

## Chapter 1 : Things to do in Ireland - Top 10 Things to do in Ireland

*This handy travel guide really hits the best things to do and see in all of Ireland - and they really are the best. The best sites, the best pubs, the best oddities and the best of the real Ireland.*

View Larger Image 11 Things to do in Ireland before You Die Ireland has a lot to offer the tourist who is willing to look beyond the obvious! The mythical Celtic nature of the island of Ireland is only truly revealed to those who are prepared to put in the effort to look beyond the bright lights of the cities of Ireland. The items listed below would be very difficult to fit into one trip and still do properly. Many of the items listed on this list will require a car rental to travel between attractions, while others simply require a car to take part. There are a number of main centres for picking up and collecting boats along the Shannon with Portumna and Carrick on Shannon being the most popular. There can be nothing more relaxing than cruising the Shannon. Life moves at a completely different pace and the only thing one has to worry about on a day to day basis is where they want to spend the night. Everybody on the river is friendly and there are no license requirements needed to rent a cruiser. The most popular routes are from Portumna to Carrick on Shannon, but for those who make their way further north, many highlights can be found off the beaten track. Cruisers come in all different shapes and sizes, from day boats which can be hired at Leitrim to 7 or 8 berth cruisers that have all the modern comforts of home. The best cruiser is medium in size and has navigational controls both inside and out. When booking a cruiser it is best to book for slightly more people than you plan to cater for in order to enjoy maximum comfort. Today Guinness is one of the most successful beer brands globally. This highlight is one of the biggest attractions in Ireland with over 4 million visitors since when the Storehouse first opened. The storehouse is a self guided tour which takes in the region of an hour and a half. The tour offers many highlights over seven floors, all surrounding a glass atrium which takes the shape of a pint of Guinness which extends from the reception to The Gravity Bar. This giant pint glass could hold upto Each floor dealing with a particular aspect of Guinness from brewer guides, advertising, ingredients, the Choice Zone, the history of the Storehouse and much much more. The seventh floor is dedicated to the Gravity Bar, and also forms the head of the giant pint of Guinness formed by the atrium. The Gravity Bar offers a place to relax, enjoy a complementary pint of Guinness and enjoy the degree views over Dublin City. No matter what time during the year you travel to Ireland, there is bound to be a festival of interest to you. The Irish people know how to enjoy themselves, so as part of your experience in Ireland why not join in, and take part in one of the top festivals in Ireland. Below is just a selection of the many festivals held annually in Ireland. The Dublin Theatre Festival celebrated 50 years during The Dublin Theatre Festival was established in by Brendan Smith who operated the Olympia Theatre in Dublin, which makes it the oldest dedicated theatre festival in Europe. Since then it has grown into a world renowned festival that has staged the works of famous artists as Seamus Heaney, Roddy Doyle and Neil Jordan. The arts festival in Galway includes theatre, dance, music, literature, visual art, comedy and street performances. The combination of top quality entertainment and the fantastic pub scene in Galway makes this an unmissable event. The festival is held over the June bank holiday weekend annually and offers a fantastic choice with over 85 live performances held. It is easily the most unique and interesting landscape in Ireland, if not Europe, and combines distinctive limestone rock formations with rare species of flora and fauna. Its unique appearance is the result of thousands of years of the erosion of limestone by acidic rainwater which left ruts and hollows between the rock surfaces. Always a favourite with hikers, The Burren has a well trodden walking trail that is 45 kilometres. As well as its stunning beauty, The Burren has long been a Mecca for naturalists. Its ecological diversity can not be found anywhere else in Europe with over different species of plants and ferns growing there. Throughout the year, and especially between April and October, the flowers and plants provide an unlikely explosion of colour among the grey rocks. A remarkable seventy five percent of Irish native species grow in the Burren and it amazingly supports arctic, tropical and alpine plants in its square kilometre area. The connection between the Irish Pub and the arts, in particular literary arts is very strong. In Dublin City Centre there is a large concentration of pubs with connections to famous literary and musical figures. The tour covers a distance of less than 1km in total and takes

