

the Best of Ireland with Ireland US Experience





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There are lots of reasons why people want to visit Ireland. For some it is an opportunity to see places they have heard about since their childhood, for others it is a chance to catch up on some family history, for some it is the scenery or the chance to play some fantastic golf, and others just want to immerse themselves in a place that is full of history and legend.

No two visitors will have the exact same mix of reasons for visiting us, so we have put together a listing of the major places of interest in every major city and county in Ireland to allow you to easily pick and choose those that particularly appeal to you.

These cover ancient monuments, historical sites, major scenic locations, interesting buildings and things to do.

This is by no means a comprehensive list of everything there is to see and do. Around every corner of Ireland you will find examples of ancient ruined churches and stately homes that are open to the public. You will find exhibitions and museums in almost every town in the country, marking local events and heroes. You will find stunning vistas from almost every hill top. You will come across exquisite churches of every denomination, historic sites and fun events and places just by travelling off the beaten track and occasionally leaving the motorways.

You will find that many attractions will feature restaurants or tea-rooms either onsite or very close to them where you can relax after your exertions of the day over a nice cup of coffee or tea. And it goes without saying, that nowhere in the country are you far from a pub, many of which offer fantastic meals at reasonable prices.

What we have tried to do is select the best of the best and present them to you as a sample of what Ireland has to offer. We apologise to anyone who feels we have left out their personal favorites, and would be delighted to hear your opinions.

We have a separate page on our website that lists all the major festivals and events that are occurring this year and as most of them take place on an annual basis around the same time every year, even if you are not intending to visit us this year, check out the various weblinks to see when your favorites will be repeated in the future.

And then, should you decide to take the next step, and make that long promised visit to the Emerald Isle, we in Ireland US Experience would be delighted to put together a tour package that takes you exactly where you want to go.

For more information, just click on : www.irelandusexperience.com



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ATTRACTIONS

DUBLIN

The Guinness StoreHouse (voted the Top Attraction in Europe: See how Guinness is made, and then pull a pint of 'the black stuff' with some of the best vistas of Dublin)

The Book of Kells in Trinity College ('the most beautiful book in the world')

Kilmainham Gaol (steeped in Irish revolutionary history)

Dublin Castle (historic home of British rule in Ireland)

Phoenix Park (the largest in-city park in the world, and home to Dublin Zoo, the US Ambassador's Residence and Aras An Uachtarain, the Irish 'White House').

Glasnevin Cemetery (see the resting places of some of Ireland's greatest heroes)

St Stephens Green (a remarkable green space located at one end of Grafton Street, Ireland's top shopping location)

The Teelings Whiskey Experience (the first working distillery opened in Dublin in over 100 years)

Dublinia (a recreation of Viking Dublin with live actors)

Other Highlights Of Dublin :

The National Gallery of Ireland, Christ Church Cathedral, The National Museum of Ireland, The Little Museum of Dublin, The National Library of Ireland, The General Post Office(GPO), The Irish National Botanic Gardens, National Aquatic Centre, The Merry Ploughboy Irish Night, Old Jameson Distillery, Croke Park & GAA Museum, Ha'penny Bridge, James Joyce Tower & Museum, Temple Bar, The Royal Canal and The Grand Canal, St Michans Church, St Patricks Cathedral, Georgian Dublin, The Dublin Mountains, Johnnie Foxes Irish Night, O'Connell Street, Howth Head, Dun Laoghaire Pier, Smithfield, Bank of Ireland College Green and the James Joyce Tower & Museum.



Guinness



Trinity College



Kilmainham Gaol

ATTRACTIONS

CORK

The English Market (A multicultural food market in a Victorian setting that was visited by Queen Elizabeth as part of her State Visit to Ireland)

Blarney Castle (Home of the Blarney Stone, which according to legend will give you the 'gift of the gab')

Cork City Gaol (Get a glimpse of what life was like for prisoners between 1824 and 1923)

Fota Wildlife Park (exotic animals roam freely on the 100 acres of Fota Island just 10km from Cork City)

The Jameson Experience in Midleton (Magnificent old distillery that only closed in 1975 where you can follow the whole process of making whiskey, and finish up with a drop of the 'hard stuff')

Charles Fort (Unusual star-shaped fort dating back to the 17th century located in Kinsale)

Michael Collins Centre (Centre dedicated to Ireland's most well known revolutionary hero whose life was featured in a major Liam Neeson movie, located in Clonakilty)

Kinsale (Historic port and fishing village located 17 miles from Cork that is very popular with locals and visitors. The Old Head of Kinsale Golf Course is one of the world's most famous – and difficult – golf links.)

Cobh (Another historic port, located 15 miles from Cork. Formerly known as Queenstown, it was the last port visited by Titanic on her fateful voyage, and still very popular with visiting cruise ships. Check out the Titanic Experience there where you can find out what life was like of her maiden and final journey)



Charles Fort

LIMERICK

King Johns Castle (The latest touchscreen and 3D technology bring 800 years of history to life)

The Hunt Museum (Diverse collection of artworks from Neolithic times to modern masterpieces.)

