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Welcome to our Co. Clare Visitor Guide

We will take you on a journey through County Clare,
a land of stunning landscapes, rich heritage,
and warm hospitality.

With a deep passion for Ireland, we have crafted this
guide to share the hidden gems and unforgettable
experiences that make Clare truly special.

From where to eat and sleep, to local events,
we've got you covered. Check out our website for
more adventure inspiring ideas.

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Mountshannon

At the heart of Lough Dreg's Blueway, Mountshannon is a picturesque village with the Blueway's 13,000 hectares of clear water. The harbour is busy in the summer and watersports such as canoeing, cruising, sailing and SUP are popular here, as well as angling on the Lough.

Mountshannon Beach is one of Ireland's most scenic lakeside bathing areas.



In the heart of the village is the 4.5 acre, "Aistear Park", which features a labyrinth, a children's playground, a picnic area and the outdoor 'Wee

Library' There are plenty of walking trails, from a 9km one to Scariff via Scariff Bay, to a Fairy Trail in Woodpark Forest, for families.

Out across the water, you can see Holy Island, Inis Cealtra, known as the Jewel of the Lough. The island has important links to the last High King of Ireland, Brian Ború. It is now uninhabited but was once a monastic settlement (520AD) with ruins of several small churches, a holy well and four high crosses. Still in use though, is the cemetery, the coffin and mourners travel in small boats to the island. Ger Madden runs guided tours from Mountshannon out to the island from April until September. There is a Pilgrims path and a Romanesque Baptism church which is enclosed by a stone wall with a doorway of an arch of three orders. The church was blown down by severe winds in 1839 but was later rebuilt as a house and ironworks.

Mountshannon Inis Cealtra (Holy Island)



There is one roofed building left on the island, St Caimin's Church, partly dating back to the 10th century. The round tower was restored

in the 1970s. Legend has it that a beautiful witch distracted the stone mason and it was never originally completed.

Scariff

Inhabited for around 4000 years, Scariff (Scairbh, meaning rocky ford or crossing place) was of great strategic importance for those wishing to cross the mighty Shannon river instead of traversing the mountainous terrain on the other side. The chipboard factory now occupies the site of a battle fought in 1315. The O'Grady clan controlled the area and built three fortified houses to maintain their dominance, one of which still exists at Tuamgraney and a smaller one at Moynoe, which can still be partly seen. Scariff castle was built in the 16th century.

Improved road connections and the Dock enabled Scariff to prosper and was known as the business centre of north-east Clare. Nowadays the Dock is used as the mooring point for pleasure crafts and Scariff has become a tourist centre with the Scariff Harbour Festival every August.



Tuamgraney

Built in the first millenium, St Cronan's Church is used for worship to this day. In the 7th century, a monastery was founded in Tuamgraney by Saint Cronan of Holy Island but it was ransacked by Vikings from Limerick for its chalices and illuminated manuscripts. Restored in the 10th century, it is said that Brian Boru assisted the monks in the rebuilding.

The McKernan Woollen Mills are home to luxurious scarves which are designed and woven here.



One of those places you want to explore to find a great vintage bargain must be Waste Lands Salvage, unexpected treasures in this small village store. Ranging from signs, clothes, bric-a-brac, art and antiques, all to be viewed with a cup of coffee!

Interestingly the oldest oak tree in Ireland is located in Raheen woods just outside the village.

Killaloe

Thinking Toys www.thinkingtoys.ie is a family business established 20 years ago in Killaloe Co. Clare.

Ailis, their daughter has Sturge Weber Syndrome, Autism, Epilepsy and a Visual Impairment. The frustration and difficulties they endured in trying to source suitable products for Ailis to aid her development was the catalyst that drove them to set up Thinking Toys.

**Thinking
TOYS**.ie
special toys for special kids



Open every Sunday, year round, is the Killaloe Farmers Market, situated between the waters by the bridge.

There is a self-guided walkway between Killaloe and their twin town of Ballina following the canal and River Shannon. Information panels are placed along the route and you can also download the walking tour on the PocketSights app using GPS. Learn about the Killaloe Railway and its canal and locks.

Killaloe has quaint narrow streets through old homes and shops, then a steep hillside, with views from the top of St Molua's Church and 13th century St Flannan's Cathedral.



The River Shannon meets Lough Derg at Killaloe, which is built alongside the river. There are moorings for anyone sailing up or down the river and there are several watersports centres. Pike and coarse fishing on Lough Derg and fishing stands

at nearby Twomilegate. There is a Blue Flag beach at Ballycuggeran, 5km away from Killaloe, which is also the starting point for the Crag Wood Walk. For those rainy days there is an art gallery with both local and art from further away, set in a restored 19th century cottage.

