

IRISH CULTURAL DRIVES

AN EBOOK BY CHILL.IE



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INTRODUCTION

There's no denying that Ireland is one of the most beautiful and interesting places in the world. Rich in history, art, music and much more, there is an abundance of things to do and places to discover the Irish culture.

To see what the fuss is about, why not plan your own road trip? Jumping in your car is a great way to immerse yourself in all that the country has to offer. In this eBook, we have the information and advice you need to visit some of Ireland's most popular attractions, from art galleries and castle ruins to the best restaurants and fun family days out.

We've also conducted a survey, asking nearly 1,000 Irish men and women about their favourite places to visit in Ireland. From the results, we've picked out the most popular answers, so you can trust that we know exactly what we're talking about.

HISTORY

If you're looking to take a drive somewhere with an interesting backstory, keep reading. According to our survey, these are the top three historical sites in the country.





DUBLIN CASTLE

Built in the early 13th century, Dublin Castle served as a headquarters for the English, and later British, administration. Following Ireland's independence in 1922, the castle was handed over to the new Irish government. Today, it is used as a government head office and conference venue. It's also one of the country's most popular tourist attractions.

Where Is It?

You can find Dublin Castle just off Dame Street, right in the heart of the bustling city centre and a stone's throw from iconic landmarks such as Dublin's City Hall and Christ Church Cathedral.

Parking

It's important to note that there is no on-site visitor parking available. Instead, you'll need to head to a nearby public car park, such as Q-Park Christchurch on Werburgh Street or Park Rite on Drury Street, and make a short walk over to the castle.



ROCK OF CASHEL

Located in Cashel, County Tipperary, the Rock of Cashel is one of Ireland's most iconic sites. Before the Norman invasion, it was originally the seat of the High Kings of Munster during the 5th century, and the majority of the buildings currently on the site date back to the 12th and 13th centuries. With its unusual architecture and high plateau above the countryside, the Rock of Cashel offers an authentic slice of Irish history.

