

EXPLORE IRELAND TOURS TOP 50

From hiking and biking to exploring ancient castles and embracing traditional Irish culture, our 'top 50' list has been compiled to ensure that you'll discover the real Ireland on a holiday you won't forget...



Explore
IRELAND TOURS

www.exploreirelandtours.com
+ 353 (0)87 2051983



Cycle to the Edge Of The World

Discover Ireland's ancient past as you cycle the Sleat Head, which long ago was thought to be the edge of the world! Overlooked by the brooding presence of Mount Brandon, the peninsula is peppered with ancient monuments and a marvellous chain of sandy beaches. One of Europe's most spectacular coastal routes, this Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking) area reveals a dramatic landscape, but its gentle gradients and sweeping vistas make this a truly heavenly cycle.



Walk a Pilgrim's Path

Uniquely Irish in character, pilgrim's paths follow centuries-old pilgrimage routes around Ireland. Deeply entwined in Ireland's heritage and culture, these ancient paths have recently been redeveloped, offering some of the richest heritage trails in the country. In bygone days, pilgrims followed these paths in search of spiritual renewal, prayer and penance. One such example is St. Declan's Way, which leads to the pretty seaside village of Ardmore, where the ruins of the original monastery and round tower stand in testimony of its former glory - a time when Ireland was earning the title of the 'land of saints and scholars'.



Seek out Hidden Pubs in Dingle

Uniquely Irish institutions, the local pub is more than just a place to have a pint. In bygone times, pubs commonly had more than one function, and often served as grocers, hardware stores, cobblers, and even undertakers! While in decline, seeking out the last vestiges of these mongrel affairs, known locally as 'hidden pubs', makes for an interesting pint - under the guise of doing the shopping! With over 50 pubs, charming Dingle Town still has some of these characterful, old-school pubs, where a night on the town might serve up more than you were expecting.



Find a Fairy Fort

Irish folklore is full of stories of mythical creatures that cross between this world and the next. Known in Irish as 'the Sidhe', it was thought that these 'wee folk' were Celtic spirits that lived beneath the ancient stone and earthen forts in Celtic times. It was believed that the act of disturbing a fairy ring-fort would bring bad luck to anyone who dared, so, to this day, the Irish landscape is scattered with the circular Celtic remains. Often marked with a hawthorn tree, they are a real gem when found, and bring to life the folklore of a near-forgotten tradition.





Ramble along Coastal Paths

Put on your walking boots for a ramble along some of the most spectacular coastal paths in the world. With miles upon miles of coastline, from the thundering splendour of stunning cliff walks to the ranging arc of golden, sandy beaches, there's no better way to experience Ireland than to get out into it. Discovering Ireland's coast will lead you from natural wonders to world-famous heritage sites, with a few hidden gems in between. Try it for yourself; it's wild and elemental, and there won't be a cobweb left when you're finished!



Walk In The Valley Of The Kings

Experience the most mysterious, majestic and awe-inspiring monuments in Ireland, at the vast necropolis of Bru na Boinne (The Boyne Palace), a UNESCO World Heritage Site that's older than the pyramids of Egypt and predates Stonehenge by over 1,000 years. The resting place of Ireland's ancient kings, it's thought that each of the passage tombs are aligned to the heavens of ancient times. To this day, they continue to be illuminated by the solstice, or equinox, adding to their mystery and intrigue.



Get 'Crafty' in Kilkenny

From the white-hot furnace of a glassblower to the throwing wheel of a potter, artisans throughout Ireland are busy preserving and developing ancient crafts. Experience the rich tapestry of Kilkenny's landscape and heritage on its splendid craft trail, which will lead you from one delightful handicraft studio to the next. Witness first-hand craftsmen at work in rural workshops such as Nicholas Mosse Pottery, where you can view the whole process of creation, from the mixing of the clay to the intricate hand-painting of the finished pieces.