Adare ('Ireland's most beautiful village located a few miles outside Limerick city)

St Marys Cathedral (Cathedral dates back to 12th century)

Lough Gur (This ancient Mesolithic human settlement site is one of Ireland's most important archaeological sites)

River Shannon (Ireland's longest river ends just after it passes through the centre of Limerick City)

Foynes Flying Boat & Maritime Museum, Foynes



King Johns Castle

ATTRACTIONS

GALWAY

Aran Islands (Take a boat trip to enjoy one or all the three islands steeped in history and Gaeltacht (Irish speaking) tradition, including World Heritage site Dun Aonghasa which is set on dramatic 300 ft cliff edge).

Connemara National Park (Spectacular woodlands, bogs and mountains located near Letterfrack)

Kylemore Abbey & Victorian Walled Gardens (Owned and run by the Benedictine Nuns, in a spectacular setting, you can enjoy the ornate gardens and eat and shop in their famous café and extensive craft shop).

Athenry Medieval Town & Heritage Centre (experience history and dress up as a medieval knight)

The Quiet Man Bridge (The famous bridge from the John Wayne movie 'The Quiet Man' is located 5 miles past Oughterard just off the N59 although most of the movie was filmed near Cong in County Mayo.)

Also Worth Seeing: In Galway City: Spanish Arch, Lynch's Castle, Salthill seaside resort, Galway Cathedral and the Atlantaqueria. Nearby: Ashford Castle, Connemara Marble Visitor Centre, Coole Park, Portumna Castle, Battle of Aughrim Interpretative Centre, Tropical Butterfly Centre in Carraroe, Patrick Pearse's Cottage, Lough Corrib, Loughrea



Kylemore Abbey

CARLOW

Delta Sensory Gardens (16 interconnecting gardens by top garden designers set on a 2.5 acre site just outside Carlow town-a place of great peace and tranquillity.)

Brownshill Dolmen (Dating back to before 3500 BC, pre-dating the pyramids, the top stone alone on this 100 tonne structure is a marvel of pre-historic engineering)

Ducketts Grove (Dating back to the 17th century, but 'enhanced' over the centuries to make it look medieval, this fascinating castle is a ruin on the inside, but the outside remains almost perfectly intact.)



Ducketts Grove

CAVAN

Cavan Burren Park (Limestone plateau 3km from Blacklion with burial monuments dating back to pre-historic times.)

Cavan County Museum (Located in Ballyjamesduff, this house a collection of artefacts dating from medieval times, and includes the WWI Trench Experience and a recreation of the GPO as it looked following the rising.)

The Cavan Way (A 26 kilometres gentle walking route starting in Dowra and heading northwards via quiet roads and country paths all the way to the Shannon Pot, the reputed source of Ireland's longest river.)

Killykean Forest Park (Picturesque forest park around the Lough Oughter lake system with a network of forest walks).

ATTRACTIONS

CLARE

The Cliffs Of Moher (One of the great Natural Wonders of the World and one of Irelands biggest visitor attractions the stunning cliffs are breathtaking and unmissable)

Bunratty Castle & Folk Park (The Castle is famous for its twice nightly medieval banquets, while the folk park lets you experience life in Ireland over the centuries).

The Burren (Spectacular and unique limestone karst eco-culture where you can find plants and vegetation that grow nowhere else in the world.)

Aillwee Cave (Traverse bridged chasms and see spectacular rock formations, plus check out the nearby Birds of Prey Centre and get close up to falcons and hawks)

Also Worth Seeing : Loop Head Lighthouse, Knappogue Castle & Gardens, Lisdoonvarna Spa Wells, and Doolin.



Poul nabrone Dolmen
In The Burren



Cliffs of Moher

DONEGAL

Slieve League (Spectacular cliffs a short drive from Killybegs, which is one of Ireland's best know fishing ports)

Malin Head (Most northerly point on the mainland of Ireland, a recently a film location for Star Wars)

Glenveagh National Park (Fabulous scenery, and beautiful walks. Includes Glenveagh Castle and Gardens which are spectacular, and although they are a 4km flat walk from the Visitors Centre, there is a shuttle bus service available for those who don't fancy the exercise)

Arannmore Island (5km off the coast of Burtonport, but easily reached by ferry.)

Doagh Famine Village (A recreation of an Irish village at the time of the Great Famine, that brings history to life)

Glenevin Waterfall (not far from the Famine Village, it requires a 1km scenic walk, but the result is spectacular)

Grianan of Aileach (A historic monument in Inishowen)

The coastal route around Donegal, part of the Wild Atlantic Way, offer spectacular scenery and quaint fishing villages



Slieve League Cliffs

KERRY

The Ring of Kerry (179km of one of the world's most spectacular drives, along the Wild Atlantic Way. Not to be missed)

Killarney National Park (including the Lakes of Killarney, spectacular scenery and lots more including Torc Waterfall)

Dingle (Fishing town that is both vibrant and eccentric, and yet quaint at the same time. Loads of great places to eat. Also check out Dingle Oceanworld & Whiskey Distillery).



Ladys View-Ring of
Kerry

KERRY CONTINUED :

Dingle Peninsula (Another fabulous Kerry coastal drive, starting at the windmill in Blennerville and down to Brandon Point, then across the truly spectacular Conor Pass – not for the faint hearted or big buses- and down into Dingle itself, not forgetting Slea Head, the ancient Gallarus Oratory stone church, and Inch Beach, used in the movie Ryans Daughter.)