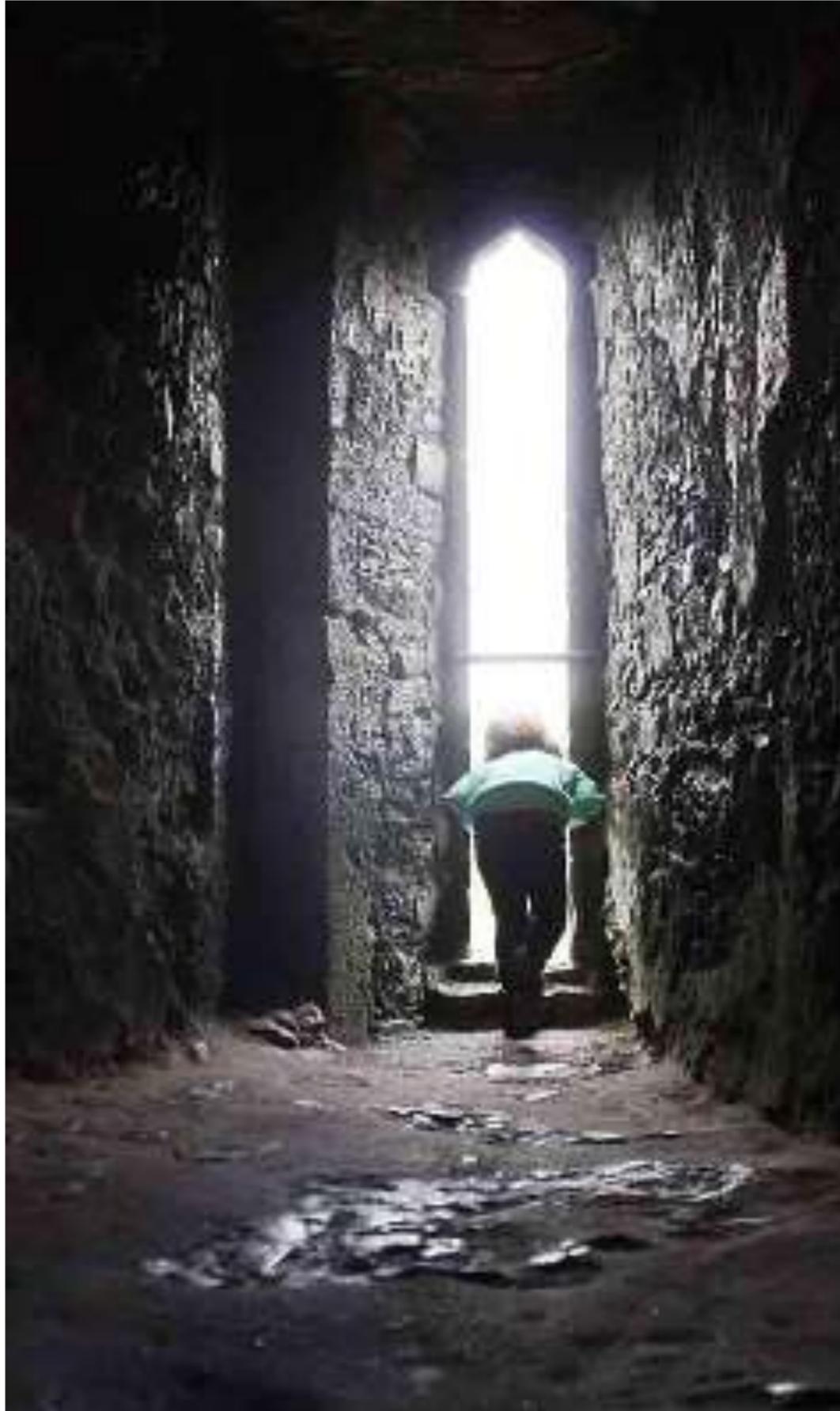
Where Is It?

You can reach the castle by taking the N8 from Dublin to Cork. It's about a two hour drive from Dublin city centre and Wexford, and one hour from Cork and Limerick.

Parking

There is a car park located at the bottom of the Rock costing around €6. Alternatively, you could park in the town centre and make the 15-minute walk uphill to the attraction.





BLARNEY CASTLE AND THE BLARNEY STONE

Blarney Castle dates back to the 10th century. The building you see today, which is the third castle to have been erected on the site, was built by Dermot McCarthy, King of Munster. The castle is home to the Blarney Stone, the stone of eloquence. Legend has it, if you kiss the stone while hanging upside down, you'll never be lost for words, making it a must-do for the thousands of people who visit the castle every year.

