy any traveller. From age-old distilleries to charming pubs and hidden historical treasures, this county is a perfect spot to unwind, explore and enjoy Ireland's natural beauty.



Distillery Delight: Tipperary's Finest Whiskey
Start your staycation in Tipperary with a visit to the renowned *Tipperary*

Distillery. Known for its high-quality single malt and blended whiskeys, this family-run distillery offers guided tours where you'll learn about the art of whiskey-making, from grain to glass. Don't miss the chance to sample their small-batch creations – a true taste of the county's pride in its whiskey heritage. It's the perfect way to kick off your staycation adventure with a warm, local flavour.

Savour Tipperary's Finest: O'Donnell's Crisps

No trip to Tipperary would be complete without indulging in the county's famous snacks and *O'Donnell's Crisps* are a local favourite.

Made from Tipperary-grown potatoes, these award-winning crisps offer a satisfying crunch and flavours that pair perfectly with a pint. Look out for them at local markets and pubs to snack like a local while you explore the area.



Traditional Pubs: Where Time Stands Still

There's nothing quite like stepping into a centuries-old Irish pub, and Tipperary offers plenty of options.

The Thatch Pub in

Ballycommon is one such gem. This quaint pub is a throwback to simpler times with its low thatched roof, wooden beams and a cosy atmosphere that's perfect for a pint by the fire. For those interested in a pub with a storied past, *Phil Carroll's* in Clonmel is a family-owned pub known for its warm hospitality, excellent food and of course, an authentic Irish pub experience. Be sure to ask the bartenders for stories about the pub's history – locals love to share a good tale. If you find yourself in Fethard, stop by the famous *McCarthy's Bar*. This historic pub also doubles as a funeral home, adding an unusual twist to its history! Aside from this quirky feature, McCarthy's is loved for its lively atmosphere and excellent selection of drinks.



Dining in Style: Ormond Stores and Beyond

When it comes to dining, Tipperary offers some standout spots, and *The Ormond Stores* is one you simply can't miss. Located in Nenagh, this restaurant is known for its commitment to local ingredients and traditional Irish cooking with a modern twist. Whether you're in the mood for seafood, lamb or vegetarian fare, you'll be in for a treat.

Cultural Stops: History and Heritage

Tipperary is also steeped in history and no staycation would be complete without visiting some of its most famous heritage sites. For those fascinated by ancient history, put *The Rock of Cashel* on your visiting list. Once the seat of the Kings of Munster, this ancient fortress sits atop a limestone hill, offering stunning views and an impressive collection of medieval buildings.

Cahir Castle, one of Ireland's largest and best-preserved castles, offers another historical experience. Situated on a rocky island in the River Suir, this imposing castle provides insight into Ireland's medieval past, complete with battlements and a rich history of battles and sieges.



Live Trad Music and More

For an authentic Irish experience, Tipperary's traditional music scene is alive and well. Head to some of the county's best pubs for live trad sessions, where musicians gather to play the fiddle, bodhrán and banjo, filling the room with lively tunes. *Phil Carroll's* and *McCarthy's Bar* are just two of the local spots known for hosting some of the best trad nights in Tipperary.

Seasonal Highlights: When to Visit

Tipperary is a fantastic destination year-round, with each season offering something unique. In the summer, the Glen of Aherlow provides breathtaking hiking trails with panoramic views of the Galtee Mountains. Autumn brings a golden glow to the countryside, perfect for exploring the Rock of Cashel or wandering the historical town of Clonmel. During winter, Tipperary's cosy pubs come into their own, offering warmth, good company, and plenty of craic.



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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.

Insítear 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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Things to Do in The East

Malahide

Malahide Castle

Malahide Castle, set on 250-acres of park land, was both a fortress and a private home for nearly 800-years and is an interesting mix of architectural styles. The Talbot family lived here from 1185 to 1973, when the last Talbot died. The house is furnished with beautiful period furniture, together with an extensive collection of Irish portrait paintings, mainly from the National Gallery.



Malahide Marina

Sitting just inside the sheltered broad-meadow estuary, Malahide Marina is the ideal location from which to enjoy sailing the waters of the Irish Sea. This seaside village is the jewel in the crown of this scenic stretch of Ireland's magnificent eastern coastline. There are 350 fully serviced berths in the Marina, located in a well-protected inlet, and vessels of up to 75-metres can be accommodated.

Kildare

The Irish National Stud and Gardens

The Irish National Stud and Gardens is the home of equine royalty, immaculately-bred stallions, protective mares, frolicking foals and athletic yearlings. It is the only stud farm in Ireland open to the public and offering daily tours..

Donadea Forest Park

Donadea Forest Park is situated in northwest Kildare and comprises of approximately 243 hectares of mixed woodland. There are many different walks through the forest, including the 5km Aylmer loop, the lake walk (wheelchair accessible) and a nature trail with stops.

Lullymore Heritage and Discovery Park

Lullymore Heritage and Discovery Park is a family day out attraction set in the heart of Ireland's largest bog land, The Bog of Allen in Kildare. There is a great mix of fun, leisure and education activity to ensure that there is something to interest visitors of all ages.

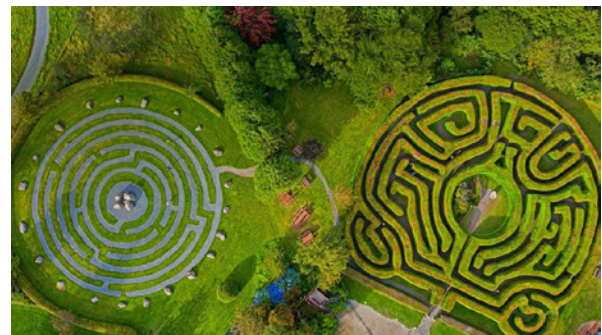
Newbridge Silverware

Originally set up as a cutlery manufacturing company in 1934, Newbridge Silverware today offers a unique tourism experience at its visitor centre. With one of the world's greatest collections of authentic couture style, Hollywood glamour, music memorabilia and other artefacts, the Museum of Style Icons is a treasure that has to be seen to be believed.

Wicklow

Glendalough Visitor Centre

Go back in time to the golden age of Irish history, to the Ireland of scholars and saints. Here you can follow in the footsteps of St. Kevin, founder of Glendalough. The audio-visual show is available in many languages as well as guided tours of the permanent exhibition. Glendalough is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Wicklow and indeed the island. Unsurprising given the stunning landscape, historic ruins and beautiful walks on offer at this unique location.

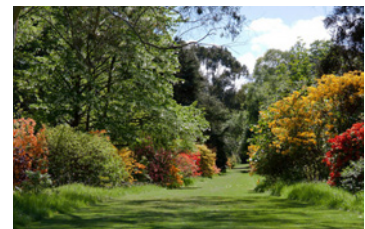


Grennan Maze

Set amidst the beautiful Wicklow hills on a pretty countryside farm, Grennan Maze has plenty of fun for all ages. It has two mazes, three museums, nature walks, woodlands, ponds, wildlife, farm animals, play areas, treasure hunt and fairy tree walk. Families enjoy spending the day at this heritage hotspot that's been described as 'an antidote to urban living within easy reach of Dublin.

Mount Usher Gardens

Described by Monty Don as one of his favourite gardens ever, Mount Usher is one of only three Irish gardens with a top rating from the UK's The Good Gardens Guide. Mount Usher is also a world-class example of a so-called Robinsonian garden, with its relaxed informality and natural layout.



Shekina Sculpture Garden

People first began visiting these gardens over 30 years ago as part of the Co. Wicklow Gardens Festival. This modern sacred space is a one-acre garden that includes a stream, two ponds on different levels, a patio, gazebo, seating areas, shrub beds and undulating lawns. From the joyful sound of birds singing to the calming trickle of water, you can enjoy a host of Modern Irish sculptures.

Things to see and do in Dublin

If you fancy taking in a tour of the capital city, perhaps some of the following places will be right up your street?