approximately 2. The tour features 8 pubs in total 4 pubs per tour and always contains a detour through Trinity College. The tour is accompanied by traditional Irish musicians who play at a variety of locations along the way. The tour is mainly focused in Temple Bar and departs Oliver St. John Gogarty pub nightly. The Passage Tomb is only rivalled in importance by Stonehenge in Europe. The prehistoric tomb dates back to circa BC which make the tomb years older than the Great Pyramids of Egypt and years older than Stonehenge. What makes Newgrange particularly special is that on the winter solstice annually, a beam of sunlight travels the length of the tomb and illuminates the floor. Each tour takes 15 people into the tomb itself Tours through the passage tomb use false lighting to simulate the winter solstice. For entry into the Newgrange Passage tomb during the Winter Solstice, a lottery is held each year. During , 28, people entered the draw from which 50 names were drawn. Each winner gets awarded 2 entries into the tomb during the Winter Solstice. Along the way, drivers will be passing through unspoilt villages, along rugged coastline and epic panoramas. Along the way, the route passes through strategically placed discovery points. The route will provide access to some of the very best experiences Ireland has to offer. It is hoped that the route encourage people to interact with location people, and therefore gain a better understanding of Ireland, her coastline, her history and her culture. Click here for more information on the Wild Atlantic Way. The beautiful landscape, excellent choice of courses and reasonable prices has kept golfing enthusiasts coming back to Ireland again and again for years. Golf is a major attraction for tourists in Ireland. For those interested in playing the best links courses in not just Ireland, but the world, Ireland has four links courses listed in the top golf clubs in the world. Royal County Down combines a severe test of golfing skills with stunning scenery. The course dates from and is a private members club although visitors are welcome. One of the main features of this stunning course is the lack of any obvious man made features. The challenge is such that a handicap of 24 or less for a man and a handicap of 36 or less for ladies are minimum requirements. The course is located on a small peninsula which extends out into the Irish Sea and is surrounded by water on three sides. If the course was not enough of a challenge in itself, the added wind from the Irish Sea can make this course very difficult to navigate. The course was built in on a vast dune land. The course has been improved several times since it opened, but the core characteristics of this stunning course sill remain strong. The town of Dingle sits on a natural harbour and at the foot of the Slieveanea Mountain, both of which add to the natural beauty that surrounds Dingle. The town is a lively combination of shops, pubs and restaurants, all with a distinctly Irish character. The Dingle Peninsula is the most Westerly point of both Ireland and Europe and mixes unrivaled natural beauty with the harsh weather of the Atlantic Ocean. Everywhere you look on the Dingle Peninsula, you will see the unmissable pattern of harsh weather on the landscape. The stunning Blasket Islands are situated just off the coast of the Peninsula, and can easily be seen from the mainland. The Blasket Islands were inhabited until by an Irish Speaking people who survived by fishing. There are boat services from Dingle to the main Blasket Island multiple times daily during peak seasons. The operators of the boat trips are so confident that the passengers will see Fungi that they provide a money back guarantee. The area is famous for unspoilt natural beauty and is one of the most scenic regions in Ireland. The main town in the area of Connemara is Clifden. Clifden is situated on Clifden Bay and is ideally situated as a base from which to explore the Connemara Region. If you are staying in Clifden, the easiest tourist trail is the Sky Drive which will take you in a circular route along a Clifden Bay and Streamstown Bay with stunning views of both the Atlantic Ocean and the Connemara region. The Sky Road is an 11km long and rises to meters above sea level at its highest point, Slyne Head. In terms of things to do, the Connemara region is not short on attractions with ample opportunities to enjoy golf, cycling, pony trekking, hill walking, water sports, horse racing and camping. In recent times the Connemara Marathon has become a major tourist draw. This challenging marathon offers a Half Marathon, a full Marathon and an Ultra Marathon all in one day through some of the most scenic parts of Ireland. The route starts and ends in Killarney, Co Kerry and covers over km of stunning scenery around the Iveragh Peninsula. It is possible to complete this trail in one day, but to do so would mean missing too many attractions. After departing from Killarney, the route passes through Kenmare, Sneem, Waterville, Cahersiveen and Kilorglin to name but a few towns along the way. The complete list of major attractions along the Ring of Kerry includes: You can pick up a car rental at Kerry Airport and do this driving route. You may also like:

