



discover  
northernireland  
.com

# Northern Ireland

## Visitor Guide



The variety of our small country is amazing – from rolling landscapes and hazy mountains, intriguing towns and villages to some of the most vibrant, cultural and history-rich cities.

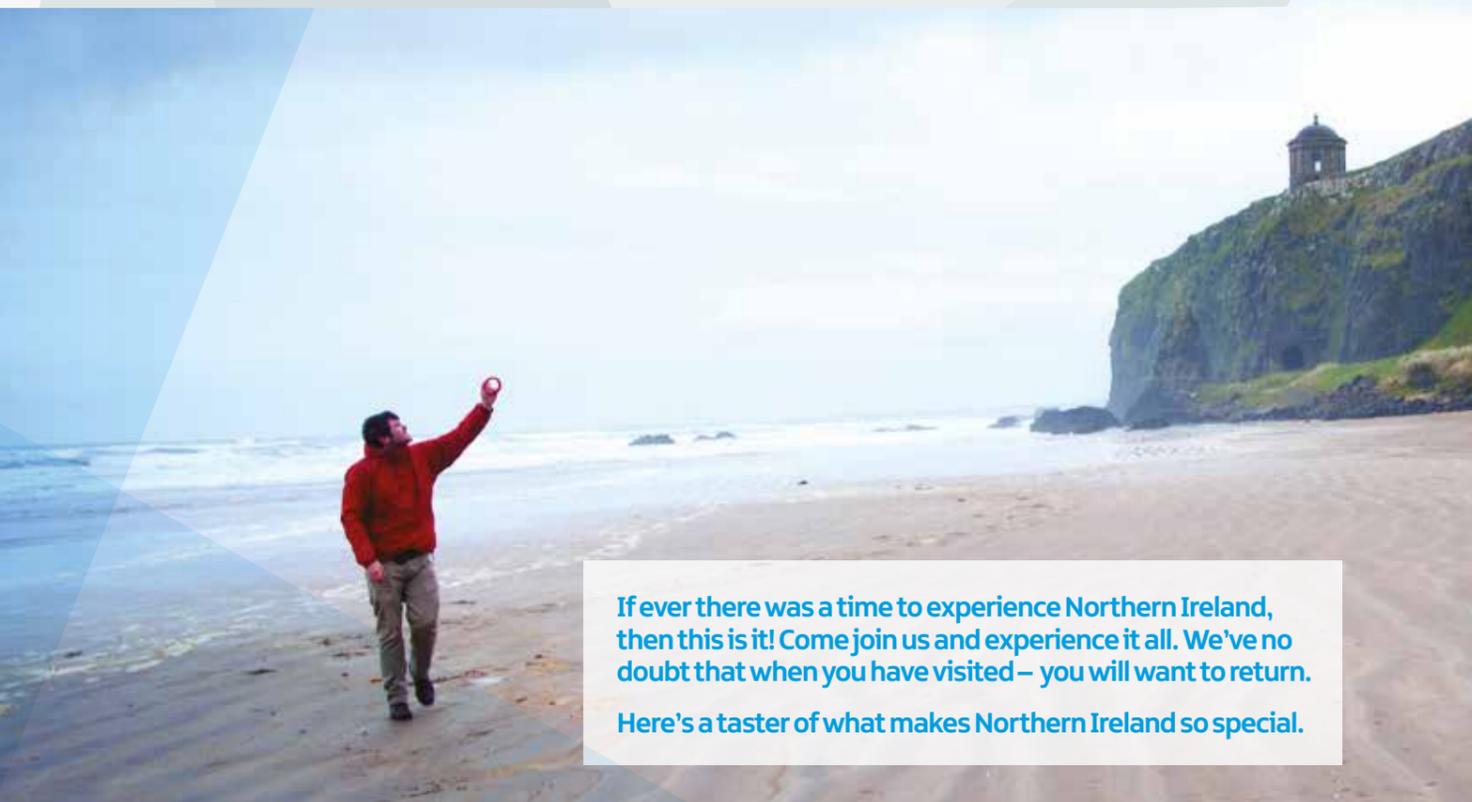
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# Welcoming you



If ever there was a time to experience Northern Ireland, then this is it! Come join us and experience it all. We've no doubt that when you have visited – you will want to return.

Here's a taster of what makes Northern Ireland so special.

## The Legend of Titanic

Only in Belfast can you follow Titanic's remarkable journey from the drawing board to the slipways, or stand on the vast floor of the dock where she was fitted out – her last footprint on land.

Learn more: Page 6  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com/titanic](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/titanic)



## The Giant's Causeway & Causeway Coastal Route

The Giant's Causeway is a spectacular natural attraction and Northern Ireland's only UNESCO World Heritage Site. Be sure to visit the world-class visitor centre. Are the basalt columns the work of giant, Finn McCool or Mother Nature? You decide. Explore the full Causeway Coastal Route, a road trip recognised as one of the Top 5 drives in the world. Its many attractions include The Gobbins, an exhilarating coastal path first enjoyed by the Edwardians and recently reimagined for the 21st century.

Learn more: Page 10  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com/causeway](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/causeway)



Images: (top left) Benone Beach County Londonderry, (bottom left) Titanic Belfast, Belfast, (bottom right) The Gobbins, County Antrim

## Made for Golf

Northern Ireland is made for golf and our home-grown talent in Darren Clarke, Graeme McDowell and Rory McIlroy is testament to this. It really is the playground of champions. Perfect your technique on the superb world-class links of Royal Portrush and Royal County Down (which played host to the Irish Open in 2012 and 2015 respectively), consistently ranked in the world's top 20 courses or hone your skills on a diverse range of parkland and seaside courses. We have over 90 great courses to choose from. Don't miss the Irish Open's first visit to Lough Erne Resort in County Fermanagh in 2017.

Learn more:  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com/golf](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/golf)

## Historical Northern Ireland

Whether it's Saint Patrick and Christian Heritage, RMS Titanic or our historic cities – there's something for everyone. Our 92-mile Saint Patrick's Trail allows you to follow Patrick's footsteps and his legacy. Belfast has an impressive industrial heritage, not least its shipbuilding. Then there is Londonderry (also known as Derry), a city with an eventful 1,400 year history and 400-year-old city walls among the best preserved in Europe. Join us in September during European Heritage Open Days, when our wonderful historic sites throw open their doors to the public – for free.

Learn more:  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com/history](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/history)  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com/ehod](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/ehod)

## Unmissable Music

Love music? Then check out a scene that is vibrant, exciting and cutting edge. Traditional sessions in local pubs, global superstars in concert, the next big thing in a local rock venue or great festivals in wonderful settings – you'll see it all in Northern Ireland. Unearth the rich music heritage that attracted MTV to stage the EMA here or take a musical bus tour of Belfast and see the city that influenced Van Morrison, Snow Patrol, Ruby Murray and many more.

Learn more:  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com/music](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/music)

## Literature & Theatre

Northern Ireland is home to Nobel Laureates and award-winning playwrights. Tour Heaney country in Magherafelt and gain an insight into the landscape that inspired the late, world-renowned poet Seamus Heaney. Enjoy a new play by local writers including Marie Jones and Owen McCafferty, classic works from internationally-acclaimed Brian Friel, or touring productions at world-class theatre venues including the MAC in Belfast. Maybe even take in one of our excellent literary festivals or summer schools.

Learn more:  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com/literature](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/literature)

## Glorious Gardens & Houses

We aren't afraid of a bit of rain here – it's what makes our gardens grow – and we have plenty of exciting locations to choose from. There are grand gardens, walled gardens, woodland gardens – even Japanese gardens. The Antrim Garden Trail includes a mix of public and private gardens.

Learn more:  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com/gardens](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/gardens)

## Fabulous Food

Northern Ireland is a great destination for lovers of good food and drink. From sea-front restaurants along the Causeway Coastal Route to seafood bars at the foot of the Mourne Mountains, contemporary city restaurants, and hearty pub grub in beautiful rural spots. The quality and authenticity of our local produce is undeniable too – with a number of recent world-wide accolades. Visit in 2016 during Northern Ireland's Year of Food, with lots of great foodie events plus new trails and experiences.

Learn more:  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com/food](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/food)

## An Adventure Playground

We have activities for all skills and preferences. Paddle along canoe trails, surf or body board on waves coming from the roaring North Atlantic or head to the Mourne Mountains, which you can walk, climb, mountain bike, horse-ride in the foothills or even experience through the adrenaline-pumping world of wet bouldering at Bloody Bridge. Fermanagh is perfect for cruising, canoeing and all things water-based. Multi-activity centres are a great way to pack in several activities in a day and try something new – caving, sailing, parachuting or white water kayaking. Less extreme, cycling is one of the best ways to take in idyllic areas such as the Sperrins, with off-road family routes to more challenging mountain bike trails.

Learn more:  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com/activities](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/activities)  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com/adventure](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/adventure)

## Genealogy – Trace Your Roots

Northern Ireland's rich migration history has created a diverse population and culture at home and an extended family the world-over, with millions of people boasting a direct family connection to the region. Visit Northern Ireland in search of your roots or retrace the footsteps of your ancestors and gain a deeper insight into your own family history.

Learn more:  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com/ancestry](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/ancestry)



## TV & Film

Many locations across Northern Ireland have been used in TV & Film productions, showcasing our wonderful natural landscapes and hosting global production companies like HBO and Universal Pictures. Northern Ireland is home to world-famous names – such as Liam Neeson, Jamie Dornan, Liam Cunningham, Michelle Fairley, Ian McElhinney, James Nestbitt, Conleith Hill and Bronagh – as well as playing a temporary home to international actors including Sir Ben Kingsley, Sean Bean, Gillian Anderson and Colin Farrell whilst filming here. Various productions have been filmed in Belfast including BBC's 'The Fall', 'Good Vibrations' and Oscar-nominated, BAFTA-awarded short film 'Boogaloo and Graham'. Oscar-winning short film 'The Shore' was filmed in Killough, County Down.

'Game of Thrones®' features many stunning locations from across Northern Ireland – the perfect setting for the epic story, with its rugged coastlines, historic castles and breath-taking scenery. Experience 'Game of Thrones®' in Northern Ireland with self-guided and guided location tours, immersive experiences, replica costumes, themed menus and interactive adventures!

Learn more:  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com/nifilm](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/nifilm)  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com/gameofthrones](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/gameofthrones)



## Mountain Biking – Embrace the Mud

Widely regarded as one of the world's fastest growing adventure activities, mountain biking has well and truly landed in Northern Ireland. We have over 100km of official purpose-built trails, with four new trail centres opened in 2013 at Rostrevor, Davagh Forest, Castlewellan and Barnetts Demense (outside Belfast). These give enthusiasts additional cross-country and downhill routes making Northern Ireland a must visit mountain bike destination! Come and enjoy the full beauty of our landscape – two wheels and endless possibilities!

Learn more:  
[www.discovernorthernireland.com/mountainbiking](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/mountainbiking)

Images: (top right) The Dark Hedges, County Antrim – 'Game of Thrones®' filming location. (bottom right) Mountain biking, Rostrevor.

# Belfast City & Greater Belfast



Birthplace of Titanic and Gateway to Northern Ireland

## Did you know?

- Birthplace of the famous ship, RMS Titanic, Belfast's skyline is still dominated by the huge cranes of the Harland and Wolff shipyard (affectionately known by locals as 'Samson and Goliath').
- St. George's Market in Belfast city centre was voted the UK's Best Large Indoor Market 2014 (National Association of British Market Authorities).
- The eight sculptured Maritime Masts lining the east side of Donegall Place each commemorate one of the great White Star Line ships. Other maritime-related sculptures include 'The Kit' (containing scale replicas of Titanic's component parts) and the popular Salmon of Knowledge or 'The Big Fish'.
- Belfast is the best value UK city for tourists, according to a major price comparison study carried out by travel website TripAdvisor in 2011.
- The Crown Bar is perhaps the finest Victorian 'gin palace' in the UK. Owned by the National Trust, the ornate interior has been enjoyed by travellers since 1885. Look out for the cosy snugs, elaborate stained glass and antique bell system.
- The first Scottish settlers to Ireland arrived in North Down in 1606. Bangor has also had an Abbey for over 1500 years, founded in 558 AD. Find out more at the North Down Museum.
- Groomsport celebrates its links with America and Independence Day every July. Pay a visit to Cockle Row Cottages which stages regular weekend events during the summer. **Interested in this?** Why not also visit Grey Point Fort in Helen's Bay or Andrew Jackson Cottage, Carrickfergus (check opening times in advance).
- The Queen bestowed the title 'Baron and Baroness Carrickfergus' to Prince William and Catherine Middleton on their wedding day.
- Harry Ferguson, the first Irishman to build and fly his own aeroplane was born in Hillsborough. Visit the memorial gardens opposite his birthplace.



## Come and experience the energy of this Titanic city and the delights of the surrounding Greater Belfast area.

Explore the city's many quarters, each with their own stories to tell.

One ship is synonymous with Belfast, RMS Titanic. There is no better place to experience the story of its origins, construction, launch and legacy - and delve into Belfast's rich industrial and maritime heritage.

A selection of specialist Titanic and maritime tours make the Titanic Quarter a must-see on any visitor's itinerary. From the cranes of the Harland and Wolff shipyard, Drawing Offices where Titanic and her sister ships were designed, the slipways from which they were launched and Titanic's Dock & Pump-House where they were fitted out.

The cultural heart of the city, the Cathedral Quarter is the oldest quarter and centres around Saint Anne's Cathedral; an area packed with cobbled streets, superb restaurants which cater for every taste (including local specialties of champ, Irish Stew and breads) and great pubs. Chat with locals over a pint at McHugh's, one of the oldest pubs in Belfast dating back to 1711 and gaze across to the Albert Memorial Clock, Belfast's answer to Pisa's Leaning Tower. It was featured in the 1947 film, 'Odd Man Out'. The history of the city is everywhere to be seen, from the architecture of magnificent buildings such as the sumptuous City Hall (home to the Titanic Memorial Garden), built on profits from the gasworks, to other civic gems such as the Grand Opera House, Ulster Hall and the Crown Bar.

The Gaeltacht Quarter is home to some of the city's descriptive wall murals and is an area where Irish language and culture has flourished since the 1960s.

The Queen's Quarter, with the historical Queen's University and the Ulster Museum, and the Lisburn Road area boast many informal cafés which provide the perfect rest stop.

Take a fascinating tour of the Parliament Buildings and then enjoy a stroll around its grounds. Cave Hill (North Belfast), offers a natural viewing gallery over the city. Did you know the giant's face on the hill (a basaltic outcrop known by locals as 'Napoleon's Nose') inspired literary great, Jonathan Swift to write Gulliver's Travels?

A short journey from Belfast City and visitors can uncover the delights of the Greater Belfast area - Lisburn, North Down, Carrickfergus, Castlereagh and Newtownabbey. Set in the beautiful Lagan Valley, the Lisburn area covers 174 square miles of contrasting scenery from the gentle drumlins of the open countryside to many picturesque towns and villages such as Ballinderry, Lambeg and Hillsborough. A not to be missed experience is the Hilden Brewery, Ireland's oldest Independent Brewery.

For those who like to be beside the sea, North Down offers fabulous coastline, stunning scenery, layers of history, plenty of activities, fascinating museums and delicious dining. From sailing Bangor Marina and a variety of other watersports, a host of summer family events to the stunning North Down Coastal Path and the breathtaking inland sections of the Ulster Way - there's something for everyone.

Castlereagh has a wide range of quality sports, leisure and recreational facilities such as Dundonald International Ice Bowl, Castlereagh Hills Golf Course and Streamvale Open Farm. Why not take a walk around the intriguing range of landscapes from the woods and waterfall of Cregagh Glen, to the grounds of Lisnabreeny house, and see the spectacular views of the city.

Sporting activities and outdoor pursuits can also be enjoyed in Newtownabbey, the gateway to one of the world's greatest road journeys, the Causeway Coastal Route.

Then there is Carrickfergus, steeped in a past of over 800 eventful years, this historic walled town has much to offer the visitor. As the words to the well-known and haunting Irish folk song goes - 'I wish I was in Carrickfergus...'



## Experiences

- **Visit the world's largest Titanic visitor experience**  
Uncover the story of Belfast's most famous creation at the state-of-the-art Titanic Belfast visitor attraction. The iconic, six-floor building features nine interactive galleries telling the story of Titanic and maritime Belfast.
- **Soak up Belfast's cultural scene**  
Enjoy a show at one of Belfast's excellent performance venues, which include the Grand Opera House, Lyric Theatre and the MAC.
- **Enjoy a tour**  
See Belfast city's key sights, including its famous wall murals from the back seat of Belfast's most iconic vehicle or sail Carrickfergus or Bangor marinas as part of an organised tour.
- **Discover Georgian gems**  
Uncover the hidden secrets of the County Down village of Hillsborough.

## After Dark:

- Enjoy the cultural experience beyond Belfast at Theatre at the Mill (Newtownabbey) and Island Arts Centre (Lisburn).
- Get spooked with a Ghost Walk in Belfast or a seasonal Graveyard Walk in Bangor.
- Enjoy live music at one of the many iconic music venues in Belfast - try the Empire, Laverys, Duke of York, Black Box, Oh Yeah Centre and An Culturilann. Sessions are also held in the Greater Belfast area.
- Take in a Belfast Giants ice hockey match at the Odyssey or go the dogs at Drumbo Park Greyhound Stadium, Lisburn.



1. Titanic Belfast

Titanic Belfast, an unbelievable, unmissable experience. Located in the heart of Belfast, right beside the historic site of this world-famous ship's construction, Titanic Belfast is the world's largest Titanic visitor experience. Housed in an iconic, six-floor building, this state-of-the-art visitor experience will tell you the story of the Titanic, from her conception in Belfast in the early 1900s, through her construction and launch, to her famous maiden voyage and subsequent place in history - only in Belfast! **While In The Area Visit:** The Wee Tram, Titanic's Dock & Pump-House, H&W Drawing Offices, T13, Belfast Barge.

T: 028 9076 6386  
W: [www.titanicbelfast.com](http://www.titanicbelfast.com)  
• £



4. Ulster Folk & Transport Museum

Step back in time and uncover a way of life from 100 years ago. Discover town and countryside with cottages, schools and shops to explore as you wander through the beautiful parkland of the Folk Museum. Chat to costumed visitor guides as they demonstrate traditional crafts and meet the animals on our farms. Discover more than 500 original artefacts at TITANICa, climb on and off majestic steam locomotives or experience the sensation of flight in the Transport Museum, bursting with horse drawn carriages, electric trams, boats, motorbikes, fire-engines and vintage cars. Closed Mondays (except Bank Holidays).