Temple Bar

Temple Bar is located in the secluded area between Dame Street and the River Liffey. Take a tour off the beaten path and don't be disappointed. Temple Bar is one of the oldest areas in the city and home to one of Europe's oldest built theatres (*Smock Alley Theatre*). This area of the city is now a hive of activity for those who are looking for an atmosphere of street art, craic and comedy.

The Ha'penny Bridge

The Ha'penny Bridge, known for a time as the Penny Ha'penny Bridge, and officially the Liffey Bridge, is a pedestrian bridge built in May 1816 over the River Liffey. Made of cast iron, the bridge was cast in Shropshire, England. Originally called the Wellington Bridge (after the Dublin-born Duke of Wellington), the name of the bridge changed to Liffey Bridge (Irish: Droichead na Life) and remains the bridge's official name to this day. Take time for a photo on the capital's most iconic bridge.

Trinity College

Spend an entire day going through the beauty and majesty that is one of the most famous buildings in Dublin. Trinity College is the earliest building to date to Georgian times. Pay a visit to its magnificent Long Room, which measures nearly 65m and houses in excess of 200,000 books. A must for any visitor is the Book of Kells, which is displayed on the ground floor of the Old Library building and is one of the most beautifully illuminated manuscripts in the world.

Guinness Store House & The Gravity Bar

Located at St. James's Gate and one of the most popular attractions for tourists, this is an important part of the Guinness family empire. The production of Guinness and the family's fortunes have been central to the development of Dublin since 1759 and the brewery has played a major part in employment – 2009 marked 250 years of Guinness production. The Gravity Bar not only offers you great Guinness but also a wow factor 360 degree view of Dublin.

Epic Museum

EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum, located in Dublin's Docklands, covers the history of the Irish diaspora and emigration to other countries. It was designed by the London-based design firm Event Communications, and was voted as "Europe's Leading Tourist Attraction" at the 2019, 2020 and 2021 World Travel Awards.



The National Library of Ireland (NLI)

Highlights at the main library buildings on Kildare Street are the award-winning Yeats exhibition, and moving World War Ireland exhibition. All locations are free to visit and within a short walking distance of the Grafton Street shopping area and St. Stephen's Green.

Ducketts Grove Carlow

Ducketts Grove is a ruined 19th-century great house and former estate in County Carlow, Ireland. Belonging to the Ducketts family, the house was formerly the focal point of a 12,000-acre estate, and dominated the local landscape of the area for more than two centuries.

Carlow County Museum

This is located in Carlow's Cultural Quarter. Admission is free and is entered through the tourist office. Spanning four galleries, the museum has a wide collection of items and artefacts from Carlow county including the original gallows trapdoor from Carlow Gaol and the 6m carved pulpit from Carlow Cathedral.

Paddle Your Own Canoe The Hub, Graigneamanagh, Co. Kilkenny

PYOC offers you the opportunity to rent canoes with associated gear and camping gear and take a multi day adventure along the beautiful Barrow river trail, south east Ireland. It is possible to paddle from 1 to 6 days between Monasterevin and New Ross, (shorter trips on a more southerly part of the river) and you may stop and set up camp anywhere you desire along the way on the bank.



5 walks to explore at CAVAN BURREN PARK



Explore wide open landscapes, 5,000 years of history and perfectly preserved geological and archaeological features at Cavan Burren Park. Get your walking shoes on, pack a picnic and prepare to uncover a glimpse into prehistoric Ireland along the way.

Discover five trails to enjoy Cavan Burren Park's natural beauty for all walking levels.

1 THE CALF HOUSE DOLMEN TRAIL

If you're looking for a short stroll, the 35-minute (1.3km) Calf House Dolmen Trail is multi-access and makes for an easy start no matter your level or ability. Breathe in that fresh country air as you explore the undiscovered landscape. You know you're in for something special as you look out over Tullygobban Lough from the **Lost Valley Viewpoint** near the start. The **Tullygobban Wedge Tomb** is a highlight along the trail, and don't miss the **Tullygobban Viewpoint**, where you can imagine the impact of moving glaciers come to life before you.

2 THE GIANT'S LEAP TRAIL

Extend your journey through prehistoric Ireland a little further by turning off the Calf House Dolmen Trail onto the Giant's Leap Trail (2.7km). The trail takes you to the stunning Giant's Leap wedge tomb

with views over the dry valley where lore has it that two young giants challenged each other to jump the gorge to show off to a female giant. This area is hugely biodiverse, so watch out for the flowers and fauna as you walk and spot some unusual plants.

3 THE PROMONTORY FORT TRAIL

Take in the most of the previous two trails on this moderate walk along the Promontory Fort Trail (2.9km) that takes an hour to do the full loop. Head up the bog bridge steps and also the gravel path to reach the tranquil **Lost Valley**. Stop at the ancient hill fort, **Promontory Fort**, and explore what remains before taking a minute to bask in the peace and quiet and admire the stunning scenery from a height.

4 THE TULLYGOBBAN LOUGH TRAIL

The Tullygobban Lough Trail takes quite a different route to the previous three. It's an easy 45-minute walk (1.6km) and while it skips some of the historic tombs and structures, it makes up for it in spades with stunning scenery and rich biodiversity. Admire the glacial erratics and desiccated sandstone along the route and break out your picnic beside Tullygobban Lough – you couldn't ask for a better spot for lunch alfresco.

5 THE CAVAN WAYMARKED WAY

Forming part of the longer **Cavan Waymarked Way**, this is the one to choose if you're looking for a challenge. Lace up your hiking boots and tackle the 26km trail from the village of Dowra to the village of Blacklion in West Cavan if you're a walking enthusiast. If you're not up for a big challenge, you can join the Cavan Waymarked Way from the Giant's Leap trail at the dry valley and you'll pass the Promontory Fort and along the Lost Valley. You'll be rewarded with incredible views the whole way along the infant Shannon River and open moorlands all around.





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EXPERIENCES,
IT'S IN OUR
NATURE 



 CAVAN BURREN PARK

GO WILD

IT'S IN OUR NATURE



Cuilcagh Lakelands UNESCO Global Geopark

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

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**THIS IS
CAVAN!**

48 Hours in DRUMSHANBO

The Shed Distillery attracts tourists from around the country and across the world, flocking to Lovely Leitrim, where there's plenty of fun to be found for the whole family in this small picturesque town, to warrant an overnight stay.



In the decade since PJ Rigney and his wife Denise established **The Shed Distillery**, Drumshanbo has become known the world around — thanks to their award-winning, best-selling catalogue of spirits, including Drumshanbo Gunpowder Irish Gin, Drumshanbo Single Pot Still Irish Whiskey, and Drumshanbo Sausage Tree Vodka.

Although it's tucked away in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, Drumshanbo is quite central to several major Irish cities. Just two hours from Dublin, Belfast and Galway, this idyllic spot in rural Leitrim is certainly worth the trip.

Nestled at the foot of Sliabh an Iarainn (the Iron Mountain), Drumshanbo sits on the lakeshores of Lough Allen, offering tranquil waters for fishing, kayaking and paddleboarding, plenty of trails and woodland walks for hiking and cycling, and several vibrant local pubs where you can enjoy lively music, culture and traditional fayre.

The distillery's carefully curated visitor experience is the perfect starting point to enjoy the scenic and unspoilt countryside that surrounds The Shed. Here are a few items you may want to add to your travel itinerary:

DAY 1: Take In The Shed Distillery Tour



The Shed's gin may have put Drumshanbo on the map, but the three-million-euro visitor centre and cafe that opened in 2020 has made it an in-demand destination for locals and tourists alike. Open seven-days-a-week, the distillery offers multiple types of tours that are suitable for all ages. Join one of The Shed's "Curious

Ambassadors" for a fully guided tour that will take you into the heart of the world's largest family-owned gin distillery to see the traditional copper pots and column stills they use for slow hand-distillation of their acclaimed spirits. Enjoy an expert tasting of Drumshanbo Single Pot Irish Whiskey and finish with a refreshing complimentary cocktail at the Honey Badger Bar in their majestic botanical glasshouse.