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Tuck into tea and scones at Kylemore Abbey, Connemara Kylemore Abbey It might look like a fantasy castle on the outside, with its magnificent lakeside setting at the foot of a mountain in the middle of Connemara, but Kylemore Abbey is actually a Benedictine monastery and is still home to an order of nuns. Bushmills and Jameson offer the best-known tasting sessions, but the Teeling Whiskey Distillery is new to the scene in Dublin. For craft beer, head to Against the Grain in Dublin, where you can try any number of varieties. Stay at Ballyfin, Co Laois Pure indulgence: One of the rooms at Ballyfin House. Donegal Admiring sea cliffs is one thing. The cliffs, rising nearly 2, feet from the Atlantic, are some of the highest in Europe. Park at the lower car park and just walk up! Visit Glenveagh National Park and walk through the grounds from the main car park to Glenveagh Castle rather than taking the shuttle. You might spot a deer or two - YG Details: See wildflower season in the Burren, Co. Clare The Burren in Co. When the wildflowers poke up between the wrinkled rocks typically in May , it makes for a scene that could have been lifted from a postcard. Continue the floral theme with a visit to The Burren Perfumery, where you can stroll through their herb garden and enjoy a pot of tea. Tread carefully along the Cliffs of Moher, and keep an eye out for puffins from the south platform. Go on a bat walk in Glendalough, Co. Wicklow Most of the talk about walks in Wicklow centres around the km Wicklow Way, and deservedly so. Glendalough has several hiking trails braided around its lakes too, combining beautiful ruins with a delicious breath of fresh air. But my favourite thing to do here is the bat walk. Held in August, an introductory talk is followed by a stroll down to the Information Office, where hundreds of bats spill out from the attic at dusk. You then follow them through the forest using bat detectorsâ€ the only thing spoiling the magic is the midges, so bring bug spray. Spot the white-tailed sea eagles on Holy Island in Lough Derg see mountshannoneagles. Seamus Heaney is soon to get his own visitor centre in Bellaghy. Take a drive to nearby Fore Abbey and all will be revealed Unique Ascent New frontiers are hard come by in travel. So when an email lands telling you of a place fewer people have visited than the moon, you take note. I drove to the edge of the earth to meet the man behind that email Ian Miller of Unique Ascent , and he took me on a nerve-jangling taster up Berg Stack, near Glencolmbcille. Spot them right here in Inishowen visitinishowen. Start in the town of Dingle and stop off at Ventry Beach to feel the sand between your toes. Boat trips are seasonal and weather-dependent, but you can get a great view from the Ballinskelligs Peninsula too. Get to a festival in Galway Macnas in Galway. But Galway is the king of festival season - from the summer races to the Film Fleadh, from the September Oyster Festival to the explosion of theatrics, music and art that is the annual Arts Festival. The streets are alive with performance, with illuminated puppetry taking centre stage. There are hundreds of islands all around our coast to discover; large or small, grassy or rocky. Step into the Hole in the Wall, Kilkenny Kilkenny The first time I chanced on this offbeat wine bar in Kilkenny, I ended up writing words of Irish on a piece of paper while watching a documentary on George Clooney. The second time, I got chatting to a group of Canadian visitors who had just been playing hurling. Michael Conway is the modest visionary behind this little gem. Kilkenny boasts some killer shopping stops around its Medieval Mile - try Folkster and A Slice of Heaven for starters. It has its unfortunate modern developments, but a stroll around the brilliantly intimate Viking Triangle brings you back through the centuries. Visit the southern tip of Ireland, Co. On the other side, set on a tiny rocky outcrop above the wild waters of the Atlantic is Mizen Head Signal Station which was home to three light keepers until