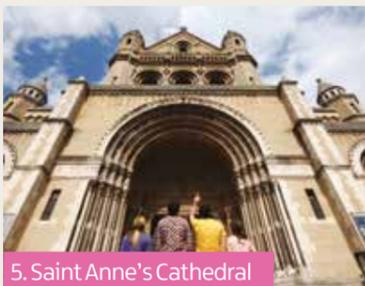
T: 028 9042 8428  
W: [www.nmni.com](http://www.nmni.com)  
• £



2. Ulster Museum

Come face to face with dinosaurs, meet an Ancient Egyptian Mummy and see modern masterpieces with a visit to the Ulster Museum. As Northern Ireland's treasure house of the past and present, the museum is home to a rich collection of art, history and natural sciences and free to all visitors. From Ireland to the South Pacific, ancient relics to hands-on activities, the museum offers something for everyone from the simply curious to the enthusiast. Closed Mondays (except Bank Holidays). **Like This? Also Try:** Northern Ireland War Memorial museum, Museum of Orange Heritage.

T: 028 9044 0000  
W: [www.nmni.com](http://www.nmni.com)  
• FREE



5. Saint Anne's Cathedral

The cathedral was consecrated in 1904, its foundation stone having been laid in 1899. The transepts were added in the 1970s and the 'Spire of Hope' as recently as 2007. It has many beautiful stained glass windows, some stunning mosaics, and an interesting labyrinth marked out on the floor at the entrance, leading the visitor from the door towards the sanctuary. There is a striking funeral pall commemorating those who lost their lives in the sinking of the Titanic. Take the personal audio tour of the cathedral which uses state-of-the-art technology to tell the stories of this great Belfast icon. Services daily.

T: 028 9032 8332  
W: [www.belfastcathedral.org](http://www.belfastcathedral.org)  
• £ (admission, audio guide and official booklet)  
(Free admission to Chapel of the Holy Spirit)



3. Crumlin Road Gaol

In 1996 Crumlin Road Gaol closed its doors for what many thought would be the final time, but in 2012 HMP Belfast was reborn as a major visitor attraction. Today you can take a guided tour of the prison and hear about the history of the site from when women and children were held within its walls through to the more recent political segregation of prisoners. During the tour you will be taken to visit the underground tunnel that connected the gaol to the Crumlin Road Courthouse, you can sit in the Governor's chair, view all the wings from the circle and pay a visit to the condemned man's cell before seeing the execution cell.

T: 028 9074 1500  
W: [www.crumlinroadgaol.com](http://www.crumlinroadgaol.com)  
• £



6. SS Nomadic

Step aboard the refurbished SS Nomadic. In 1911 Harland & Wolff built the Nomadic as the first and second class passenger tender to the Titanic. Now, over 100 years later, the last remaining White Star Line ship has been restored to her original glory and is back home in Belfast's historic Hamilton Dock. Experience over 100 years of authentic maritime and social history with a guided tour.

T: 028 9076 6386  
W: [www.nomadicbelfast.com](http://www.nomadicbelfast.com)  
• £



7. Belfast City & Greater Belfast Tours

Uncover the remarkable story of the Titanic, the world's most famous ship; built with passion, determination and pride - right here in Belfast. Experience the Titanic story by boat, luxury car, bus, tram and segway tour or a guided walk around the historic Titanic Quarter. Or see a different view of Belfast from an open-top bus, black taxi or bike tour. Enjoy some of the city's most impressive and evocative sights, including its open air gallery of passionate and provocative wall murals. Themed tours include: Belfast Music Tour, food tours and self-guided George Best and Van Morrison Trails. Beyond Belfast don't miss the Hilden Brewery and Hillsborough Castle Tours, Carrickfergus Walking Tours and Bangor Fishing Trips and Short Sea Cruises.

T: 028 9127 0069 (Bangor VIC)  
T: 028 9024 6609 (Belfast Welcome Centre)  
T: 028 9335 8241 (Carrickfergus VIC)  
T: 028 9268 9717 (Hillsborough VIC)  
T: 028 9266 0038 (Lisburn VIC)  
W: [www.discovernorthernireland.com/titanic](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/titanic)  
W: [www.discovernorthernireland.com/touring](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/touring)  
• £



10. North Down Museum

Learn the fascinating saga of the area in Northern Ireland's most visited small museum, located around a covered courtyard at the rear of Bangor Castle. The story of the region's history, archaeology and wildlife unfolds before you through a series of exciting audio-visual displays and intriguing exhibits. Key artefacts on display include the Bronze Age Ballycrochan Swords, the Bangor Bell and the Raven Maps, the only complete folio of Plantation era maps in Ireland. **While In the Area also Visit:** Bangor Walled Garden and Bangor Abbey.

T: 028 9127 1200  
W: [www.northdownmuseum.com](http://www.northdownmuseum.com)  
• FREE



8. Carrickfergus Castle

Carrickfergus Castle is one of Northern Ireland's most striking monuments and earliest Norman castle. It was begun in 1177 by John DeCourcy shortly after the invasion of Ulster and played an important military role until 1928. The castle is dominated by its medieval keep while the 13th century gate towers form an impressive entrance. The form of the buildings in the outer ward and the locations of the cannon reflect the use of the castle during the Napoleonic period. The site is open throughout the year for fun family days out and for visitors wishing to learn more about its history.

T: 028 9335 1273  
W: [www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea)  
• £



11. Belfast Zoological Gardens

Belfast Zoo is a safe haven to more than 1,000 animals and 150 species. It focuses on conservation, education and the breeding of rare and endangered species. On your visit, you can expect to see unique animals such as the Goodfellow's tree kangaroos, red pandas, Western lowland gorillas and White-nosed coaties. You can also enjoy the stunning panoramic views over Belfast as well as the newly developed Adventurers' Learning Centre. This play area offers modern play equipment all while learning more about animals at Belfast Zoo, native species and biodiversity. **Like This? Also Try:** Ice Bowl, We are Vertigo, SKYTrek and Urban Sports.

T: 028 9077 6277  
W: [www.belfastzoo.co.uk](http://www.belfastzoo.co.uk)  
• £



9. Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum

Based in Lisburn's oldest building, the 17th century Market House, the Irish Linen Centre/Lisburn Museum brings to life the story of the Irish linen industry and showcases one of Ireland's best known industries and its importance to Lisburn. Take an audio-visual tour and see the weaving centre and hand looms. The centre also showcases events and exhibitions which recreate and honour Lisburn's rich, local history. **While In The Area Visit:** Coca Cola Visitor Experience.

T: 028 9266 3377  
W: [www.lisburnmuseum.com](http://www.lisburnmuseum.com)  
• FREE



12. Belfast Castle

The magnificent sandstone building of Belfast Castle is a familiar landmark, overlooking the city from a prominent site 400 feet above sea level on the slopes of Cave Hill. It was built by the third Marquis of Donegall in the Scottish baronial style, and completed in 1870. Includes Cellar Restaurant, exhibition and gift shop. Also experience the sights and sounds of Cave Hill Country Park, a Green Flag awarded park.

T: 028 9077 6925  
W: [www.belfastcastle.co.uk](http://www.belfastcastle.co.uk)  
• FREE

## Tell me more

Please contact all attractions directly to confirm opening times and prices.

[www.discovernorthernireland.com/belfast](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/belfast)  
[www.visit-belfast.com](http://www.visit-belfast.com)  
[www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk](http://www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk)  
[www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk](http://www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk)  
[www.visitardsandnorthdown.com](http://www.visitardsandnorthdown.com)  
[www.visitlisburncastlereagh.com](http://www.visitlisburncastlereagh.com)

Save money on tours, attractions and travel with the Belfast Visitor Pass.



# Causeway Coast & Glens

One of the World's Great Scenic Road Journeys

## Did you know?

- Slemish Mountain near Ballymena, County Antrim is said to be where Saint Patrick was held as a slave and herded sheep for his master, Miluic in the 5th century. It is still a place of pilgrimage to this day with people climbing Slemish in his memory every Saint Patrick's Day, 17 March.
- The iconic Mussenden Temple was inspired by the Temple of Vesta in Tivoli, near Rome. It was built by The Earl Bishop of Derry, Frederick Hervey in 1785 as a summer library, and occupies a dramatic clifftop setting overlooking the seven-mile Benone Strand.
- Rathlin Island was Robert the Bruce's refuge when driven from Scotland by Edward I of England in 1306. It is believed that while on the island he watched a spider persevering until it bridged the gap with its web. He took heart from this and raised fresh forces to return to Scotland and fight for his kingdom. He succeeded in 1314 and regained the crown of Scotland.
- The Causeway area, particularly the Glens, abounds with myths and legends and tales of saints, scholars, heroic deeds of daring, fairies, banshees and bogeymen. Learn more as part of a guided or self guided tour.
- Mountsandel Wood is one of the earliest known settlements of man in Ireland dating to between 7600 and 7900 BC.
- In 1883 the first hydro-electric tramway in the world was opened between Portrush and Bushmills.
- Recent archaeological excavations of Dunluce Castle have further demonstrated the significance of the site, revealing an incredibly well preserved merchant town built in 1608.
- Carnfunnock Country Park in Larne has a maze in the shape of Northern Ireland.
- Ballymoney has strong international road racing connections. Visit the Joey and Robert Dunlop Memorial Gardens and reflect on the achievements of these racing legends.
- Game of Thrones® has used much of this beautiful landscape for its filming locations, including Downhill Beach, Ballintoy Harbour, Murlough Bay, Cushendun Caves, The Dark Hedges, Binevenagh and Portstewart Strand. Also, UNESCO World Heritage Site, The Giants Causeway featured in both Universal's Dracula Untold and Your Highness.



The Causeway Coastal Route is rated as one of the Top Five Road Trips worldwide and when you drive it, you'll see why.

It's an ever changing tapestry of scenery and colours, set against a dramatic coastal backdrop that will take your breath away - the perfect place for a leisurely tour.

The journey starts in Belfast, follow the Coast Road to the Islandmagee peninsula and The Gobbins – an exhilarating cliff-face path first enjoyed in the early 20th century, which will excite all the senses and form a new jewel on the route. The nearby Larne area is the gateway to the Nine Glens of Antrim; Glenarm (home to Glenarm Castle and Walled Garden, one of Ireland's oldest walled gardens, dating from the 18th century), Glencloy, Glengariff, Glenballyemon, Glencorp, Glanaan, Glendun, Glenshesk and Glentaisie.

The road hugs the narrow strip of coastline between the sea and high cliffs. Around 60 million years ago, three great lava flows were laid down here, cooling the basaltic plateau of North Antrim. You can still see the different layers in the cliff face. At the end of the last Ice Age, ten thousand years ago, massive glaciers scoured the deep valleys that form the Glens. Time, weather and man have created the beautiful landscape that you see today. Inland, near Ballymena, Slemish Mountain is all that's left of an ancient volcano. Saint Patrick is said to have spent six years there as a slave, herding sheep.

Glenariff Forest Park is at the heart of the Glens of Antrim. Set in a classic u-shaped valley, it offers a choice of bracing walks through stunning scenery.

Take a detour to Torr Head, with its views across to the Mull of Kintyre. It's a reminder that before the road was built in the 1830s, this region was closely connected to

Scotland. Many local families have Scottish surnames. This mix of Scots and Irish cultures has meant that North Antrim and the Glens have always been known as "a place apart".

Rathlin Island, with its striking lighthouses and backdrop, lies just six miles off the coast and is reached by a regular ferry service from Ballycastle. Take time to cross the Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge and enjoy a drop of whiskey at the Old Bushmills' Distillery. Catch the narrow gauge steam train from Bushmills to Northern Ireland's most famous attraction and recognised World Heritage Site, the Giant's Causeway. Formed over 60 million years ago, when molten lava cooled suddenly on contact with water, it is an awe-inspiring landscape of mostly hexagonal basalt columns.

Be sure to experience the impressive, world-class Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre.

A round of golf at Royal Portrush is the perfect way to finish the day, before following the Causeway Coastal Route west, towards Londonderry, taking in the beautiful Mussenden Temple and Downhill Demesne at Castlerock.



## Experiences

- **Experience the world-class Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre**  
Go on a journey of discovery and learn about the history, geology, biodiversity, myths and legends of the Causeway area in a building which itself is an architectural masterpiece.
- **Drive the stunning Causeway Coastal Route (CCR)**  
Enjoy 120 miles of driving route or why not try 52km on foot along the Causeway Coast Way which starts in Ballycastle and finishes at Portstewart.
- **Tee off at the renowned Royal Portrush Golf Club**  
Join the many famous golfers who have been enjoying this course over the years since it opened in 1888. The club will host The Open Championship in 2019.
- **Travel the stretch of line between Bushmills and the World Heritage Site at the Giant's Causeway in style**  
The Bushmills Railway has been built to the Irish narrow gauge of three feet and runs for two miles along the track bed of the former Giant's Causeway Tram.
- **Scullion's Hurls**  
Watch the artisans at work at Scullion Hurls workshop, part of the Northern European Écomusée Artisans at Work tourist trail.
- **Experience Northern Ireland's only off-shore inhabited island**  
Take a walk or hire a cycle around Rathlin Island and don't forget to admire the island's lighthouses or visit the Boathouse Visitor Centre. Immerse yourself in the rich cultural heritage of island life.

## After Dark:

- Savour the live traditional music in one of the many pubs in Cushendall, Cushendun or Ballycastle.
- Soak up the culture with a range of events in the Roe Valley Arts and Cultural Centre, Limavady, the Riverside Theatre in Coleraine or The Braid in Ballymena.

On the very edge of the Irish Sea lies The Gobbins cliffpath, one of the 'best kept secrets' of the Causeway Coastal Route. Recently reimagined for the 21st century, the unique coastal path at Islandmagee was first enjoyed in 1902 by the Edwardians. Today, The Gobbins will once again thrill those with a sense of adventure and delight those who wish to experience the coast up close. As the water rises up to greet you, you will be rewarded with breathtakingly beautiful views and unparalleled access to the rugged North Coast. The dramatic and challenging two-mile-long cliff-face path will include: spectacular tubular and suspension bridges, caves, steps, and tunnels carved through the rock. Through

your exhilarating journey, you will follow the curves of curious geology and learn ancient stories about this fascinating attraction. Ticket booking online in advance is essential. Please be aware of all visitor guidelines around accessing the attraction (available on the website), to avoid disappointment. Parking is free but limited. Visitors not wishing to walk the path can enjoy the Visitor Centre and its fascinating exhibition.

T: 028 9337 2318  
W: [www.thegobbinscliffpath.com](http://www.thegobbinscliffpath.com)  
• £ (visitor experience charge includes path access and guided walk by a tour guide)

## 1. The Gobbins



2. Giant's Causeway (World Heritage Site) and Visitor Experience

Northern Ireland's iconic only World Heritage Site and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is home to a wealth of local history and legend. The Giant's Causeway, renowned for its polygonal columns of layered basalt resulted from a volcanic eruption 60 million years ago and is famously steeped in myth and legend. Some say it was carved from the coast by the mighty giant, Finn McCool who left behind an ancient home full of folklore. Have fun searching for distinctive stone formations fancifully named the Camel, the Wishing Chair, the Granny and the Organ. Unlock the secrets of the Causeway landscape with the interactive exhibition in the Visitor Experience and explore the great outdoors with our audio guide available in a range of languages or avail of a free walking tour with a member of the National Trust team. There are four stunning trails to discover – from the all-accessible walk at Runkerry Head to the more challenging Causeway Coast Way and Ulster Way.

T: 028 2073 1855  
W: [www.giantscausewaytickets.com](http://www.giantscausewaytickets.com)  
• £ - (visitor experience charge includes parking, use of audio guide, guided walk, interpretation area and access to other centre facilities)



3. The Old Bushmills' Distillery

The craft of whiskey making has been carried out at Bushmills for over 400 years using the same traditional methods to create the finest Irish whiskeys. Why not join us to see for yourself in the company of an experienced guide who will take you through the heart of the oldest working distillery in Ireland. Please call for opening times and age restrictions.

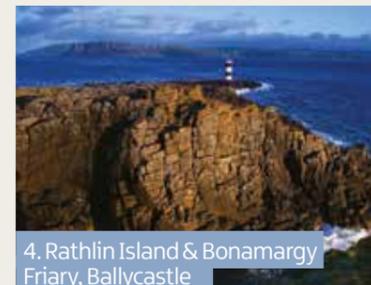
T: 028 2073 3218  
W: [www.bushmills.com](http://www.bushmills.com)  
• £ (tours)



5. Cushendun & Torr Head

Nestling at the foot of Glendun, is Cushendun, with its distinctive Cornish-style village square and cottages by architect Clough Williams-Ellis. Artists Maurice Wilkes, Deborah Brown and Charles McAuley were inspired by its beauty. Along the coast, only twelve miles separate rocky Torr Head from the Mull of Kintyre. Many Scottish clansmen settled along this North Antrim Coast.

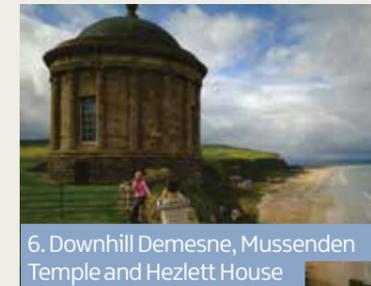
T: 028 2076 2024  
(Ballycastle Visitor Information Centre)  
W: [www.visitcausewaycoastandglens.com](http://www.visitcausewaycoastandglens.com)  
• FREE



4. Rathlin Island & Bonamargy Friary, Ballycastle

Rathlin Island is known for its rich history and traditional culture, as well as its stunning landscapes, seascapes and diverse wildlife. An inspirational retreat for walkers, artists, writers, musicians, bird enthusiasts, divers, photographers or generally for those who just want to enjoy the peace and tranquility of island life. The popular RSPB Seabird Centre at the West Lighthouse is due to reopen for the 2016 season. On the outskirts of Ballycastle are the picturesque ruins of Bonamargy Friary, founded around 1500 by the Franciscans. It contains the remains of chieftain Sorley Boy McDonnell. In Ballycastle, there is a memorial to Guglielmo Marconi who carried out the first tests on radio signals here in 1898.

T: 028 2076 2024  
(Ballycastle Visitor Information Centre)  
T: 028 2076 9299 (Rathlin Ferry Ltd.)  
W: [www.visitcausewaycoastandglens.com](http://www.visitcausewaycoastandglens.com)  
• FREE  
(£- ferry Ballycastle to Rathlin Island; pre-booking advised, especially at peak times)



6. Downhill Demesne, Mussenden Temple and Hezlett House

There cannot be a more wild and dramatic place in Northern Ireland than the landscape park of Downhill. The romantic vision of Frederick Hervey, Earl Bishop of Derry, he created an elegant mansion at Downhill, which now lies in ruins. On the nearby clifftop, the Earl Bishop built the circular Mussenden Temple as his library. As an extra treat you can learn about the reality of life in the rural 17th century thatched cottage of Hezlett House, told through people who once lived there in one of Northern Ireland's oldest buildings.

T: 028 7084 8728  
W: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/downhilldemesne](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/downhilldemesne)  
• £



9. Glenariff Forest Park Waterfalls & Carnlough Harbour

Enjoy the space and freedom of this beautiful forest park. It is a rambler's paradise with woody glades, small lakes, tumbling waterfalls and a seasonal café. Take a leisurely coastal drive to Carnlough, where fishing boats rest in the harbour. Call in for refreshment at The Londonderry Arms Hotel, an 1848 coaching inn once owned by Winston Churchill. **Like this?** **Also Visit:** Roe Valley Country Park.