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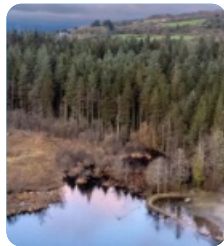


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Cratloe

A state forest of mainly spruce and pine has been planted to cover 800 acres and on the back road to Limerick, the ancient oaks of Garranon Wood, dating back to 700AD can still be seen. The oaks from this wood were used in the building of St Mary's Cathedral in Limerick, the timbers of London's Westminster Hall and the Royal Palace of Amsterdam.

Woodcock Hill rises to 310 metres and the western side of the hill is known as Gallows Hill after the 1850 executions made by Cromwellian forces. There is a Megalithic wedge tomb which was excavated in Craughan Cemetery in 1990 by the ruins of Craughan Church.



Cratloe is home to Ballymorris Pottery, which has an extensive range of beautiful stoneware pottery on display at the workshop. The pottery runs pottery classes and fun events for adults and children to learn a new skill in a friendly and informative atmosphere.



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Cratloe Castle north of the N18 is five stories high, built in the early 1500s. Cratloekeel Castle, 1km away on the opposite side of the road was built in the late 15th century, you can see it from the road through the trees. One of the largest castles, Castle Connell is just ruins now but used to be a trading post as it is near River Shannon. Destroyed in 1730, the stones were used to build Cratloe Wood House, the only example of an Irish longhouse still lived in by a family.

First mentioned in the Annals of the Four Masters in 376AD, Cratloe is the area where the King of Munster and High King of Ireland died from poison given to him by his sister, Mongfind, who also died as she drank some to convince the King to take some. Her reason being that she wanted her son Bríón to be High King. However this Kingship went to Bríón's half-brother, known as Niall of the Nine Hostages and Bríón had to be content with having the Kingdom of Connaught.

Bunratty

There are many restaurants in this busy town and Irish pubs with traditional Irish music, a woollen mill and hotels. One of our favourite places to stay is The Carriage Houses at Beechpark House, who offer handmade furniture and Irish artwork in their beautiful suites to allow you to unwind and enjoy a slower pace of life for your stay. With huge rooms and every luxury imaginable, modern bathrooms and a four poster bed in some, you will always have a very warm welcome here from Catherine.



THE CARRIAGE HOUSES AT BEECHPARK HOUSE

Set in the grounds of a country house, The Carriage Houses at Beechpark House consists of four individually appointed suites with separate living and dining area complete with kitchenette as well as either four poster or twin bedded rooms. Come and enjoy the quiet luxury!



www.beechparkcountryhouse.ie

Next to the castle is Bunratty Folk Park which replicates village life in Ireland in the 19th century. There is also a variety of rare breeds of native Irish animals at Pa's Pet Farm here and a Fairy Trail.



Bunratty Castle is said to be the most authentic and complete castle in Ireland. It has Medieval Banquets, fine medieval furniture and the chance to roam through the many chambers and hear stories of battles.



It is thought that the first settlement in Bunratty was set up by the Vikings in the 10th century and it is reported that Brian Boru - he was an Irish king who ended the domination of the High Kingship of Ireland by the Uí Néill, and possibly ended Viking

invasions of Ireland, destroyed one Viking settlement here in 977.

JILLY & JOE'S



Visit Jilly & Joe's, where great food and a warm welcome await. Famous for our award-winning carvery, we also serve a delicious breakfast and a popular all-day brunch.

Our courtyard features something for everyone including a food truck, ice cream parlour, pizza parlour, full bar and coffee bar!



Bunratty Rd, Bunratty | (061) 364 321

Open 7 days a week, we invite you to experience the charm of Bunratty, where exceptional shopping, delicious food, and a warm Irish welcome await.

Our spacious heated courtyard tent offers a comfortable setting all year round, with live music at weekends creating the perfect atmosphere to enjoy food, drinks, and time with family and friends.



WWW.JILLYANDJOES.COM



BUNRATTY VILLAGE MILLS

From authentic Irish gifts and Aran knitwear to award-winning food and family experiences - discover the charm of Bunratty Village Mills.

Explore a wonderful selection of Irish gifts, fashion, homeware, and seasonal collections at Meadows & Byrne, and experience the heritage and craftsmanship of Blarney Woollen Mills, renowned for its authentic Irish products.