## Chapter 3 : 50 Unique Things To Do In Ireland - UPDATED NOVEMBER

*From the spectacular Cliffs of Moher to the magical Dunluce castle - be inspired to visit the Emerald Isle after reading the 52 best things to do in Ireland. From the spectacular Cliffs of Moher to the magical Dunluce castle - be inspired to visit the Emerald Isle after reading the 52 best things to do in Ireland.*

Just the one, but a very cool one in a very random location it must be said. The cable car on Dursey Island in County Cork transports up to 6 people at a time across the Dursey sound, where you can often see dolphins jumping through the water below. When the weather is rainy or windy, it can be quite a scary ride – but one you should do nonetheless! It is the only cable car in Europe that transports people across open sea water – yet another reason to put it on your Irish bucket list! Watch the sunset at the Baltimore Beacon Baltimore is one of my favourite places in Ireland and once you go there you will see why. It is unlike anywhere else, and on a sunny day, you sometimes feel like you are in another world. Watching the sunset behind Sherkin Island, Cape Clear and Schull in the background is an unforgettable site. The whole sky turns orange and the sunset is reflected in the harbour below as fishing boats and ferries back there way back to the mainland. Go mountain biking in the Ballyhoura Mountains The Ballyhoura mountains on the Cork Limerick border are one of the best places to go mountain biking in Ireland – so good, in fact, that Kanye West brought Kim Kardashian here on their last visit to Ireland. Turns out they are semi normal people after all! The Ballyhoura Mountain Bike Trails are 92km long in total but there are trails of varying length depending on your skill and fitness level. A great day out and by far one of the most adventurous things to do while visiting Ireland! Sometimes when there you can see them in costume sailing around Blessington lake in Vikings ships! Blessington also happens to be an amazing kayaking spot, so why not head down for a day trip and rent kayaks for as little as 15 euro. Jump off the pier at Salthill On those rare hot, sunny days in April, August and even late September, the Salthill Promenade in Galway is jam packed with keen swimmers and wannabe cliff jumpers waiting for their turn to show off their back flip skills. Even in Winter, you will find a few brave souls swimming here come rain or shine. A great Irish experience and another one for your bucket list! Often making into onto Top Road Trip Lists by travel journalist around the world, when you drive or cycle around this intensely green , mountainous region you will quickly see why. With lakes, mountains, V shaped valleys and even the stunning Dingle Peninsula, a drive here offers a compact taste of beautiful Ireland. Need more Kerry inspiration? Check out these gorgeous photos of Kerry! A full day is probably needed if you want to do as many rides as possible and get a free tour of the Tayto factory where you will be offered endless free bags of crisps to take home with you. You can either drive there or take one of the buses from Dublin, which leave in the morning and return late afternoon. All you need is 2 slices of bread, some butter and a packet of cheese and onion crisps. Watch in awe at the Cliff Diving Championships While this competition is not unique to Ireland, the location where it takes place in Ireland is unlike anywhere else in the world. It will scare and excite you in equal measures. Many animals such as the Kangaroos roam freely within the grounds while larger African wildlife such as Giraffes and Zebras are given such huge enclosures to wander around that they too almost look like they are roaming freely. This really is an amazing thing to do in Ireland, and everyone should go at least once. If you are looking to stay nearby, check out the magnificent Fota Island House and Spa. Walk from Bray to Greystones If living in Dublin, or just visiting, the Bray to Greystones walks is one the things to do at the weekend or whenever you have a day off. It is a stunning coastal path along the cliffs, and follows the railway line which connects Dublin with Wicklow and Waterford. Just wrap up warm! It has been named the longest defined coastal driving route in the world, and stretches the whole way from Donegal in the very North to Cork in the very South. Ireland may be small, but thanks to our small winding roads, it takes A LOT longer to get places than you might think. Situated on South William Street, and serving the best pints and toasties for miles, it is the perfect place to pull up a chair outside, sit back and watch as the world passes you by. This pub gets especially busy during the summer, during 12 Pubs of Christmas and often during the Dublin Web Summit when techies from around the world descend on Dublin and want slice of Irish charm. I actually know of 2 people who met their future husband and wife in Coppers, so it may not be that bad after all. He lives on

