County Donegal

'Up here, it's different,' they proclaim in Donegal. And it's true, for the wild child of Ireland is indeed a place apart, tucked into the north-western corner of the island and a fitting finale – or ideal start – to the Wild Atlantic Way.

Donegal's rugged and gloriously untamed interior is a wonderland of dramatic scenery. Bare-topped mountains stretch across the middle of the county, a lonely cottage and the occasional cluster of dwellings the only sign of human habitation. In Donegal's southwestern corner, the road north from **Glencolumbkille** is marked by the magnificent **Glengesh Pass**, a series of switchbacks that wind their way through the mountain in almost alpine drama until they reach the thatched cottages of **Ardara**, long-famed for its manufacture of tweeds and knitwear.

he county's natural highlights come tumbling into view one after the other. Some of the very best of these are gathered within the boundaries of Ireland's cond-largest national park at **Glenveagh**, where scraggy peaks look down on glacial lakes and valleys dotted with bog and forest. Cut through the park are some of the most scenic hiking trails in Ireland, while at the heart of it all is a marvellous castle modelled on **Balmoral** and is surrounded by exotic

Donegal's traditional culture extends far beyond the manufacture of cloth. A third of the county is a designated **Gaeltacht** or Irish-speaking region, with the heartland of Irish culture centred on the district of Gweedore (Gooth Dobhair). Ireland's largest Irish-speaking parish is a hotbed of traditional music and the birthplace of musicians like Enya and Clannad.

The wild interior is easily matched by its spectacular coastline, a blockbuster collection of dramatic cliffs, long arcs of golden sand and gorse-clad peninsulas jutting out into the mercurial north Atlantic. You can surf at Rossnowlagh, go horse riding on Trá na Rossan at Rosguill and walk the beach in splendid isolation at Tramore, just outside Dunfanaghy. The sea cliffs at Slieve League are the highest in Ireland, dropping 600m into the churning waves below, its high slopes sheltering the remains of an early Christian site, complete with beehive huts and a chapel. For them, it must have felt like they were living at the edge of the world; any exploration of this beautiful, wild county and you'll understand exactly how they felt.



Visitor Attractions

01 Inishowen Maritime Museum and Planetarium

The museum has an extensive collection of artefacts, exhibitions and memorabilia of all things

Doagh Famine Village and Visitor Centre www.doaghfaminevillage.com This centre tells the story of a

Donegal family and community liv on the edge of Donegal and surviving from famine times right up to the resent day. Fort Dunree Military

www.dunree.pro.ie he unique history of Fort Dunree is fully explained and recreated in vibrant and colourful displays.

birds including geese, swans, ducks

months it is alive with activity as a

huge variety of birds make this thei

home, rearing their young around

and other waders. In the summer

04 Inch Levels

the lake.

8 Kinnegar Brewing www.kinnegarbrewing.ie Take a tour and see Kinnegar brew www.inchwildfowlreserve.ie their best beers. In the winter it is home to migrator

05 Old Church Visitor

Our centre displays some of the latest

multimedia technological exhibits

surrounding the mythical Tuatha De

Danann Race of Gods and Warriors

parklands. Over 100 acres to explore

including a narrow gauge railway

OT Lifford Courthouse

www.liffordcourthouse.com

Lifford Old Courthouse offers guided

tours, escape rooms and lunches

with focus of attention on the

Grianan of Aileach Ringfort.

06 Oakfield Park

www.oakfieldpark.com

with regular train trips.

Formal walled gardens and

www.oldchurch

09 Newmills Corn and Flax

Glebe House was built in 1828 and www.heritageireland.ie The visitor to Newmills can gardens. It is decorated with William experience the pleasure of seeing Morris textiles as well as Islamic and village to the world stage. one of the largest waterwheels in Ireland in action as it drives the

used in a fine old stone building, which was once part of the Letterkenny workhouse. The museu houses a fascinating range of artefacts covering all aspects of life in Donegal. Find us on Facebook

11 Tropical World at

www.tropicalworld.ie Be astounded by Donegal's not so mini zoo. Experience your own slice of the Amazon

12 Glenveagh National Park www.glenveaghnationalpark.ie Glenveagh park and castle is set in some 16.500 hectares of mountains lakes, glens and woods, with a large herd of red deer.

13 Colmcille Heritage Centre www.colmcilleheritagecentre.ie The story of St Colmcille told with beautifully reproduced artefacts and

www.glebegallery.ie

19 Daniel O'Donnell Visitor 14 Glebe House and Gallery is a Regency House set in woodland This centre highlights Daniel's life

Enjoy a guided tour of this magnificent working lighthouse and a main signature point on the Wild

16 Doe Castle www.heritageireland.ie

This castle was a stronghold of the MacSweeney Clan who came to Donegal from Scotland as Gallowglasses (professional fighters).