Even for those who aren't drinkers or of drinking age, the tour has plenty to offer. Funny, informative and entertaining, the 90-minute experience includes treasures from around the world that have inspired "The Curious Mind" of PJ Rigney.

Lunch at the Jackalope Café

An ideal location for families, the Jackalope Café offers a range of delicious, locally sourced meals in a friendly, comfortable atmosphere with great service. The café is open seven days and although they don't take reservations, the wait is never long, thanks to plenty of indoor and outdoor seating. They have a wide selection of luxurious coffees and homemade goodies, a variety of artisan meals that look as good as they taste and a kid's menu with options for the little ones in your party.

Walk on the Water

Drive two-minutes down the road to take an afternoon stroll on Ireland's first floating boardwalk. A wide and accessible path that's ideal for prams and wheelchairs, Acres Lake



Boardwalk allows you to take in the beautiful scenery and offers plenty of opportunities for wildlife viewing. If you're feeling adventurous, the 600m boardwalk connects to a 6.5km walking and cycling trail along the Shannon Blueway that takes you to Battlebridge Lock, near Leitrim Village. Right beside the boardwalk, you'll find a free car park with plenty of spaces, a lovely visitor centre where you can learn all about local history and a playground that's perfect for toddlers up to school-age children. Before you leave, make sure to grab a treat fresh from the oven at the award-winning on-site bakery at **Jinny's Tearooms**. They also offer plenty of boardwalk bites for kids, sweet treats and a full picnic basket service.

Stay the Night

Whether you're looking for a cosy cottage or a spacious lake-house with spectacular views, you'll find a range of self-catering accommodations in Drumshanbo. Cook yourself a meal or enjoy one of the many options for tasty local fare before you retire for the night.

DAY 2: Explore the Drumshamazon

Start your day fresh by kayaking or paddleboarding the "Drumshamazon," a local nickname for the enchanting waterways around Lough Allen. **Lough Allen Adventure Centre** offers two daily tours for beginners and experienced water enthusiasts, families plus solo adventurers. They can accommodate children from 4 years of age, kayaking with an accompanying adult.

Led by friendly and experienced tour guides, you'll paddle still waters that are part of the Shannon-erne Blueway and enjoy the surrounding views of the Sliabh an Iarainn.



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DISCOVER GOLFING GEMS *in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands*



There's a reason that Ireland is one of the most popular golfing destinations in the world. Golfers are spoiled for choice with a course for every day of the year, courses in beautiful, natural settings and incredible golf clubs. Find your new favourite course with these golfing gems in Ireland's Hidden Heartlands.

ESKER HILLS GOLF CLUB, COUNTY OFFALY



Golfers have been enjoying the course at Esker Hills Golf Club since 1885, yet it still remains one of the best kept golfing secrets in Ireland. Christy O'Connor Jr. extended it to an 18-hole course in the nineties and its many undulations and elevation changes will delight and surprise you in equal measure.



SLIEVE RUSSELL GOLF CLUB, BALLYCONNELL, COUNTY CAVAN

Cavan's trademark drumlins and an inspired parkland course design makes Slieve Russell Golf Club an ideal place for a memorable round. Don't let its gently rolling landscape fool you. It's a testing course layout, with 50-acres of water ready to punish any wayward shots.



GLASSON GOLF CLUB, GLASSON COUNTY WESTMEATH

With views of Lough Ree from every hole, it's hard not to be impressed by the surroundings of this striking course. In between the sightseeing, you'll have to contend with Glasson Golf Club's tricky par fives, varied terrain and challenging tournament layout.

PORTUMNA GOLF CLUB, PORTUMNA, COUNTY GALWAY

The mature trees and roaming deer give Portumna Golf Club a magical, idyllic look but don't be fooled by its beauty. The challenging course features blind shots, elevated tees and some awkward hazards that ensure this parkland course is more than just a pretty face.



ATHLONE GOLF CLUB, ATHLONE, COUNTY WESTMEATH

A parkland course on the banks of Lough Ree, Athlone Golf Club provides great golfing throughout the year. It sets out its stall on the first hole, with an elevated tee looking down a tree-lined fairway with a tricky approach shot to a raised green to come. It's the first of many daunting holes on a course that is all about risk and reward.

FARNHAM ESTATE GOLF RESORT COUNTY CAVAN

With a first nine played on a wide open landscape and a back nine cutting through dense woodland, Farnham Estate will test every aspect of your game. This is one of Ireland's newest courses and its clean, contemporary design is complemented by natural features that include a meandering stream, mature trees and seven glistening lakes.



ROSCOMMON GOLF CLUB, COUNTY ROSCOMMON

This long-established golf club is over 100-years-old and was extended from nine to 18 holes in 1991. It has continuously found new ways to challenge golfers ever since it first opened. Four of the holes at Roscommon Golf Club have water features and new trees have been strategically placed alongside its mature trees to provide some scenic touches and additional hazards, as you make your way around the course.



MOUNT TEMPLE GOLF CLUB, MOATE, COUNTY WESTMEATH

The ancient ring forts and abbey ruins at Mount Temple Golf Club are reminders of its long history. Discover the ancient past as you battle this tough course. The tricky Par Threes, challenging Par Fours and long Par Fives will test your skill and strategy but, it's terrific fun to play.







Eight great things to do IN COUNTY LOUTH



Steeped in history and adorned with coastal beauty, County Louth has something for every explorer. From fun in the water at Carlingford Lough to discovering ancient monastic settlements, you'll be spoiled for choice in Ireland's smallest county.

Here are some of the best things to explore in Louth.

1 DROGHEDA MUSEUM MILLMOUNT

Delving into its history is a great way to begin exploring any town. An impressive Norman fort towers over Drogheda, surveying the town below and playing host to Drogheda Museum Millmount. Described as one of the finest town museums in Ireland, uncover a wealth of historical treasures



2 SEE OLIVER PLUNKETT'S HEAD IN ST. PETER'S CHURCH

While you're in Drogheda, visit the shrine of St. Oliver Plunkett at St. Peter's Church. Constructed using local limestone in 1884, parts of an original church built in 1791

still form some of the impressive Gothic building. Inside you'll find fine sculptures, a spectacular marble High Altar and more than 40 beautiful, stained-glass windows but the church is most famous for housing the shrine of St. Oliver Plunkett.

3 BEAULIEU HOUSE AND GARDENS

Just ten minutes from Drogheda on the banks of the Boyne, Beaulieu House and Gardens is one of the earliest examples in Ireland of an unfortified house. Constructed between 1660 and 1666, the house is a rare example of late 17th-century Irish domestic architecture and has survived with minimal alterations. Its garden and terraces remain unchanged from their early design; the historic 1.5 hectare walled garden is a tranquil haven for anyone who loves plants. Visitors can explore the garden or take the guided tour of Beaulieu House from June to September 1.



4 OLD MELLIFONT ABBEY

Another short spin from Drogheda, Old Mellifont Abbey is Ireland's first Cistercian monastery. Founded in 1142, it features a fascinating Monks' Chapter House and unique octagonal lavabo, in which the monks washed their hands, dating from circa 1200. At the visitor centre learn all about the work of masons in the Middle Ages, with fine examples of their craft on display, alongside remnants of the Abbey's ancient gates and church.

5 MONASTERBOICE HIGH CROSS AND ROUND TOWER

Just ten minutes from Mellifont Abbey, continue your discovery of the region's history at the monastic site of Monasterboice, with its impressive round tower and two high crosses. Founded in the 600s, the early Christian settlement was once an important religious centre captured by invading Vikings in 968 AD. Discover its old graveyard, historic churches, sundial and the spectacular high crosses.