T: 028 2955 6000  
(Glenariff Forest Park, c/o Garvagh Forest Service)  
W: [www.nidirect.gov.uk/forests](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/forests)  
• £ (car parking)  
T: 028 2826 0088  
(Carnlough Harbour, c/o Larne Visitor Information Centre)  
• FREE



7. Dunluce Castle

The striking ruin of Dunluce Castle sits dramatically on the cliffs of the north Antrim coast. This Late Medieval fortress was built around 1500 by the local MacQuillan family, before the Scottish MacDonnell clan took the castle, expanded it, and eventually established a small town here in 1608. Dunluce was the seat of the MacDonnell earls of Antrim before being abandoned at the end of the 1600s. This iconic castle has inspired writers like C.S. Lewis and was recently included in BBC Countryfile Magazine's top 10 romantic ruins in Britain.

T: 028 20731932  
W: <http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea>  
• £



10. Glenarm Castle and The Walled Garden

Glenarm Castle was the ancestral home of the McDonnells, Earls of Antrim, and the Walled Garden dates from the 18th century. Memorabilia on the ancestors of the present Earl of Antrim are displayed on various occasions. A 19th century Mushroom House has also been converted to a charming tea-room. While visiting the castle and walled garden be sure to experience the signed heritage trail around the Conservation Village. Closed October – March.

T: 028 2884 1203  
W: [www.glenarmcastle.com](http://www.glenarmcastle.com)  
• £



8. Gracehill Village

Two miles west of Ballymena lies the village of Gracehill, where you can step back 250 years in time. This small village was founded by the Moravians between 1759–1765 and is Ireland's only Moravian settlement. The layout of the village and unique Georgian-style architecture remains unchanged. In 1975, it was designated Northern Ireland's first Conservation Area.

T: 028 2563 5010  
(Ballymena Visitor Information Centre)  
W: [www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk](http://www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk)  
• FREE



11. Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge

Take the exhilarating rope bridge challenge to Carrick-a-Rede island (a Site of Special Scientific Interest) and enjoy a truly cliff top experience. Near the North Antrim Coast road, amid unrivalled coastal scenery, the 30-metre deep and 20-metre wide chasm is traversed by a rope bridge that was traditionally erected by salmon fishermen. Open all year (weather permitting excluding 24/25/26 December). Please telephone for details of opening times.

T: 028 2076 9839  
W: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/carrick-a-rede](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/carrick-a-rede)  
• £

## Tell me more

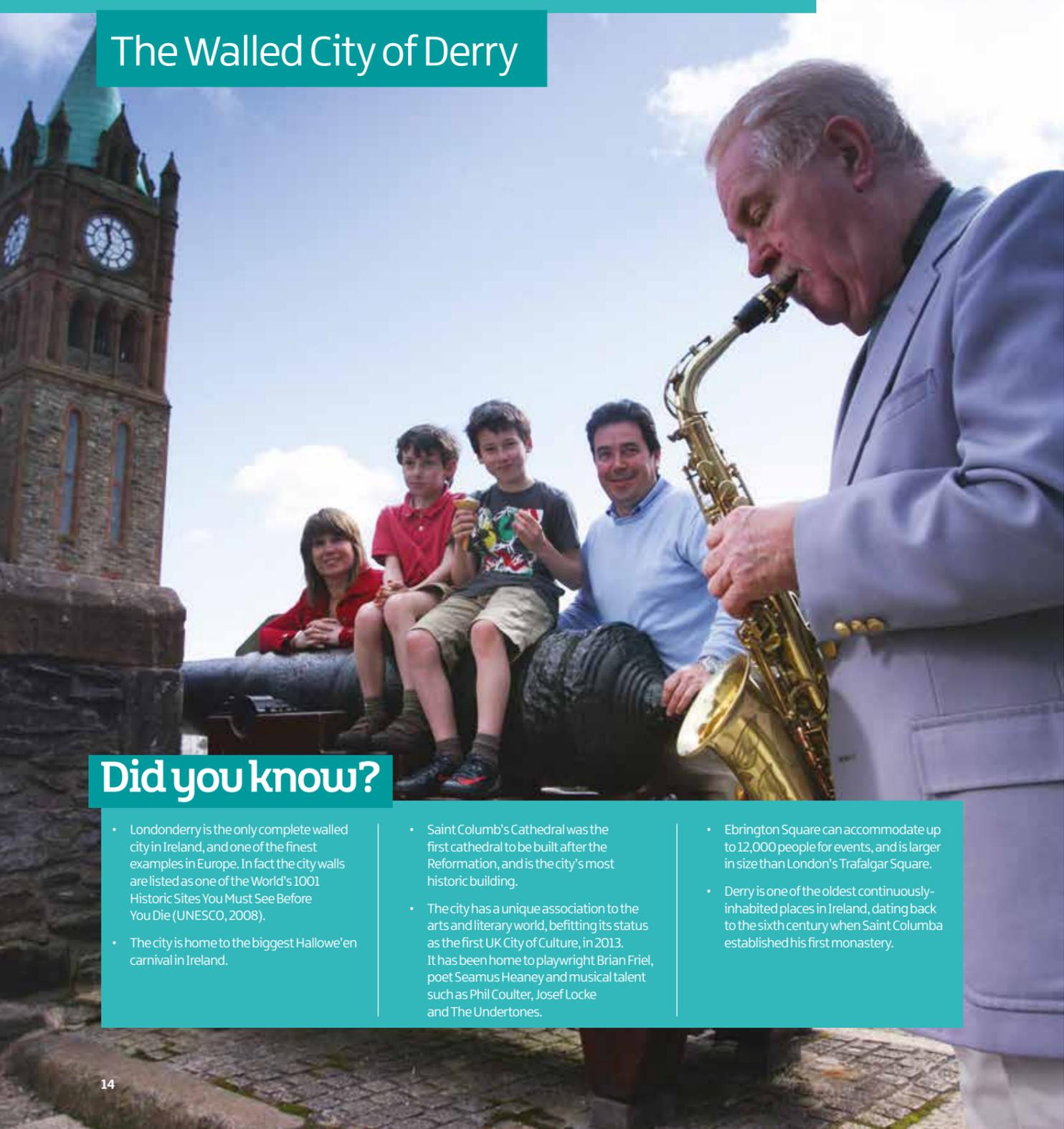
Please contact all attractions directly to confirm opening times and prices.

[www.discovernorthernireland.com/causeway](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/causeway)  
[www.visitcausewaycoastandglens.com](http://www.visitcausewaycoastandglens.com)  
[www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk](http://www.midandeastantrim.gov.uk)

# Londonderry



The Walled City of Derry



## Did you know?

- Londonderry is the only complete walled city in Ireland, and one of the finest examples in Europe. In fact the city walls are listed as one of the World's 1001 Historic Sites You Must See Before You Die (UNESCO, 2008).
- The city is home to the biggest Halloween carnival in Ireland.
- Saint Columb's Cathedral was the first cathedral to be built after the Reformation, and is the city's most historic building.
- The city has a unique association to the arts and literary world, befitting its status as the first UK City of Culture, in 2013. It has been home to playwright Brian Friel, poet Seamus Heaney and musical talent such as Phil Coulter, Josef Locke and The Undertones.
- Ebrington Square can accommodate up to 12,000 people for events, and is larger in size than London's Trafalgar Square.
- Derry is one of the oldest continuously-inhabited places in Ireland, dating back to the sixth century when Saint Columba established his first monastery.



**Voted 4th in Lonely Planet's 'Best in Travel Guide 2013', Londonderry, also known as Derry, is an ancient yet contemporary city. It was the worthy recipient of the prestigious title 'UK City of Culture 2013'.**

The rich cultural and architectural heritage is reflected in the city's names: Derry, from old Irish Doire, a reference to the oak grove where Saint Columba founded a monastery around 546 AD; Londonderry, the name granted during the seventeenth century Plantation of Ulster; and within which you will find 'The Walled City', one of Europe's best preserved walled settlements.

Built to defend the Plantation city from marauding Irish chieftains, the walls were completed in 1618. They proved effective during the Siege of Derry, from 1688-89, when thirteen Apprentice Boys closed the city gates against the Jacobite forces of King James. The Protestant garrison held out for months in appalling conditions, with people reduced to eating cats, dogs and even rats! The siege was lifted when three ships, Mountjoy, Phoenix and Jerusalem broke the boom across the River Foyle and unloaded their precious cargo of food for the starving citizens.

The city played a key role during the Second World War, owing to its strategic position as the Allies' most westerly naval base. At the war's height, 20,000 sailors of various nationalities were based at the thriving port, and the city retains historic links with the US Navy to this day.

Over a mile in circumference, standing 26 feet high and 30 feet wide in places, the walls boast twenty-four original cannons standing sentinel, including the mighty Roaring Meg.

Explore some of the many intriguing sights, including Saint Columb's Cathedral and the beautiful Guildhall (a popular performance and exhibition venue, which underwent a major refurbishment in recent years.)

The Craft Village with its glazed roof canopy, will take you on an evocative journey back to the city in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Across the city is the elegant Saint Eugene's Roman Catholic Cathedral, dating from 1873. Or visit Riverwatch, a favourite with families especially at feeding time, when you can see some voracious fish being fed!

If you have an interest in the past, the Tower Museum, Museum of Free Derry and Saint Columba Heritage Centre reveal different aspects of the city's economic, social and more contemporary history, as well as its Christian heritage.

Be sure to walk across the gleaming Peace Bridge, which curves majestically across the River Foyle. It connects the renovated Guildhall Square to the spectacular performance space at Ebrington, which was a key venue during the UK City of Culture celebrations and is also adjacent to the largest public artwork to ever be commissioned in Ireland, 'Mute Meadows'.

This is a city that just loves to party and enjoys a year-round cycle of festivals, including Ireland's biggest Halloween carnival. The momentous UK City of Culture win saw Derry-Londonderry play host to events of global significance, including the Turner Prize and All-Ireland Fleadh, as part of a year-long programme of over 1,000 cultural events.

As the city enters one of the most exciting times in its history and opens its doors to the world, there's never been a better time to visit.



## Experiences

- **Enjoy retail therapy at Austin's - the world's oldest independent department store**  
Austin's has been the cornerstone of the city's Diamond area since 1830. It predates Jenners of Edinburgh, Harrods of London and Macy's of New York. Browse the impressive range of Irish crystal, giftware, fashions, linens and homewares.
- **Take in a walking or taxi tour of the city**  
Uncover all there is to know with an organised tour. Look out for the 'Hands Across the Divide' statue, a symbol of today's vibrant city.
- **Stroll across the Peace Bridge and explore Ebrington**  
View the city from a unique angle on the Peace Bridge and take time to discover the rejuvenated Ebrington Square.
- **Known as the City of Song, enjoy the best of the city's live music**  
From impromptu traditional music to contemporary music visit Peadar O'Donnells or the Gweedore Bars. The Nerve Centre, Cultúrlann Uí Chanáin and many more pubs and clubs are also host to a vibrant music scene.
- **Travel outside the city and marvel at the highest waterfall in Northern Ireland**  
At Ness Country Park, you can also check out the many species of wildlife and birdlife including the famous red squirrel.

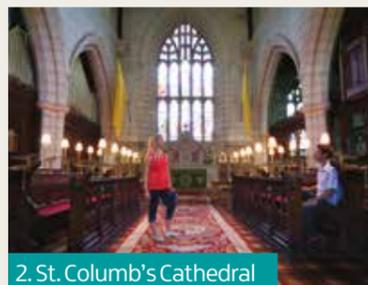
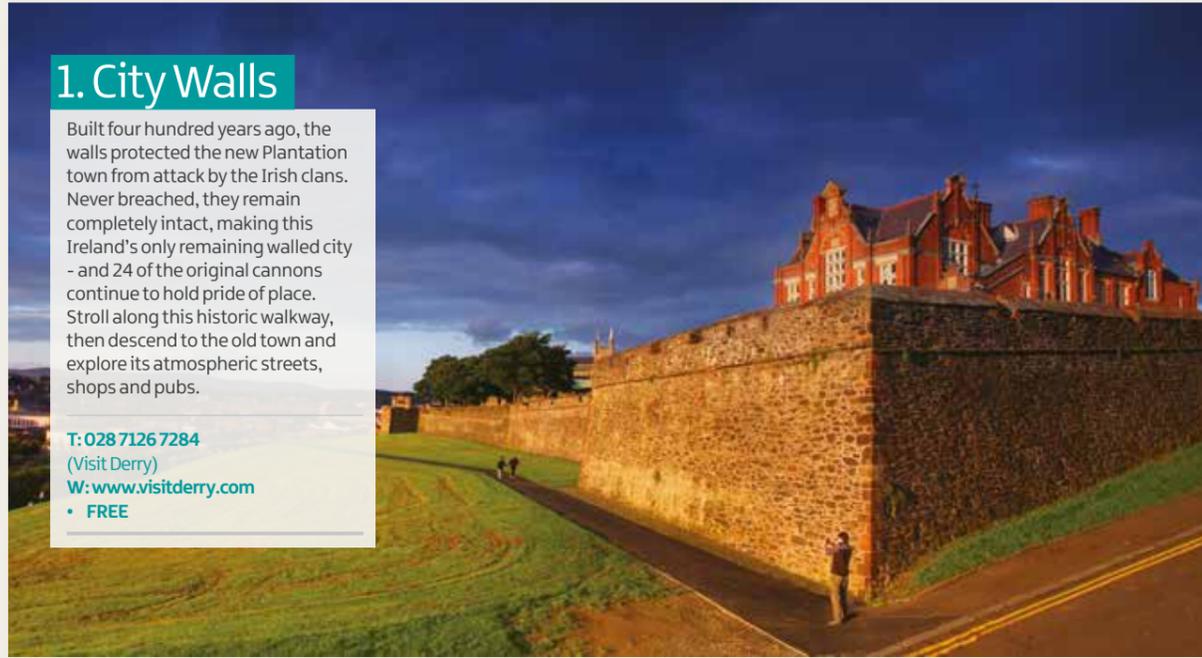
## After Dark:

- Soak up the culture of this vibrant city by taking in a performance at The Playhouse, Millennium Forum, Verbal Arts Centre or Waterside Theatre.
- Take a stroll along the Queens Quay and choose from one of the many fine restaurants on offer.

## 1. City Walls

Built four hundred years ago, the walls protected the new Plantation town from attack by the Irish clans. Never breached, they remain completely intact, making this Ireland's only remaining walled city - and 24 of the original cannons continue to hold pride of place. Stroll along this historic walkway, then descend to the old town and explore its atmospheric streets, shops and pubs.

T: 028 7126 7284  
(Visit Derry)  
W: [www.visitderry.com](http://www.visitderry.com)  
• FREE



2. St. Columba's Cathedral

The cathedral was the first of its kind to be built after the Reformation. As one of the city's most historic buildings, its Chapter House Museum contains artefacts from the Siege of 1689 as well as information on famous personalities; Cecil Frances Alexander (the hymn writer), the Earl Bishop and world famous philosopher, George Berkeley. Audio visual display. **While In The Area Visit:** Saint Augustine's Church, the monastic site of Saint Columba.

T: 028 7126 7313  
W: [www.stcolumbascathedral.org](http://www.stcolumbascathedral.org)  
• '£ (donations appreciated, £2 suggested; tours)



3. First Derry Presbyterian Church and Blue Coat School Visitor Centre

First Derry Presbyterian Church re-opened in May 2011 following extensive restoration which totally renovated the church whilst retaining many of the original features. Having been closed for 9 years the Church is once again being used as a place of worship. Adjoining the Church is the Blue Coat School Visitor Centre which tells the story of how Presbyterianism arrived in Ireland, the role Presbyterians had in commerce, education and in the defence of the city during the Great Siege. Closed October to April. Please call for more details.

T: 028 7126 1550  
W: [www.visitderry.com](http://www.visitderry.com)  
• Free (£ - guided/group tours) donations welcome



4. The Tower Museum

The Tower Museum immerses you in Londonderry's potent history with two engrossing exhibitions: The Story of Derry Exhibition, which narrates the city's development from monastic times to present day and An Armada Shipwreck - La Trinidad Valencera, the story of a Spanish galleon that sank off the Donegal coast in 1588. Opening times vary during summer months.

T: 028 7137 2411  
W: [www.derrycity.gov.uk/museums](http://www.derrycity.gov.uk/museums)  
• £



5. Walking and Taxi Tours

Learn about the city's past and present by going on a guided walking tour. Or go it alone with the MyTourTalk MP3 player. Alternatively take a more intimate taxi tour and explore the stories of this historic city. Details of all tours available from the Visitor Information Centre.

T: 028 7126 7284  
(Visit Derry)  
W: [www.visitderry.com](http://www.visitderry.com)  
• £



8. Museum of Free Derry

The museum focuses on the civil rights campaign which emerged in the 1960s and the Free Derry/early Troubles period of the early 1970s. It tells the people's story of the civil rights movement, the Battle of the Bogside, Internment, Free Derry and Bloody Sunday. The museum has an archive of over 25,000 individual items relating to the period. Most items with immense historical significance were donated by local residents.

T: 028 7136 0880  
W: [www.museumoffreederry.org](http://www.museumoffreederry.org)  
• £



6. The Guildhall

Built in 1887 by The Honourable The Irish Society, the Guildhall is steeped in unique history. With its stunning stained glass windows and neo-gothic style it is one of the most striking buildings in the North West. See the staircase, main hall organ and corridors within this distinctive building. After internal refurbishments (which have won numerous architectural awards) new facilities include a Visitor Information Point, an exhibition area, tours as well as a café with outdoor space onto Harbour Square.

T: 028 7137 6510  
W: [www.derrycity.gov.uk/guildhall](http://www.derrycity.gov.uk/guildhall)  
• FREE (£ - tours)



9. Riverwatch Aquarium & Visitor Centre

Riverwatch Aquarium & Visitor Centre is a must for all ages. Learn about the incredible fish life in our loughs, rivers, sea and shore through interactive exhibitions and activities. Eight aquariums hold freshwater and saltwater species from different eco-systems. If you're lucky, you might just arrive at feeding time. Also open Saturdays during July and August.

T: 028 7134 2100  
W: [www.loughs-agency.org](http://www.loughs-agency.org)  
• FREE



7. Creggan Country Park

A great place for sports enthusiasts, or those who simply want to enjoy the scenery. Enjoy outdoor pursuits, paintballing, watersports, water park and angling, available here with professional instruction. There are wonderful views including the Donegal Hills and across the city to the Lough Foyle estuary, with Binevenagh Mountain visible in the distance. Fully licensed restaurant and signed heritage trail on-site.

T: 028 7136 3133  
W: [www.creggancountrypark.com](http://www.creggancountrypark.com)  
• FREE (Park admission/heritage trail)  
• £ (Activities)

## Tell me more

Please contact all attractions directly to confirm opening times and prices.