Dingle harbour and is one of the most friendly dolphins you will find anywhere in the world. Take a boat trip out with the locals and be treated to an acrobatics display by Fungi and his friends, just watch out as he sometimes comes VERY close and might scare the living daylights out of you! Wear your waterproofs and protect your camera from all the splashing! Blo Karting is a very unique adventure sport, involving sitting in a beach buggy with a sail and flying down the wide open beaches of Donegal. Try it out at the TurfnSurf hostel and surf school where you spend the night and wake up to a lovely breakfast overlooking the ocean. It is such a beautiful place to spend the day, whether doing a tour of Muckross House, a boat trip on the lake or hiking to Torc waterfall. One fun way to get around is by taking a Jaunting Car with the locals who are sure to entertain with their funny stories and folklore. Sip on a pint at Reidys Sweet shop Also found in beautiful Killarney, Reidys Sweet shop and bar is certainly not for tourists, but you would be welcome should you come across it. The bar looks like an old-fashioned grocery and sweet shop from the front, but if you walk through the shop to the back rooms which looks kind of like someones private living room you will find a small bar with locals sitting on high stools or on a bench sipping on pints or cans of beer from the fridge. Skellig Michael is a rocky island outcrop, a few miles off the coast of Kerry. It is very remote, which makes it difficult to get there and stops most people from ever trying. It is totally unique to Ireland, and is one of the most incredible things to do on your trip to Ireland. Watch the sunset at the Cliffs of Moher The Cliffs of Moher are one of the most photographed pieces of land in Ireland and once you arrive here you will soon understand why. On a clear day you can see for miles, while on a misty day you make the long trip here and may see nothing. If you do make it here, try and stick around for the sunset, it is one of the most beautiful sights in Ireland and is honestly a photographers dream. Just be careful not to get too near the edge! Do the Howth cliff walk which has spectacular views of Dublin bay and over to Dun Laoghaire, then finish up back in Howth village and treat yourself to a fish and chips and maybe an ice-cream. You can get real close to them, and they are best photographed at dawn or at sunset. This is by far one of the most fun things to do in Dublin! If you are not driving, there is an open top tour bus that stops here throughout the day. Featuring expansive gardens, water features, beautiful pathways, a walled garden and two championship golf courses, Powerscourt is known to be home to the most beautiful gardens in Ireland and one of the most exclusive hotels in the country. Selling locally made produce from fish, to poultry to fruit and veg and Flynns famous sausages, a trip here is a treat for the senses. When the Queen visited Ireland a few years back, she even took a small detour into the English Market to chat to the local producers. There is also a lovely cafe called Farmgate, which is one of the best places to eat lunch in Cork city. Take part in the 12 Pubs of Christmas If you are living in Ireland, or you will be visiting in December, you would be forgiven for becoming overwhelmed by the amount of large drunken groups walking around wearing crappy Christmas Jumpers. While not unique to Ireland, it is growing in popularity each year and hundreds if not thousands of people can be seen jumping off piers and rocks or running into the cold water on beaches around Ireland every Christmas day. If you get the chance, scoring a ticket to an All-Ireland final in Croke Park is the most exciting, enthralling and uniquely Irish experience you will have throughout your entire stay. Just be careful which team you decide to support! Join a live music session in Doolin.

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*The fact that author says this is a list of the coolest things to do in AUSTRALIA should've been a tip-off right from the start of what was to follow. Is essentially little more than someone's opinion of "coolest" things to do in Ireland (or is it Australia?) with a SHORT paragraph about each.*