6 TAKE THE CARLINGFORD FERRY

While you're in Carlingford, take the scenic Carlingford Ferry across the lough from Greenore as far as Greencastle in County Down. Departing once an hour, the car ferry takes just 15 minutes and connects the Cooley Peninsula to many beautiful drives around beautiful County Down, taking in the magnificent Mourne Mountains and Rostrevor.

7 WALK OR CYCLE THE CARLINGFORD GREENWAY

Built along an old railway line on Carlingford Lough's southern shore, the Carlingford Greenway connects Omeath and Carlingford and is ideal for walkers and cyclists of all levels, even kids. With great views across the lough to the mountains of Mourne, Slieve Foy towers over the trail on the Louth side.

8 COUNTY MUSEUM DUNDALK

Get a deep insight into the history of County Louth from the Stone Age right through to modern day at the County Museum Dundalk. Housed in a building that once stored whiskey and tobacco, the museum tells the story of Louth with riveting displays, regular exhibitions and a 'virtual presenter' that was one of Europe's first at the time of installation.

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Wicklow Mountains



Rosses Point Caravan Park

Escape into nature in a vintage caravan or put up a tent with seascape views. Toast marshmallows under the stars or wake to the sound of birds. Unforgettable experiences await across the country's many camping and caravan parks, from the traditional to the extraordinary. Discover the best camping in Ireland and plan your next trip into the great outdoors.

Roundwood Caravan and Camping Park, Wicklow

Go camping in Wicklow and embrace a slower pace of life at Roundwood Caravan and Camping Park. Pitch your tent in the highest village in Ireland and set off on foot around the Wicklow Mountains National Park.

The Trading Post Camper Park, Wexford

Experience the best of both worlds in the Sunny South East with a seaside holiday and camping trip in one at The Trading Post Camper Park. Discover this scenic caravan park between two of Wexford's best beaches, Morriscastle and Curraclloe. Spend a day swimming in the sea and wash the sand away with a hot shower back at the campsite.

North Beach Caravan Park, Dublin

Visit Dublin and see a different side of the capital from North Beach Caravan Park in Rush. Watch the sunrise over the Irish Sea before meandering along the cliff paths on a gentle hike. Pick up a jar of homemade jam for breakfast at the local Skerries Mills Farmers Market,.

Boyles' Caravans and Camping Ground, Donegal

Enjoy evenings toasting marshmallows by the fire at Boyles' Caravans and Camping



Valentia Island

Ground in west Donegal. Bed down in a comfy caravan or bring your tent and wake up to the sound of the sea. Look out for pods of dolphins and basking sharks when you go camping in the County of the Gaels.

Valentia Island Caravan and Camping Park, Kerry

Hit refresh in a truly unique setting and pitch your tent at Valentia Island Caravan and Camping Park for an epic home holiday. Roam the rugged landscape where dinosaurs once walked, go for a swim in the sea and hop on a boat to Skellig Michael to explore one of Ireland's most famous landmarks.

Beirne's of Battlebridge, Leitrim

Visit Ireland's Hidden Heartlands and spend a night at Beirne's of Battlebridge iconic camping ground in Leitrim. Soak up the

lively atmosphere at the gastropub once you've settled into your campsite or cast your fishing rod in the River Shannon and sit back as you wait for the perfect catch.

Rosses Point Caravan Park, Sligo

Pack your trunks, take yourself to Sligo's stunning coastline and book a stay with Rosses Point Caravan Park. With access to two beaches on either side of the caravan park, there's lots of choice when it comes to activities on the water.

Streamstown Caravan and Camping Park, Tipperary

At the heart of a dairy farm, this classic caravan and camping park in Roscrea is all about tranquil living but you don't have to go without your creature comforts like hot showers and a full camper kitchen. Hire a mobile home or curl up in your sleeping bag in a cosy tent at Streamstown Park. You'll know you've arrived when you see the cattle roaming around.



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Heading south to WEXFORD

Welcome to Wexford, on Ireland's southeast coast! This charming county is a delightful mix of stunning coastlines, rich history and vibrant culture.

Explore the Stunning Beaches

Wexford is renowned for its beautiful beaches and the golden sands of *Curracloe Strand* are simply unmissable. Known for its appearance in the film *Saving Private Ryan*, this beach is perfect for sunbathing, swimming or long walks along the shore. *Ballymoney Beach* is also famous for its stunning dunes and great surf conditions. Pack a picnic and spend a day soaking up the sun!

Discover History at Tintern Abbey

Tintern Abbey was founded in 1200 by the Cistercian monks. This stunning ruin is surrounded by picturesque gardens and forest trails. The peaceful ambience makes it a great spot for a stroll or a quiet moment of reflection. Don't forget to explore the nearby *Tintern Trails*, where you can hike through lush woodland and enjoy breathtaking views.

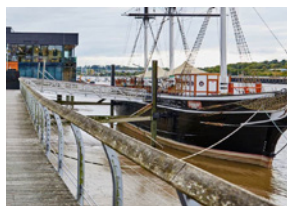
Visit the Historic Town of Wexford



The town of Wexford itself is brimming with charm and history. Wander through the narrow streets, stopping at the *Irish National Heritage Park*, where you can step

back in time and experience Ireland's past through interactive exhibits and reconstructions. For a taste of local culture, visit *Wexford Opera House*, which hosts an array of performances throughout the year.

Incorporating guided tours, costumed performers and themed exhibitions of the highest quality, '*The Dunbrody*' provides a unique insight into the bravery and fortitude with which Irish people faced up to a desperate situation.



Designated Heritage Island Premiere Attraction and Winner of the Tripadvisor Travelers' Choice award.



Immerse Yourself in Nature at the Hook Head Peninsula

A trip to Wexford isn't complete without visiting the *Hook Lighthouse*, one of the oldest lighthouses in the world. Climb to the top for panoramic views of the coastline and surrounding countryside. The Hook Head Peninsula offers fantastic walking trails where you can enjoy the

rugged cliffs and the stunning Irish Sea. Keep an eye out for dolphins and seabirds during your walk.



Savour Delicious Cuisine

Wexford's culinary scene is not to be missed. Head over to *The Greenroom* for a taste of locally sourced dishes that highlight the region's freshest ingredients. If you're in the mood for traditional Irish fare, *The Crown* is a cosy spot serving up hearty meals in a welcoming atmosphere. And don't forget to try some local seafood at *The Lobster Pot*, where the catch of the day is always fresh.



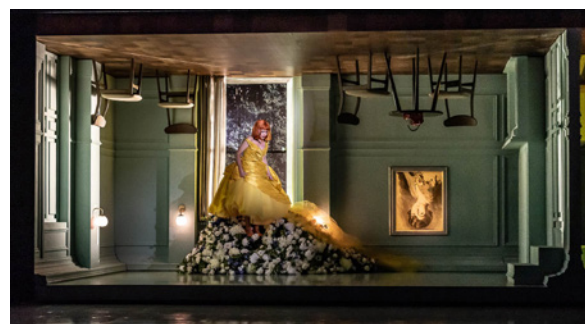
Experience Traditional Irish Music

Wexford is home to a lively traditional music scene. Check out *The Sky and the Ground*, a fantastic pub known for its regular music sessions and warm atmosphere. Join locals

for a pint and enjoy the sounds of fiddles, bodhráns and lively jigs. Another great spot is *The Bull Ring*, where you can find live performances almost every weekend.

Seasonal Highlights

Each season in Wexford brings its own charm. Spring sees the countryside bursting into bloom, making it a perfect time for hiking and exploring the coast. Summer is ideal for beach outings and outdoor festivals, including the famous *Wexford Festival Opera* in October, which draws music lovers from all over. Autumn transforms the landscape into a tapestry of warm colours, perfect for scenic drives through the countryside.



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History, Coastlines and the Crystal Charm of **WATERFORD**

Waterford, Ireland's oldest city, is the perfect destination for a long weekend getaway. With its rich history, stunning coastal views and famous crystal creations, Waterford has something for every type of traveller. Whether you're exploring the medieval past of the city or soaking up the beauty of its nearby beaches, a weekend here promises memories to last a lifetime.