[www.discovernorthernireland.com/walledcity](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/walledcity)  
[www.visitderry.com](http://www.visitderry.com)

# Tyrone & Sperrins



Discover, Explore, Enjoy

## Did you know?

- Strabane is home to some much-loved public art. 'The Tinnies', at 5.5m tall, are one of Ireland's largest and consist of five semi-abstract figures themed on music and dance. The 2.4m gold sculpture of Ambrose the Pig in the grounds of the Alley Theatre takes its name from a character created by the town's most famous literary son, Flann O'Brien. Some believe he is a 'wishing pig' who can bestow good fortune.
- The Carleton Trail, in the Clogher Valley is a 30-mile, scenic cycle route named after the acclaimed poet and novelist William Carleton (1794–1869), who spent his childhood there.
- The Sperrins region is an angler's paradise. The Foyle River System (including the Mourne and Owenkillew Rivers), offers some of the best game fishing in Europe.
- Michael Street in Omagh is said to be the smallest street in Ireland, with only one house, while Cookstown is known to have the longest and widest main street in Ireland.

- James Wilson, grandfather of Woodrow Wilson, 28th President of the United States was born at Dergalt, outside Strabane. **Like this? You will love:** Wilson Ancestral Home (tours available July and August), Gray's Printing Press, Strabane (open on limited dates).
- Water from St. Patrick's Well, Magherakeel, west of Castlederg, is reputed to cure toothache.



The largely rural counties of Tyrone and Londonderry are dominated by the heather clad slopes of the Sperrin Mountains, Northern Ireland's largest and least explored mountain range.

Tyrone & Sperrins are one of Northern Ireland's premier eco-tourism destinations, with rivers teeming with life, mountains, valleys, forests, lakes and outdoor pursuits.

The ancient bog gives the Sperrins landscape its character and it has yielded age-old secrets in recent decades. Most notably the Beaghmore Stone Circles, created around 1500 BC, perhaps as an observatory and ritual site for the people who farmed the high pasture of the Sperrins.

With its scenic windswept hills, Tyrone has a special appeal for walkers, who can relax after a day's hiking in the pleasant main street pubs. Quality walks include the Craignamaddy Circuit and the Robber's Table near Gortin, which passes the site where supposed 17th century highwaymen met to divide their spoils after raiding postal carriages.

Visit the region's newest attraction, Hill of The O'Neill & Ranfurly House Arts & Visitor's Centre - the hill from which the famous O'Neill dynasty ruled Gaelic Ireland for over 300 years. With commanding 360 degree views, it is perfect for morning walks, family outings and special picnics.

Explore the Sperrins on the excellent network of signed cycle routes. The more adventurous can take the 31-mile Gold Cycle Route, a scenic

route with little traffic, taking you through the ancient valleys and spirit lifting heights of the Sperrins. From the breathtaking Glenelly Valley, often regarded as one of Northern Ireland's most idyllic and dramatic landscapes, you can marvel at the glacial environment millions of years in the making as you cycle through the dramatic Barnes Gap and the wilds of Sawelabeg and Doraville. Other great views include the Owenkillew Valley and Butterlope Glen – fellow glacial landscapes and from Pigeon Top Mountain near Omagh, Mullaghcarra which rises above Gortin Glen Forest Park and Bolaght Mountain near Castlederg.

Or why not experience one of the Sperrins' four scenic driving routes – included in the National Geographic's prestigious list of the world's top 101 scenic drives for 2012. This is a region rich in history, with many important sites of interest; from Clogherney Wedge Tomb and Tirnoney Dolmen, megalithic burial chambers at least 4000 years old, to the ruins of two separate castles in Newtown Stewart, the 14th century Gaelic Avery's Castle and the 17th century plantation Stewart Castle.

No visit would be complete without some time spent at the Ulster American Folk Park, an outdoor museum which chronicles the story of emigration during the 18th and 19th centuries; bringing to life the various aspects of the emigrant's tale on both sides of the Atlantic.

Whether you enjoy electrifying, adrenaline-based pursuits at Todds Leap, relaxing with a holistic treatment at Angel Sanctuary Healing Centre, walking in Drum Manor Forest Park or marvelling at 'The Tinnies' in Strabane, the Sperrins and Tyrone make for an unforgettable experience for all.



## Experiences

- **Wander around historic Sion Mills**  
Founded around a thriving flax spinning mill in 1835, this beautiful model village has 41 listed buildings. Features include a riverside walk, treasure trail and the popular 'Swinging Bridge'.
- **Indulge in unique retail therapy**  
Island Turf Crafts in Coalisland offers hand-crafted gifts including Celtic crosses, harps and jewellery made from 5,000 year old Irish turf. The Linen Green, based in the historic linen village of Moygashel, boasts a number of internationally renowned Irish designers, while Moy Antiques offers an excellent range of quality Georgian, Victorian, Edwardian and decorative furniture.
- **Pan for gold in the Sperrins**  
The precious metal can still be found in this upland landscape and guides can arrange mineral prospecting in local streams – watch out for 'fool's gold' though.
- **Cook traditional Irish fayre with Norah at Grange Lodge**  
Join Norah Brown, one of Rick Stein's 'Food Heroes', and learn how to make the best use of seasonal, local produce with a contemporary twist.

## After Dark:

- Enjoy a performance at Strule Arts Centre, Omagh, Alley Arts Centre, Strabane or the Craic Theatre & Arts Centre, Coalisland.
- Go for a pre-theatre meal and then enjoy a show at The Burnavon, Cookstown.
- Enjoy traditional music in Tomney's Bar, Moy.
- Head along to a traditional gig or the weekly music session at Dún Uladh Cultural Heritage Centre, Omagh.



## 1. Ulster American Folk Park

Immerse yourself in the story of Irish emigration at the museum that brings it to life. At the Ulster American Folk Park, Omagh, you'll experience an adventure that takes you from the thatched cottages of Ulster, on board a full scale emigrant sailing ship, to the log cabins of the American Frontier. Meet an array of costumed characters with traditional crafts to show, tales to tell and food to share.

T: 028 8224 3292  
W: [www.nmni.com](http://www.nmni.com)  
• £



## 2. Sion Stables

Sion Stables is the focal point for discovering the fascinating, historic linen village of Sion Mills and its unique architecture. The village was founded by the Herdman brothers in 1835 around the imposing Herdman's Mill. Following a major renovation, the stables building has been restored to its original glory for use as a museum, heritage centre, craft/gift shop and café. You will be transported back to a bygone era through innovative digital and visual interpretation techniques exploring the many facets of village life. Visitors can delve deeper into the history of Sion Mills and its key sites with the free Sion Stables smartphone heritage trail app. Alternatively, groups of 10+ can pre-book a guided walking tour; some of the guides worked in the mill until its closure and have family links to the mill going back generations.

T: 028 8165 9772  
W: [www.sionstables.com](http://www.sionstables.com)  
• FREE (£ - guided tours)



## 3. Outdoor Activity in Tyrone & Sperrins

This region is ideal for an outdoors or activity break. Enjoy the excellent range of walking and cycling routes throughout the Sperrins, with exhilarating mountain bike trails at Blessingbourne Estate and Davagh Forest. A number of outdoor adventure operators such as Todds Leap and Adventure Tours NI offer a variety of adrenaline-pumping activities. These include archery, paintballing, off-road driving, canoeing and zip lining.

W: [www.discovernorthernireland.com/asperrins](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/asperrins)  
W: [www.outdoorni.com](http://www.outdoorni.com)



## 4. An Creagán

This visitor centre unveils the rich heritage at the foot of the Sperrin Mountains, and is located within the designated Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. Learn about the area's culture and traditions through the centre's interpretative exhibitions and guided tours (must be pre-booked). Explore this wild, unspoilt area on foot or bike. Stay in one of the An Clachan cottages and discover the past, with all the comforts of the present. Full programme of events throughout the year.

T: 028 8076 1112  
W: [www.ancreagan.com](http://www.ancreagan.com)  
• FREE (entry to attraction)



## 5. Beaghmore Stones

This Bronze Age site, discovered during turf cutting in the 1940s, consists of three pairs of stone circles and associated stone rows, a single circle with many stones within, burial cairns and earlier field boundaries. There are several theories as to why this enigmatic site was built, why not visit and decide for yourself? There are many more stone circles and megalithic tombs to visit in the surrounding area which form part of this impressive historic landscape.

T: 028 8076 1112  
W: [www.ancreagan.com](http://www.ancreagan.com)  
W: [www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea)  
• FREE



## 6. Gortin Glen Forest Park

Located 6 miles from Omagh, the park provides a stunning gateway to the Sperrin Mountains and Gortin Lakes. There are way marked nature trails, an enclosed deer herd, horse trails, mountain bike trails and a 5 mile designated car trek from which to enjoy the views of the superb countryside. **Like this?** You may also like: Drum Manor Forest Park outside Cookstown.

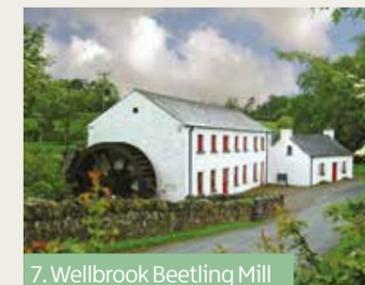
T: 028 6634 3165  
(c/o Enniskillen Forest Service)  
W: [www.nidirect.gov.uk/forests](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/forests)  
• £



## 9. Lissan House

An enchanting country residence set within a 250-acre demesne of ancient woodland and forestry, which was created in the 17th century and remained the home of the Staples family for nearly 400 years. It came to prominence in 2003, reaching the final of the BBC Restoration programme. It opened its doors in Spring 2012 to reveal modern interactive exhibits and original family furnishings which take you on a unique journey through the history of the estate and the family characters who have shaped it. Lissan House includes a wooded picnic area, walking trails through the entire estate, shop and The Dining Room at Lissan serving freshly baked goods and bespoke tea and coffee.

T: 028 8676 3312  
W: [www.lissanhouse.com](http://www.lissanhouse.com)  
• £



## 7. Wellbrook Beetling Mill

Nestling in an idyllic wooded glen full of lovely walks and picnic spots, the last working water-powered linen beetling mill in Northern Ireland offers a unique experience for all the family. Try some scutching, hackling and weaving and over the thundering cacophony of beetling engines, learn of the importance of the linen industry in 19th-century Ireland.

T: 028 8674 8210  
W: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wellbrook-beetling-mill](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/wellbrook-beetling-mill)  
• £



## 10. Hill of The O'Neill and Ranfurly House Arts & Visitor Centre

This is the perfect starting point for an exploration of the Dungannon and Tyrone area. The Hill of The O'Neill is one of Ireland and Europe's most important heritage sites, used by rulers, noblemen and armies as a stronghold to dominate the region. At least two castles are thought to have been built here, as well as a grand manor house and a fortified town. It was from here the famous O'Neill dynasty utilized a stunning 360-degree view of the province of Ulster to rule Gaelic Ireland for over 300 years. The adjacent Ranfurly House Arts & Visitor Centre has a multi-media exhibition narrating the Hill's historical significance, its links to the O'Neills and the subsequent Flight of the Earls and Plantation of Ulster. It is located in the former Belfast Bank, a beautiful mid-Victorian centrepiece at the heart of Dungannon town. Visitors can enjoy guided tours on request and learn about tales of intrigue and exile, fascinating journeys and battle stories.

T: 028 8772 8600  
W: [www.dungannon.info](http://www.dungannon.info)  
• FREE (including tours)



## 8. Springhill

Springhill has a beguiling spirit that captures the heart of every visitor. Described as 'one of the prettiest houses in Ulster', its welcoming charm reveals a family home with portraits, furniture and decorative arts that bring to life the many generations of Lenox-Conynghams who lived here from 1680. The old laundry houses one of Springhill's most popular attractions, the Costume Collection with some exceptionally fine 18th to 20th century pieces. Visit the natural play area where there is endless fun for all the family. The Visitor Centre has self-service refreshments and retail area offering locally made crafts and souvenirs. Enjoy short walks around the charming estate, relax in the herb garden with a chamomile lawn and browse the second-hand bookshop.

T: 028 8674 8210  
W: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/springhill](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/springhill)  
• £

## Tell me more

Please contact all attractions directly to confirm opening times and prices.

[www.discovernorthernireland.com/sperrins](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/sperrins)  
[www.flavourofityrone.com](http://www.flavourofityrone.com)  
[www.midulstercouncil.org](http://www.midulstercouncil.org)

# Fermanagh Lakelands



An Enchanted Landscape



## Did you know?

- The Erne Canoe Trail provides a water trail of up to 50 kilometres, linking to the Shannon and covering both Upper and Lower Lough Erne.
- Fermanagh's Lakelands are famous for both coarse and game angling – these diverse waters include salmon, wild brown trout and also the famous sonaghan, feroc and gillaroo.
- Fermanagh is a shoppers' delight with many local craft shops, specialist delicatessens and locally made Belleek Pottery.
- For a completely different museum experience, why not visit Sheelin Irish Lace Museum in Bellanaleck.
- There are 154 islands on Lough Erne – 57 on Upper Lough Erne and 97 on Lower Lough Erne.
- Fermanagh's main town, Enniskillen, derives its name from the Irish 'Inis Ceithleann' meaning 'the island of Cathleen'.
- The family of Andrew Barton Patterson, famous as the composer of 'Waltzing Matilda', came from Letter, near Kesh.
- Portora Royal School in Enniskillen includes among its alumni Irish literary greats Samuel Beckett and Oscar Wilde.
- Fermanagh is known for its famous black bacon, invented by Award Winning O'Doherty's Fine Meats. They keep their own herd of pigs living freely on Inishcorkish Island on Upper Lough Erne, which can be visited by appointment.
- In 2012 the town of Enniskillen celebrated 400 years of its official foundation by the Royal Charter of James I.



The county derives its name from 'Firmonach', 'the men of Monach', a Celtic tribe that settled around the shores of the loughs in the early Christian era.

The twin lakes of Lough Erne, Upper and Lower, cover one-third of Fermanagh. With such an abundance of water including lakes, rivers and canals there are many opportunities to island-hop your way through the waves and currents, or you can join a cruise through the waters of Upper and Lower Lough Erne taking in the breathtaking scenery and landscapes.

Local folklore says that a graceful woman glides across Lower Lough Erne through the mists of May, clad in flowing garments and carrying a garland of wild flowers. Her appearance is an omen of good times ahead and is celebrated at the Lady of the Lake Festival each July in Irvinestown.

Evidence of the Celts abounds here, particularly in the enigmatic pagan stone idols of Boa Island. The two-headed Janus figure on Boa Island was the inspiration for Seamus Heaney's poem, 'January God', with the Celts believing that the head was the seat of the soul and the centre of man's life force.

Take a boat tour across to Devenish Island, one of the most important monastic sites in Northern Ireland. Founded by Saint Molaise in the sixth century, it includes a round tower, bell tower and a refuge from the Viking Raids.

Fermanagh is also home to three National Trust properties – Castle Coole, Crom Estate and Florence Court.

As one of Ireland's greatest neo-classical houses, Castle Coole is an 18th century mansion with beautifully landscaped gardens and stunning interiors including a State Bedroom prepared for George IV. The grounds are perfect for a leisurely walk in picturesque surroundings.

Crom Estate is considered to be one of the National Trust's most important nature reserves as the largest surviving area of woodland in Northern Ireland. With a combination of historical ruins, islands and woodlands it also offers tranquil landscapes and beautiful surroundings. The Old Castle Garden is also home to the ancient Yew Tree, named among the 50 greatest British trees.

Florence Court is one of our most important 18th century houses, noted for its rococo plasterwork and a fine collection of Irish furniture – explore in detail with an organised tour.

Fought over and captured many times, Enniskillen Castle dates back to the early fifteenth century and houses the museum of the Inniskilling Fusiliers. The Duke of Wellington acknowledged that this regiment saved the centre of the line at the Battle of Waterloo. The town's Portora Royal School, founded by James I in 1608, includes such literary alumni as Oscar Wilde and Samuel Beckett.

Fermanagh is also ideal for an activity break, with a number of adventure centres offering options on land and water. There are also some fine golf courses, with Lough Erne Resort due to host the Irish Open in 2017.

Don't forget to explore the underground network of caverns at the Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark, which celebrated 30 years of being open to the public in 2015. The longest is 7 kilometres, so don't get lost!



## Experiences

- **Enjoy an educational haircut**  
Headhunters Barbers Shop, Enniskillen is also home to a railway museum, so learn some interesting facts about the railway while you are there.
- **Cruise Fermanagh's islands**  
Hire a cruiser and explore Fermanagh at your own pace. Stop off at one of the islands for a lazy lunch. With an abundance of islands to choose from, you will be spoilt for choice.
- **Climb Cuilcagh**  
At 665m, Cuilcagh is the only true mountain in Fermanagh. Follow the new boardwalk and enjoy breathtaking views from the summit – an unmissable Geopark experience.
- **Get a different view of Enniskillen**  
Take the Enniskillen Canoe Tour and discover the secrets of this historic island town from a unique perspective.

## After Dark:

- Have a pint in historic Blakes of the Hollow, which celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2012.
- Take in a show at the Ardhowen Theatre, overlooking picturesque Lough Erne.
- Enjoy fine dining at one of Fermanagh's many waterside restaurants.
- Take an evening cruise with a local boat company – dinner can be included.
- Unwind with live music sessions at a range of top venues.

## 1. Florence Court

Florence Court is one of the most beautiful Georgian houses in Ulster, nestled against the wild mountain backdrop of Benaughlin and the Cuilcagh Mountains. Outside there are scenic and restful gardens, a play and picnic area with extensive walks across the demesne; and inside enjoy a fascinating upstairs-downstairs tour of the house to uncover the story of the Cole family and their working Irish estate. Home-baking is a speciality in the tearoom and courtyard areas, where a snack or meal can be enjoyed.

T: 028 6634 8249  
W: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/florencecourt](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/florencecourt)  
• £



2. Castle Coole

This neo-classical masterpiece, completed in 1798, captures the elegance and opulence of its era. The mansion is set in a beautiful, scenic landscaped park, with numerous walks to enjoy. Visit the huge basement, where an army of servants once worked, and look out for the underground Servants' Tunnel, created so that staff and goods could be brought into the house unseen.

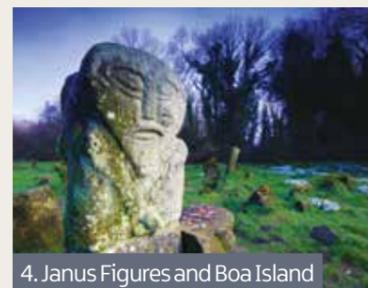
T: 028 6632 2690  
W: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/castlecoole](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/castlecoole)  
• £



3. Crom

The Crom Estate is one of the most important nature conservation sites in these islands. The beautiful lakeside demesne is home to ancient woodland, freshwater habitats, rare butterflies and the largest heronry in Ireland. You might even spot an elusive pine marten! The visitor centre houses an exhibition on the estate's history and wildlife. Hire a boat and enjoy viewing Crom from Lough Erne.

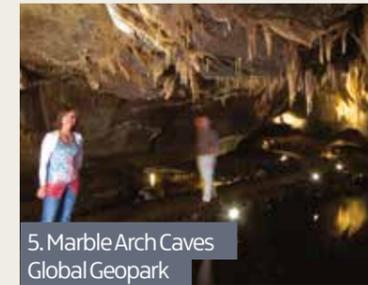
T: 028 6773 8118  
W: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/crom](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/crom)  
• £



4. Janus Figures and Boa Island

In Caldragh Cemetery on Boa Island stand two pagan idols in stone. The larger of these is a Janus figure, so called because it has two heads back to back. The other statue, from nearby Lustmore Island, has only one fully carved eye suggesting that it represents Badhbha, or Divine Hag, the Celtic goddess of war. Open all year. Accessible by car.

