

Ireland's wild, wondrous west



Skellig Michael



Kinsale



Slieve League Cliffs

Ireland is a tantalising treat for the senses, especially the loveable Irish sense of humour. The people, culture and scenery of the Emerald Isle will capture your heart. It is the perfect start to your European adventure.

"May the road rise up to meet you..." begins the famous Irish Blessing. And there are many blessings to be found when you explore this beautiful country by road. Stunning scenery, pretty villages, ancient monuments and the friendly, welcoming Irish way of life are daily companions. You can linger wherever you fancy, enjoy a drink with the locals, take a route less travelled. The roads are easy, navigation is simple and they even drive on the same side of the road as we do!

Ireland boasts a range of scenic touring routes and one of the most spectacular is the 2500 kilometre-long Wild Atlantic Way, which wraps around the west coast like a warm Irish embrace. The Wild Atlantic Way is split into six sections, each, like the people themselves, with a

captivating charm. Breathe in the salty air at picturesque inlets on the Haven Coast and visit the brightly-painted, medieval fishing village of Kinsale. Make your way towards The Southern Peninsulas and see Skellig Michael, accessible by ferry from Portmagee. This fearsome steep crag in the ocean became world-famous overnight when it starred in the final scene of Star Wars: The Force Awakens and is also home to a UNESCO World Heritage-listed eighth century cliff-top Monastery. To the north is the Cliff Coast, where the awesome 200-metre-high Cliffs of Moher stretch for eight kilometres along shore. Puffin colonies and dolphins live here in the place Nobel Prize-winning poet Seamus Heaney said can "catch the heart off guard and blow it open."

Indeed, whether you drive the entire length or selected segments, the Wild Atlantic Way will fill your heart and your memory card. Enjoy the craic and a singalong at a local pub, dine on fresh-caught seafood and put your head down for the night at a homely B&B. Wherever you go in Ireland, the warm welcomes you receive will make you feel like a local. You'll spend your days – and nights – smiling. As Irish eyes do.

Glorious Galway

Galway - the vibrant, romantic 'City of Tribes' - is one of the highlights on the Bay Coast section of the Wild Atlantic Way. Get a feel for the timeless heritage at the old city walls, Spanish Arch and 400-year-old Portumna Castle, or take a trip out to the Aran Islands and

see the ancient churches, forts and prehistoric sites. Galway's intriguing, bohemian culture also boasts a thriving arts scene, centred on the two-week Galway International Arts Festival in July. And at night you'll find live music at the pubs, where you simply must try the oysters.



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