DAY 1: Discover Waterford's History and Craftsmanship

Start your Waterford journey by stepping back in time. Begin at **Reginald's Tower**, one of Ireland's oldest civic buildings, located on the edge of the Viking Triangle. The tower dates back to the 13th century and inside you'll find exhibitions that delve into Waterford's Viking history. A short stroll away, you'll find **Christ Church Cathedral**, a beautiful Georgian structure that has a fascinating history.

No trip to Waterford is complete without visiting the **Waterford Crystal Visitor Showroom**. Known worldwide for its luxury glassware, this showroom allows visitors to watch master craftsmen shape, cut and polish dazzling pieces of crystal. You'll even get the chance to purchase one-of-a-kind souvenirs to bring home! Visit: www.waterfordvisitorcentre.com.

After a day of sightseeing, enjoy a relaxed evening in the city's welcoming pubs. Why not grab a pint at **Nickys Bar**, a local favourite known for its lively atmosphere?

DAY 2: Beaches, Beauty, and Coastal Vibes

On your second day, head to Waterford's stunning coastline. Just a 15-minute drive from the city, you'll find **Tramore Beach**. This popular destination is perfect for long beach walks, family picnics or even a bit of surfing if you're feeling adventurous. tramore.ie.

If you prefer somewhere quieter, venture to **Woodstown Beach**. This peaceful retreat is ideal for unwinding and soaking up the tranquil atmosphere. With soft sand and gentle waves, Woodstown offers a more intimate coastal experience.

For a quintessential Irish fishing village vibe, head to **Dunmore East**. Colourful cottages, fresh seafood and dramatic coastal views make this an unforgettable stop. Don't miss the chance to enjoy a fresh seafood meal in one of Dunmore East's charming restaurants.



DAY 3: Immerse in Culture and Gastronomy

On your final day, take time to explore Waterford's cultural scene. **The Medieval Museum** in the Viking Triangle is a must-visit, showcasing artefacts and treasures that tell the story of Ireland's medieval past.

For food lovers, Waterford won't disappoint. Sample traditional dishes at one of the city's renowned eateries, such as **Momo Restaurant**, where locally sourced ingredients are crafted into delightful dishes.

If you're after something more coastal, take a short drive to **The Copper Hen**, a charming restaurant overlooking Tramore Bay, serving some of the best seafood in the region.

SEASONAL HIGHLIGHTS AND HIDDEN GEMS

If you're visiting in the summer, Waterford's coastline comes alive with festivals, outdoor markets, and local events. **Tramore's Summer Racing Festival** is a thrilling experience, offering a mix of sport, food and entertainment.



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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.

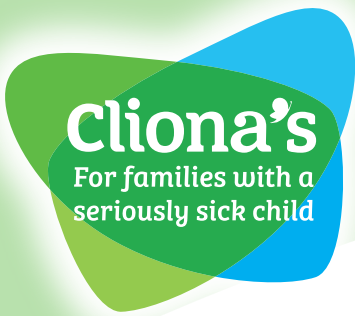
WHERE TO STAY

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.





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.

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TOTAL OF 1,366 FAMILIES DEC 2023

Explore beautiful nature in Carlow

Take a peaceful stroll through elegant gardens, get to grips with local history or embrace nature with towering mountains at your back – there's plenty to explore on a short break in Carlow.

Altamont Gardens

Begin your adventure at the gorgeous Altamont Gardens, just 10 minutes outside of Tullow. Spread across a 16-hectare estate, no matter what time of the year you visit, you can expect a little slice of heaven, with a spectacle of flourishing flora through every season.

Plan a visit for February to experience the Snowdrop Gala, where the dainty white flowers can be found in abundance. There are 200 varieties planted on-site and visitors can take a guided tour and learn all about the Snowdrop Collection in their famous walled garden.

Huntington Castle and Gardens

Less than 15 minutes away, explore the Fellowship of Isis Temple at Huntington Castle and Gardens. Built in the 1970s as a place of worship of the Egyptian Goddess



Isis, guided tours include the sacred well of St. Brigid, the main altar to Isis, and altars reflecting the zodiac signs. Get a sense of the castle's previous occupants on the tour, which now includes the old kitchens and drawing room.

Allow enough time to stroll around the gardens – from the French lime trees bordering the avenue to the ornamental lawns and fish pond, each is a destination worth visiting. Stop by the lake to see one of Ireland's earliest water turbine houses, which once powered the castle.



Blackstairs Eco Trails

Discover the secrets of the Blackstairs Mountains on an eco-trail guided walk. Meander through lovely lanes, lowlands, bogs and streams on a unique rural experience in the foothills of the mountains. Take the Tree Trail to discover



the seven Noble Trees of our forebearers The Celts and see the birds, mammals, flora and fungi that make up this wonderful ecosystem. Extend the journey south along the river if you have the time, on part of Barrow Way which takes you down to the village of St. Mullins. It is a peaceful route through a quiet wooded landscape, with the constantly expanding river, growing more majestic every mile, for company.

Clogrennan Wood Loop

Blow off those cobwebs on the Clogrennan Wood Loop Walk, on Carlow's border. A serene, gently sloping trail that covers 4km of forest roads, you're rewarded with magnificent views of nearby Carlow Town and the River Barrow. Discover a huge variety of trees in the old wood, as you walk, with beech, spruce, larch and oak most common. You won't have to look too hard to spot the abundance of bluebells, ferns and even wild garlic.





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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 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

KILDARE:

Exploring Ireland's Hidden Gem

If you're planning your next getaway, look no further than Kildare, a county brimming with charm, history and stunning landscapes. Conveniently located near Dublin, this picturesque region is perfect for a staycation, offering a delightful mix of culture, nature and fantastic hospitality.

Embrace History and Heritage

Kildare is steeped in history, with an array of captivating heritage sites to explore. Start your adventure at *Newbridge House* in Donabate, a beautifully preserved Georgian mansion with over 370 acres of parklands. Explore its elegant interiors, stroll through the gardens and visit the on-site pet farm that's perfect for families. This gem of a location offers an enriching peek into Ireland's aristocratic past.



For those keen on Irish history and equestrian heritage, a trip to the *Irish National Stud* is a must. This world-renowned breeding facility is not just for horse lovers. The

stunning *Japanese Gardens* are an oasis of peace and beauty, offering a perfect setting for a relaxing walk. Be sure to visit the *Horse Museum*, which gives a fascinating glimpse into Ireland's long love affair with racing and breeding.

Another heritage highlight is *Castletown House* in Celbridge. This Palladian mansion is one of the finest examples of Georgian architecture in Ireland, surrounded by beautiful parklands. Take a guided tour of the ornate rooms, and be sure to explore the serene grounds, which are ideal for a leisurely walk or picnic. You can plan your visit by checking out the *Castletown House* website.



The Thrill of the Races

Kildare is synonymous with horse racing and a day out at *The Curragh Racecourse* is an unforgettable experience. Whether you're a seasoned racing fan or just looking for a fun day out, this venue is the home of flat racing in Ireland and hosts some of the biggest events on the racing calendar. Soak up the lively atmosphere, place your bets and enjoy the buzz of race day.



Fun for All Ages at Lullymore Heritage Park

A fantastic day out for families, *Lullymore Heritage Park* offers a mix of education and fun. Step back in time and explore Ireland's past with exhibits on rural life, peatlands and biodiversity. Kids will love the pet farm and the fairy village, while adults can enjoy scenic walks and fascinating historical displays. It's the perfect blend of fun and learning.

Unwind at the Best Pubs and Restaurants

After a day of exploring, there's no better way to relax than by experiencing some of Kildare's best food and drink. For a truly authentic Irish pub experience, head to *Johnny Fox's* in the nearby Dublin Mountains. Known as one of Ireland's highest pubs, *Johnny Fox's* offers traditional Irish music, great food and a warm atmosphere that will have you feeling like a local in no time.