Step Back In Time On The Aran Islands

Set your clocks to 'island time' as you set sail across Galway Bay to the Aran Islands, where soft-hearted locals will welcome you into their everyday lives. Often described as a 'Celtic Eden', the islands are a bastion of traditional Ireland, where the beat of everyday life runs a little slower. Inis Mor, the largest of the three islands, is an enigmatic bag of historical and natural goodies dominated by stone-fenced paths that form a daze of rocky magnificence. This is topped by a World Heritage gem, Dun Aengus Fort, which is perilously perched on a towering, 100ft cliff edge.





Discover a Gothic Fantasy

Set in the dramatic Connemara landscape, Kylemore Abbey is a gothic fantasy castle like no other in Ireland. A kaleidoscope of rustic bogs, desolate valleys and shimmering lakes form the background to this magical structure, which is now home to the Benedictine Nuns in Ireland. The tranquil setting of the abbey was until recently an exclusive girls' boarding school. The crenelated 19th Century castle is now open to the public, who can view its splendid gothic church and Victorian walled gardens



Hang out in 'The Fair City'

Ireland's famous capital - 'the fair city' - is a sightseer's delight, where the nation's rich history and culture lingers in every corner. With less than 2 million inhabitants, it's a small city by most international standards, and has managed to retain the friendliness and intimacy of a small provincial town. Packed with fascinating monuments for every era of Ireland's history, it's easy to explore on bike and foot, from its buzzing centre at Trinity College to the green haven of Phoenix Park.



Relax in a Seaweed Bath

Okay, it sounds a bit bizarre - but it's an experience not to be missed while in Ireland. Imagine yourself immersed in a hot bath, luxuriating in silky bath oils. As you relax, you experience weightlessness... you drift off into a tranquil world, leaving your thoughts behind and relaxing each muscle as you go... This uniquely Irish experience is that of a homeopathic Seaweed Bath, where the silky oils are extracted from seaweed by a simple, natural process - you'll emerge revived and invigorated!



Hike a Hidden Gem!

A hidden gem that is treasured by all who discover it, the Sheep's Head Peninsula is one of the most isolated and tranquil places in Ireland. A walker's haven of blissful solitude and sublime views awaits as sea collides with land all along the narrow strip of this wild Atlantic Peninsula. Off the beaten track, its sleepy villages and friendly locals are matched by its scenic charms, where a walk or bike-ride up the winding Goat's Path road affords spectacular, far-reaching views in all directions.



Smell Sweet Flowers in the Burren

Smell the sweet perfume of the Burren, where Mediterranean, Arctic and Alpine plants live side-by-side, producing a bewildering, topsy-turvy world of botany. Of all Ireland's native flowers, 75% can be found in the Burren, where you'll be amazed by the colour and diversity of the exquisite blooms and plants that dazzle the otherwise arid beauty of this haunting landscape. One of Ireland's six National Parks, the karst landscape of the Burren is peppered with medieval ruins, ancient monuments and intriguing villages to explore.



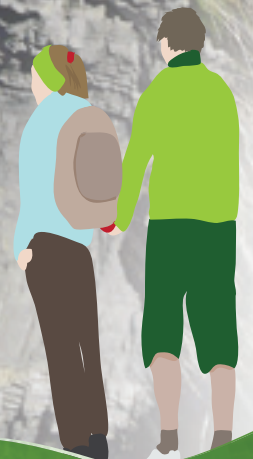
Freewheel to Dublin

In stark contrast to the magnificent formal gardens of Wicklow's 18th Century Manor Houses, the wild and desolate Wicklow Mountains make for an exhilarating bike-ride. Rising high out of the monastic valley of Glendalough, the Sally Gap cuts a pass through the remote mountain peaks, passing the dramatic black lakes of Lough Tay and Lough Dan, before descending onto the Military Road – built to flush rebels out of the mountains during the 1798 rebellion. The rugged wilderness of the uplands makes for an exhilarating ride, and if you get a lift to the top, you can freewheel the rest of the way towards Dublin!