Skillig Islands (famous for centuries for their beehive shaped stone monastic huts, but now more famous as the site of the closing scenes in the recent Star Wars movie – note: this is a protected World Heritage Site, so visitor numbers to the actual islands are very restricted),

Killarney (Who has not heard of this place, famous for its lakes – a boat trip is recommended- and the Gap of Dunloe)

Muckross House (Famous house and grounds, with a full working farm you visit)

Tralee (Famous as the location of the annual Rose of Tralee Festival, but also home of a large Aquadome)

The Magillicuddy Reeks (Ireland’s highest mountain range, which includes Carrauntoohil, the highest peak in the country).

ATTRACTIONS

KILDARE

Irish National Stud & Japanese Gardens (See some of Ireland’s best horses, and the spectacular gardens at the same location are a delight)

The Curragh (a vast open space, home of one of Ireland’s premier race course, and the Irish Military Museum)

Kildare Town (a vibrant large town, with extensive shopping and don’t forget to visit St Brigids Cathedral with its Round Tower, which is the 2nd highest in Ireland and the tallest that can be climbed).

Newbridge Silverware Visitors Centre & Museum of Style Icons (Home of one of Ireland’s premier brands, but now also houses a unique museum of style and design including iconic clothes worn over the years by people as diverse as Audrey Hepburn, Princess Diana and Michael Jackson.)

Castletown House & Park (Former home of the owners of Guinness where you can stroll around the park grounds, have a coffee and see how the other half lived)

Straffan Steam Museum (In Straffan, this is full of old steam engines of various types, and also has beautiful gardens).

Moone High Cross (Close to Moone, this is a fantastic example of Irelands great High Crosses, although it can be hard to find – GPS location N52.97879, W6.82468)



Moone High Cross



Boat House, Carton House

ATTRACTIONS

KILKENNY

Kilkenny City (Ireland's best medieval city with its Medieval Mile with narrow streets of quaint shops and restaurants)

Kilkenny Castle (A huge castle right in the centre of the city, in which you can trace the whole history of the city)

The Smithwicks Experience (Smithwicks is one of Ireland's best known beer brands- after Guinness of course – and this exhibition centre traces the history of the brewing process along with the Smithwicks family who gave it its name in a fascinating multimedia tour.)

St Canice's Cathedral & Round Tower (A 13th century Gothic Cathedral, along with a 100ft tall 9th century round tower and celtic crosses of all shapes and sizes, plus bright stained glass windows and elaborate wooden carvings)

Jerpoint Abbey (Located outside Thomastown, this ruined abbey is full of history – for example, did you know that the monks drank 6 pints of beer every day because the local water at the time was so bad)

The Black Abbey (Famous for its stained glass windows)

Castlecomer Discovery Park (Located near Castlecomer, this adventure offers everything from tree top challenges to zip lines, along with boating or beautiful walks in a woodland setting).

Dunmore Cave (Castlecomer Road, Kilkenny: fascinating visit to the caves, including tales of Viking massacres, hidden treasures and fairy's, but 300+ steps and the ground can be damp, so wear sensible shoes)

Kilkenny National Craft Gallery (Located directly across from Kilkenny Castle, this features a very wide range of different Irish craft products from some of Ireland's best).



Kilkenny Castle

LAOIS

Rock of Dunamase (Old castle ruins on top of a hill with fantastic views of the surrounding countryside)

Emo Court (Fascinating house, gardens and lake, located in Emo, with exhibition of historic photos by Fr Browne, but wheelchair access is limited)

Donaghmore Famine Workhouse Museum (Gives a chilling insight into the conditions faced by many Irish people during the famine years where they had the stark choice between starvation and throwing yourself on the mercy of the workhouses. Also features an exhibition of historical agricultural artefacts.)

Mountmellick Museum (If lace and embroidery is your thing, then you will find much to interest you in this exhibition of all things lace, including introductory workshops)

ATTRACTIONS

LEITRIM

Glencar Waterfall (Not the biggest waterfall in the country, but the walk along Glencar Lake to it is well worth the trip, and the whole scene is in the shadow of Benbulbin)

Parkes Castle (Located at Fivemile Bourne near Carrick On Shannon, this is a well preserved and renovated castle, with a rich history and really interesting multi-media show)

Cavan and Leitrim Railway (Located in Dromod – Don't be fooled by the name, as this living museum has planes, trains and automobiles a plenty for you to explore)

Glenview Folk Museum (In Ballinamore, this is a quaint museum where you can view many of the farming and other implements used over the centuries).

LONGFORD

St Mels Cathedral (Following a fire several years ago all that was left was a burnt out shell, but the cathedral has been totally renovated and rebuilt and shows that it's not just the artisans from past centuries who can produce great woodwork and architecture)

Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre (Located in Keena, this fascinating exhibition houses an ancient Celtic wooden roadway that was found in a bog, and now preserved in a climate controlled environment with an extremely interesting audio-visual show on its origins & preservation)

Ardagh Heritage & Creativity Centre (located just a few miles from Longford Town in the little village of Ardagh, which has won the overall Irish Tidy Towns Competition on a number of occasions and the entire village is actually a heritage site, complete with Clock Tower and Tudor style houses, with the Heritage Centre at its core)

Quaker Island, Lough Ree (Steeped in history, you can take a boat over to the island which is a haven of tranquillity, and view the remains of five ruined churches)

Richmond Harbour (Located in Clondra, this is the start of the Royal Canal, which at one time was one of the main transportation routes to Dublin. Its stone-cut walls fit in with its beautiful peaceful setting).