If you're looking for something more refined, Kildare has some fantastic restaurants to try. *Hartes of Kildare*, located in the heart of Kildare town, offers locally sourced ingredients and a diverse menu that caters to all tastes. Their warm and welcoming ambience, paired with delicious food, makes it the perfect spot for a relaxed evening meal.

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A misty sunrise at Bective Abbey



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LONGFORD:

Discover the Unexpected

If you're planning a staycation in Ireland, why not escape to a county that might not be the first on everyone's list but offers incredible experiences, both unexpected and memorable? Longford, in the heart of Ireland's midlands, is often overlooked but this charming destination is packed with natural beauty, cultural treasures and peaceful retreats.

Experience Longford's Scenic Beauty

When you think of Longford, sprawling lakes and lush green forests should come to mind. For those who love the great outdoors, don't miss the *Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre*. Here, you'll find a preserved Iron Age oak road built in 148 BC, offering both a fascinating glimpse into ancient Ireland and a peaceful walk along the surrounding boglands.

Next, head over to Lough Ree, one of the major lakes along the Shannon River, offering a perfect spot for fishing, boating or simply relaxing by the water. The serene atmosphere makes



it an ideal escape for families or couples looking to unwind. Don't forget to check out Saints Island, an unspoiled natural haven with scenic walking trails that reveal panoramic views over the lake.

Dive into History and Heritage

Longford boasts a deep sense of history, and no trip here would be complete without visiting St. Mel's Cathedral. This stunning 19th-century cathedral, which was rebuilt after a devastating fire in 2009, stands tall as a symbol of resilience and heritage. The intricate stonework, grand interior and beautiful stained-glass windows will leave you in awe.



If you're a fan of historical homes, Ardagh Heritage Village offers a picturesque setting with charming cottages and Georgian architecture. It's also steeped in literary history as the home of Maria Edgeworth, one of Ireland's earliest novelists. The village's tranquil atmosphere makes it a wonderful place for a quiet stroll or a coffee in a cosy café.

Outdoor Activities for All Ages

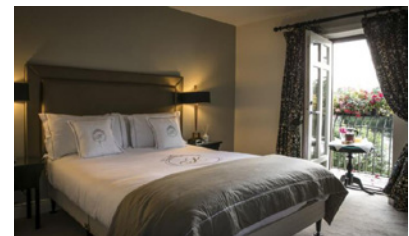
Longford is a haven for outdoor enthusiasts. Whether you're into hiking, cycling or horseback riding, there's plenty to keep you busy. One of the top spots for adventure seekers is Royal Canal Greenway, a long-distance trail perfect for walking or cycling along its scenic



towpaths. The peaceful route winds through rural landscapes, offering picturesque views and tranquil escapes along the way.

Food and Drink: A Taste of Longford

What's a staycation without indulging in some local flavours? Longford has plenty of hidden culinary gems that will leave you satisfied.



Keenan's of Tarmonbarry, located on the banks of the Shannon, is a beloved spot for a relaxed meal with views over the water. They offer hearty Irish classics and locally sourced ingredients that reflect the best of Longford's produce.

If you're in the mood for a drink or a casual evening out, *Viewmount House* offers not only stunning Georgian architecture but also a fine dining experience that's celebrated throughout the region. Enjoy a glass of wine while you take in the peaceful surroundings of this countryside retreat. Please check opening hours as winter times may vary.

Seasonal Highlights

Longford is a delight to visit no matter the season but each time of year brings its own unique charm. In the spring and summer, the county comes alive with vibrant greenery, wildflowers and festivals. One event to mark in your calendar is the Abbeyshrule Air Show, a fun-filled event showcasing



aircraft and aerobatic performances in the picturesque village of Abbeyshrule.

For those who love autumn, the changing colours

make Longford's forests and lakeside walks even more magical, with crisp air perfect for a countryside escape. Winter brings a quieter, more peaceful vibe, ideal for those seeking a tranquil getaway in the heart of Ireland's natural beauty.

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NORTHERN IRELAND

20 things to see and do

- 1** Visit the Giant's Causeway, a natural wonder made of hexagonal basalt columns.
- 2** Take a tour of the historic Belfast City Hall.
- 3** Walk across the Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge, which connects the mainland to a small island.
- 4** Explore the caves at Fermanagh's Marble Arch Geopark.
- 5** Visit Dunluce Castle, a ruined medieval castle on the coast.
- 6** Enjoy the new Game of Thrones Studio in Banbridge or if you'd rather see the natural settings, hop onto a tour and visit the various Game of Thrones filming locations in Ireland.
- 7** Explore the ruins of the medieval Nendrum Monastery on Strangford Lough.
- 8** Visit the Ulster Museum in Belfast to learn about the history and culture of Northern Ireland.
- 9** Take a hike in the Mourne Mountains, known for their rugged beauty.
- 10** Visit the historic town of Enniskillen, with its 17th-century castle and many other historic buildings.
- 11** Take a scenic drive along the Causeway Coastal Route, passing by famous landmarks such as the Dark Hedges.
- 12** Visit the National Trust property at Mount Stewart, a Georgian house with formal gardens and a lake.
- 13** Go skiing or snowboarding at the ski centre in the Mourne Mountains.
- 14** Visit the Old Bushmills Distillery, the oldest licensed whiskey distillery in the world.
- 15** Find out about the history of the R.M.S. Titanic at Titanic Belfast.
- 16** Visit the Ulster American Folk Park, a museum that tells the story of Irish emigration to America.

- 17** Visit the historic city of Derry/Londonderry, with its 17th-century city walls and many other historical sites.
- 18** Take a trip to the island of Rathlin to see the RSPB seabird centre and the lighthouse.
- 19** Visit the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum, which tells the story of how people lived and worked in Northern Ireland over the past century.

- 20** Take a trip to the island of Arranmore to see the traditional thatched cottages and enjoy the local music and culture.



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Retail

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OFFALY:

Heart of the Hidden Heartland

Looking for a staycation that combines history, natural beauty and authentic Irish charm? Offaly, located in the very heart of Ireland, is the perfect destination for a weekend getaway or a longer stay. From ancient monastic sites to stunning natural landscapes, this often-overlooked county has plenty to offer those seeking a peaceful retreat or an adventurous escape. Get ready to explore the treasures of Offaly and experience the best of Irish culture and hospitality.

Day 1: Unveil Offaly's Ancient History and Culture

Begin your staycation with a journey through time at one of Ireland's most famous monastic sites, Clonmacnoise. Situated on the banks of the River Shannon, this ancient monastic city was founded in the 6th century and became a hub of learning and spirituality. Today, you can wander through the atmospheric ruins of churches, round towers, and high crosses, while enjoying breathtaking views of the surrounding landscape. *Clonmacnoise* is a must-visit for history lovers and offers a peaceful start to your Offaly adventure.



After your history-filled morning, head into the town of Tullamore for a leisurely lunch. Be sure to stop by for a tour and tasting of one of Ireland's most beloved whiskeys. Learn about the art of whiskey-making and sample the smooth flavours that have made *Tullamore D.E.W.* a global favourite. It's a perfect way to get a true taste of Offaly's heritage.

For the evening, enjoy traditional Irish cuisine at *The Bridge House Hotel* in Tullamore. Known for its warm atmosphere and locally sourced dishes, it's a great spot to unwind and savour the flavours of the region.



Day 2: Explore Offaly's Natural Wonders

Start your second day with an outdoor adventure in *Birr Castle Demesne*, one of the most stunning destinations in Offaly. The castle itself is a marvel of architecture, but the real highlight is the surrounding gardens and grounds. Wander through the lush gardens, home to some of the tallest trees in Ireland or visit the Great Telescope, which was the largest in the world during the 19th century. Whether you're a nature lover, a history buff or a science enthusiast, *Birr Castle* is the place to be.

After exploring the grounds, take a short drive to *Lough Boora Discovery Park*, a paradise for outdoor enthusiasts. This vast park features walking and cycling trails, wildlife spotting and impressive sculptures dotted throughout the landscape. Whether you're looking to relax by the water, explore the flora and fauna or take a family-friendly bike ride, *Lough Boora* provides the perfect backdrop for a day in the fresh air.