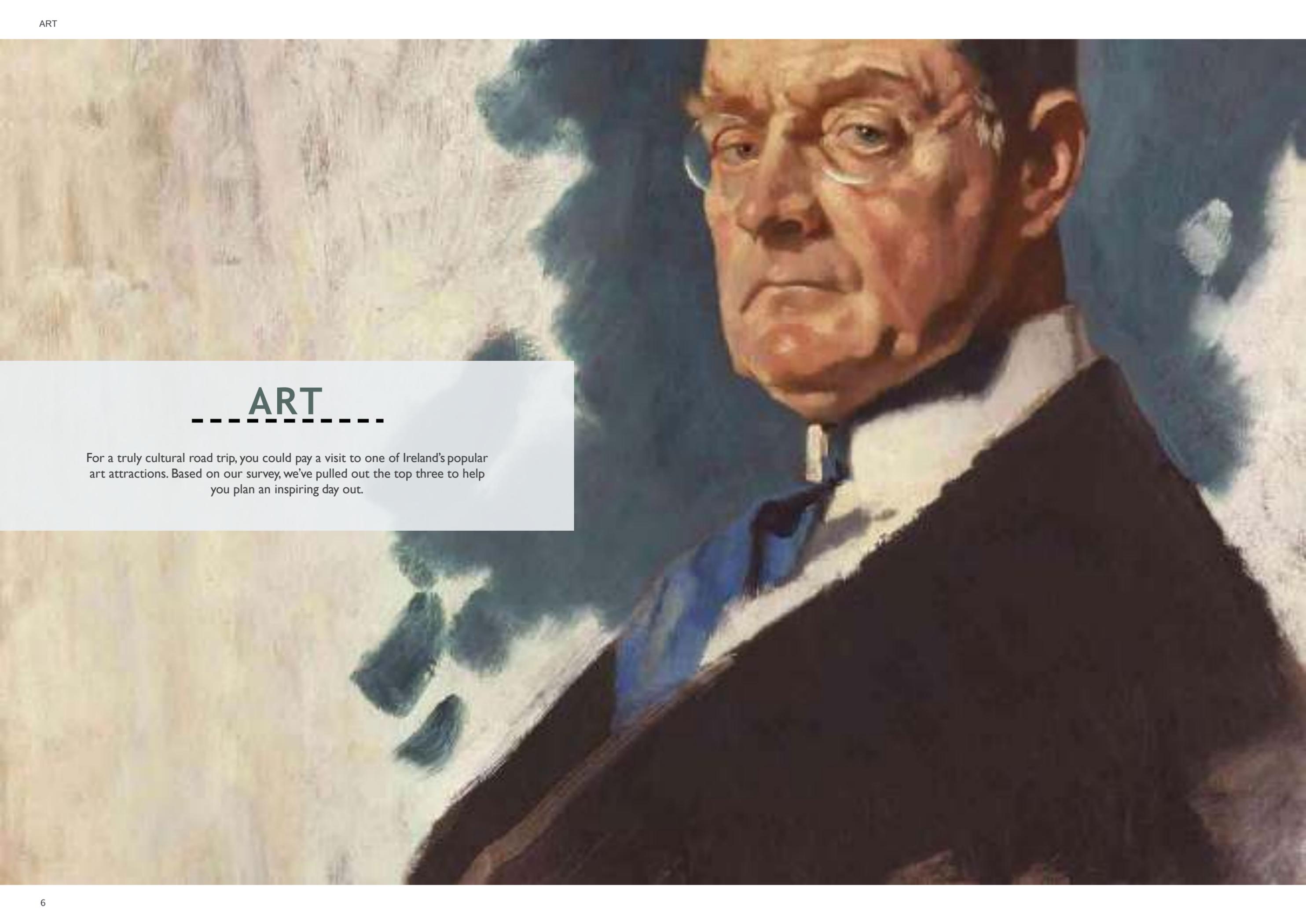
Where Is It?

Blarney Castle can be found about five miles northwest of Cork city in Blarney Village. If you're travelling from Shannon, you will need to take the road to Limerick, then follow signs to Mallow. From Dublin, you will need to take the N8 and follow signs for Cork.

Parking

There is free on-site parking at the castle.





ART

For a truly cultural road trip, you could pay a visit to one of Ireland's popular art attractions. Based on our survey, we've pulled out the top three to help you plan an inspiring day out.



NATIONAL GALLERY OF IRELAND

Founded in 1854, the National Gallery of Ireland is home to the national collection of Irish and European artwork. Entry to the gallery is free, and during your visit you will be able to learn more about each artist and the different art movements. You can also take in the peacefulness of the Fine Art Library and participate in workshops, lectures and tours.

How Do I Get There?

The gallery is located in the heart of Dublin city centre near to Merrion Square. There are a number of roads into the city and the attraction is well signposted.

Parking

There is metered parking available on Merrion Square. There are also a number of secure car parks within walking distance of the gallery.