Walk Along the Soaring Cliffs of Moher

Sculpted by nature, the mighty Cliffs of Moher have been pounded by the Atlantic ocean for over 300 million years, creating the 700ft rugged ridge of shale and limestone. A stunning cliff-top walk allows you to experience the wild beauty of the cliff face, from the highpoint at O'Brien Tower to the fabled Hag's Head. A finalist in the global 'new seven wonders of nature' campaign, the soaring cliffs are home to more than 30 species of birds, including Ireland's only colony of the darling puffin.





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Tap to the Beat of Traditional Music.

The 'local pub' is where Ireland's social heart beats, and so it makes for a great place to experience Ireland's 'ceol agus craic' (music and laughter). Follow the hum of traditional music to where the pub-filled villages create a wonderful opportunity to explore Ireland's rich musical culture. With traditional 'sessiuns' (informal music sessions) commonplace, you can mingle with the locals over a few creamy pints as you tap your feet to the beat of traditional tunes.

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Discover the 'Water of Life'

Uisce Beatha translates from Irish to mean the 'water of life', a name fondly given to Ireland's native golden brew – Irish Whiskey. It was discovered by Irish monks back in the 9th century, who, when distilling perfume, realised it tasted better than it smelt! There are over a hundred different types of Irish whiskey, passionately distilled three times (unlike the Scots, who distil it twice) to remove any harsh impurities and create a warm, soothing tippie. In Ireland, we call it the 'gold stuff', unlike the 'black stuff' (Guinness), and, generally speaking, the more expensive the bottle, the smoother it gets...

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Cheer with the Crowds

Ireland's national sports are the stuff of legend, so it will come as no surprise that they hold a special place in the Irish psyche. From the 'clash of the ash' (hurling) to the kick of the football (Gaelic), the crowds roar in support of their local teams. Fast, furious and exciting, whether you join with the fans at the home of the GAA (Gaelic Athletic Association) in Croke Park or watch this thrilling tradition from a packed pub down the country, you're sure to be enthralled by the atmosphere as much as the game itself.

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Walk the Gap of Dunloe

Escape to the wilderness with a walk through the Gap of Dunloe, where the sheer-sided valley divides Purple Mountain from the Macgillycuddy's Reeks. A breathtaking way to enter the gap is by open boat across the magical lakes of Killarney, where you'll have the opportunity to spot wild eagles in the rugged scenery of the National Park before landing at Lord Brandon's Cottage. It's a leisurely 7km walk past babbling brooks and alpine lakes to the legendary Kate Kearney's Cottage (now a quaint old pub) for a well-deserved pint at the path's end.



Walk on Sacred Turf

From the heralding of the golden age of Christianity in the 5th Century, Ireland became known as the 'land of saints and scholars'. Throughout the ages, Ireland celebrated this faith with the building of glorious monasteries and elegant abbeys. These iconic ecclesiastical ruins decorate the Irish landscape, where, to this day, the conical peaks of the bewildering round towers that marked these ancient sites pierce the horizon. A treat to the senses, an exploration of Ireland's Christian remains reveals beautifully decorated temples and oratories, intricately designed Celtic crosses and the best illuminated manuscripts in the world.



Stroll along the Barrow

A legacy to a bygone era, Ireland's towpaths back in the 1700's were at the forefront of the transportation system, where goods were hauled along the old trading routes. Once the preserve of barge horses, these canal and river towpaths have now been developed into splendid walking and cycling trails. Setting out from the charming village of Graiguenamanagh, you'll find one of the most tranquil stretches along the River Barrow, where the gentle terrain and abundant wildlife makes for a magical way to while away a few hours on bike or foot, in peace and tranquillity.