T: 028 6632 3110  
(Fermanagh Visitor Information Centre)  
W: [www.fermanaghlakelands.com](http://www.fermanaghlakelands.com)  
• FREE



5. Marble Arch Caves Global Geopark

Identify stalactites from stalagmites at the Marble Arch Caves, one of Europe's finest show caves. Glide along an underground river on electrically powered boats and explore winding passages and lofty chambers. Powerful lighting reveals the beauty and grandeur of these magnificent caverns. The Geopark achieved UNESCO status once again in 2012, and the caves celebrated their 30th anniversary of being open to the public in 2015. Closed November - February.

T: 028 6634 8855  
W: [www.marblearchcavesgeopark.com](http://www.marblearchcavesgeopark.com)  
• £



6. Enniskillen Castle Museums

Enniskillen Castle was a stronghold of the Gaelic Maguire Chieftains, then a Plantation Castle and later a military barracks. The Inniskillings Museum has informative displays about the history of the regiments. Fermanagh County Museum is closed for refurbishment with the exception of the Medieval Maguire display, and is due to re-open in Spring 2016. A special VE Day beacon was lit on the adjacent Castle Island in May 2015 marking the 70th anniversary of the end of the Second World War.

T: 028 6632 5000  
W: [www.enniskillencastle.co.uk](http://www.enniskillencastle.co.uk)  
• £



7. Castle Archdale Courtyard, Visitor Centre & Country Park

Situated approximately 10 miles north west of Enniskillen and extending over 230 acres along Lower Lough Erne. Based on the demesne of the Archdale Manor House, built in 1773. The Courtyard is complete with a visitor centre and World War II museum.

T: 028 6862 1588  
W: [www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea)  
• FREE



8. Belleek Pottery

Since 1857, the white pearly lustre of Belleek porcelain has won the hearts of collectors the world over. Step into Belleek Pottery and see one of Northern Ireland's oldest and most fascinating attractions. A tour reveals that the techniques first developed by the Belleek craftsmen are still meticulously followed today. Closed Christmas.

T: 028 6865 8501  
T: 028 6865 9300  
W: [www.belleek.ie](http://www.belleek.ie)  
• £



9. Devenish Island Monastic Site

The most important of Lough Erne's many island church settlements, Devenish was founded in the sixth century by Saint Molaise. Admire the beautifully carved, intricate details of the churches and climb the round tower. Devenish Island can be accessed by the MV Kestrel. Contact Fermanagh Visitor Information Centre for details of boat tours to Devenish.

T: 028 6632 3110  
(Fermanagh Visitor Information Centre)  
W: [www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea)  
• FREE (£ - tours)

## Tell me more

Please contact all attractions directly to confirm opening times and prices.

[www.discovernorthernireland.com](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com)  
Fermanagh Lakelands Tourism  
T: +44 (0) 28 6632 3110  
[www.fermanaghlakelands.com](http://www.fermanaghlakelands.com)  
[www.ardhowentheatre.com](http://www.ardhowentheatre.com)  
[www.canoeni.com](http://www.canoeni.com)  
[www.cycleni.com](http://www.cycleni.com)  
[www.field-studies-council.org/derrygonnelly](http://www.field-studies-council.org/derrygonnelly)  
[www.irishcookeryschool.com](http://www.irishcookeryschool.com)  
[www.nidirect.gov.uk/forests](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/forests)  
[www.orchardacrefarm.com](http://www.orchardacrefarm.com)  
[www.walkni.com](http://www.walkni.com)  
[www.waterwaysireland.org](http://www.waterwaysireland.org)

### Pamper

Relax and pamper yourself at one of these peaceful, zen-like locations:

- Lough Erne Resort and Thai Spa
- Blaney Spa and Yoga Centre
- The Spa at the Killyhevlin Hotel
- Manor House Country Hotel

### Cook

Fermanagh is truly a foodie's paradise, and is home to some top cookery schools. Learn how to create contemporary and traditional dishes at Belle Isle School of Cookery or immerse yourself in green living at Orchard Acre Farm.

### Tour

Tour Fermanagh by land or water. Join a fascinating walking tour of Enniskillen or enjoy a tranquil cruise around Lough Erne's myriad of islands by boat or waterbus.

### Activities and Things to Do

- Enjoy a picnic and the stunning viewpoint at Lough Navar.
- Get active with outdoor pursuits at the Share Centre, Corralea Activity Centre, Lough Melvin Holiday Centre and Lusty Beg. Try your hand at a full range of land and water-based activities including archery, windsurfing and 4x4 off-road driving.
- Explore the historic ruins of Tully Castle and Monea Castle.

# Armagh



## The Ancient Cathedral City of Ireland

### Did you know?

- Armagh Public Library, Northern Ireland's oldest, founded in 1771 by Archbishop Richard Robinson, holds a first edition of Jonathan Swift's 'Gullivers Travels' containing the author's own hand-written notes.
- County Armagh is known as 'the orchard county' and is home to circa 4000 acres of Apple Orchards. The Armagh Bramley was recognised as a European food brand in 2012, one of only 3-4 in Northern Ireland. Learn more at the Bramley Apple Blossom Fair in nearby Loughgall (May).
- The 92-mile Saint Patrick's Trail driving route runs between Armagh and Bangor, connecting key sites relating to Patrick's life and legacy. Alternatively walkers can follow the 82-mile Saint Patrick's Way walking route from Armagh's Navan Centre to Down Cathedral, Downpatrick.
- Armagh City is the oldest city in Ireland. It was founded by Saint Patrick and is the location of his principal Church in Ireland.
- Armagh City is the location of the primates of both the Catholic Church and Church of Ireland in Ireland, namely Cardinal and Archbishop.
- Armagh is the only city in the world with two cathedrals dedicated to the one Saint, Saint Patrick.
- Football's penalty kick was invented in the village of Milford, 2 miles out of the city. This is recognised by both FIFA and UEFA.
- Tommy Makem, the legendary folk musician who was a huge name in the US, hailed from outside Armagh City.



### This is Armagh, Ecclesiastical Capital of Ireland and a place of significance to stimulate and satisfy the soul.

It may be the smallest of Northern Ireland's six counties but it certainly has no shortage of history, culture and scenic landscapes. The elegant City of Armagh with its Georgian houses and featured Mall is best known for its rich Christian heritage. The city is a main destination on the Saint Patrick's Trail and has been known as the spiritual capital of Ireland since the Saint founded his great church in 445 AD on the hill-top where presently the Church of Ireland cathedral is situated.

Stroll through this dignified city, enjoying the elegant Georgian streets and tree-lined Mall. Explore the many sites of interest, including two cathedrals named after our patron saint – one Catholic, one Church of Ireland. The city has many sites to be explored and enjoyed.

Re-live the battle of Barossa, part of the Napoleonic wars at the Royal Fusiliers Museum. Discover the coin and art collections on display at No. 5 Vicars' Hill or visit nearby Armagh Public Library and see the many hidden treasures such as an original copy of 'Gulliver's Travels' and Sir Walter Raleigh's 'History of the World'. Step back in time at Navan Fort situated to the west of the city. This Iron Age site was once home to the high kings of Ulster and an ancient ceremonial site. Uncover the facts

and findings of Emain Macha and learn about the mystical and mythical characters associated with Navan. Explore first-hand the remaining mounds, ditches and banks of Emain Macha.

The rest of the county also has much to offer to visitors of all interests. The pretty National Trust properties of Address House, the Argory and Derrymore House are fine country estates worth exploring.

Armagh is full of surprises. Both city and the wider rural surroundings enjoy a gentler pace of life, unmatched Georgian architecture, the amazing green space of the Mall, stunning National Trust properties, surprising sports passed down from generations and a host of activities in a beautiful natural environment. Enjoy daytime café culture at a number of restaurants in the city centre.

The wider area is also home to a rich linen heritage, historic villages and acres of apple orchards centred around Loughgall and befitting its status as the 'orchard county'. Each May the county comes alive with colour and pink flowers in the apple trees and an annual Apple Blossom Festival celebrates the start of the season.

This is a thought-provoking destination - from Saint Patrick to the Kings of Ulster, from studying the heavens in the Planetarium to researching your family tree in Armagh Public Library, Armagh has always been a place that stimulates and enthralles. Whether, cathedrals or cultural events; myths or monuments there are stories, insights, discovery and enjoyment for all.

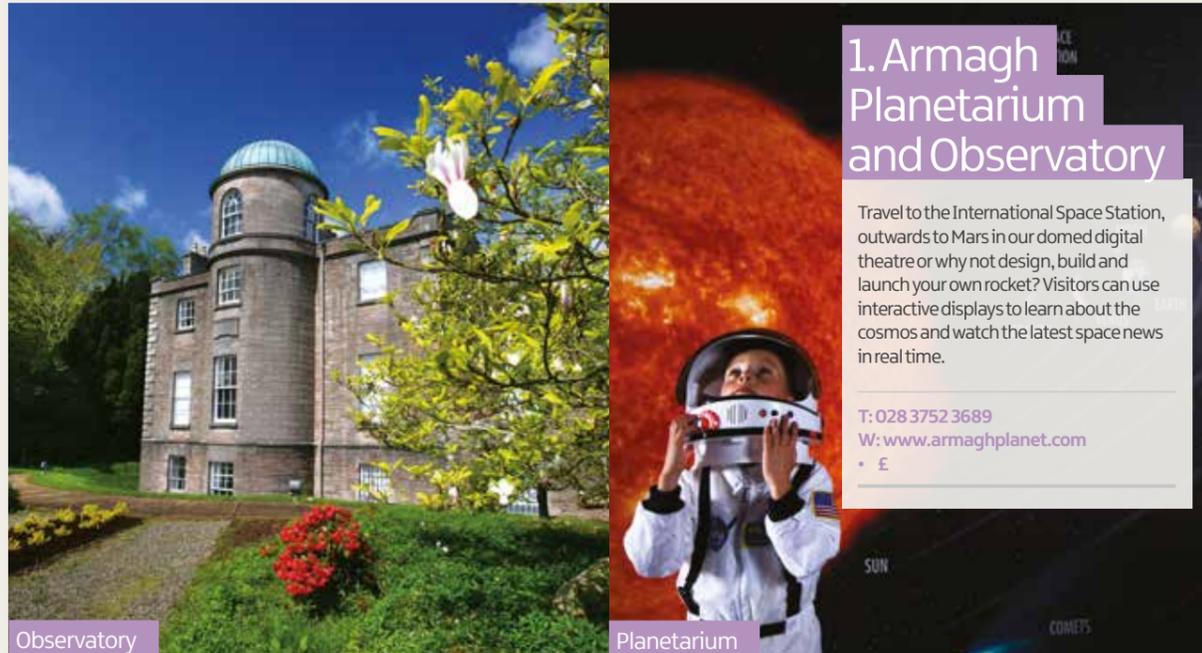


### Experiences

- **Enjoy a day of culture and learning in Armagh**  
Visit Armagh Public Library, founded in 1771 by Archbishop Richard Robinson. Then head to nearby No. 5 Vicars' Hill and view the coin and art collections of Archbishops Robinson and Beresford. Don't miss a show at Armagh Planetarium – perfect for all ages.
- **See a scale model of the universe at the Astropark at Armagh Observatory**  
Explore the Astropark, a scale-model of the Universe, where you can learn about our Solar System, our Galaxy, and beyond.
- **Stroll around picturesque Palace Demesne**  
While walking the grounds, marvel at the beautiful surroundings.
- **Watch the traditional game of road bowls in Armagh**  
Played along a 2 mile stretch of road - probably the longest bowling lane in the world, Blackwatertown will play host to the 2nd part of the All-Ireland Road Bowls Competition on 2nd August 2014.
- **Spend an afternoon in Loughgall**  
Visit the picturesque village of Loughgall, a short distance from the city. It is home to a large Country Park and Sloan's House, a museum exploring the origins of the Orange Order.

### After Dark:

- Take in a show at the city's Market Place Theatre & Arts Centre where you will find everything from top quality drama to comedy nights.
- Enjoy both traditional and modern music in many of the various bars the city has to offer.



### 1. Armagh Planetarium and Observatory

Travel to the International Space Station, outwards to Mars in our domed digital theatre or why not design, build and launch your own rocket? Visitors can use interactive displays to learn about the cosmos and watch the latest space news in real time.

T: 028 3752 3689  
W: [www.armaghplanet.com](http://www.armaghplanet.com)  
• £



### 2. Navan Centre and Fort

The centre offers an appreciation of the history of the area through a stimulating multi-lingual exhibition, which uncovers the facts and findings of Emain Macha (Navan Fort) while providing engaging activities for all the family. Visitors learn about mystical and mythical characters such as Cu Chulainn and King Connor. Walk and talk with heroes of these tales through living history interpretation. Experience the remaining mounds, ditches and banks of Navan Fort. Learn about the massive circular ritual temple on our walking tours and piece together myth and reality.

T: 028 3752 9644  
W: [www.navan.com](http://www.navan.com)  
• £



### 3. St. Patrick's Catholic Cathedral

This twin-spired, imposing cathedral, on an elevated site, was started in 1840, but work was suspended during the Irish Famine of 1845-48. Work recommenced in 1854 when J J McCarthy was appointed architect. It was dedicated for worship in 1873 but the magnificent interior decoration was not completed until early in the 20th century. The cathedral was finally consecrated in 1904.

T: 028 3752 2813  
W: [www.armaghparish.net](http://www.armaghparish.net)  
• FREE (general entry) / £ (guided tours)



### 4. St. Patrick's Church of Ireland Cathedral

In the centre of the city, on the Hill of Armagh, the cathedral stands on the site of St. Patrick's first church of 445 AD. Frequently destroyed and re-built, the cathedral of today is a 19th century restoration of Archbishop O'Scannell's building of 1266 - of which the crypt, now open to visitors, remains. It contains some important artefacts, and is the burial place of Brian Boru, the first High King of Ireland, who was killed at Clontarf in 1014.

T: 028 3752 3142  
W: [www.stpatricks-cathedral.org](http://www.stpatricks-cathedral.org)  
• £



### 5. The Argory

Built in the 1820s, this handsome Irish gentry house is surrounded by its 130 hectare wooded riverside estate. The former home of the MacGeough Bond family, a tour of this Neo-classical masterpiece, provided by local guides, reveals stories of its hero and hidden treasures which remain unchanged since the 1900s. Enjoy garden, woodland and riverside walks, and explore the children's adventure playground, complete with rope swing and zip line. Visit the Courtyard Coffee Shop for some home baked produce, then browse the gift shop and second-hand bookshop, Blackwater Books. **Like this? You might also like:** Address House.

T: 028 8778 4753  
W: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/argory](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/argory)  
• £



### 8. No. 5 Vicars' Hill

Built in 1772 as the Diocesan Registry to hold records for the Church of Ireland Diocese, its octagonal rooms contained many public as well as church records. While the records are no longer retained in the building, some examples are on display, with ancient coins, gems, significant prints, early Christian artefacts and other collections and curiosities from Armagh Public Library. There is an opportunity to explore the collections in more detail through the use of touch screens. Copies of old maps of Armagh are on display and provide a good overview of settlement patterns from 1600 onwards.

T: 028 3752 3142  
W: [armaghpubliclibrary.arm.ac.uk/](http://armaghpubliclibrary.arm.ac.uk/)  
• £



### 6. Armagh County Museum

Armagh County Museum is Ireland's oldest county museum with fine displays and collections which reflect the rich and varied lives of the people who lived, worked and had connections with this famous city and county over the centuries.

T: 028 3752 3070  
W: [www.nmni.com/acm](http://www.nmni.com/acm)  
• FREE



### 9. Gosford Forest Park

Situated six miles from Armagh, Gosford Forest Park is perfect for families. Enjoy a picnic, barbecue, feed the ducks, or look at the variety of poultry and red deer and other animals. Eco-trail on-site.

T: 028 3755 2154  
028 3755 2169  
W: [www.nidirect.gov.uk/forests](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/forests)  
• £



### 7. Armagh Public Library

One of the oldest libraries in Ireland, Armagh Public Library was established in 1771 by Archbishop Robinson. In addition to the Archbishop's personal library which contains 17th and 18th century books on a wide range of subjects, there are many rare and valuable books such as incunabula, first editions, and illuminated manuscripts. The library is also a registered museum and holds prints, ancient Irish artefacts, gems, coins, as well as other objects. The collections are kept alive and current by acquisitions of items on the following subjects: local history (Armagh City and county), church history, St. Patrick, and Jonathan Swift.

T: 028 3752 3142  
W: [armaghpubliclibrary.arm.ac.uk/](http://armaghpubliclibrary.arm.ac.uk/)  
• FREE

## Tell me more

Please contact all attractions directly to confirm opening times and prices.

[www.discovernorthernireland.com/armagh](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/armagh)  
[www.armagh.co.uk](http://www.armagh.co.uk)

# Mourne Mountains



The outdoor capital with a rich cultural history and a million stories to tell

## Did you know?

- The Mourne Mountains were the inspiration for CS Lewis' Kingdom of Narnia. Explore this magical world at the Narnia Trail within Kilbroney Park, Rostrevor.
- The 22 mile Mourne Wall runs from peak to peak over some of the highest summits in the range, and is testament to the stone-working skills of the hardy locals.
- Local seafood restaurants are kept well supplied with the specialities of turbot, plaice, langoustine and brill.
- Ireland's highest surviving passage tomb can be found on the summit of Slieve Gullion.
- The Mourne Mountains is rich with an abundance of local myths and legends. Although many of the stories originated from true stories, most are only local folklore. Find out more about the origins of Maggie's Leap, The Brandy Pad and The Bloody Bridge.
- If you turn off your car at Gravity Hill at Spelga Dam you can experience your car move up the hill.
- Rathfriland, in the fertile land of County Down, was the birthplace of Patrick Brontë, father of Charlotte, Emily and Anne - the Brontë sisters. Why not visit the Brontë Homeland Interpretative Centre and find out more about this influential literary family.
- The Mourne Mountains have provided a stunning backdrop as filming locations for HBO's 'Game of Thrones®' as well as for BAFTA and Golden Globe nominated movie 'Philomena.'



The Mournes stand true to the words of songwriter Percy French as the place 'where the mountains sweep down to the sea'. They are not only one of Ireland's most scenic areas and an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), they are quite simply an adventurer's paradise.

The landscape lends itself perfectly to outdoors adventure activity and appreciation of the environment. The combination of sea and mountains means you can choose from full on adventure or a more laid back approach to the outdoors and there are many outdoor adventure centres providing activities from hill walking, rock climbing and mountain boarding to mountain biking, bouldering, fishing, golf and horse riding.

Don a wetsuit and prepare to take on waterfalls, rock slides and plunge pools at Bloody Bridge as you enter the world of wet bouldering or go sea kayaking.

