With more than 30 million reviews and opinions, TripAdvisor makes travel planning a snap for the 35 million travellers visiting our sites each month.
Northern Ireland has been inhabited for almost 10,000 years, and is the site of the earliest known settlement in Ireland at Mountsandel, close to the North Coast. One of its greatest appeals for visitors today is its compactness, with most parts of the region within two hours drive of the capital city, Belfast. It is comprised of six counties, five of which touch the shores of Lough Neagh, the largest lake in Ireland and Britain. Within this relatively small area there is a huge variety of attractions and landscapes.

**Belfast** is a city reborn, where old and new go hand in hand. A booming retail centre with a fine Victorian streetscape, it has a proud industrial and maritime heritage. The RMS Titanic is the city’s most famous creation, built at the once-mighty Harland and Wolff shipyard. Today the city is divided into four quarters, each with their own story to tell, and a range of tours will help you uncover them.

The second largest city, **Londonderry**, also known as Derry, is an ancient settlement. Located on the site of a monastery founded by Saint Columba in 546AD, the modern city was established during the 17th century Plantation of Ulster and is Ireland’s only remaining completely walled city. A variety of excellent museums explore the different aspects of the city’s history.

Rated as one of the world’s top road trips, the stunning **Causeway Coastal Route (CCR)** takes in many of our famous attractions. These include Carrickfergus and Dunluce Castles, the Glens of Antrim, Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge, Old Bushmills Distillery, Mussenden Temple and Northern Ireland’s only World Heritage Site, the iconic Giant’s Causeway.

Northern Ireland has a strong connection with **Saint Patrick**, the island’s patron saint. The **St. Patrick’s Trail** is a 92 mile driving route linking 15 keys sites in Counties Armagh and Down, relating to Patrick’s life and legacy. These include the site of his first stone church and the base of his ministry in Armagh City, today Ireland’s ecclesiastical capital, and the site thought to mark his burial place in the grounds of Down Cathedral. County Down is also home to the famous Mountains of Mourne, Northern Ireland’s most impressive mountain range, thought to the inspiration for Belfast-born C.S. Lewis’ Narnia books.

Also well worth exploring are the beautiful **Fermanagh Lakelands** with their rich Celtic and Christian heritage, grand stately homes and an abundance of water-based activities. County Tyrone, meanwhile, is dominated by the heather-clad Sperrin Mountains, and is littered with megalithic monuments such as the intriguing Beaghmore Stone Circles. These rural counties can be explored at a leisurely pace on foot, bicycle or by car.

With so much to see and experience, Northern Ireland is just waiting to be explored.

The weather in Northern Ireland is traditionally changeable. The temperature usually stays above freezing, so there is seldom snow or ice, but at any time of year it is advisable to be prepared for rain. Summer months sometimes see prolonged periods of sunshine.

- Average temp in summer (2009): 14.2°C
- Average temp in winter (2009): 4°C
- Average annual rainfall (1971 – 2000): 1112.4mm

Please check [www.bbc.co.uk/weather](http://www.bbc.co.uk/weather) for an up-to-date forecast before or during your visit.
Main tourist sites/monuments

Titanic Trail

Causeway Coastal Route
Key sites including Giant’s Causeway, Old Bushmills Distillery, Dunluce Castle and Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge

Saint Patrick’s Trail
Key sites including Down Cathedral and Saint Patrick’s Grave, The Saint Patrick Centre, North Down Museum and St. Patrick’s Roman Catholic and Church of Ireland Cathedrals, Armagh

Ulster Folk and Transport Museum

Queen’s University

Walled City of Derry – city walls and museums

Mourne Mountains and Silent Valley

Ulster American Folk Park

Marble Arch Caves

Belleek Pottery

Navan Fort and Centre Complex

Oxford Island Nature Reserve

Belfast is served by two airports, Belfast International Airport and George Best Belfast City Airport.

The second largest city, Londonderry (also known as Derry) is served by the City of Derry Airport.

There are passenger ferry ports at Belfast and Larne, serving destinations in Scotland, England and Isle of Man.

The principal railway stations in Belfast are Great Victoria Street and Belfast Central, the Enterprise service to Dublin departs from the latter. Other main cities/towns served by rail include Londonderry, Coleraine, Ballymena, Lisburn, Bangor and Larne.

The principal bus station in Belfast is the Europa Bus Station. From here you can travel to various cities and towns across Northern Ireland and the Republic, including Dublin.

Main roads include the A1 (Belfast to Dublin via Newry), M1/A4 (Belfast to Enniskillen via Dungannon) and M2/A6 (Belfast to Londonderry).
### A Selection of Some Annual Events

#### Saint Patrick’s Day
Various cities and towns, March.
Festivities take place right across Northern Ireland to celebrate Ireland’s patron saint.

#### Titanic Made in Belfast Festival
Various Venues, Belfast, April.
Belfast’s most famous creation and the city’s maritime heritage are celebrated with a range of activities.

#### Armagh Apple Blossom Festival
Armagh City/surrounding area, Co. Armagh, May.
Celebrate the start of the beautiful apple blossom season in Ireland’s Orchard County.

#### North West 200
Causeway Coast area, May.
A week of activities culminating in Ireland’s most famous road race.

#### Mourne International Walking Festival
Newcastle/Warrenpoint, Co. Down, June.
Various walks and evening entertainment in the Mourne Mountains Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.