Lick your Lips in Kerry

For a real treat of Ireland's guilty pleasures, try the simple taste of Ireland's natural environment, infused with the creamiest milk from happy Kerry cows, which blend to create the best Ice-cream and chocolates in Ireland. It's impossible to decide which flavours to sample at Murphys Ice-cream in Dingle or the Skelligs Chocolatiers on the Ring of Kerry, where these soul-fulfilling delights are created. They're both a little off the beaten track, but certainly worth the visit, as both of these award-winning artisans create a unique flavour of Ireland to enjoy - Yum!



Dance a Jig

Step into your dancing shoes and join a 'Traditional Ceili' (an informal gathering of musicians and dancers), where the locals meet and make merry. The Ceili can be traced back to pre-famine times, when dancing at the cross-roads was a popular rural pastime. Nowadays, pubs tend to be the venue of choice, where both young and old dance traditional sets – often into the wee hours of the morning! Solo dancers are held in high esteem, and there's no sight more charming than when an endearing old lady (or man) rises to their feet in ritual performance, much to the glee of the community.





Paddle Ireland's only Fjord

Travel in the company of seals, otters and dolphins as you paddle in the natural splendour of Ireland's only fjord. Surrounded by mountains, the steep southern flanks of Mweelrea soar dramatically above Killary Harbour, where mussel rafts and lobster pots dot the calm waters. You'll learn about Ireland's troubled past as you glide by the many deserted villages that have been abandoned since the Great Famine, and you'll experience first-hand the wild beauty that formed the backdrop to Hollywood's version of the famed Irish play by John B Keane – 'The Field'.



Strike a Match in Lisdoonvarna

Ireland's awash with festivals throughout the year, from the national festivities of St. Patrick's Day to local celebrations of culture, history and sport. One such festival is based on a tradition in the olden days of agrarian Ireland, where eligible bachelors would emerge from their farms after the long hard-working days of summer, in search of the love of a sweet Irish Rose. To this day, the tradition is alive and kicking in Lisdoonvarna, where lonely souls descend to capture the love of an Irish heart. But if you don't wish to 'strike a match' in Lisdoonvarna, you could try a host of other traditional and modern festivals, from Opera in Wexford to racing in Galway.