Ardagh

LOUTH

Carlingford (A beautifully preserved medieval town, right on the shores of Carlingford Lough)

Mellifont Abbey (Ireland's first 'European-style' monastery that dates back to the 12th century located in the Boyne Valley not far from Newgrange)

Monasterboice Monastery (Several of Ireland's most recognizable High Crosses and a round tower, all in one location)



Mellifont Abbey

LOUTH CONTINUED:

Rathiddy Standing Stone (where legendary Irish superhero Cu Chulainn tied himself to die upright facing his enemies)

St Peters Church (beautiful church most famous for the fact that it contains the head of St Oliver Plunkett who was hung, drawn and quartered for his faith)

Carlingford to Omeath Greenway (Aimed at walkers and cyclists, this 6km stretch of converted railway track is flat and offers great views of the Cooley Peninsula and into Northern Ireland)

Cooley Whiskey Visitor Centre (Discover how whiskey is made and sample the goods – or a Guinness – afterwards).

ATTRACTIONS

MAYO

Achill Island (Achill is Ireland’s largest island, but is linked by a bridge, allowing access to its many historic sites, accommodations and sights—including 5 Blue Flag beaches, walks, seaweed baths, surfing and watersports areas).

The National Museum of Country Life (Near Castlebar, located in the fabulous grounds of Turlough Park House, the museum demonstrates what life in rural Ireland was like between the mid 19th and 20th centuries).

The Great Western Greenway (Ireland’s longest greenway, based on converted railway tracks, which gives walkers and cyclists an undisturbed 42km path from Westport via Newport and Mulranny all the way to Achill passing rolling hills and amazing views).

Croagh Patrick (Near Westport, this has been a mountain place of pilgrimage since pagan times. Not for the faint hearted, and hiking boots are a necessity.)

Ashford Castle (Near Cong, a true Irish estate complete with castle and outstanding grounds and golf course that is also one of Ireland’s top 5 star hotels)

Downpatrick Head (If you liked the Cliffs of Moher, you will be impressed by the cliffs and sea stack and cliff walks located near Ballycastle)

Westport House, Gardens & Pirate Adventure Park (Stunning gardens and house, with loads of additional activities including swan boats, zip lines, train ride and pirate ship, but a little on the expensive side)

Our Lady’s Shrine in Knock (The shrine is centred around the Basilica and Apparition Chapel where Our Lady is said to have appeared to some local children in 1879)

The Quiet Man Museum (For fans of the John Wayne movie, the museum is located in Cong where a lot of the exteriors for the movie were shot, and the town also features a memorial statue to John Wayne and Maureen O’Hara).



Ballyglass, Mayo



The Quiet Man, Cong

ATTRACTIONS

MEATH

Newgrange / Bru na Boinne (Built around 3,200BC, this UNESCO World Heritage Site is a prehistoric passage tomb that pre-dates the Pyramids in Egypt, and, like Stonehenge in England, which it also pre-dates, it operates like a gigantic seasonal clock and demonstrates how expert the ancients were are astronomy and the cycle of the seasons. The Bru na Boinne site on which it is located also contains the Knowth and Dowth passage tombs.).



Newgrange

Hill of Tara (Seat of Ireland's ancient High Kings and the location where many of them were coronated, but with a history going back to 4000BC, including several historic monuments and visitor centre. Involves a lot of walking)

Trim Castle (Near Trim, this is Ireland's largest Anglo-Norman castle, built in 1173, and has been used as the setting in several movies including Braveheart)



Trim Castle

Tayto Park (Located near Ashborne, Tayto Park is like Ireland's home-grown version of Disneyland, with rollercoasters, rides and attractions that are themed around one of Ireland's most familiar food brands, Tayto Crisps.)

Irish Military War Museum (Ireland is known more for its peacekeeping activities than its military prowess, but as well as taking tank driving lessons, you can also see many artefacts, weapons and vehicles dating back to the First and Second World Wars. Located near Starinagh)

Loughcrew Megalithic Cairns (Located near Oldcastle, these burial passages located on four hill tops were built before Newgrange. A bit of a walk up the hills, but you will be rewarded with fantastic views, and inside the passages, be sure to check out the ancient stone art carvings)

Oldbridge Estate/Battle of the Boyne Visitors Centre (Oldbridge: Lovely house and grounds, plus the visitors centre gives a detailed and informative history of the 1690 Battle of the Boyne, which was to have a profound effect on the history of Ireland for hundreds of years afterward).

Other Highlights of Meath include : The Hill of Slane, Bective Abbey, Slane Castle and Kells Monastic Site (where the Book of Kells was created)

MONAGHAN

The High Cross in Clones (Located right in the town centre, this majestic high cross is actually the shaft of a cross dating from the 11th century and the top of a later one).

Monaghan Country Museum (Monaghan Town: recently voted one of the 'Top 30 Places To See For Free In Ireland' Has a range of exhibits on local and national history)

Patrick Kavanagh Centre (Inniskeen dedicated to one of Ireland's most celebrated poets).