#### Twelfth of July Celebrations and Orangefest
Various cities and towns, July.
The Orange Order celebrates its culture and heritage.

#### Ould Lammas Fair
Ballycastle, Co. Antrim, August.
Ireland’s oldest market fair offering the chance to sample local specialities.

#### Appalachian and Bluegrass Festival
Ulster American Folk Park, Co. Tyrone, September.
Features some of the top names in bluegrass music, in a unique open air setting.

#### Enniskillen Arts Festival
Co. Fermanagh, October.
A full programme of events including music, literature, film, drama and dance.

#### Banks of the Foyle Halloween Carnival
Londonderry/Derry, October.
Ireland’s biggest Halloween celebration, including a top class carnival parade and fireworks display.
For up-to-date maps of Northern Ireland please visit www.discovernorthernireland.com
### Best Attractions

1. **Titanic Walking Tour**  
   ‘Odyssey Complex’, Belfast  
   +44 (0) 7904 350 339

2. **Clearsky Adventure Centre**  
   Castle Ward Demesne, Strangford, Downpatrick, Co. Down BT30 7LT  
   +44 (0) 28 4372 3933

3. **Titanic Tours Belfast**  
   Queens Island, Belfast  
   +44 (0) 28 9065 9971

4. **Belfast Famous Black Cab Tours**  
   Belfast  
   +44 (0) 7990 955 227

5. **Giant’s Causeway**  
   44a Causeway Road, Bushmills, Co. Antrim BT57 8SU  
   +44 (0) 28 2073 1582

6. **Museum of Free Derry**  
   Bloody Sunday Centre, 55 Glenfada Park, Londonderry/Derry BT48 9DR  
   +44 (0) 28 7136 0880

7. **Ghost Walk Belfast**  
   Departs City Hall, Belfast BT1 5GS  
   +44 (0) 7907 251 414

8. **City Tours**  
   11 Carlisle Road, Londonderry/Derry BT48 6JJ  
   +44 (0) 28 7127 1996

9. **Dunluce Castle**  
   A2 Coast Road, Portrush BT57 8SX  
   +44 (0) 28 7082 3333

10. **Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge**  
    West of Ballycastle, along the B15, Ballycastle BT9 7FJ  
    +44 (0) 28 2076 9839

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Northern Ireland has a wealth of top class attractions including world famous historic and scenic sites, award-winning museums and visitor centres, tours to suit all interests and an excellent choice of outdoor pursuits. For more ideas on things to see and do in Northern Ireland please visit www.discovernorthernireland.com
What to EAT

Local Specialties

Northern Ireland has a distinctive food tradition and heritage influenced by the geography, climate and the long history of the people. Local specialties include the famous Ulster Fry (distinguished by its griddle breads – soda bread and potato farls, fried until crisp and golden), Irish Stew (a hearty casserole traditionally made with meat, potatoes, carrots and onions), champ (a delicious dish of potatoes mashed with lots of butter, warm milk and chopped spring onions), wheaten bread (a healthy brown bread made with whole wheat flour), dulse (a salty, seaweed snack), Lough Neagh eels and an abundance of seafood sourced from the County Down fishing villages.

Those with sweeter tastes will enjoy our delicious home baking, with favourites including tray-bakes (large cakes, cooked in a single tray and cut into squares) and the distinctive ‘Yellow man’ (a crunchy golden confectionery similar in texture to honeycomb, sold at fairs and markets).

In addition, Northern Ireland is also gaining renown for its local suppliers and you can sample their produce at food festivals and farmers’ markets across Northern Ireland. The region also boasts award-winning restaurants to suit all tastes, from traditional rural retreats to modern city dining.
Where to SLEEP

Staying at a self-catering cottage, County Fermanagh

Whatever your preference – seaside, city, town or countryside, Northern Ireland is full of special places to stay. Accommodation types available include hotels, guesthouses, bed and breakfasts, self-catering, hostels and caravan and camping sites.

Best Hotels

1. **Belmore Court Motel**
   Tempo Road, Enniskillen, Co.Fermanagh, BT74 6HX
   +44 (0) 28 6632 6633

2. **The Valley Hotel**
   60 Main St. Fivemiletown, County Tyrone BT75OPW
   +44 (0) 28 8952 1505

3. **Dufferin Coaching Inn**
   33 High Street, Killyleagh, Co Down BT30 9QF
   +44 (0) 28 4482 1134

4. **Tara Lodge**
   36 Cromwell Road, Botanic Avenue, Belfast BT7 1JW
   +44 (0) 28 9059 0900

5. **Ardtara Country House**
   8 Gorteade Road, Upperlands, County Londonderry BT46 5SA
   +44 (0) 28 7964 4490

Best B&Bs

1. **Strand House**
   105, Strand Road, Portstewart, County Londonderry, BT55 7LZ
   +44 (0) 28 7083 1000

2. **Cul Erg House Portstewart**
   9 Hillside, Atlantic Circle, Portstewart, BT55 7AZ
   +44 (0) 28 7083 6610

3. **Caw Cottage B&B**
   1 Caw Park, Limavady Road, Londonderry/Derry BT47 6LZ
   +44 (0) 28 7131 3915

4. **Abbey Bed and Breakfast**
   4 Abbey Street, Londonderry/Derry, BT48 9DN
   +44 (0) 28 7127 9000

5. **The Cairn Bay Lodge**
   278 Seacliff Road Bangor, County Down BT20 5HS
   +44 (0) 28 9146 7636
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