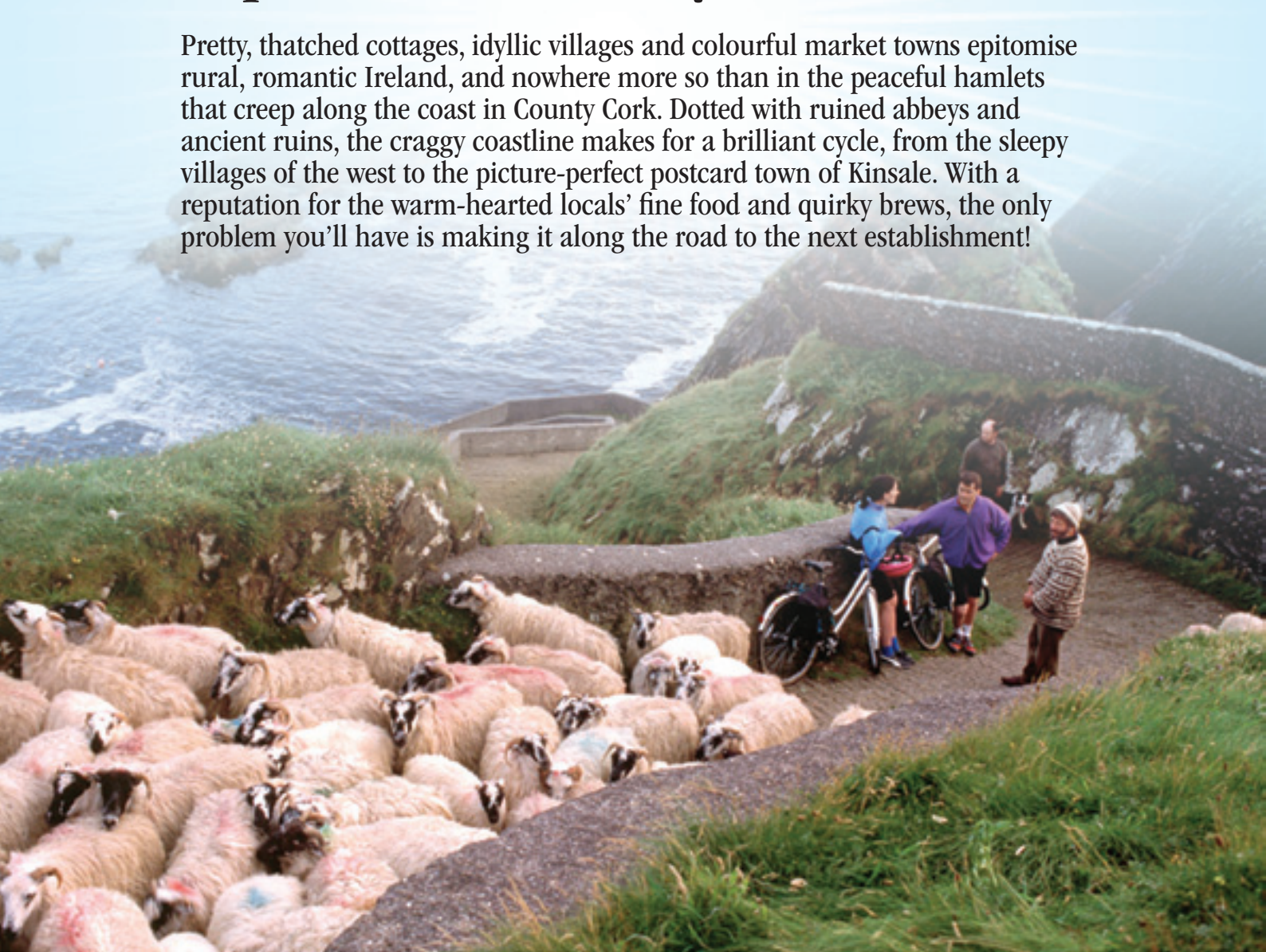
Say 'Cheese' In Ireland

It's not something you would typically associate with Ireland, but we possess some of the best cheese in Europe! We have earned this accolade due to the lush green fields of Ireland, from which cows, sheep and goats happily munch the fertile grass, resulting in some of the richest, creamiest milk imaginable. From the award-winning Camembert cheese of Cooleeney to the creamy Wicklow and Cashel Blues, our farmhouse cheeses are created by artisans of the palate. It makes for an extra-special experience to visit the farm houses and see cheese-making in action.



Explore Backroads by Bike

Pretty, thatched cottages, idyllic villages and colourful market towns epitomise rural, romantic Ireland, and nowhere more so than in the peaceful hamlets that creep along the coast in County Cork. Dotted with ruined abbeys and ancient ruins, the craggy coastline makes for a brilliant cycle, from the sleepy villages of the west to the picture-perfect postcard town of Kinsale. With a reputation for the warm-hearted locals' fine food and quirky brews, the only problem you'll have is making it along the road to the next establishment!





Discover 'Green Gold' in Connemara

Get the luck of the Irish with Ireland's most precious stones from Connemara, where, over 600 million years ago, twists of serpentine infused with rock to create the magical swirling veins of green Connemara marble. Quarried for centuries, this is one of Ireland's oldest industries, where the traditional family business at Joyce's workshop in Galway continues the age-old tradition of cutting and polishing the semi-precious stones into fabulous works of art. Unswayed by the magnetic forces of 'outsourcing', this family enterprise offers a behind-the-scenes view into its workshops to experience master craftsmen at work and discover an almost lost way of life.