Wildlife & Heritage Centre (Clontibret)

ATTRACTIONS

OFFALY

Birr Castle (Birr: Science and history mix : in addition to the castle and its extensive gardens featuring many rare plant species, you will also find Great Telescope that was built by the 3rd Earl of Rosse back in the 1840s, along with an interactive Science Centre)

Tullamore Dew (Based in Tullamore, this is where one of Ireland's other major whiskey brands is produced, and visitors can take a tour of the distillery)

Clonmacnoise Monastic Site (Based in Shannonbridge, this is another of Ireland's best known and iconic monastic sites, complete with high crosses and is well worth a visit),

Charleville Castle (Tullamore : old and slightly scary, but very interesting tour of a castle that is being renovated by volunteers who are trying to retain its ambience)

Clara Bog Visitors Centre and Boardwalk (Located outside Clara, this includes a 1km wooden boardwalk laid on top of the bog that allows you to have a pleasant stroll while taking in the history of the bog and its flora and fauna)



Clonmacnoise

ROSCOMMON

Rathcaghan Royal Site (Near Roscommon town, this site mixes Ireland's Bronze Age and Iron Age history with its myths and legends, in particular its links to Queen Maeve and the Tain, one of Ireland's most enduring legends).

Arigna Mining Experience (Ever wonder what it's like to be a miner? Here you can experience what life was like underground in a coal mining complex that was in use up to 1990, with ex-miners guiding you round the site)

The Claypipe Visitor Centre (Based in Knockcroghery, this is definitely a unique attraction, where you can view the history of clay pipes, see how they are made and buy unique handmade pieces)

Strokestown Park National Irish Famine Museum (Located in Strokestown, this is a grand old house, with a splendid walled garden and museum dedicated to the Irish Famine of 1845 to 1850. A great place to find out information on what was one of the worst major disasters in Irish history).

Boyle Abbey (Located in the centre of Boyle, this 12th century abbey is one of the largest in the country, and given its age, is quite well preserved.)

Lough Key Forest Park (Situated near Boyle, this park offers a wide range of activities and walks, including zip lines, playgrounds and even Segway rides, although prices for individual items can be expensive)

ATTRACTIONS

SLIGO

Glencar Lake & Waterfall (Located close to Sligo, a beautiful peaceful location with great walks and views of the waterfall).

Eagles Flying (Located in Ballymote, this amenity presents a display showing off a wide range of birds of prey and other animals that you can get up close to. Both fun and educational)

Carrowmore Megalithic Cemetery & Visitor Centre (Ancient stone graves dating back possibly as far as 5000BC, with historical information available at the visitor centre)

Lissadell House (Near Sligo, this was the family home of Constance Gore-Booth (Countess Markiewicz), who led the women's contingent in the 1916 Rising in Dublin. It is now a well preserved stately home that provides excellent tours, and was regularly visited by celebrated Irish poet, W.B.Yeats),

Drumcliffe Church and Grave of W.B. Yeats (in Drumcliff "Under bare Benbulbin's Head", this quaint country church is famous as the final resting place of W.B. Yeats and also features some high crosses. There is even a visitors centre close by)

Rosses Point (A few miles outside Sligo, this village, beach and promenade have a real old-world feeling).



Drumcliffe Churchyard

TIPPERARY

The Rock of Cashel (One of Ireland's most iconic sites, perched high on a hill above the town, with fantastic views over the whole countryside, as well as historic buildings including a 13th Century cathedral, a 15th Century castle, a 12th Century round tower and several high crosses. Within a short walking distance you will also find Irish cultural events in Bru Boru, Hore Abbey and the Cashel Folk Park).

Cahir Castle (Located near Cahir town centre, this is one of Ireland's best preserved medieval castles, as it was undamaged during the 17th century Cromwellian war)

Mitchelstown Cave (near Cahir, these huge underground caves are an amazing natural beauty, although there are lots of steps down, and it can be cool down underground)

Nenagh Castle (located in Nenagh, this is really just a shell and a tower, located in a lovely park, with great views from the top).

Holy Cross Abbey (Restored historic old Cistercian abbey named after a relic there said to be from the 'True Cross')

Fethard Medieval Walls (Ireland's best preserved town walls)

The Vee (A pass over the Knockmealdown mountains near Clogheen with fabulous views across the Tipperary countryside, with a great walk to a hidden lake).

The Glen of Atherlow (A stunning country valley drive)



The Rock of Cashel



The Vee Hidden Lake

ATTRACTIONS

WATERFORD

Waterford's Viking Triangle (This area of Old Waterford is rich in history, including three museums, Reginald's Tower, Waterford Crystal and loads of coffee shops and bars),

The House of Waterford Crystal Factory Tour (Waterford: One of Irelands most famous international brands, including the New Years Eve Crystal Ball in Times Square, you can see how they make the icon crystal glass pieces)

Reginald's Tower (Waterford: a thousand year old Viking tower, with audio-visual history of Waterford in a three story tower, but its spiral staircase is not suitable for limited mobility. It also has a replica Viking longboat at the base of the tower.)

Tramore (The seaside town of Tramore is famous for its beach and its amusements park which can provide a great days entertainment for young and old)

Waterford Treasures Medieval Museum (Entertaining and informative, it is well worth taking the guided tour and then exploring the wealth of exhibits.)