17 The Workhouse www.dunfanaghyworkhouse.ie Hear the true story of wee Hannah, a child of the famine and typical inmate. Visit the exhibition on the new lake and the ecology of this unique area.

18 Ionad Cois Locha www.dunleweycentre.com This visitor centre is a restored two story weaver's house within a farm museum, a large variety of animals and children's activities.

from his roots in a small coastal



Centre gauge railway, a 5km return trip, right www.visitkillybegs.com It offers a fascinating audio-visua insight into the history of the fishing

and hand-knotted carpets.

24 Donegal Castle www.heritageireland.ie reflecting life from different eras of

20 Fintown Railway

www.fintownrailwav.com Donegal's only operational narrow

along the shores of Loch Finn.

21 Glencolmcille Folk

A cluster of six traditional cottages

Irish history, from the 17th, 18th, and

22 Sliabh Liag Distillery

With a passion for Irish Whiskey and

authentic brands the Founder's are

bringing their vision for retelling the

legends and folklore of the Donegal

Gaeltacht in a modern and confiden

www.sliabhliagdistillery.com

www.glenfolkvillage.com

The castle was built by the O'Donnell clan in the 15th century. Information panels chronicle the history of the castle and guided tours are available

25 Donegal Craft Village www.donegalcraftvillage.com Reputedly the best collection of comtemporary art, craft and design in Ireland.

For further information please visit www.WildAtlanticWay.com



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Donegal Visitor Map



Sliabh Liag (Slieve League)

Visit one of Ireland's best kept secrets and a signature point on the Wild Atlantic Way. Located in south west Donegal along this magnificent coastal driving route are some of the highest and finest marine cliffs in Europe.

To make the most of your visit, it's best to leave your car in the car park and walk the few kilometres to the cliffs. As you climb toward the top of Sliabh Liag – which at 601m high is not a place for the faint-hearted – there are terrific views of the Atlantic Ocean, Donegal Bay and the Sligo Mountains.

Sliabh Liag was also the site of a Christian pilgrimage for more than a 1,000 years, although it's believed to have been a sacred place long before the Christians arrived. Given the landscape's rich history, there is a lot you can learn at the visitor centre, where you'll also get a taste of the local food, culture and unique sense of humour.

Activities & Adventure

Adventure One Surf School Surfing/surf school. Fanad, County

Bundoran Surf Company www.bundoransurfco.com Surfing/surf school. Bundoran, County Donegal.

Castlefin X-treme Karting www.castlefinkarting.com Go-karting. Castlefin, County

Donegal Adventure Centre www.donegaladventurecentre.net Surfing, kayaking, archery. Bundoran, **Centre** County Donegal.

Donegal Bay Waterbus www.donegalbaywaterbus.com Cruise around Donegal Bay. Donegal

Donegal Fun Adventure www.creevvexperience.com seakayaking

Sea kayaking, coasteering orienteering. Creevy, County Donegal Donegal Heritage Trails www.donegalheritagetrails.com Walking tours of Ramelton and

Donegal Sea Kayaking www. done galse a kayaking. comSea kayaking. Fanad, County Donegal.

Rathmullan, Milford, County Donegal

Donegal Wild Atlantic Bus Tour and Donegal Town Historical Walking Tour www.walkingireland.ie

Extreme Adventure www.extremeadventure.ie Paintball games, raft building, obstacle courses, 5km mud run. Letterkenny, County Donegal.

Fin McCool Surf School www.finmccoolsurfschool.com Surfing/surf school. Rossnowlagh, County Donegal.

www.gartan.com Surfing, kayaking, archery, powe boating, hill walking. Church Hill, County Donegal.

Gartan Outdoor Pursuits

Glen Valley Adventure Centre

Off-road jeep driving, clay pigeon shooting, blind fold driving.Carrigart, County Donegal.

www.grassroutes.ie Explore Donegal with an electric or hybrid bike. Termon, County Donegal.

Inish Adventure www.justkayak.ie Kayaking, canoeing, sailing hillwalking, extreme sports. Moville,

County Donegal.

GLENCOLUMBKILLE, COUNTY DONEGAL

County Donegal. **Jaws Watersports** www.jawswatersports.ie Surfing, sea kayaking, sailing. windsurfing, paddle boarding, kids beach club. Dunfanaghy, County

Donegal.