Cycle Desolate Valleys

Get ready for a photo opportunity at every turn as you roll through the desolate valleys of Ireland's wild romantic west, where the rugged valleys reflect the colours of the ever-changing vistas in their shimmering black lakes. You'll be entranced by these magical landscapes as you pedal the gentle, undulating roads where silence is broken only by the chitter-chatter of turf cutters as they work the dark peaty bogs or the bleating of sheep as they tread aimlessly along the winding roads.



Buy local in Kinvara Farmers Market

There's something rather special about meeting the local farmers and artisans that grow and produce the food we eat. At Kinvara's Farmers Market (one of the many to be found throughout the country), you can savour the genuine Irish cultural food experience with the local farmers, fishermen, bakers, vegetable growers, cheese makers and a host of other producers who gather to 'peddle their wares' in Kinvara's beautiful Victorian walled garden. It's as much a weekly community gathering, complete with local musicians - a market sale, but also a genuine cultural gem not to be missed.



Spin a Yarn in Ireland

Nestling in the sweet Vale of Avoca, you will find Ireland's oldest working woollen mill, where you can witness weavers creating kaleidoscopic works of art. Established in 1723, this thriving mill is part of the lively woollen industry in Ireland, where the tradition of spinning, weaving and knitting has reawakened in recent years. Stretching from the wilds of Donegal, famous for their speckled tweeds, to the outposts of the Atlantic Islands, with their intricately designed Aran sweaters, this time-old tradition is just one of the many crafts to discover in Ireland.





Bet on the Ponies

Known as the 'Sport Of The Kings', the Irish have a passion for horseracing that is deeply entwined in the fabric of Irish life, with an unrivalled reputation for producing horses, world-famous trainers and jockeys - it's simply one of the things we do best! If you fancy a flutter on the ponies, events range from colourful annual festivals to simpler rural affairs, where the thrill of the first bet is equally as exciting. For a day out with a difference, join the roaring crowds at Glenbeigh, Laytown or Omey Island, where racing takes place on the hard sands uninterrupted by waves crashing on the shore.



Taste Ireland

Blessed with a bounty of local produce from the land and abundant fruits of the sea, Ireland is one hell of a place to arouse your taste buds! In the grasp of a culinary revolution, this 'new Irish cuisine' is a confident return to the traditional preparation of locally sourced food, without fuss or faddism. This home-grown cuisine will tease and surprise you with regional delicacies on menus throughout the country, from Galway Bay Oysters and Burren smoked salmon to Skeaghanore duck and Connemara Spring lamb, followed by the sweetest Wexford strawberries and creamiest Murphys Ice-cream.



Have a Whale of a Time

Experience the rare and beautiful magic of Ireland's mighty sea mammals on a boat trip in pristine coastal waters, where you'll be amazed at the sight of gracefully arching Whales in their natural environment. From Fin and Minke Whales to Humpbacks and the occasional Killer Whale, Irish waters are among the richest in Europe, with 24 species of cetaceans recorded off the Atlantic West Coast. One of Ireland's best-kept secrets, Whale-watching trips offer a different kind of adventure, where the natural spectacle of Ireland's marine environment gets up close and personal.



Explore Intriguing Belfast

Unexpected charms await in this treasured city, which boasts the Destination Of The Year 2012 award, as recently voted by the National Geographic Traveller. Fought over for centuries, it's one of the most elegant cities in Ireland, and, having shrugged off its bomb-scarred past, has emerged energised and revitalised as Ireland's most intriguing city. Learn about its troubled past with a tour of the iconic murals and peace walls of West Belfast, which colourfully depict the story of a transformation from conflict to peace. If that doesn't 'float your boat', explore the birthplace of the Titanic at Belfast docks, where the famous Belfast saying resounds: 'She was alright when she left here!'