SPHERE WITHIN A SPHERE

Created by Italian sculptor Arnaldo Pomodoro in 1982, Sphere Within A Sphere is a bronze, globe-shaped piece of artwork. Pomodoro gifted the sculpture to Trinity College, where it currently sits

How Do I Get There?

You can find the sculpture outside the Main Library at Trinity College in Dublin. Simply travel into the city centre and follow signs for the college.

Parking

There are a number of car parks close by, including Q-Park Setanta and Trinity Street car park. Both are a short walk from the sculpture

LIMERICK CITY GALLERY OF ART

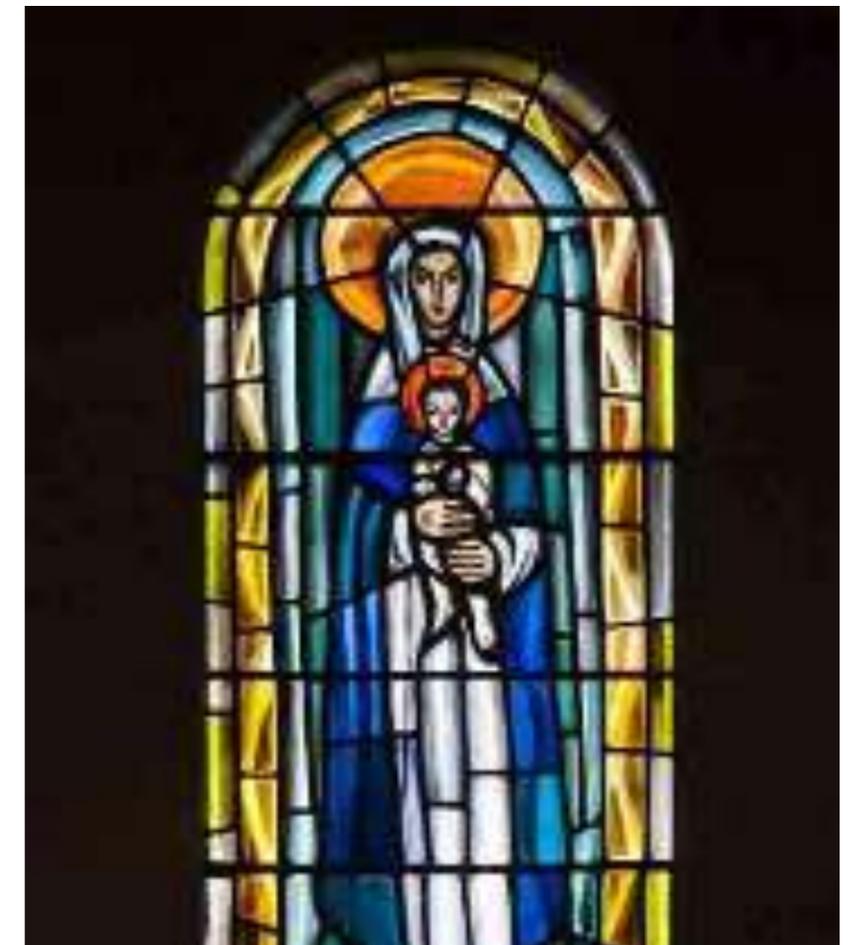
Limerick City Gallery of Art is one of Ireland's leading contemporary art galleries. It's home to an impressive collection of Irish art, including 18th, 19th and 20th century pieces. The gallery currently has works on display by renowned artists such as Camille Souter, Evie Hone, Paul Henry, Sean Keating and William Orpen.

How Do I Get There?

The art gallery is situated at Pery Square in the heart of Limerick. The city centre is about a two and a half hour drive from Dublin and about one and a half hours from Cork.

Parking

There is no parking available on-site, but there are a variety of car parks nearby, such as Q-Park Henry Street car park and City Centre car park.



FAMILY

If you're in Ireland and you're keen to plan the perfect family day out, keep reading. According to our survey, these are the three most popular, fun-filled trips you can take in the car with your brood in tow.