The array of adventures on offer is all under the gaze of Northern Ireland's highest mountain peak, Slieve Donard which rises to an impressive height of 848 metres. Discovering the Mourne Mountains by foot is a must. Dominated by a compact ring of 12 mountains there are walks to suit everyone.

Alternatively you can explore a section of the Mourne Way Walk, a 26 mile off-road walk

traversing the foothill of the Mourne Mountains from Newcastle. The route provides a magnificent display of amazing views of the impressive Mourne landscape and historic Mourne Wall.

The towns in the Mournes area have their own stories to tell, the fishing villages of Kilkeel and Annalong, Banbridge with its linen industry legacy, Victorian Rostrevor and the historic City of Newry. Indeed the charming seaside town of Newcastle is home to the famous Royal County Down golf course, one of the world's top ten links courses. Other golf courses can also be found in Ardglass, Warrenpoint and Kilkeel. Along the coast, you can enjoy the wild and natural dunes of Murlough National Nature Reserve, a habitat for a diversity of wildlife. Visit the colourful village of Dundrum, where a splendid Norman castle overlooks restaurants offering Dundrum Bay oysters, the day's fish catch and venison reared in the surrounding drumlins.

There are many forest parks in the region, two of which are Tollymore and Castlewellan.

In the upper Mournes are the vast tranquil reservoirs of Silent Valley and Ben Crom, which stand as testament to the stone-working skills of the hardy locals. There are many walking trails showcasing the stunning scenery and the 22-mile Mourne Wall also runs from peak to peak over some of the highest summits.

It's not all fast paced though, in the evening, why not unwind the Mourne way with a steaming seaweed bath, sample some local food and 'craic' or simply watch the sunset beneath the magnificent mountains that give the area its enduring appeal - then you will be refreshed for another day's activities ... and all without straying from the splendour of the Mountains of Mourne.



## Experiences

- **Get active outdoors**  
The Mournes area is ideal for outdoor pursuits, from walking, cycling and horse-riding to more extreme options like mountain boarding and coasteering.
- **Tee off at top golf courses**  
From world-famous Royal County Down, which hosted the 2015 Irish Open, to other excellent courses like Ardglass, Kilkeel and Warrenpoint, this is a golfer's paradise.
- **Climb Slieve Croob (AONB)**  
Walk to the summit of this outlier of the Mourne Mountains and take in the stunning views of the range. Make sure to visit the impressive Legananny Dolmen nearby.
- **Learn first-hand about seafood**  
Try a hands-on course at the Mourne Seafood Cookery School in Kilkeel - you can even cook your own lunch!
- **Explore The Giant's Lair**  
Kids will love this magical living storybook in the woodlands of Slieve Gullion Forest Park, with art inspired by local myths and legends.

## After Dark:

- Enjoy a gig at Brontë Music Club - a former church, this intimate and unique venue has links to the literary Brontë family.



## 1. Ring of Gullion

The Ring of Gullion Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty offers a wealth of things to do and places to see. Explore the rich cultural heritage and mythology of the area and enjoy the excellent walking, cycling, angling or driving tours. The area is home to a host of impressive neolithic tombs, Kilnasagart Inscribed Stone and nearby Moyry Castle built in 1601 to secure the historic mountain pass known as the 'Gap of the North'.

The flagship events during the year are the Lúnasa Festival in August and the Winter Solstice Festival in December, see the website for full details. Slieve Gullion Forest Park is the gem in South Armagh's crown. Its courtyard is renovated farm buildings from around 1820 and has a café and bar, and Visitor Information Centre. The perfect start to any family trip to the forest park is a visit to the action-packed Adventure Playpark followed by a magical walk around the Giants Lair - A Children's Storybook. Round off your day out with a spin around the mountain's 10km scenic drive.

**T: 028 3031 3170**  
(Newry Visitor Information Centre)  
**W: [www.ringofgullion.org](http://www.ringofgullion.org)**  
• FREE



## 2. The Mourne Mountains and Silent Valley Reservoir

The author C.S. Lewis loved the Mournes and reportedly based his depiction of Narnia on the peaks, valleys and forests of these ancient granite mountains. The Silent Valley reservoir is circled by the range and houses beautiful parkland, lakes and a pond. A shuttle bus runs from the car park to the older Ben Crom reservoir during the months of May, June and September (weekends) and July and August (daily).

**T: 028 4372 2222**  
(Newcastle Visitor Information Centre)  
**T: 0345 744 0088** (NI Water)  
**W: [www.visitmournemountains.com](http://www.visitmournemountains.com)**  
**W: [www.niwater.com/silent-valley](http://www.niwater.com/silent-valley)**  
• £ (Silent Valley car park & shuttle bus; annual pass available)



## 3. Mourne Mountains Bike Trails

Castlewellan Forest Park offers gentle green and blue trails as well as a long distance singletrack red trail which includes some hair-raising black options thrown in for good measure. Those after a more challenging ride should head to the Rostrevor trails, where your extra efforts will be rewarded with stunning panoramic views of Carlingford Lough not to mention an incredible singletrack descent back down to sea level. The Rostrevor Trails include Northern Ireland's only official downhill trails.

**W: [www.mountainbikeni.com](http://www.mountainbikeni.com)**  
• FREE (parking charges may apply)



## 4. Bagenal's Castle (Newry and Mourne Museum)

Bagenal's Castle is a 16th century fortified house and adjoining 19th century warehouse, housing Newry and Mourne Museum. During restoration work, many original features were uncovered, which have been interpreted for the visitor. The museum's diverse collections include material relating to pre-history, Newry's Cistercian foundations, Ulster's Gaelic order, the building of a merchant town and the first summit level canal in the British Isles. A key exhibition, 'A Border Town's Experience of the 20th Century', examines local attitudes to major political and economic events of recent times. There are also permanent exhibitions on farming, fishing and folklore in the Mournes and South Armagh and two temporary exhibitions each year.

**T: 028 3031 3182 / 028 3031 3178**  
**W: [www.bagenalscastle.com](http://www.bagenalscastle.com)**  
• FREE



## 5. Royal County Down Golf Club

Royal County Down is located in the naturally beautiful links setting in the Murlough Nature Reserve where the links stretch along the shores of Dundrum Bay. Narrow ribbons of fairways thread their way through sand dunes surrounded by heather and gorse – so beautiful but also punishing! The famous 'bearded' bunkers feature overhanging lips of red fescue and heather. The greens are fast and many are domed, rejecting any shot lacking conviction. Golf writer Bernard Darwin described the course as one of "big and glorious carries, nestling greens, entertainingly blind shots, local knowledge and beautiful turf – the kind of golf that people play in their most ecstatic dreams. Royal County Down hosted the Irish Open in May 2015.

**T: 028 4372 3314**  
**W: [www.royalcountydown.org](http://www.royalcountydown.org)**  
• £



## 8. Scarva Visitor Centre

Scarva Visitor Centre is located on the banks of the Newry Canal adjacent to the original basin, where vast quantities of coal were loaded for use in the local linen industry. Interpretive boards within the centre help to explain the building of the canal, its trade and Scarva's role within this. The highly acclaimed tea-rooms are located within the centre and serve as a place to relax after a walk or cycle along the canal towpath or simply to enjoy the tranquillity of the canal-side setting. During the summer, Sunday afternoon band concerts take place making the centre an ideal place to spend an enjoyable afternoon. Bike hire available on-site.

**T: 028 3883 2163**  
**W: [www.banbridge.com](http://www.banbridge.com)**  
• FREE



## 6. F.E. McWilliam Gallery and Studio

The F.E. McWilliam Gallery and Studio is dedicated to the memory of Banbridge-born sculptor Frederick Edward McWilliam, one of Ireland's most influential and successful artists. Following his death in London in 1992, the executors of his estate donated the sculptor's studio and its contents to the town of his birth. The gallery and studio houses the collection in a superb exhibition facility of gallery, garden and reconstructed studio. It also provides a café, craft shop and Visitor Information point. Regular exhibitions of Irish and international art. Lecture and workshop programmes also available.

**T: 028 4062 3322**  
**W: [www.femcwilliam.com](http://www.femcwilliam.com)**  
• FREE



## 9. Greencastle Royal Castle and Dundrum Castle

The strategic importance of the South Down coastline over the centuries can be seen in the impressive fortifications which survive in the area. Overlooking the entrance to Carlingford Lough is Greencastle Royal Castle, built in the mid-13th century as part of the coastal chain guaranteeing a safe passage between Dublin and the north. Today's castle is a mix of 13th to 16th century structures and offers excellent views of the Mournes and across the Lough to the Cooley Peninsula. Dundrum Castle is sited on a rocky outcrop high above the town and bay of the same name and was a central fortification in the late 12th century Anglo-Norman conquest of Ulster. The castle is dominated by a tall circular medieval keep with the ruins of the 17th century Blundell House below. Check website for opening times.

**T: 028 9082 3214**  
**W: [www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea)**  
• FREE



## 7. Tollymore Forest Park, Castlewellan Forest Park and Kilbroney Park

Tollymore Forest Park, a filming location for several productions including 'Game of Thrones', offers panoramic views of the nearby Mourne Mountains and the sea at Newcastle. Four waymarked trails of varying lengths explore the park's highlights, including one of Ireland's oldest known arboreta, ornate bridges over the Shimna River, and garden follies including a barn dressed like a church. Nearby Castlewellan Forest Park has one of Europe's most outstanding tree and shrub collections. Attractions include the walled Annesley Garden, a 2.5 mile-long lake walk and the Peace Maze – the world's second largest permanent hedge maze. Kilbroney Park and the adjacent Rostrevor Forest are known for their ancient oak woodland and include a two-mile scenic drive, a play park, Narnia Trail and waymarked walks. Follow the trail up to the famous Cloughmore Stone, a huge glacial erratic, and take in the stunning views across Carlingford Lough.

**T: 028 4377 8664**  
(Castlewellan/Tollymore Forest Parks)  
**T: 028 4173 8134** (Kilbroney Park – play park and caravan/camping bookings)  
**W: [www.nidirect.gov.uk/forests](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/forests)**  
• £ - Tollymore and Castlewellan Forest Parks  
• FREE – Kilbroney Park/Rostrevor Forest

## Tell me more

Please contact all attractions directly to confirm opening times and prices.

[www.discovernorthernireland.com/mournes](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/mournes)  
[www.visitmournemountains.co.uk](http://www.visitmournemountains.co.uk)

# Strangford Lough



Play, Pause, Rewind



## Did you know?

- Strangford Lough in County Down is the largest sea lough within the United Kingdom and Ireland and with 2,000 species of marine and plant life, it is Northern Ireland's first Marine Nature Reserve.
- The Strangford Lough area features several 'Game of Thrones' filming locations, including Castle Ward, Quoile River, Audley's Field, Inch Abbey and Quintin Bay. Oscar-winning short film, 'The Shore' was filmed primarily on location in Killough.
- Thomas Andrews Jr, designer of the Titanic was born in Comber.
- Saul Church was the first Ecclesiastical site of Patrick's mission to the Gael. Saint Patrick is said to have blessed nearby Struell Wells, where legend has it he would spend a great part of the night standing in the water singing psalms and spiritual songs.
- Strangford Millennium stone in Delamont Country Park is one of the tallest megaliths in Ireland. Built from 47 tonnes of Mourne granite, it took 1,000 children 3 days to erect.
- Affreca, daughter of the King of Mann and wife of John de Courcy, Anglo-Norman invader of East Ulster, founded Grey Abbey in 1193.
- Louis MacNeice, celebrated author of the poem 'Carrickfergus' is buried at the Church of Ireland in Carrowdore.



**Designated as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, Strangford Lough is Northern Ireland's first marine nature reserve and is the British Isles' largest sea inlet, internationally renowned for its marine, plant and wildlife.**

Tour along the Ards Peninsula and enjoy the combination of stunning scenery and picturesque villages and towns. Newtownards, at the northern tip of the Lough, Portaferry and Strangford, which is separated by a short ferry crossing at its southern end are notable examples. Seafood is the speciality of the region and the fishing fleet of Portavogie keeps many of the local seafood restaurants well supplied with the very best quality of turbot, plaice, langoustine and brill, providing a real taste of the region.

The area is also associated with two great Scots, James Hamilton and Hugh Montgomery, who led the settlement of the Ards and North Down, laying the foundations for the Plantation of Ulster by Scottish people whose descendants came to be known as the Ulster-Scots.

Activities such as kayaking, fishing and sailing are popular on the Lough, and for the more adventurous the sea safari or canoe trails are a real treat. Activities on land include walking and cycle trails, golf, bird watching and horse riding.

There are also many fascinating attractions to be explored and enjoyed. Spend an afternoon at one of the two National Trust properties in the area, Mount Stewart House and Gardens (which reopened its doors in 2015 following a major restoration

programme) or Castle Ward, which has cycling trails in its grounds. Stately homes and stunning gardens are prominent in the area, largely due to the sub-tropical micro-climate around the Strangford Lough area. Delamont Country Park offers waymarked walks, a miniature railway and the Millennium or Strangford Stone - the largest megalith in Ireland and Britain - while the large collection of native and exotic water birds and wildlife at the tranquil Castle Espie Wetland Centre offers an amazing outdoor learning experience.

Steeped in Christian heritage sites, the Strangford Lough area forms part of the Saint Patrick's driving trail - indeed the area to the south east of the Lough around Downpatrick is commonly known as Saint Patrick's Country due to its close links with the saint and is known the world over as the burial place of Saint Patrick.

Take time out to enjoy the nature events happening in the area throughout the year, from the calm and inspirational colours of spring, on a walk at one of our wonderful National Trust properties, to exploring nature at its finest by early summer when many of Strangford Lough's islands will be crammed with noisy colonies of gulls, terns and ducks.

The summer is also a great time of year to explore the wildlife lurking within rock pools, Search for crabs, starfish and a huge variety of other sea monsters on the shore of Kearney village on the Ards Peninsula.

With over 150 attractions waiting to be discovered, Strangford Lough is waiting to be explored.



## Experiences

- **Step back in time aboard the Downpatrick and County Down Railway**

Enjoy a ride from Downpatrick to Inch Abbey on this full-size, heritage railway (various dates throughout the year). While you're there, visit the exhibition room and gallery of restored, vintage carriages.

- **Tour the stunning Ards Peninsula**

Be sure to also experience the crafts the local area has to offer with a visit to Ards Crafts (Newtownards), Eden Pottery (Millisle), Discovery Glass (Comber) and the Lightning Tree (Comber).

- **Enjoy the viewpoints along the lough on the Portaferry Road**

Take in The Flood Gates, The Maltings, Barrs Bay and The Gas Works.

- **Take on Kirkistown and Bishops court racecourses**

Motorbike and motor sports enthusiasts will love racing these high speed circuits.

- **Enjoy a boat trip to the Copeland Islands**

Take a short boat trip to the main island and enjoy a spot of bird watching while you're there.

## After Dark:

- Enjoy a performance at the Web Theatre, Newtownards.
- Take a historical, evening walking tour of Newtownards.

## 1. Castle Ward

Take the car over to Castle Ward, an 820-acre walled demesne, with an intriguing 18th century mansion. Adventure playground, tea-room, gift and second hand book-shop, three cycling trails, selection of walking trails and 'Hoof Trail' horse-riding all on-site. The estate's 17th century farmyard was temporarily transformed into a 'Game of Thrones®' filming location, 'Winterfell'. Immersive experiences can be enjoyed at 'Winterfell' including archery, filming location cycle tours and much more.

**Like this? Also Visit:** Ark Open Farm and Seaforde Butterfly House.

**T: 028 4488 1204**  
**W: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/castle-ward](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/castle-ward)**  
 • £



## 2. Saint Patrick Centre & Down County Museum

The story of Ireland's patron saint is told at the Saint Patrick Centre. It culminates in a fantastic IMAX presentation and virtual flight. Gift shop, café and terraced garden on-site. Located in the historic buildings of the 18th century Gaol of Down, Down County Museum has fascinating exhibitions, lively events and hands-on activities. **Like this? Also Visit:** The Somme Heritage Centre

**T: 028 4461 9000** (Saint Patrick Centre)  
**W: [www.saintpatrickcentre.com](http://www.saintpatrickcentre.com)**  
 • £  
**T: 028 4461 5218** (Down County Museum)  
**W: [www.downcountymuseum.com](http://www.downcountymuseum.com)**  
 • FREE / £ (some special events / guided tours)



## 3. Strangford Lough Top Tours and Trails

There is something in the area for everyone – why not tour Strangford Lough with a unique sea safari, canoe trail, or an aerial tour from the skies. For those who like a slower pace, you can also enjoy sailing, cruising, walking, cycling or horse-riding.

**W: [www.visitstrangfordlough.co.uk](http://www.visitstrangfordlough.co.uk)**  
 • £



## 4. Down Cathedral and Saint Patrick's Grave

Saint Patrick was buried here around 432 AD. The Memorial Stone, placed in 1911, marks the supposed grave of Patrick. The present building was built in 1183 as a Benedictine Monastery, it has been restored many times and became a Church of Ireland/Anglican Cathedral in 1609. The edifice contains beautiful stained glass, rare stone carvings and boxed pews. Pre-book for tours.

**T: 028 4461 4922**  
**W: [www.downcathedral.org](http://www.downcathedral.org)**  
 • £ (donations appreciated; guided tours)



## 5. Castle Espie Wetland Centre

Castle Espie, situated on the shores of Strangford Lough near Comber, is the Wildfowl & Wetland Trust's first visitor centre in Ireland where visitors can witness the island's largest collection of ducks, geese and swans. Centre facilities include unique viewing points from the Brent hide, waterfowl gardens, woodland walks, visitor centre, art gallery, shop, Loughshore café and Secret Swamp natural outdoor play space. A winter highlight is the arrival of many hundreds of migrant birds, among them virtually the world's entire population of light-bellied brent geese. Other attractions include bats, many species of woodland, hedgerow and song bird, and an abundance of wild plants. Castle Espie offers a varied programme of events and activities for all ages throughout the year.

**T: 028 9187 4146**  
**W: [www.wwt.org.uk/castlespie](http://www.wwt.org.uk/castlespie)**  
 • £



## 8. Scrabo Tower and Country Park

Scrabo Tower is one of Northern Ireland's best-known landmarks, built in 1857 in memory of the third Marquis of Londonderry. Overlooking Strangford Lough and the whole of North Down, the Tower provides visitors with some of the finest views in the country. The paths through Killynether Wood and the disused sandstone quarries all offer the opportunity for quiet countryside enjoyment. It is possible to climb the tower on weekends during the summer months.

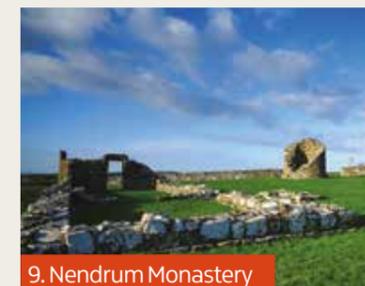
**T: 028 9181 1491**  
**W: [www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea)**  
 • FREE



## 6. Delamont Country Park

Situated on the shores of Strangford Lough in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, this 200 acre country park offers a variety of attractions. These include woodland and countryside walks ranging from one to seven kilometres, stunning views across the lough and of the Mourne Mountains, an outdoor adventure playground, a miniature railway, caravan and camping site and the Strangford Stone – the tallest megalith in Ireland. The park also provides access to the Strangford Lough Canoe Trail. A full programme of events takes place during the summer months.