Discover Ireland's National Parks

Ireland is famed for its stunning scenery, and there's nowhere better to experience it than in one of our six national parks (Glendalough, Connemara, Burren, Glenveagh, Killarney and Ballincroy). Areas of outstanding natural beauty, they all offer something quite unique, from the ancient woodlands of Killarney and Glenveagh to the arid landscape of the Burren. Boasting Ireland's most stunning vistas, they offer a calm and tranquil refuge from the hustle and bustle of the cities, with mile upon mile of beautiful, unspoilt walking and cycling trails to explore.



Swim with Dolphins

Take a dip in Dingle Bay and chance a meeting with one of Ireland's many wild dolphins in his natural habitat. The famed bottlenose dolphin Fungie has been a resident of Dingle for over two and a half decades. A sighting of his smooth back and playful grin is sure to be one of the most thrilling treasures of nature you'll experience. You can enjoy the antics of this amazing dolphin while taking in the stunning views of cliffs and other native sea life from the pristine waters of the wild Atlantic coast.



Go Medieval

There's no better way to truly experience Ireland's medieval castles than to 'feast' and 'make merry' in them. The glittering pageants are hosted by elegantly costumed performers and waiters who bring to life the ancient castles, creating history anew within their walls. Bunratty Castle has been hosting banquets since its restoration in the 1960's, and, having mastered the art of creating fun-filled evenings in the most majestic of settings, earns its place amongst the top sites to experience while in Ireland.



Walk into a Waterfall

Experience nature in all her terrifying beauty with a walk into one of Ireland's magnificent waterfalls. Whether it's the mighty Torc waterfall hidden in Killarney's ancient forest, or the foaming cascade of Poulanass along the lakeside path in Glendalough, all of Ireland's waterfalls have something unique and beautiful to offer. Whether you're retreating to these romantic spots to shade from the summer sun, or to hear the thundering falls after a heavy spell of rain, you'll be amazed by these wonders of nature every time.





Follow The Path Of Giants

Whether it's a natural wonder or the stuff of legendary giants, this UNESCO World Heritage Site, the Giants Causeway, is not to be missed. The story goes that it's the handiwork of Irish Giant Finn McCool, who built the 40,000 hexagonal basalt stone columns as a pathway out across the sea to fight his rival Bennedonner in Scotland. It's one of Ireland's most atmospheric landscapes, where you can walk along a 400ft cliff-top path or clamber over the majestic rocks that dip gently beneath the waves below.



Visit A Stately Home

Ireland's architecture reflects a history of conquest, from the stone castles of the first Anglo-Norman invaders to the Palladian mansions of the 'landed gentry'. Known as 'The Big Houses', Ireland is dotted with many stately homes from this bygone era of the Protestant Ascendancy. Today, many of these grandiose buildings are open to the public, where their splendid interiors and manicured gardens give a true insight into how the other half lived. Feel like an earl as you discover the splendid drawing rooms, libraries and living quarters of the privileged class, before heading down to the basement to imagine the buzz of life in the servants' quarters.



Canter along a Sandy Beach

There's nothing more exhilarating than to feel the wind in your hair and the salt on your lips as you canter along one of Ireland's spectacular sandy beaches. Boasting miles of shoreline and some of the longest beaches in the world, there are great options for all levels, from the complete novice to the more experienced rider. So whether you opt for the tranquil beaches of Kerry or the wild coastline of Inishowen, you can kick back and relax on sandy trails as the waves break upon the shore by your feet.



Stargazing by Kayak in West Cork

There's nothing more magical than stargazing at the northern skies as you glide gracefully along, listening to the water lap upon the shore. Setting off at dusk, there's always something to make you gasp on the starlight kayak trip, whether it be a brilliant red sun setting in the skies, the silhouette of the seabirds resting on the bank, the twinkling of stars overhead, the reflection of the moon on the silent waters or, at certain times of year, the astonishing bio-luminescence, where the waters around us light up with 1,000 tiny lights.