Meagher's Quay, Waterford (For a pleasant stroll along the waterfront, this is in close proximity to the Viking Triangle, plus check out the intricate carvings of the Clock Tower).

Mahon Falls (Take a drive through the Comerage mountains passing through quaint villages, then visit The Magic Road at Mahon Falls, where your car will magically roll uphill!)

Ardmore (This pretty little seaside village is said to be Ireland's oldest Christian settlement, where you can still see the round tower of St Declans Church dating back to the 1300's and the ruins of the original cathedral).

Mount Mellery Abbey (picturesque old abbey with great views)



Reginalds Tower



Mount Mellery Abbey

WESTMEATH

Athlone Castle (Athlone: Well preserved castle located right on the river Shannon, there are interactive exhibits and even the opportunity to dress up in medieval costumes)

Derryglad Folk & Heritage Museum (Derryglad: check out the history of times gone by in Ireland, including facsimile cobbler's workshop, schoolhouse, pharmacy and a dairy).

Tullynally Castle & Gardens (Near Castlepollard on the Granard Road – lovely walks, tea rooms and gardens)

Lough Owel & Lough Ennel (There are some lovely picturesque drives around these lakes)

Church of Saints Peter & Paul (Athlone centre, and famous for its Harry Clarke stained glass windows and architecture)

Old Kilbeggan Distillery (Kilbeggan – tour Irelands oldest distillery that includes most of the original equipment)



Athlone Castle

ATTRACTIONS

WEXFORD

The Dunbrody Famine Ship Experience (The Quay, New Ross – This is a full-scale reconstruction of the type of ship that transported many emigrants to the USA during the famine years. From the replica ticket with the name and age of a real passenger to the staff/storytellers in period costume, this is a fascinating glimpse into history).

Hook Head & Lighthouse (Near Fethard-On-Sea: At 800 years, this is the oldest working lighthouse in the world, with a spectacular view from the top balcony. The ‘Ring of Hook’, around the peninsula is well worth checking out when you are in the area. If you don’t scare easily, drop in to Loftus Hall, and find out about its dark and troubled past and its infamous ‘visitor’ who prowls the hall at night).

John F. Kennedy Arboretum (Outside Wexford Town, is a lovely place to stroll and view the scenery, with a Visitors Centre and small ride-on railway for the little ones, with a short drive to Slieve Coillte where you will have a view over County Wexford and Waterford)

The Kennedy Homestead (Dunganstown, New Ross: see where JFK’s family originally came from, including exhibits of his visit there while president in 1963, shortly before his assassination).

The National 1798 Rebellion Centre (Enniscorthy: See history come alive and relive the battle of Vinegar Hill. The Hill itself is nearby, so after you learn the history why not visit where it all took place, with great views from the top.)

Enniscorthy Castle (With fantastic views over the city from the roof, which disabled visitors can access via an elevator, with several exhibitions downstairs, and an opportunity for kids to dress up in period costumes.)

Irish National Heritage Park (Near Ferrycarrig: Reconstructions of how they used to live in ancient Ireland in a fascinating educational park that is both fun and educational).

Irish Agricultural Museum & Johnstown Castle Gardens (Johnstown: Although the castle itself is not currently open, the agricultural museum is a fascinating history of how farming was done by past generations, while the gardens offer fantastic walks and even nature trails for younger visitors).

Curraclloe Beach (Curraclloe: miles and miles of sand dunes and shallow water for swimming, and most famous as the place where Steven Spielberg filmed the opening Normandy beach invasion scenes in Saving Private Ryan).

Kilmore Quay Harbour (A picturesque harbor to wander around, with plenty of parking, with great places to eat and hang out, with the option of taking a boat out to the Saltee Islands.)



Dunbrody Famine Ship Experience



Hook Head Lighthouse

ATTRACTIONS

WICKLOW

Wicklow Mountains National Park (With scenes to rival the best in the world, every corner reveals a new stunning vista, particularly around the Sally Gap and the Military Road or if you are into hill walking you cannot beat the Wicklow Way.)

Glendalough Monastic Settlement & Round Towers (Glendalough: One of the must see places on any trip to Ireland, this tranquil valley and lake is the location for one of Ireland's most famous round towers and ancient monasteries)

Powerscourt Gardens, House & Waterfall (Enniskerry: See how the other half lived a hundred years ago, including Tara's Palace & Museum of Childhood, full of miniatures and model toys for times gone past. The fantastic gardens are rated at No 3 in National Geographic's Top 10 Gardens in the World, while the famous waterfall is in the grounds of the estate but a short distance away.)

Wicklow Gaol (Wicklow Town: A spooky but entertaining view of what was like for prisoners in bye-gone eras presented by guides in period costumes).

National Sea Life Centre (Bray Seafront: All things aquatic are on view in 25 themed display tanks full of exotic sea creatures from sharks to seahorses).

Russborough House (Near Blessington: A gorgeous 18th century mansion in pristine condition, that among other things, house the world-famous Beit art collection, and was the scene of Ireland's greatest/worst ever art robberies. The grounds also include the National Birds of Prey Centre, which contains falcons, hawks and owls. On your way there, why not check out the Blessington Lakes and the pleasant drives and walks around them).