DUBLIN ZOO

Since it first opened in 1831, Dublin Zoo has been one of Ireland's most visited attractions. It welcomes around one million people through its gates each year and prides itself on its contribution to the safety and protection of over 400 animals, including endangered species.

How Do I Get There?

Dublin Zoo is situated in the city's Phoenix Park. There are a number of major roads running into the city and the attraction is well signposted.

Parking

There is no parking at Dublin Zoo itself. However, you can park your car around Phoenix Park in locations such as the Lord's Walk car park, which is located on Chesterfield Avenue, or at the Cricket Grounds car park situated opposite the zoo.



ISLAND HOP AROUND THE ARAN ISLANDS

The Aran Islands are a group of three islands situated off the mainland near Galway Bay. The islands - Inishmore, Inishmaan and Inisheer - are renowned for their natural beauty and charm and are home to sandy beaches, steep cliffs and unique flora and fauna. To make the most of your time on the coast, why not island hop between each one?

How Do I Get There?

The islands are situated in the middle of the Wild Atlantic Way. You can reach each one by catching a ferry from the mainland. If you're travelling from Galway or Connemara, there is a port at Rossaveal and you can access the ferry from Doolin too. Ferries run regularly throughout the day and you can travel via boat between each island.

Parking

There is parking available at the ferry terminals.





DOOLIN CAVE

The hidden, natural beauty of Doolin Cave was first discovered in 1952 and quickly became a must-see attraction for visitors. The cave is home to the Great Stalactite - the longest free-hanging icicle-shaped formation in the Northern Hemisphere. Measuring 23 feet in length, the stalactite is magnificent.

How do I get there?

Doolin Cave is located about 15 minutes from the Cliffs of Moher and around five minutes from Doolin Village. You can expect to reach Doolin Cave in approximately three hours from Dublin and two and a half hours from Cork.

Parking

There is free parking available on-site near the Visitor Centre.

MUSIC

Ireland is well-known for producing some of the most talented musicians of our time. In our survey, we asked people which Irish artists they feel are the most influential to the country - and here are the three that came out on top.



TOP 3 IRISH ARTISTS

1 / U2

Since they got together in 1976, U2 have been one of Ireland's most successful bands. Led by vocalist Bono, the group have had seven number one hits over the years, including 'With Or Without You', 'Beautiful Day', 'Vertigo' and 'Sometimes You Can't Make It On Your Own', and released 13 studio albums. One of the world's best-selling music acts of all time, U2 have sold over 170 million records worldwide and won 22 Grammy Awards.

If you fancy stepping in Bono's shoes, why not visit Windmill Lane Recording Studios? Located at 20 Ringsend Road in the centre of Dublin, this is where the band recorded some of its most successful albums, including 'Boy', 'War' and 'The Joshua Tree'.

2 / The Dubliners

The Dubliners formed in 1962 and were best known for their lively, Irish folk songs and traditional instrumentals and ballads. The group's line-up changed many times over the years, but their success was mainly centered around lead singers Ronnie Drew and Luke Kelly. Some of the band's most popular tunes include 'Black Velvet Band', 'The Irish Rover' and 'Seven Drunken Nights'. In 2012, they celebrated 50 years together and announced their retirement later that year.

Fans of The Dubliners can take a trip down memory lane and visit O'Donoghue's Bar where the band met and performed their first gig together. Situated at 15 Merrion Row in Dublin, O'Donoghue's is one of the city's oldest pubs.

3 / Thin Lizzy

Rock band Thin Lizzy formed in Dublin in 1969. Founded by drummer Brian Downey and lead singer Phil Lynott, the group have enjoyed a hugely successful career, releasing 12 studio albums. Their most famous songs include 'Whiskey In The Jar', 'Jailbreak' and 'The Boys Are Back In Town'. Despite a number of breaks and Lynott's death in 1986, the band continues to make music.