As evening approaches, stop by *Hennessy's* in Fermanagh, a popular local pub known for its hearty meals and traditional Irish music sessions. Grab a seat by the fire and enjoy the warm hospitality that Offaly is known for.

Day 3: Scenic Views and Off-the-Beaten-Path Adventures

On your final day, take in some of the most picturesque views that Offaly has to offer. Begin with a visit to the *Slieve Bloom Mountains*. The *Slieve Bloom Way* offers a variety of trails that cater to all fitness levels, with rewarding views over the rolling countryside. If hiking isn't your thing, simply enjoy a scenic drive through this tranquil region.

For something a little different, consider a visit to *Leap Castle*, known as one of Ireland's most haunted castles. This atmospheric site has a long and turbulent history, with tales of intrigue and ghostly apparitions. *Leap Castle* is a must for those who enjoy a bit of mystery with their history!



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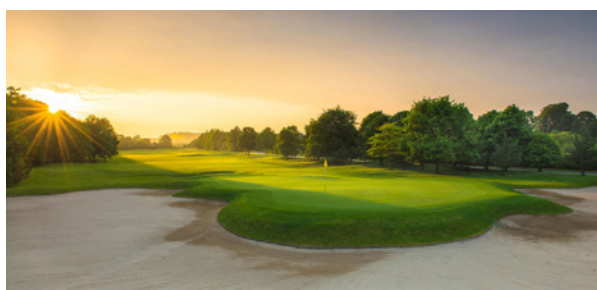


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A Golfer's Paradise ON IRELAND'S EAST COAST

Check out 16 great East Coast Golf courses in no particular order



1. MOUNT JULIET

Mount Juliet Estate golf course, a masterpiece of Jack Nicklaus, opened in 1991 and has established itself as one of the best golf courses in Ireland. The layout is gloriously positioned amongst the woodland and rolling pastures.

2. SLIEVE RUSSELL HOTEL & COUNTRY CLUB



18-hole championship course, where the tricky greens of the course promise a worthwhile round of golf. The course has hosted major championships such as The Irish PGA Championship and a PGA Pro-Am tournament.

3. THE HERITAGE GOLF CLUB

Within the rustic landscapes of the Heritage Golf Resort lies a splendid course co-designed by the Ryder-cup legend Seve Ballesteros and renowned golf architect

Jeff Howes. The two created a little piece of heaven for golfers that offers the challenging golf experience that Ireland's golf courses are well-known for.



4. CARTON HOUSE HOTEL & GOLF RESORT (O'MEARA AND MONTGOMERIE COURSES)



Situated in the midst of a private parkland in County Kildare, Carton House Hotel and Golf Resort is home to two stunning championship courses. The O'Meara course is a classic parkland

positioned on the banks of the River Rye, meandering through lush woodlands. The majestic Montgomerie course will take you on a journey across impeccable greens, against the stunning backdrop of the resort.

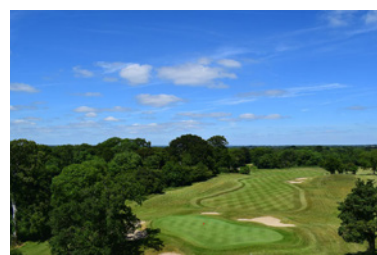
5. MOUNT WOLSELEY HOTEL & GOLF RESORT

The course at Mount Wolseley Hotel and Golf Resort is a grandiose 18-hole championship course designed by Christy O'Connor Jr. With its unforgiving rough, testing water hazards and lush greens – this par 72 course will not disappoint even the most discerning player.



6. NEW FOREST GOLF CLUB

Both a testing terrain for golfers and a joy to the eye, New Forest Golf Club is a truly amazing Irish parkland golf experience. With the forested surroundings and undulating beauty of its fine fairways, tees and putting surfaces, the course is one of the best in the country. The layout is positioned over gently rolling terrain and encircled with woodlands that give the property a traditional feel.



7. CONCRA WOOD GOLF AND COUNTRY CLUB

Situated on Ireland's Ancient East, Concra Wood is the only golf course designed by the legendary Irish duo – Christy O'Connor Jr. and Christy O'Connor Sr. Boasting a fantastic mountain backdrop, the course has hosted major tournaments such as the European Challenge Tour and three Europro Tour events.

8. WOODENBRIDGE GOLF CLUB

For those wishing to play a round of golf in Ireland, Woodenbridge Golf Club is a hidden heaven that's waiting to be revealed. This par 71 course was designed by Patrick Merrigan. It boasts two rivers that come into play on no fewer than ten of the course's holes.



9. LAYTOWN & BETTYSTOWN GOLF CLUB



Founded in 1909, Laytown and Bettystown Golf Club boasts a stunning traditional links course. With its undulating greens and narrow fairways,

the course hides unexpected hazards and challenges. Set by the sea in the beautiful village of Bettystown, the course is a must-visit spot when in the Dublin region. Golf is just one of the ways you can get off the beaten track on your visit to Dublin.

10. ARKLOW GOLF LINKS

With its rugged sand dunes and elegantly meandering fairways, Arklow Golf Links is the ultimate traditional links course. Formed by Hawtree and Taylor in 1927, it has evolved with additional inputs from Eddie Hackett and Eddie Connaughton. Incorporating Wicklow's evergreen beauty and boasting stunning views of the Irish sea,



11. BLAINROE GOLF CLUB



Offering spectacular views of the Irish Sea and with the Wicklow Mountains as a beautiful backdrop, Blainroe Golf Club boasts an 18-hole championship

course. Blainroe enjoys its own micro-climate which makes it a unique spot for golf all year round. This par 72 course carries the prestigious Hawtree and Son design signature and includes tricky fairway bunkers and sand-based greens.

12. KNIGHTSBROOK HOTEL & GOLF RESORT

With picturesque views of its carefully curated fairways, challenging greens and water hazards, the Knightsbrook Course is a popular destination for golf holidays in Ireland. Knightsbrook Hotel and Golf Resort is a perfect place where you can escape hectic daily life.



13. MACREDDIN GOLF CLUB

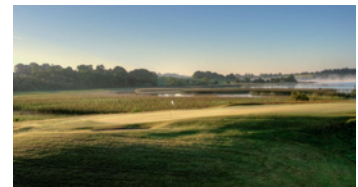


Situated within the 160 acres of a striking natural setting at Macreddin Valley, the course represents the debut design of Paul McGinley.

Alongside co-designer, the legendary Roger Jones, McGinley has showcased his talent throughout the visually appealing and challenging 7,172-yard par 72 "golfing pilgrimage" in the Wicklow countryside.

14. GLASSON COUNTRY HOUSE HOTEL & GOLF CLUB

Situated outside Athlone, Glasson Country House Hotel and Golf Club is a golf experience that ought not to be missed. The course is designed so that you can enjoy either a testing game on a championship level or a relaxing tee time while soaking up the amazing atmosphere. Carrying the signature of the Ryder Cup star, Christy O'Connor Jr., the course boasts stunning lake views from every hole.



15. BUNCLODY GOLF CLUB

Bunclody Golf Club is becoming another glittering jewel in Ireland's crown of fine golf courses. Running over 7,000 yards of breathtaking parklands, the course carries the signature of Jeff Howes.



16. RATHSALLAGH GOLF CLUB

Rathsallagh Golf Club was first opened in 1994 and is the joint masterpiece of Peter McEvoy and Christy O'Connor Jr. Rathsallagh is situated in beautiful County Wicklow parkland, with fairways lined with mature woodland. Its testing burns, ponds and ditches make it a course to challenge.



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.