Vale of Avoca (Avoca: A lovely drive, that can include a visit to the working Avoca Mill, plus the world famous Avoca Hand weaving Shop and see the best of Irish handcrafts and some great food, expensive but worth it)

Brittas Bay (A lovely sandy beach, not too far from Dublin, but can be a bit crowded during summer weekends).

Avondale House & Forrest Park (Near Rathdrum: a stately home that includes the Charles Stewart Parnell Museum, and 300 acres of woodlands that include many walks, from child-friendly to challenging).

Greenan Maze (Ballinanty, Greenan: Not only has It got a full size maze and a smaller Solstice Maze, but included a restored farmhouse museum, a Country Life Museum, Tea rooms and Craft Shop and even a petting farm for the kids)

Bray & Bray Head (Great walks along the head plus the mile long Victorian Promenade along the beach in Bray itself.)



Powerscourt Waterfall



Glendalough

ATTRACTIONS

NORTHERN IRELAND : BELFAST

Titanic Belfast (Titanic Quarter, Belfast: a must see for anyone interested in the ill-fated ‘unsinkable’ ship that went to its watery end on its maiden voyage. Seven fascinating galleries present the whole history of the ship, from its creation, to replicas of its berths from staterooms to third-class, to its ultimate demise following a collision with an iceberg. While you are there, check out the SS Nomadic, the last remaining ship in the White Star Line, and tender to the Titanic, that has been restored to its former glory and is a short walk from Titanic,)

The Ulster Museum (Stanmillis Road, Belfast: From dinosaurs and Egyptian mummies, to interactive discovery zone and a treasure trove of modern masterpieces, they can all be found in the fascinating collections housed here).

Crumlin Road Gaol (Crumlin Road, Belfast: From the Gaols centre circle to its four wings, that housed some of Northern Ireland’s most infamous prisoners, to its ‘Condemned Mans’ cell where many spent their final days you can experience what it felt like to be locked up – and then go home for tea).

HMS Caroline (Alexandra Dock, Belfast: a renovated First World War Battle Cruiser, with footage on the Battle of Jutland in which it took part. A great place to visit if you are into big warships or the history of warfare at sea).

W5 (Odyssey, Queens Quay: The name stands for WhoWhatWhereWhenWhy, and it is Ireland’s award winning science and discovery centre that will keep young and not so young alike enthralled with its 250 interactive exhibits, events and shows.)

Stormont Estate & Parliament Buildings (Belfast: walk up the historic steps and avail of a free tour around the building and if the NI Parliament is in recess you can even book a meal in members dining room).

Cathedral Quarter (The area around St Anne’s Cathedral is famous for its good food and shops, and also includes the MAC museum of modern art).

Falls Road /Shankill Road / Peace Wall (Infamous from their many appearances on our TV news screens during ‘The Troubles’, but now more famous for their many murals. Bring a magic marker and leave your own peace message on the Peace Wall. Best seen by black-cab taxi tour).

Belfast Zoo (Newtownabbey: If you are into animals, why not check out the zoo)

Black Cab Tours (We know it’s not a visitor site, but if you want to find out the real history of Belfast and ‘The Troubles’ then this is the best way to do it).



Titanic Belfast



The Peace Wall

ATTRACTIONS

NORTHERN IRELAND : ANTRIM

The Causeway Coast (Follows the coastline north from Belfast and then west from the Giants Causeway to Derry, and is considered to be one of the most scenic drives in Europe. On a clear day you can even see Scotland across the Irish Sea).

Giants Causeway (Near Bushmills : A geological phenomenon and a UNESCO World Heritage Site, one of the most unique places on the planet)

Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge (Near Bushmills: Not for the faint hearted, cross the rope bridge to a small island, but don't look down!)

Old Bushmills Distillery (Bushmills: the oldest Irish Whiskey Distillery in existence, where you can take a tour of the distillery, shop in their extensive shop and have a nice meal in their restaurant).

Dunluce Castle (Portrush: not only a beautiful old ruined castle, but also has fantastic views of sea and countryside).

The Dark Hedges (Ballymoney: For all fans of Game of Thrones, this is both haunting an eerie as the line of twisted beech trees join together over the road)

Carrickfergus Castle (Carrickfergus: an 800 year old castle that is in pristine condition with fantastic views from the top, and with exhibits that help visualise what it must have been like to work there over the centuries).

Ulster Aviation Museum (Lisburn: Two hangers filled with aircraft of all types, including a replica Spitfire that will enthral aero enthusiasts)

Portrush Seaside Resort (One of Northern Ireland's favorite seaside resorts).



The Giants Causeway



Carrick-A-Rede Rope Bridge

NORTHERN IRELAND : ARMAGH

Armagh City (The ecclesiastical capital of all Ireland, including two St Patricks Cathedrals – one is Catholic, and the second is Church of Ireland that is reputed to be built on the site of a church that was actually built by St Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland)

Armagh Astronomy Centre & Planetarium (If you have even the slightest interest in astronomy and the universe, then this will fascinate and entertain you, as you view the space and the stars in fantastic detail)

Navan Centre & Fort (Killylea Road, Armagh: Not to be confused with Navan in County Meath in the Republic, this important archaeological site is the legendary Emain Macha, which was home of the Red Branch Knights from the Ulster Cycle of Myths and Legends and includes reconstructions of how it would have originally looked).