Inishowen Surf School

www.inishowensurfschool.com

Surfing/surf school. Buncrana,

Letterkenny Activity Centre www.lkactivitycentre.com Go-karting, body zorb, archery. airsoft and high rope zip line. Letterkenny, County Donegal.

Lough Foyle Ferry www.loughfoyleferry.com Ferry from Greencastle to Magilligan Point. County Donegal.

Mangan Tours www.donegaltours.ie iscover Donegal. Gortahork, County Donegal.

Mevagh Dive Centre www.mevaghdiving.com Diving. Carrigart, County Donegal. Mulroy Clay Pigeon Club

Clay pigeon shooting. Milford, County

egal. Find us on Facebook

www.narosalife.com Surfing/surf school. Dunfanaghy, County Donegal. Rapid Kayaking www.rapidkayaking.com

Narosa Life

Kayaking. Annagry, County Donegal. Rathmullan Charters www.rathmullancharters.com Fishing, sightseeing trips. Rathmullan, County Donegal.

Rathmullan Sailing and Watersports School www.rathmullansailing.com Sailing, kayaking, wind surfing, diving. Rathmullan, County Donegal.

Selkie Sailing www.selkiesailing.com Sailing, kayaking, raft building, wind surfing, camping trips. Gweedore, County Donegal. Sea Safari and Marine

Heritage Boat Trips www.divearranmore.com Scuba diving, whale/dolphin watching, sea angling. Arranmore Island, County Donegal.

Slieve League Boat Trips www.sliabhleagueboattrips.com Boat tours, angling charters. Teelin, County Donegal.

Surf World www.surfworld.ie Surfing/surf school. Bundoran, County Donegal.

Swilly Ferry www.swillyferry.com Ferry from Buncrana to Rathmullan County Donegal.

Turn n'Surf www.turfnsurf.ie Surfing, yoga. Bundoran, County Donegal. The Lakeside Centre

www.lakesidecaravanandcamping.com Kayaking, canoeing. Ballyshannon, County Donegal. The Meadows Trout Fishery Game angling centre. Kerrykeel,

True North Bike Tours www.truenorthbiketours.com Guided bike tours. Letterkenny County Donegal.

County Donegal.

The Old Foundry Paintball Games Ltd www.letterkennypaintball.town. ie Paintball. Letterkenny, County

Unique Ascent www.uniqueascent.ie Rock climbing, hillwalking, kayaking.

Donegal.

Falcarragh, County Donegal. Walking & Talking in Ireland www.walktalkireland.com Walking, Letterkenny, County

Donegal.

Waterworld www.waterworldbundoran.com Indoor aqua adventure. Bundoran, County Donegal.

Wild Atlantic Adventures www.wildatlanticwayadventures.ie Abseiling, archery, coasteering, canoeing, kitesurfing, orienteering, raft building, rockclimbing, walking, windsurfing. Clonmany, County

For a full listing of all there is to see and do in the area including angling, cycling, equestrian, gardens, golf, walking and more – please visit www.WildAtlanticWay.com



Donegal

Centre





Explore County Donegal

Ards Forest Park The park has many features of

historical and archaeological interest. The remains of four ring forts can be seen in the park as well as a number of megalithic ombs. On the same walk there is a Mass Rock where religion was celebrated in defiance of the penal laws. There are numerous viewin points on the walks and trails with spectacular views of the surrounding

www.coillte.ie

Donegal Garden Trail The trail which winds its colourful way around the county, offers garden lovers many opportunities to access and enjoy a broad range

of both private and publicly owned www.donegalgardentrail.con

Grianan of Aileach A very fine stone-built hilltop for or cashel is situated 800 feet abo sea level on Greenan Mountain and commands superb views of Lough

Lough Derg Pilgrimage Island

A unique island, rich in prayer and faith, which has been calling pilgrims for over a thousand years.

Poisoned Glen

One of the most renowned areas in County Donegal for its sweeping valleys, imposing mountains and shimmering lakes. It is very true to say the magnificent beauty of this area is such a capturing sight that it remains as a sanctuary in your mind forever of a very special place.

The Gaeltacht

The Donegal Gaeltacht comprises of a number of town lands and areas, the heart of which can be found near the mystic mountains of the Derryveagh range and the scenic Poisoned Glen. This is an area where the Irish language is spoken and where the traditions of Irish song, dance and folklore prevail.