Conveniently located just 10 minutes from Shannon Airport, Bunratty Village Mills is an ideal stop whether you are beginning your Irish adventure or heading home.

Blarney Woollen mills,
Old Bunratty road, Bunratty,
Co Clare | V95HROF



SHOP | DINE | DISCOVER

Sixmilebridge

The bridge and the term 'Six-Mile' refer to the distance between Limerick and the town with its primary crossing point over the O'Garney River to Sixmilebridge. Once having a brewery, water-powered mills and a market house, soap and rape seed oil were once exported from here and the remains of the quay walls and soap factory can still be seen today.

There is a sculpture by Shane Gilmore standing in the river below the bridge, named 'The Miller Returns'

The award-winning library is situated in the converted Church of Ireland building and The Old House Bar is still in operation and dates back to 1775.

Mount Levers Court, a Georgian period country house built in 1736 is a grand house well worth a view. Laid out in the 16th and 17th centuries, the town has three large squares and green area.

The town has a huge population of ducks and their go-to haven is named 'Duck Inn' - a floating safe raft on the river.



Just a short drive away are the '12 o'clock hills' which offer three fully sign-posted walking trails round bogs, lakes, castles and woodland with stunning views across Co Clare.

Shannon airport is only fifteen minutes away and the railway station connects Sixmilebridge to Galway, Ennis and Limerick.

Fun Fact

- In 1815, there was a duel between Daniel O'Connell (The Liberator) and John d'Esterre, over a remark d'Esterre had found to be a personal insult (O'Connell described the Dublin Corporation as "beggardly") However, local tradition told it that it was over a dispute when O'Connell refused to pay d'Esterre the toll at the bridge at Rosmangher!

Newmarket on Fergus

Legend has it, that this town was renamed from the Irish Cora Chaitlín by Lord Inchiqin after the famous racecourse, following a victory where he had staked Dromoland Castle as a wager! It is probably so named, as when they opened a Market here, Bunratty market pre-dated it, so this was the 'New Market' and the nearby River is called Fergus.

Within Dromoland Castle grounds, is the huge Mooghaun Bronze Age hill fort, built around 950 BC and recently excavated, it occupies the entire hill with three ring-forts and remains of round houses. It would have been home to perhaps a dozen families, who farmed the land and kept livestock. Pre-Christian skeletons of six people were found in nearby Barnhill in an ancient burial site.

Mooghaun Hill Fort, Newmarket-on-



O'Regan Park is a six hectare area, opened in 2003 with a story telling area, nature trail and fantastic naturalistic playpark, made from Robinia wood, with a pirate ship, climbing area, ropes, poles and swings. Also tyre swings, a mini digger, see-saws and a Zip line!

Carved animals feature in a lot of the wood, which is such a cute idea! All four schools in the area built and use the story telling circle in the park as an outside classroom when weather permits.

Also in the park is a sensory garden, gifted by a local Active Retirement Group, and is of huge benefit to those needing a sanctuary.

The Park was named as one of the top ten playgrounds in Ireland by The Irish Times and Mummy Pages in 2014 and more recently Family Friendly HQ gave it a similar accolade.



Huge flexible wooden structures were erected in the park in 2024 by Clare County Council as part of a pilot scheme for these structures to be used more widely.

At the end of August, beginning of September, there is a Family Fun Day in the park, traditionally with pizza oven and bbq, circus acts, fancy dress and competitions.

Shannon

Most people would associate 'Shannon' with its famous airport, ready to whisk you away to far off places. Also bringing visitors to Co Clare, and Shannon must be on your list of places to see before moving around the county.

Shannon was purpose-built in the 1960s on reclaimed marshland alongside the airport. Originally intended for the thousands of workers at the airport, residential areas were set up but initially there weren't enough facilities and the workers stayed elsewhere nearby, like Ennis and Limerick. By the 1990s, facilities had improved in the town and the 'Skycourt' complex was added to the shopping centre.



Nowadays, you can exercise in the local pool and leisure centre, visit the fantastic Aviation museum – well worth taking the family here. Take a wander round the Oasis Garden community project and stay in one of the local hotels, Treacy's Oakwood is especially good.

From the moment you step inside the Shannon Aviation Museum & Discovery Centre, prepare to be immersed into the fascinating world of aviation. In the company of your guide, travel through the development of aviation, engineering and technology. See historic and modern aircraft, engines and cockpits, sit into a Cessna aircraft and observe a live life-vest demonstration.

Discover the rich historical treasure of Irish aviation and get up close to Irish Air Corps aircraft, badges, patches and uniforms.