The Ring of Gullion: Beautiful drive across two counties.

ATTRACTIONS

NORTHERN IRELAND : DERRY

City of Derry (Also known as Londonderry and as the 'Maiden City', as it is the only city in Ireland whose walls have never been breached. Stroll around the City Walls and Guildhall in the city centre, and check out the Peace Bridge, the Museum of Free Derry, the Tower Museum, the Bloody Sunday Memorial, the work of the Bogside artists at Free Derry Corner plus the Loyalist Murals on Bond Street and Nelson Drive, the Siege Museum, the Riverwatch Aquarium and Visitor Centre).



Derry

NORTHERN IRELAND : DOWN

County Down is the last resting place of St Patrick, the patron saint of Ireland. You can visit his grave in Down Cathedral, and find more about the man himself at the audio visual displays in the Saint Patrick Centre in Downpatrick.

Castle Ward (Near Downpatrick: If we say that this is a fabulous 18th century stately home, famous for its mix of architectural styles, with gorgeous gardens that you can stroll around then you might say it's worth a visit. If we also mention that it was the main set for Winterfell Castle, Robb Stark's Camp, the Baelor battle and the Whispering Wood among others, then Game of Thrones fans will immediately perk up. If we then mention that you can dress up as GOT characters and take part in various activities recreated from the TV series such as the archery competition, then GOT fans will definitely put it on the must-see list.)



Castle Ward
(Game of Thrones
Winterfell)

Ulster Folk & Transport Museum (Hollywood, Co Down: this is a two part experience: on one side you can explore thatched cottages, shops, farms as they would have in the early 1900's, and see demonstrations of traditional crafts, and on the other side you can see original items recovered from the sea bed in Titanic or climb on board steam engines, fire engines, electric trams and vintage cars.)



Tollymore Forest Park

Tollymore Forest Park (Newcastle: in the foothills of the Mourne Mountains, this park not only has a huge range of unusual trees but also many follies built for the original owner including a barn that looks like a church, and both natural and artificial bridges, grottos and caves).

Silent Valley Mountain Park (Annalong, Newcastle: For peace, solitude and... adventure. Located in the heart of the Mourne Mountains with fantastic views, and loads to explore from dams to industrial heritage along its many walks that range from 1 to 11 miles.)

The Somme Museum & Heritage Centre (Bangor Road, Newtownard: experience life in the World War One trenches and get a background to the Irish involvement in the tragic battle that took place in France in 1916).

Downpatrick & County Down Railway (Market Street, Downpatrick: Explore the history of steam trains, and actually get to ride on one, and also take in nearby Inch Abbey, which was also used in Game of Thrones).

ATTRACTIONS

NORTHERN IRELAND : FERMANAGH

Enniskillen Castle (Enniskillen: Housing two museums, the Fermanagh County Museum and the Inniskillings Museum this perfectly maintained large castle, situated beside the River Erne, has for 600 years guarded one of the few passes that accessed Ulster and is dripping in history)



Enniskillen Castle

Florence Court (Enniskillen: Beautiful 18th century Georgian mansion, one of the most important and well preserved in Ireland, with lovely gardens to wander around and a visitors centre where you can explore its history).

Marble Arch Caves Geopark (Near Enniskillen: an incredible subterranean world awaits in one of the finest show caves in Europe, with its stunning rock formations, natural underworld of rivers, waterfalls and vaulted high chambers)

Belleek Pottery & Visitors Centre (Belleek: watch each stage of the pottery making process as they make the pieces for which Belleek Pottery is world famous, plus purchase unique items only available in their gift shop).

Castle Coole (Enniskillen: drive through the gates and be awed by this wonderful example of neoclassical manor houses, including all the original furniture, and lovely grounds to wander around)



Marble Arch Geopark

Head Hunters Barber Shop & Railway Museum (Enniskillen: Here's something you don't see every day – a barbers shop located in a railway museum, so get your hair cut, and your head turned by the train exhibits).

Lough Erne : Why not take a boat trip around the lough and see the sights from a new perspective, and while you are out there, take a visit to Devinish Island and see the old church ruins, round tower and museum).

Sheelin Antique Lace Museum & Shop (Ballanaleck: Step back in time and see vintage lace in its full glory, and there are even pieces for sale if they take your fancy)

Tickety Moo (Oghill Farm, Killadeas, Irvinestown: Fermanagh's answer to Ben & Jerry's, this is a working farm where you can view the whole process of milking the cows to creating a huge range of delicious ice creams, and, or course, trying them out.)

NORTHERN IRELAND : TYRONE

Ulster American Folk Park (Omagh: A unique park that links reconstructions of Old World thatched cottages in Ireland to log cabins in American, by passing through a life-sized emigrant ship, with colourful characters along the way helping you on your journey and explain how things were)



Ulster American Folk Park

The Abingdon Collection (Abingdon, Omagh: Fascinating for boys of all ages: firstly there are classic cars and 'big boys toys' from the 1950's onwards, and then the UK's largest privately owned collection of World War II memorabilia).

If the above has started you thinking about taking a trip to Ireland, then for more ideas and information on what we have to offer, why not check out our website:

www.irelandusexperience.com

or our Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/irelandusexperience