**T: 028 4482 8333**  
**W: [www.downdc.gov.uk](http://www.downdc.gov.uk)**  
 • £ (parking / caravan and camping)  
 FREE (pedestrian access)



## 9. Nendrum Monastery

Nendrum Monastery was founded with the blessing of St. Patrick and was at its prime in the year 1000. It is a magical and beautiful island accessible by bridges with dry stone walls, heavenly views and a guide and site display. The remains of this important pre-Norman monastery include three concentric enclosures (stone walls). Check website for visitor centre opening hours. **Like this? Also Visit:** Grey Abbey, Inch Abbey, Raholp Church and Dundrum Castle.

**T: 028 9082 3214**  
**W: [www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea)**  
 • FREE



## 7. Mount Stewart

Mount Stewart, located on the shores of Strangford Lough, is Northern Ireland's much loved family home and garden. Following a three-year restoration programme it has opened its doors to reveal an amazing transformation. Filled with the spirit and character of Edith, Lady Londonderry, the house and gardens reveal the history, grandeur and enchantment of Mount Stewart, bringing it to life in a glorious celebration of people, power and plants. Housing collections of national and international importance, Mount Stewart gives visitors a chance to view treasured objects ranging from the grandest art to the most personal family mementos. The gardens, voted one of the top ten gardens in the world, combine bold planting schemes and a rich tapestry of design to create a haven of colour and smells.

**T: 028 4278 8387**  
**W: [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/mount-stewart](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/mount-stewart)**  
 • £

## Tell me more

Please contact all attractions directly to confirm opening times and prices.

[www.discovernorthernireland.com/strangford](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/strangford)  
[www.visitstrangfordlough.co.uk](http://www.visitstrangfordlough.co.uk)

# Lough Neagh & its Waterways

Discover it for yourself



## Did you know?

- Legend has it that Lough Neagh was created by the Irish giant Finn McCool who scooped out the lough basin to throw it at a Scottish rival who was fleeing Ulster by way of the Giant's Causeway. Apparently the piece of land that fell into the Irish Channel formed the Isle of Man.
- Covering 160 square miles in total Lough Neagh is the largest lake in Ireland and Britain, touching 5 of Northern Ireland's 6 counties with spectacular views of the Sperrins and the Mournes.
- Lough Neagh is home to the largest commercial wild eel fishery in Europe. The eels in Lough Neagh travel over 4000 miles to breed in the Sargasso Sea. The Lough also has its own species of fish, such as the Dollaghan, one of the world's most unique Brown Trout which has survived from the Ice Age and can only be found here and in the rivers that feed it.
- 1.7 million tonnes of sand is extracted from Lough Neagh annually. Sand from the lough was also used to build the hallowed surface of Croke Park and the mortar in Stormont.



Bordering five of Northern Ireland's six counties, Lough Neagh is the largest freshwater lake in the British Isles at 18 miles long and 7 miles wide and the third biggest in Europe.

Lough Neagh captivates visitors with its tranquil atmosphere, un-spoilt scenery, secluded bays and skyward views. A haven for wildlife and home to a wealth of flora and fauna, the lough also has a rich Christian heritage, with the remnants of three round towers and one of the finest high crosses in the whole of Ireland, Ardboe Cross. Local legend has it that the cross was built with the help of a 'magic cow' (the Gaelic Ard bó meaning 'height of the cow') which stepped out of the lough and provided workmen with lashings of cream, milk and butter whilst constructing it.

There are a number of canals linked to the lough including the Lagan Canal, the Ulster Canal, the Newry Canal and Coalisland Canal. There are heritage and ecological sites of interest both on its shores and on islands within the Lough. The surrounds of the lough can be investigated by foot, car or bicycle whilst the lough itself is navigable by following the Lough Neagh canoe trail, and various forms of boats ranging from yachts and barges to cruisers. There are a number of stations on the shoreline at various points around the 79 mile perimeter, bases for jetties, marinas, and water-based activities.

The richness of the wildflower meadows, woodlands, shoreline and open water means that there is always something special to see. The lough has two major islands; Ram's and Coney Island, both of which have significant historic interest. Visitors can explore Lough Neagh on a day trip on The Maid of Antrim or the Islands of Lough Neagh on the Coney Explorer or the Island Warrior. Lough Neagh is also growing as a major boating and sailing destination and has four main marinas at Kinnego, Ballyronan, The Battery and Sandy Bay.

Whether it is the mythical story of Finn McCool or the more scientific explanation that you choose to believe about Lough Neagh's history, the largest natural resource in Northern Ireland is undoubtedly an 'eco-treasure'. There is so much to see and do from history and heritage, visitor attractions to land and water based activities including a cycle trail, Peatlands Park and the Lough Neagh Discovery Centre & Oxford Island Nature Reserve.

The Loughshore Cycling Trail is well known to both racing and leisure cyclists. A unique cycleway, not only because of its location, but because it uses quiet country lanes and consists of mainly flat terrain. As well as providing breathtaking views the trail also incorporates over 25 major sites of interest including marinas, nature reserves, parks and sites of archaeological interest.

Indulge in a shopper's delight by viewing the Potters at work at Ballydougan Pottery and why not browse the gift shop, once an 18th century house and select the perfect piece to take home. Or enjoy the best of high street fashion and retail at Junction One Outlet, Antrim.

Lough Neagh's best kept secrets are just paradise waiting to be explored.



## Experiences

- **Get a feel for the countryside at Tannaghmore, Craigavon**  
Meet rare farm breeds and visit the Barn Museum with traditional farming displays and the beautiful rose gardens.
- **Cycle the Loughshore Trail**  
This long-distance cycle route encircles the lough, mostly following quiet country roads, and includes most of the area's main attractions. It can be broken into shorter sections or the more ambitious can take on the Lap the Lough challenge cycle each August.
- **Explore Lough Neagh by canoe**  
Paddle the lough's bays and inlets along the Lough Neagh canoe Trail – there are over 90 miles to explore plus the adjoining Blackwater and Lower Bann Trails.
- **Walk the grounds of the grand estate of Brownlow House**  
Enjoy the setting of Brownlow House, a 19th century mansion located next to Lurgan Park. Be sure to stop off for afternoon tea.

## After Dark:

- Enjoy a regular traditional music session at The Crosskeys Inn, near Toome – an atmospheric thatched pub thought to date from around 1740.
- Watch live performances and film screenings in the historic surroundings of The Old Courthouse, Antrim.
- Enjoy a play or performance in an intimate local venue such as the Bardic Theatre, Donaghmore or Millennium Court Arts Centre, Portadown.

## 1. Oxford Island National Nature Reserve

Nature lovers can wander four miles of footpaths through woodland and wildflower meadows or observe birds from watching hides at this nature reserve. At the Lough Neagh Discovery Centre, see panoramic views across the lough and visit the café and gift shop. The centre also runs a programme of conservation and environmental events and exhibitions. The adjacent Kinnego Marina is the largest on Lough Neagh and offers seasonal boat trips on the Master McGra'. **Like this? Also Visit:** World of Owls at Randalstown Forest.

T: 028 3832 2205  
W: [www.oxfordisland.com](http://www.oxfordisland.com)  
• FREE



2. Bellaghy Bawn

A splendidly restored fortified house and bawn (defensive enclosure), originally built around 1619 on lands rented from the Vintners' Company of London. What you see today is a mix of building styles from different periods, with the main house lived in until 1987. Resources on site include a film made for the bawn and exhibitions on local and natural history. The library is a must for fans of celebrated local poet Seamus Heaney, with items including the late Nobel Laureate's manuscripts, his schoolbag and duffle coat.

T: 028 7938 6812  
W: [www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea)  
• FREE



3. Peatlands Park

A short stroll around the Bog Garden will give you a chance to see almost all of the flora and fauna associated with this precious peatland habitat. You may see anything from butterflies, damselflies and woodland and wetland birds to badgers, hares and lizards. Within the park are two National Nature Reserves, designated in 1980 for their unique flora and fauna species, many of which are found nowhere else in Northern Ireland. There is a narrow gauge railway on-site and the park hosts the annual Bog Snorkelling Championships each July.

T: 028 3885 1102  
W: [www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea)  
• FREE



4. Antrim Castle Gardens and Clotworthy House

Antrim Castle Gardens and Clotworthy House offer a beautiful location close to Antrim town centre for a stroll, a coffee or the opportunity to experience a variety of exhibitions. The gardens are a complex living museum containing over four centuries of culture and heritage alongside remnants of the Massereene family dynasty. The original location of Antrim Castle has now been integrated within the wider garden landscape in a contemporary and innovative way. While you are there uncover the legends of the Wolf Hound and the White Lady.

T: 028 9448 1338  
W: [www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk](http://www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk)  
• FREE



5. Antrim Lough Shore Park

Situated on the north eastern shore of Lough Neagh, the Lough Shore Park at Antrim is a magnet for those seeking relaxation by the water's edge. The attractive surroundings make it the ideal spot to spend a few hours enjoying a picnic, feeding the swans or walking along the many pathways. The Lough Shore Coffee House, offering a range of hot and cold snacks, is also open all year round.

T: 028 9442 8331  
W: [www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk](http://www.antrimandnewtownabbey.gov.uk)  
• FREE



8. U.S. Grant Ancestral Homestead

Explore the cottage of the Simpson family, with close ties to Ulysses Simpson Grant, the Commander of the victorious Union troops in the American Civil War. U.S. Grant served two terms as President of the United States and visited the homeland. Today the homestead and farm have been restored to the style and appearance of the mid-19th century small holding. The cottage and grounds are open all year round. For tours and audio-visual show, booking is essential. Facilities are accessible to a wheelchair user with assistance. Picnic and BBQ area, children's play area, toilets, bike rental and wildlife garden. Coach and car parking available.

T: 028 8772 8600  
(Dungannon Visitor Information Centre)  
W: [www.flavourof Tyrone.com](http://www.flavourof Tyrone.com)  
• FREE



6. Ardboe High Cross

Ardboe High Cross, which dates from the tenth century, stands on the site of a monastery founded by St. Colman in 590. It is one of the finest of the Ulster figure-carved crosses, despite damage and weathering, with an exceptionally full scheme of biblical carving. It stands at 5.5 metres high and 1 metre wide. Remains of St. Colman's Abbey can be found in the field beside the present graveyard. The ruined church within the graveyard was repaired and reused during the seventeenth century.

T: 028 9082 3214  
W: [www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/niea)  
• FREE



9. Activities in the Lough Neagh Area

The Lough Neagh area is ideal for an outdoors activity break with options including walking, cycling, canoeing, horseriding and birdwatching. Dedicated centres include The Jungle NI which offers activities like zorbing and tree top adventure, Superdrive Motorsports Centre, Foymore Lodge Country Sports, Craigavon Watersports Centre and Craigavon Golf and Ski Centre – home to Northern Ireland's only outdoor, artificial ski slope.

W: [www.discoverloughneagh.com](http://www.discoverloughneagh.com)  
W: [www.outdoorni.com](http://www.outdoorni.com)



7. Kinnego Marina

Situated on Lough Neagh beside the Oxford Island National Nature Reserve, Kinnego Marina is the largest marina on the Lough. It boasts a range of associated amenities on site including skippered boat services, quality instruction in sailing and powerboating. The site offers 190 fully sheltered berths with deep and shallow water access for vessels drawing less than 1.55metres. Assistance is provided for launching boats, stepping masts and other related services. Secured summer and winter storage is provided for 60 boats within the boat park on-site. Boat trips, walks, café, caravan and camping park (including eco-pods) all available on-site. **Like this? Also visit:** Ballyronan Marina or Portlengone Marina.

T: 028 3832 7573  
W: [www.discovercraigavon.com](http://www.discovercraigavon.com)  
• FREE (£ - Tours)

## Tell me more

Please contact all attractions directly to confirm opening times and prices.

[www.discovernorthernireland.com/loughneagh](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/loughneagh)

[www.discoverloughneagh.com](http://www.discoverloughneagh.com)

# Find a place to stay

Northern Ireland isn't just awash with picturesque panoramas, exciting happenings and delectable places to eat – there are endless wonderful places to sleep over too.

Whether you love the seaside, cityscapes or rural countryside, there's a place to stay that will suit you.

Countless venues, lodgings, rooms and crash-pads.

With spectacular views, charming owners and a real sense of Northern Irish hospitality.

The range is varied from bunkhouses and campus accommodation to hotels, bed and breakfasts and self-catering. We have included a few types to get you started.

## Hotels

For pampering or passing through, splurging or saving, Northern Ireland has a hotel to suit your perfect holiday. Pick and choose from cool city escapes, coastal hideaways and country retreats—budget-friendly and budget-blowers. Visit chic venues with luxurious spas, boutique settings with world-famous cocktail lists or cool creations with great cuisine and things-to-do. Enjoy fantastic views, the buzz of local cafés and pubs, shopping hotspots, wonderful restaurants and plenty of craic.

Depending on your type of Northern Ireland holiday, peruse our wonderful hotel offerings – the family-run, major international names or unique one-off destinations.



## Self-Catering

If you're planning a break in Northern Ireland and you really want to experience local life, opt for self-catering accommodation. Our range of properties will tick every box, whatever you love – pretty petite places for romance, big happy places for family gatherings and everything in-between. Some venues even offer catering services, so you can really unwind. Pick a modern house, a converted barn, cottage or countryside estate and live like a local. Shop for food and gifts, drink in the neighbourhood pubs and enjoy all the gems close-by. There's no better way to explore or appreciate our very friendly, very compact part of the world.



## Bed and Breakfast

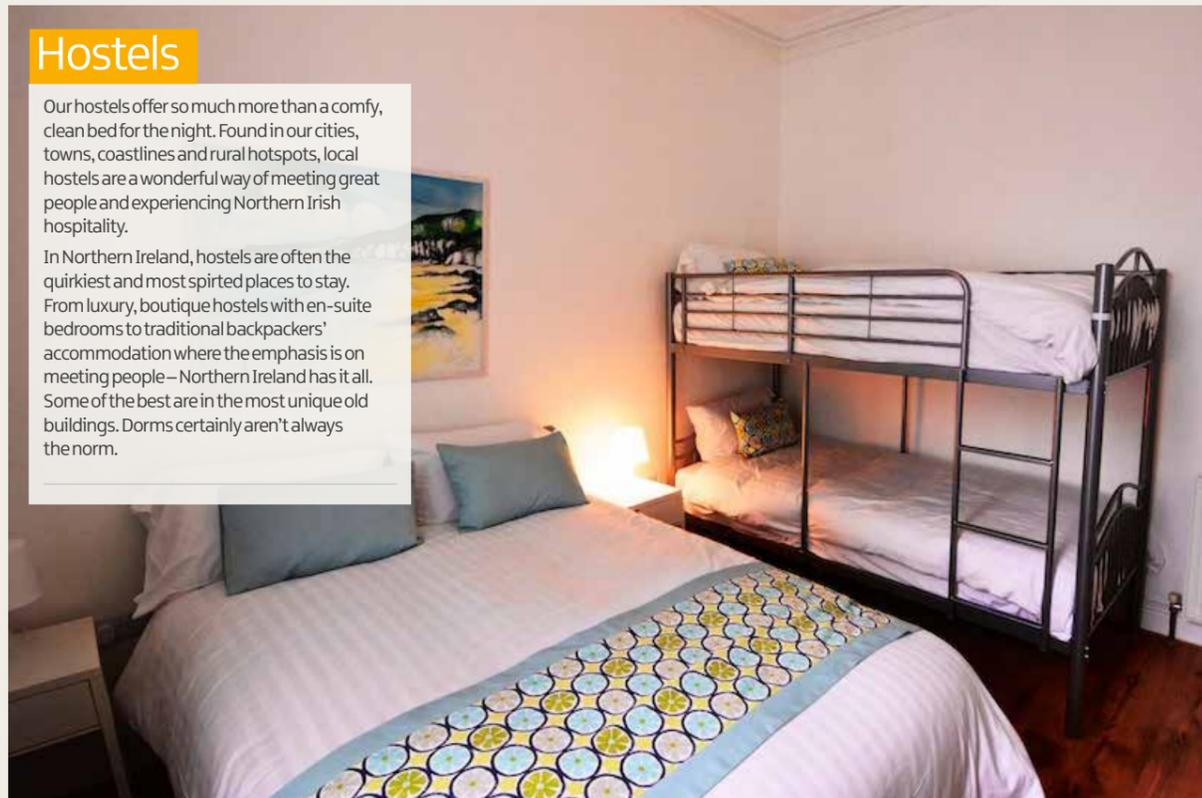
The beauty of our B&Bs and Guesthouses is in the service. A friendly and relaxed 'home from home' that's snug and personal. Homespun touches make them a wonderful stayover choice—like pots of tea, home-made wheaten bread on arrival, lovely local produce and an owner with unbeatable local knowledge. There is something for everyone though, so for those weary travellers who just want a room for the night our Guest Accommodation offers modern en-suite bedrooms with a simple continental breakfast. Properties may showcase local arts and crafts, celebrate our literary giants, or include all the latest technological facilities – welcoming extras and attention to detail which make for a complete getaway experience.





## Campus Accommodation

Campus accommodation is provided by educational establishments for their students and is made available to individuals, families or groups at certain times of the year, typically Easter, Summer and Christmas holidays. Accommodation may be comprised of dormitories, serviced by separate bathrooms or en-suite facilities.



## Hostels

Our hostels offer so much more than a comfy, clean bed for the night. Found in our cities, towns, coastlines and rural hotspots, local hostels are a wonderful way of meeting great people and experiencing Northern Irish hospitality.

In Northern Ireland, hostels are often the quirkiest and most spirited places to stay. From luxury, boutique hostels with en-suite bedrooms to traditional backpackers' accommodation where the emphasis is on meeting people – Northern Ireland has it all. Some of the best are in the most unique old buildings. Dorms certainly aren't always the norm.