Donegal Islands A visit to the Islands of Donegal will reinvigorate you. This is predominately where the Irish language and culture is still vibrant Árainn Mhór - Arranmore Island probably the most accessible of all the Gaeltacht islands has a resident population of approximately 600 people. From the island's rolling hills, observe views of the Rosses region (Na Rosa), the islands and the Donegal Mountains. A place to get away from it all and yet mainland

Getting there: Arranmore Car and Passenger Ferry (Red) www.arranmoreferry.com

Donegal is just a 15 minute boat

Arranmore Fast Ferry (Blue) www.arranmorefastferry.com

Gabhla - Gola Island is approximately 2km from the mainland at Gaoth Dobhair (Gweedore). Evidence of past life remains in the form of stone houses. the homes of families who have long since moved to the mainland. The launching of a regular ferry service and cliff climbing is bringing back new life. Gabhla can be explored in a

Getting there: The Cricket Ferry www.donegalislands.com

few hours over easy walking terrain.

Toraigh - Tory Island, standing staunchly against the storms of the Atlantic Ocean. Tory has been inhabited for 4.000 years. The resilient and independent residents of this Gaeltacht Island have their own music, songs, stories and dances and are expressions of a distinctive Irish culture and tradition preserved by remoteness. Visitors can enjoy diving, fishing, rock climbing, walking and whale or

Getting there: Tory Ferry www.torvferrv.com

located approximately 3km from the mainland this island has been relatively untouched and unspoilt A rocky coast with cliffs, sea arches, caves and sandy beaches can be explored. Inland fields are home to globally endangered corncrakes and many other birds.

Getting there: Ferries sail seasonally www.donegalislands.com

For personalised advice and information visit our Tourist Information Centres





CONTINUED OVERLEAF

THINGS TO DO EXPLORE THE ROUTE

SHORES TO EXPLORE

Letterkenny Town Centre

For a full listing of all there is to see and do in the area: including angling, cycling, equestrian gardens, golf, festivals and events, suggested itineraries, walking and more – please visit

www.WildAtlanticWay.com



Inis Fraoigh - Inishfree Island, lying 5km off the coast of Donegal, offers visitors an opportunity to step back to a simpler time, a time without cars, televisions or technology, and

to experience the raw natural beauty of a place that for many holds an air of distinctive spirituality.

fame include one of the world's

most beautiful lighthouses and the

famous Flight of the Earls, which

Some of the highest and finest marine cliffs in Europe, County

make the most of your visit it is best

to leave your car in the car park and

Wild Atlantic Way Signature Points **Iconic must-see sights**

Malin Head

Rugged yet inviting, Donegal's Malin Head, Ireland's most Northerly Point, is steeped in history and offers activities such as walking, fishing, swimming and bird watching. Here, north of Trawbreaga Bay, you can view Five Finger Strand, home to some of Europe's largest sand dunes

Fanad Head lies on the north coast of County Donegal between Lough Swilly and Mulroy Bay. Its claim to





Key for Town Centre and **County Regional Maps**

Airport

Ferry - Foot Passengers

Ferry - Vehicles below Deck Bus/Coach

Railway Station

Railway Line € Toll Road

Local Roads

Minor Roads

Pedestrian Streets

01 Motorway Junction Number

P Car Parking Fáilte Ireland Tourist Information Centres Taxi Rank

Community Tourist Information Centres

Library Services Motorways church/Cathedral

National Roads Heritage Site Regional Roads

Historic Ruins

Park

Services H Hospital

Fire Station

Court House Cemetery

Town/City Hall Public Toilets

Don't forget to pick up your Wild Atlantic Way Passport and collect your Discovery Point Stamps along the route!

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Practical Information

Bus Éireann www.buseireann.ie National bus service

Local Link www.locallink.ie Rural community bus service

Private Bus Operators
Please ask in your local Tourist
Office for details on numerous
private bus services operating in
the region.

Donegal Airport
www.donegalairport.ie
Flights to Dublin and Scotlan
Carrickfinn, County Donegal

Driving is on the left hand side of the road & safety belts mus be worn at all times. The M50

motorway around Dublin is a barrier-free toll road, tolls can be paid on www.eFlow.ie or at any outlet with a Payzone sign.

National Transport Driving: www.rsa.ie

National Activity Organisations Cycling: www.cyclingireland.ie Equestrian: www.aire.ie Fishing: www.fishinginireland.info Golf: www.golf.discoverireland.ie Walking: www.irishtrails.ie

services – Garda Síochána, Ambulance, Fire and Irish Coast Guard – can be contacted by dialling 112 or 999. Tourist Information

Irish Tourist Assistance

Emergency Services

Service

Centres Donegal Tourist Information Centre

The Quay, Donegal Town, County Donegal, F94 PX52.

Letterkenny Tourist Information County Donegal, F92 E796.

www.WildAtlanticWay.com