Back in the day, Thin Lizzy were renowned for taking the Dublin music scene by storm, playing many of the pubs and clubs around the city - some of which are still up and running today. From the infamous Bruxelles bar on Harry Street to the Mansion House on Dawson Street, why not pop in for a drink?





- 1/ Niall Horan, former One Direction star
- 2/ Van Morrison, singer-songwriter
- 3/ Bono, U2 frontman
- 4/ Sinéad O'Connor, singer-songwriter
- 5/ Danny O'Donoghue, The Script frontman
- 6/ Damien Rice, musician
- 7/ Bob Geldof, The Boomtown Rats lead singer
- 8/ Andrew Hozier-Byrne, Hozier singer-songwriter
- 9/ Hermitage Green, acoustic folk rock band
- 10/ The Corrs, pop band
- 11/ The Frank and Walters, alternative rock band
- 12/ Two Door Cinema Club, indie rock band
- 13/ The Saw Doctors, rock band
- 14/ Mundy, singer-songwriter
- 15/ Gemma Hayes, singer-songwriter



FOOD

There's no shortage of places to eat in Ireland. But if you're looking for somewhere that's a little more upmarket than the 'norm', there are a number of popular Michelin-starred restaurants you could visit. Below, we take a look at the three most popular Irish eateries according to our survey to help you decide where you should book a table at next.

TOP 3 MICHELIN RESTAURANTS IN IRELAND

1 / Restaurant Patrick Guilbaud, Dublin

Located at 21 Upper Merrion Street in the heart of Dublin, Restaurant Patrick Guilbaud describes itself as Ireland's only two star Michelin restaurant. Owned by the acclaimed French chef Patrick Guilbaud, the eatery has received praise from The New York Times.

2 / Aniar, Galway

Aniar is a one star Michelin restaurant in Galway. Led by owner and head chef JP McMahon, the culinary team is renowned for crafting contemporary Irish dishes. The restaurant is described as being terroir based - a term that refers to wine-making and how the combination of the soil, climate and environment gives a wine its distinctive flavour. The eatery uses this approach to pair up the perfect wine with each of its dishes. You can find the restaurant at 53 Lower Dominick Street.

3 / Campagne, Kilkenny

Located at 5 The Arches on Gas House Lane in Kilkenny, Campagne offers a relaxed, comfortable dining experience with a menu of high-quality seasonal produce featuring French influences. The restaurant has a one star Michelin rating and it has been awarded many prestigious national and international awards over the years.



PREPARING YOUR CAR FOR SUMMER

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Regardless of where you plan on going this summer, it's crucial that your car is prepared for the journey ahead. To ensure you're safe on the roads this sunny season, here are five top tips.

1/ Check The Air Pressure In Your Tyres

The drop in temperature from the warm weather during the day to the cooler nights can cause your tyres to lose pressure more quickly than normal, so it pays to check yours regularly to ensure they're in tiptop condition.

2/ Make Sure Your Air Conditioning System Is Working

There's nothing worse than setting off on a road trip on a hot, sunny day only to find out your air conditioning system isn't working as well as it should. To ensure your journey is comfortably cool, check yours before you leave.

3/ Evaluate Your Windscreen Wipers

Although we hope the sun will continue to shine all summer long, there's still a high chance you'll be caught in the rain at some point. For your safety, it's important to make sure that your windscreen wipers work correctly.

4/ Keep Your Washer Fluid Topped Up

It's vital that you keep your windscreen washer fluid topped up. The dry, warm weather can mean that your windscreen becomes dirty quickly, so make sure you have enough screen wash to keep it clear at all times.

5/ Take A Look At Your Coolant Levels

The summer heat can make it more difficult for your car engine to cool down. To avoid any problems, take a look at your coolant levels and top them up if necessary.



Thank you for taking the time to download and read this eBook. We hope it's provided you with the information and advice you need to plan a fun, and cultural road trip this summer.



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