The Heritage Killenard

Escape to The Heritage, Killenard this summer! Unwind in our luxurious spa, savour gourmet dining, and explore Laois gems like Glenbarrow walks, Emo Court, and the Catholes cold plunge and sauna. A perfect blend of relaxation and adventure awaits. Discover timeless elegance and natural beauty in every moment. Theheritage.com



Malahide Castle & Gardens

Escape to County Dublin! Begin your journey at Malahide Castle, a majestic fortress steeped in history. Explore its opulent interiors and wander through the enchanting gardens. Then, venture to Newbridge House & Farm, a charming intact Georgian estate. Discover the elegant house, explore the picturesque gardens, and meet the friendly farm animals. A perfect day trip for history buffs and nature lovers alike! For more visit www.malahidecastleandgardens.ie www.newbridgehouseandfarm.com/



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.*



Riverdance

Riverdance 30 – The New Generation celebrates the show's incredible 30th year milestone, with a special anniversary tour, which comes home to the Gaiety Theatre for the summer season. The spectacular production rejuvenates the much-loved original show with new innovative choreography and costumes and state of the art lighting, projection and motion graphics showcasing the new generation of exceptional performers, all of whom were not born when the show began 30 years ago. SHOWS: Tuesday to Saturday at 7.30pm, Sunday at 5pm. Matinee Saturday at 3pm. VIP Experience: Tuesday, Friday and Saturday at 6.30pm. Tickets available on TICKETMASTER.COM or at GAIETY THEATRE BOX OFFICE, South King Street, Dublin D2



Beyond the Trees Avondale – Escape to the Treetops

Discover a world of wonder and excitement this summer at Avondale Forest Park! Our centrepiece, the magnificent Treetop Walk, offers an unparalleled journey into the heart of the forest. Meander along the elevated walkway, surrounded by the sights and sounds of nature, and experience the tranquility of the canopy.



Ireland's Blue Book

Magical 16th Century Castle and Former Station House Join Ireland's Blue Book.

Ireland's Blue Book proudly welcomes two exceptional additions for 2025: the majestic 16th-century Dromoland Castle in Co. Clare and the charming Station House Hotel in Co. Meath. These historic gems enrich the collection's renowned offering of country houses, castles, and restaurants—perfect for those seeking luxury, heritage, and unforgettable Irish hospitality.



GAA Museum

Immerse yourself in Irish culture with a visit to the GAA Museum - Choose from the Croke Park Stadium Tour where you'll discover the history of Ireland's national sports, or learn all about Dublin from 17 storeys high on the Kellogg's Skyline Tour. Both tours include GAA Museum access.



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



OPW

Explore the stunning Elizabethan architecture of Ormond Castle, a riverside medieval jewel in Carrick-on-Suir;



or take a glimpse into the 15th century at the newly renovated Barryscourt Castle in Cork. Both castles provide an unforgettable journey through time for history enthusiasts.

Visit heritageireland.ie for further information and details of re-opening dates.

Athlone Castle

Stay a while and explore the charming town that has grown around the Castle walls.

Athlone, in the Heart of Ireland's Hidden Heartlands, is the perfect base for your next break. You can wander through charming streets, with delightful shops, cafes, bars and restaurants. Explore the many heritage and cultural experiences and riverside walks. Choose from a variety of accommodation options.



Irish National Stud & Gardens

One of the only working stud farms open to the public in the world, the Irish National Stud & Gardens is home to our stallions, mares and newborn foals, two stunning gardens,



playground, fairy trail, beautiful restaurant, and the interactive Irish Racehorse Experience. More than a day out, it's a day off... Visit irishnationalstud.ie
Tel: +353 (0)45 521 617.
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Arigna Mining Experience

'The Arigna Mining Experience in Co. Roscommon offers a unique, immersive tour of the Arigna coal mines. Visitors experience an underground tour of a former mine with ex-miner as their tour guide, they can learn about the miners' lives through exhibits, dramatic sound effects, and the miner's sharing their first-hand experiences of working underground. The centre and tour are fully accessible, is family-friendly, and includes a coffee shop and gift shop. Open daily, all year-round.'



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."



Fota House

Once the home of the Smith-Barry family who lived here until 1975 Fota House, Arboretum & Gardens continues to delight visitors today. The Irish Heritage Trust is proud to carry on the Smith Barry family traditions, caring for the house, gardens, and arboretum for the enjoyment of all in perpetuity.



Passage East Ferry

Since 1982, Passage East Ferry operate a continuous car ferry Service across the historic River Suir linking the villages of Passage East, Co. Waterford and Ballyhack, Co. Wexford. With easy access to Waterford City, Dunmore East, Waterford Greenway in Waterford and New Ross, Duncannon, the Hook Peninsula and Wexford town in Wexford, there is an abundance of things to see and do.



The Irish Rock'n'Roll Museum Experience

Rock out in the heart of Dublin! Take a guided tour through Irish music history at Ireland's most influential music complex. Hear stories



and see iconic memorabilia from U2, Sinéad O'Connor, Rory Gallagher, and explore the Thin Lizzy Exhibition. Plus, step into the rehearsal room and channel your inner rockstar!

The National Wax Museum Plus

The National Wax Museum Plus in central Dublin offers a fun, interactive experience for all ages. Explore Irish history, meet famous faces in wax, and dive into zones like Science & Discovery, the Chamber of Horrors, the Mirror Maze, and more. A must-see attraction blending education, entertainment, and selfie-worthy moments!



Choose Roscommon for a richer life

Roscommon, in the heart of Ireland, offers unforgettable adventures—thrilling water sports, scenic walking trails, historic landmarks, and family fun. Explore tranquil lakes, rich culture, and stunning landscapes. Enjoy warm hospitality, cozy accommodations, and delicious local food.

Discover a hidden gem where every experience is immersive, unique, and truly memorable.



Russborough House

Discover the beauty and history of Russborough and its treasures, collected and preserved over three centuries by the families that called this magical place home.

Its classical design, perfect scale, architectural detail, and exquisite decoration marks this Palladian jewel as the most beautiful Georgian house in Ireland.



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.



The Landmark Hotel

"Discover riverside charm at The Landmark Hotel in Carrick-on-Shannon, the perfect base for your Hidden Heartlands adventure. Overlooking the River Shannon, this family-run hotel blends boutique-style bedrooms with award-winning dining and heartfelt hospitality. Explore nearby walking trails, visit local distilleries, or simply relax and watch the boats go by. Whether you're escaping for a romantic break or a foodie weekend, let your journey begin at The Landmark"



National Museum of Ireland

The National Museum of Ireland is home to the world's greatest collection of objects related to Irish history and heritage. The collection spans from prehistoric times to the present day and is on display across our museums, two in Dublin and one in Co Mayo. Exhibitions explore a diverse range of themes from Bronze Age gold to 20th century revolution and contemporary design. While our Natural History Collection is relocated as we commence the first phase of refurbishment of the Museum at Merrion Street, you can engage with all your favourite specimens and programme at the Dead Zoo Lab in Collins Barracks, opening summer 2025. The main aim of the National Museum of Ireland is to preserve, share, explore and celebrate Ireland's history and culture and its place in the wider world. Join the conversation with guided tours, lectures, creative workshops and more. Admission is free. Please see www.museum.ie for updated information.



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.



Lafcadio Hearn Japanese Gardens

The Lafcadio Hearn Japanese Gardens are set in the beautiful seaside town of Tramore. Built in 2015 they tell the fascinating story of Irish Writer Patrick Lafcadio Hearn who travelled to Japan and married into a Samurai family, visitors can follow his story through eleven unique garden areas.



Newbridge House & Farm

Newbridge House & Farm is an 18th Century hidden gem located in Donabate, North County Dublin, just 10 minutes from Dublin Airport.

Nestled on 350 acres, Newbridge House was built back in 1736 by the Archbishop of Dublin, Charles Cobbe, as his country residence. Knowledgeable and passionate tour guides are on hand to bring the story of the Cobbe family to life for visitors, showcasing some of the finest examples of Georgian period architecture. The house and the 30-acre working farm are open daily for tours.

For more information visit www.newbridgehouseandfarm.com



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.



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