## Caravans, Camping and Motor Homes

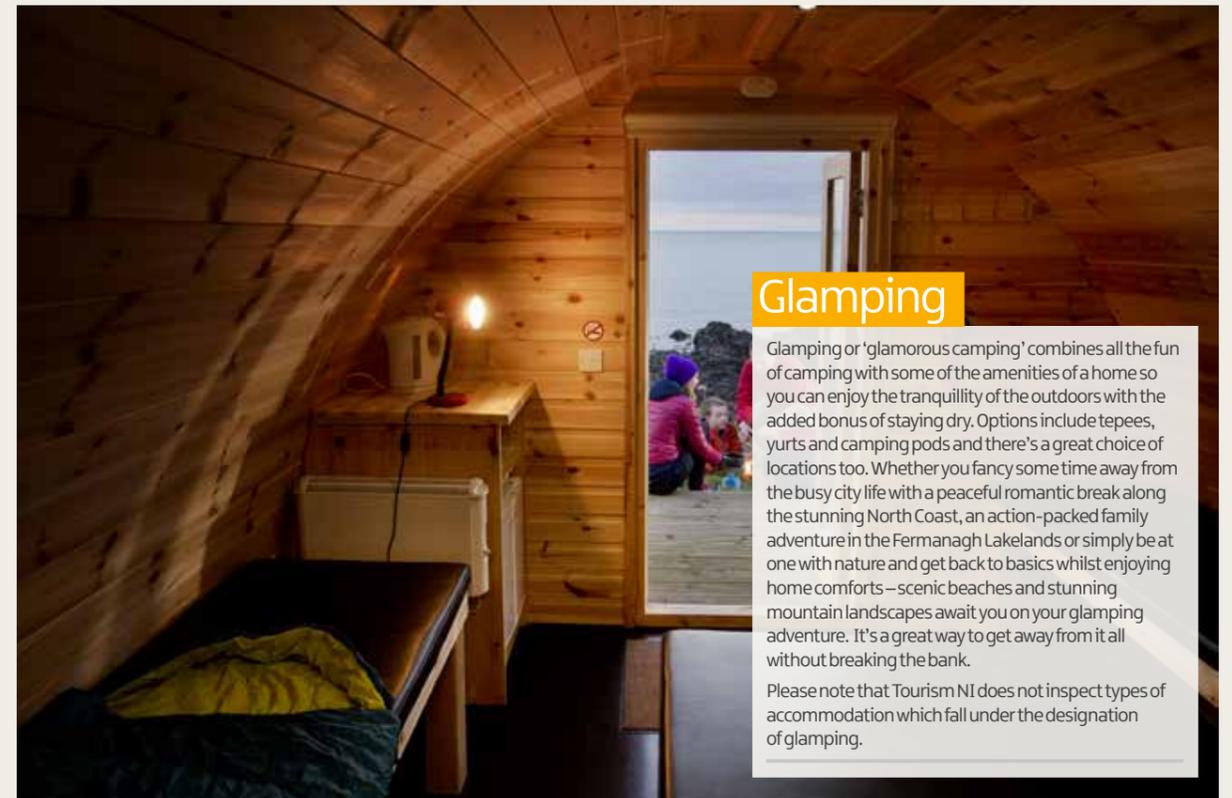
If you prefer to tour a place at your own pace, you'll love a camping or caravanning getaway in Northern Ireland. This part of the world is brimming with glorious places to pitch a tent, put your caravan or rent a pocket-sized place to snooze. Pretty camping sites are dotted all over the place, with a whole range of facilities and activities on offer. There are also a number of Aire de Service points/motorhome service points on offer.

Choose a destination to match your dream holiday. A spot at the foot of the majestic Mourne Mountains or close by the grassy Sperrins, somewhere picturesque amidst the lovely Fermanagh Lakelands or along the beloved Causeway Coastal Route. From cycling, to sandcastle building, jewellery making to sky-diving, you'll never be stuck for something fantastic to do nearby.

### Learn more...

Camping and Caravan Parks are only inspected by Tourism NI if they choose to be a member of the British Graded Holiday Parks Scheme.

[www.discovernorthernireland.com/camping](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/camping) Provides information on all parks in Northern Ireland which are part of this scheme, plus all other local council licensed sites.



## Glamping

Glamping or 'glamorous camping' combines all the fun of camping with some of the amenities of a home so you can enjoy the tranquillity of the outdoors with the added bonus of staying dry. Options include teepees, yurts and camping pods and there's a great choice of locations too. Whether you fancy some time away from the busy city life with a peaceful romantic break along the stunning North Coast, an action-packed family adventure in the Fermanagh Lakelands or simply be at one with nature and get back to basics whilst enjoying home comforts – scenic beaches and stunning mountain landscapes await you on your glamping adventure. It's a great way to get away from it all without breaking the bank.

Please note that Tourism NI does not inspect types of accommodation which fall under the designation of glamping.



discover  
northernireland  
.com



# Information on the go

Networked Visitor Information Centres

## BELFAST

### Belfast City Centre

Visit Belfast Welcome Centre  
Visitor Information (Belfast & NI)  
8-9 Donegall Square North,  
BT1 5GJ

T: (028) 9024 6609

E: info@visit-belfast.com

## AIRPORTS

### George Best Belfast City Airport

Sydenham Bypass, BT3 9JH

T: (028) 9093 5372

E: info@visit-belfast.com

### Belfast International Airport

Arrivals Hall, BT29 4AB

T: (028) 9448 4677

E: info@visit-belfast.com

## COUNTY ANTRIM

### Antrim

The Old Courthouse  
Market Square, BT41 4AW

T: (028) 9442 8331

### Ballycastle

Portnagree House Harbour  
& Marina Visitor Centre,  
14 Bayview Road, BT54 6BT

T: (028) 2076 2024

### Ballymena

The Braid  
1-29 Bridge Street, BT43 5EJ

T: (028) 2563 5010

### Ballymoney

Ballymoney Town Hall  
1 Townhead Street, BT53 6BE

T: (028) 2766 0230

### Bushmills (seasonal)

Main Street, BT57 8QA

T: (028) 2073 0390

### Carrickfergus

Visitor Information Centre  
and Museum  
11 Antrim Street, BT38 7DG

T: (028) 9335 8241

### Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre

44 Causeway Road,  
Bushmills, BT57 8SU

T: (028) 2073 1855

### Larne

Narrow Gauge Road, BT40 1XB

T: (028) 2826 0088

### Lisburn

15 Lisburn Square, BT28 1AN

T: (028) 9266 0038

### Portrush (seasonal)

T: (028) 7082 3333

## COUNTY ARMAGH

### Armagh

40 English Street, BT61 7BA

T: (028) 3752 1800

## COUNTY DOWN

### Banbridge

The Old Town Hall,  
1 Scarva Street, BT32 3DA

T: (028) 4062 0232

### Bangor

34 Quay Street, BT20 5ED

T: (028) 9127 0069

### Downpatrick

The St. Patrick Centre  
53a Market Street, BT30 6LZ

T: (028) 4461 2233

### Hillsborough

The Courthouse, The Square,  
BT26 6AG

T: (028) 9268 9717

### Kilkeel

The Nautilus Centre  
Rooney Road, BT34 4AG

T: (028) 4176 2525

### Newcastle

10-14 Central Promenade,  
BT33 0AA

T: (028) 4372 2222

### Newry

Bagenal's Castle  
Castle Street, BT34 2DA

T: (028) 3031 3170

### Newtownards

31 Regent Street, BT23 4AD

T: (028) 9182 6846

### Portaferry (seasonal)

The Stables  
Castle Street, BT22 1NZ

T: (028) 4272 9882

## COUNTY FERMANAGH

### Enniskillen

Wellington Road, BT74 7EF

T: (028) 6632 3110

## COUNTY LONDONDERRY

### Coleraine

Coleraine Town Hall,  
35 The Diamond, BT51 1DP

T: (028) 7034 4723

### Limavady

Roe Valley Arts & Cultural Centre  
24 Main Street, BT49 0FJ

T: (028) 7776 0650

### Londonderry

Visit Derry, 44 Foyle Street,  
BT48 6AT

T: (028) 7126 7284

### Magherafelt

The Bridewell,  
6 Church Street, BT45 6AN

T: (028) 7963 1510

## COUNTY TYRONE

### Cookstown

The Burnavon  
Burn Road, BT80 8DN

T: (028) 8676 9949

### Dungannon

Hill of The O'Neill, 26 Market Square,  
Dungannon, BT70 1AB

T: (028) 8772 8600

### Omagh

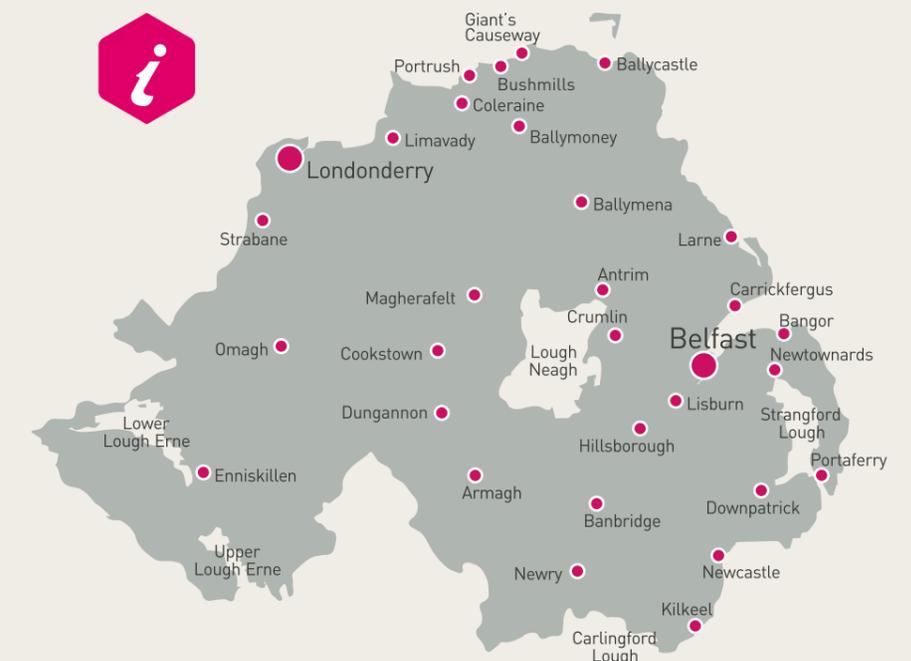
Strule Arts Centre  
Townhall Square, BT78 1BL

T: (028) 8224 7831

### Strabane

The Alley Arts & Conference Centre  
1a Railway Street, BT20 8EF

T: (028) 7138 4444



[www.discovernorthernireland.com](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com)

#northernireland



## TELL ME MORE

Activities: [www.outdoorni.com](http://www.outdoorni.com), [www.cycleni.com](http://www.cycleni.com), [www.walkni.com](http://www.walkni.com), [www.canoeni.com](http://www.canoeni.com), [www.beachni.com](http://www.beachni.com), [www.mountainbikeni.com](http://www.mountainbikeni.com);  
Events: [www.culturenorthernireland.org](http://www.culturenorthernireland.org), [www.whatsonni.com](http://www.whatsonni.com); Food: [www.nigoodfood.com](http://www.nigoodfood.com); Craft: [www.craftni.org](http://www.craftni.org)

# travel information

## GETTING TO NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland is easy to get to, easy to get around. Excellent fast ferry links from England and Scotland to Belfast and Larne, three airports with frequent, low-cost flights from the UK and beyond, plus good roads, buses and trains to take you where you want to go.

You can fly to Northern Ireland directly from a number of European and International destinations. Check with the airports directly for details of carriers and the most up-to-date scheduled and chartered flights:

### BELFAST INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT (BIA)

T: +44 (0) 28 9448 4848  
www.belfastairport.com

#### Services to/from Belfast (Bus)

T: +44 (0) 28 9066 6630  
www.translink.co.uk

#### Airport Express 300

24 hr bus service between the airport and Belfast (departing every 15 minutes at peak times). Departs: bus stop at terminal exit.

#### From BIA to Belfast

Buses travel via: Templepatrick, M2 Motorway, Royal Avenue, Donegall Square South and terminate at Belfast Europa Buscentre. Journey time: approx 30–40 minutes.

#### Services to/from Londonderry (Bus)

T: +44 (0) 28 7126 9996  
www.airporter.co.uk

**The "Airporter"** - Operates a frequent coach service between Derry~Londonderry and both Belfast airports.

#### Services to/from Belfast and Londonderry (Rail)

T: +44 (0) 28 9066 6630  
www.translink.co.uk

Nearest rail service operates from Antrim, six miles from BIA.

Taxi fare to Belfast City centre is approximately £30.

### GEORGE BEST BELFAST CITY AIRPORT

T: +44 (0) 28 9093 9093  
www.belfastcityairport.com

#### Services to/from Belfast (Bus)

T: +44 (0) 28 9066 6630  
www.translink.co.uk

#### Airport Express 600

Operates every 20 minutes at peak times to the city centre and Europa Buscentre.

**The "Airporter"** - Operates a Derry~Londonderry.

T: +44 (0) 28 7126 9996  
www.airporter.co.uk

#### Services to/from Belfast (Rail)

Nearest rail service operates from Sydenham Train Station, reached from a free shuttle bus service from the airport terminal, to Belfast Central and Great Victoria Street Stations.

Taxi fare to the city centre is approximately £10.

### CITY OF DERRY AIRPORT

T: +44 (0) 28 7181 0784  
www.cityofderryairport.com

#### Services to/from Londonderry (Bus)

T: +44 (0) 28 9066 6630  
www.translink.co.uk

Operates various scheduled services to and from the airport to the main Foyle Street Bus Depot in the city. Ulsterbus service 143 or Goldline 234 into Derry~Londonderry City centre, Limavady and Coleraine.

#### Services to/from Londonderry (Rail)

Rail services operate from Derry~Londonderry train station and run to Coleraine and Belfast. Full details are available on the Translink website.

Taxi fare from the airport to city centre is about £10–£12.

#### Services from the Republic of Ireland to Londonderry (Bus)

www.buseireann.ie

### BELFAST HARBOUR

T: +44 (0) 28 9055 4422  
www.belfast-harbour.co.uk

#### Services to/from Belfast (Bus)

T: +44 (0) 28 9066 6630  
www.translink.co.uk

Journey time 20 mins. Taxi fare is about £5–£10 to city centre.

#### Metro Service 96

Operates from Stena Line Terminal (West Bank Road) to Upper Queen Street, Belfast City Centre. Journey time 20 mins.

#### Stena Line

www.stenaline.com  
Sailings: Belfast to Cairnryan and Liverpool.

#### Isle of Man Steam Packet Company

www.steam-packet.com  
Sailings: Belfast to Isle of Man (Douglas) - seasonal.

### LARNE HARBOUR

T: +44 (0) 28 2887 2100  
www.portoflarne.co.uk

Goldline bus service 256A and train service to Belfast.

Taxi is about £30 to Belfast City centre. Car rental available.

#### P&O

www.poferries.com  
Sailings: Larne to Cairnryan & Troon.

## GETTING AROUND NORTHERN IRELAND

### Translink Bus and Train Services T: +44 (0) 28 9066 6630, W: www.translink.co.uk

Within Belfast, the Metro bus service offers unlimited travel for £3.20/£3.70 per day. Check website for good value Day Returns and iLink card (unlimited bus and rail travel in NI).

#### Goldline X1/X2 Express Coach: travels frequently between Dublin Airport/City centre and Belfast.

**Enterprise Train Dublin – Belfast:** several journeys daily in each direction (2 hrs 5 mins).

**Driving and Speed Limits:** Drive on the left and overtake on the right is the rule of the road. Speed limits: 30 miles per hour (mph) in towns unless signs show otherwise; 60mph on single carriageways; 70mph on dual carriageways and motorways. Seat belts are mandatory for drivers and all passengers and motorcyclists must wear crash helmets.

Visit [www.nidirect.gov.uk/motoring](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/motoring) for the Highway Code online.

**Car Parking:** Car parking is permitted where there is a blue P sign which indicates a car park in towns or a lay-by at the roadside outside towns. Drivers can park elsewhere on the street except when there are double yellow lines which prohibits all parking, or a single yellow line which permits parking at limited times only. **Pay heed to restriction notices.**

#### Blue Badge parking scheme:

The scheme offers an important service for people with severe mobility problems, enabling badge holders to park close to where they need to go. Visit [www.nidirect.gov.uk/blue-badge-scheme](http://www.nidirect.gov.uk/blue-badge-scheme) for information on the scheme and restrictions. Please note: badge holders are not entitled to free parking in Department for Regional Development charged car parks.

**Car Rental:** Prices for car rentals start from about £100 per week, though you should shop around to get the best deal to suit your needs. Age restrictions vary according to rental company but you must have a valid driving licence for more than one year. For further information visit [www.bvrla.co.uk](http://www.bvrla.co.uk)

**Taxis:** All legal taxis should display taxi licence plates. Taxis are generally private hire taxis and contact numbers are available in Yellow Pages or the BT Telephone Directories. Taxis are generally meter reading fares; if not ask the fare to your destination before setting off. In Belfast, taxi ranks are also available; these are generally in the city centre or at some points of entry, and are London-type black cabs.

## Passport/Visa Requirements

Passport Advice Line (UK)  
T: 0300 222 0000

www.ips.gov.uk

UK nationals can travel without a passport but will need photographic identification. Individual airline and ferry company requirements can vary. Passports are not required for travel between Northern Ireland and the Republic, however international visitors arriving in one jurisdiction and wishing to travel to the other must ensure they hold a valid visa for both the UK the Republic of Ireland. For further information, contact the British Embassy in your country of origin.

## Bringing a pet?

UK Pet Travel Scheme helpline:  
T: 0345 933 5577

www.defra.gov.uk

## Medical Insurance

T: 0845 606 2030  
0300 330 1350  
+44 (0) 191 218 1999 (overseas)

www.ehic.org.uk

You need to obtain a European Health Insurance card (EHIC) which will allow you to access state-provided healthcare in all European Economic Area (EEA) countries at a reduced cost or sometimes free of charge. You can apply online at their website or by telephone. Visitors are strongly advised to take out private travel insurance.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Supplied Courtesy of the Attractions / Councils and Tourism Partners:  
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**Page 09** – Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum (Courtesy of Tourism Ireland)  
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**Page 20** – Ulster American Folk Park, mountain biking at Davagh Forest, An Creagán, Beaghmore Stones (Courtesy of Flavour of Tyrone), Sion Stables  
**Page 21** – Wellbrook (Courtesy of Cookstown District Council), Springhill (Courtesy of Flavour of Tyrone), Lissan House (Courtesy of The Lissan Trust), Hill of The O'Neill

(Courtesy of Dungannon VIC)  
**Page 25** – Castle Archdale Courtyard (Courtesy of DOENI)  
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**Page 32** – Slieve Gullion (Courtesy of Ring of Gullion Landscape Partnership Scheme), mountain biking at Castlewellsan (Courtesy of Outdoor Recreation NI)  
**Page 33** – F.E. McWilliam Gallery and Studio (Courtesy of Banbridge District Council), Scarva Visitor Centre (Courtesy of Banbridge District Council), Greencastle and Dundrum Castles (Courtesy of DOENI)  
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**Page 44** – Portrush Townhouse Accommodation (Hostel image)

For more information contact:

**Visit Belfast Welcome Centre**  
**Visitor Information (Belfast & Northern Ireland)**  
8-9 Donegall Square North BT1 5GJ  
T: +44 (0) 28 9024 6609  
Email: [info@visit-belfast.com](mailto:info@visit-belfast.com)

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Please contact the Visitor Information Unit for further details.

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Tourism Northern Ireland would be delighted to hear what you think of this publication. Please send your comments to [comments@tourismni.com](mailto:comments@tourismni.com)

© Tourism Northern Ireland, 59 North Street, Belfast, BT1 1NB  
T: +44 (0) 28 9023 1221 Skype: [switchboard@tourismni.com](mailto:switchboard@tourismni.com)  
Fax: +44 (0) 28 9024 0960 Email: [info@tourismni.com](mailto:info@tourismni.com)