Meet the Tribesmen in Galway

Arty, bohemian Galway is the heartbeat of the west of Ireland, where Cromwell's soldiers once mocked the townsmen for their native ways, bestowing upon them the insulting nickname of the 'Tribes of Galway'. Today, this medieval city is a swirl of cobbled streets laced with colourfully painted shops and enticing old pubs that hum with traditional music from dawn to dusk. A lively student population keeps the city on its toes, with over a quarter of the city's population under the age of 25, adding to the city's bohemian vibe and relaxed atmosphere.



Climb a Little Marvel

According to local folklore, the enormous cairn that sits proudly atop Knocknarea in County Sligo is the burial tomb of the legendary warrior Queen Maeve of Connacht. The epic Irish tale, *The Tain Bo Cuailnge* (The Cattle Raid of Cooley), depicts the story of this majestic queen as a mighty warrior who invaded Ulster in an embittered battle, and 'all to keep up with the Joneses'. A 45-minute climb to reach the tomb will reveal more than you were expecting, with spectacular panoramic views toward Benbulbin, or below to the golden sands of Strandhill and out into the great Atlantic Ocean.



Breathe Fresh Air

Ireland is famed around the world for its unspoiled, unpolluted environment, and you can tell as soon as you step out into the countryside that there's something 'soul-nourishing' about the Irish air! Poets and authors from Yeats to Synge have been writing about our environment for centuries - a true testimony that the Irish landscape exerts a powerful sway on the people who live here. So if you're in the mood to get out and get active in 2012, why not do it in the healthiest environment possible.





Kiss the Blarney Stone

Get the 'Gift of the Gab' in exchange for a kiss of the famed Blarney Stone, where this treasured Irish ritual can be experienced by climbing the ruins of the majestic 15th Century McCarthy Castle. Not for the faint-hearted, prepare to hang upside down on the castle parapet's edge to plant your kiss on the fabled blarney stone. With many colourful explanations for its origins, it is said that the term 'blarney' was coined by Queen Elizabeth I, when she accused King McCarthy of giving her a 'lot of blarney'!



Catch an Atlantic Wave

Sculpted by nature, the vast stretches of Ireland's Atlantic coastline are a surfer's paradise. The great Atlantic rollers that sweep along the coast offer something for everyone, from the complete beginner to the truly adventurous surfer. Sligo and Donegal are two of the great hotspots, from the southern beaches of Easkey and Strandhill to the northern stretches of Rossnowlagh and Muckcross Point. Not only will you have a great time surfing in Ireland, but you'll experience some of the most stunning coastal scenery to enjoy while you're doing it!



Discover Ireland's Past

It's a somber, even chilling place to visit, but a tour of Kilmainham Gaol provides a fascinating insight into Ireland's painful path to independence. Arguably Ireland's best museum, you'll learn of how its history as an institution is intimately linked with the story of Irish nationalism, from the birth of the nation in the 1780's to the closing of the prison, with the release of Eamon de Valera, in 1924. Eamon de Valera was one of the dominant political figures in twentieth century Ireland. The tour ends in the eerie Stonebreakers' Yard, where some of Ireland's greatest heroes from the 1916 Easter Rising were executed.



Spot a Golden Eagle

The wilds of Donegal have been tempered by humans in Glenveagh National Park, where the golden eagle has been reintroduced. Hunted to extinction in the 19th Century, the majestic eagle now soars in the skies again in this remote inland valley where the flamboyant Glenveagh Castle twinkles in its lakeside setting. Walk lightly and listen for hooded crows and ravens as they sound their anxious calls, denoting the presence of the swift hunting bird. Symbols of wisdom in ancient times, they are just one of the many wild animals to be found in Glenveagh, from the princely red deer and peregrine falcon to the native Irish hares and the tiny pygmy shrew.



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www.ExploreIrelandTours.com

+ 353 (0)87 2051983

Explore Ireland Tours,
Unit 204, Business Innovation Centre,
National University of Ireland,
Galway, Ireland.



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