There's an RAF aircraft carrier jet, a spitfire replica section, gliders, microlights, and an example of the smallest jet aircraft in the world, the Bede BD5. There are pedal planes and a mini runway for the little ones too so that everyone can have their flying fun!

Dress up in aviation theme from a choice of costume on the Aviation Discovery Tour which offers the opportunity to learn more about aviation and have a virtual flying lesson!

Learn how to fly with a pre-flight lesson followed by a demonstration on the flight simulators. The fun begins as you take to the virtual skies on an air race around New York. Then, take a guided tour through the museum – ideal for taking fun photographs!"



- Sit in a Cessna aircraft
- See historic and modern aircraft
- Pedal planes and mini runway for the little ones to have fun
- Dress up in aviation theme and take a virtual flying lesson!

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Fun Facts about River Shannon

- *The river Shannon drains the Shannon River Basin, which has an area of 16,900 km², approximately one fifth of the area of Ireland.*
- *It is the longest river in Ireland and the British Isles at 360km*
- *The Shannon first appeared in maps c.100 – c.170 AD*
- *The Shannon divides the west of Ireland from the east and south*
- *The aquifer-fed naturally fluctuating Shannon Pot, is a pool and is the traditional source of the River Shannon. It has connections, through the Shannon Cave system, to other pools, two in County Fermanagh. The pool itself is about 16 metres wide, and has been dived to 14.6 metre depth.*

Nestled in the heart of the county, **Shannon Springs Hotel** is a premier destination offering guests the perfect blend of modern comfort and traditional Irish hospitality. Conveniently located just minutes from Shannon Airport, this award-winning hotel is an ideal base for both business and leisure guests looking to explore the stunning Wild Atlantic Way, the Cliffs of Moher, and Bunratty Castle.

Shannon Springs Hotel prides itself on providing a warm and inviting atmosphere. Its stylishly refurbished rooms are designed to offer comfort and luxury, featuring plush bedding, contemporary décor, and modern amenities to ensure a restful stay. The hotel's relaxed yet sophisticated environment extends to its Old Lodge Gastro Pub, which has earned a coveted AA Rosette for its superb food and impeccable service. Here, guests can indulge in locally-sourced Irish dishes, crafted with care by talented chefs, and complemented by a selection of craft beers and fine wines.

Beyond its culinary delights, the hotel offers a range of facilities, including complimentary Wi-Fi, free parking, and meeting space for corporate events or private gatherings. Its proximity to Shannon Airport makes it an excellent choice for those looking for a stress-free start or end to their Irish adventure.



*Experience Stay, Eat, Explore from
Clare: Shannon Springs Hotel!*



Stay at Shannon Springs Hotel, a welcoming haven featuring modern rooms, complimentary Wi-Fi, car parking and easy access to Shannon Airport. Enjoy a delightful stay as you explore the breathtaking beauty of the west coast.

Onsite our award winning The Old Lodge Gastro Pub offers a taste of Ireland with a menu showcasing locally sourced ingredients, craft beers, and fine wines. Whether it's a hearty breakfast or a cozy dinner, our friendly staff is here to serve you.



**Book your getaway today
for an unforgettable
experience in County Clare!**

Shannon Springs Hotel, Ballycasey, Shannon, Co Clare V14 A336
Telephone: 061 364047 | Email: info@shannonspringshotel.com
Website: www.shannonspringshotel.com

Ennis

In 2005 and 2021, Ennis won the accolade of Ireland's tidiest town in the Irish Tidy Towns competition and Ireland's tidiest urban centre on many occasions. Traditional Irish Music Festivals are held in Ennis, such as the Fleadh Nua and the Ennis Trad Festival. See the Festivals and Events page for dates.

The people of Ennis are known for their friendliness, they've won awards for it! This Medieval town is quirky, vibrant, with narrow streets, laneways and many of the Ennis-named 'bow-ways', so called because these laneways have arched (bow-shaped) coverings. The town grew outwards from the Old Friary, built around 1240 AD, which attracted hundreds of European students. So Ennis is used to others coming to their town and greet them openly to this day.



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The town is the largest town in Co Clare and derives its name from the Irish word "Inis", which means "Island" because it lies between two water courses of the River Fergus. Ennis is linked to the Kings of Thomond, who built a Clonroad Fort in 1210 on the banks of the river, then after the arrival of the Franciscan monks, King Donnachadh O'Brien had a large church constructed, which he later gave to the Friars. It was the last school of Catholic Theology to survive the Reformation after the Dissolution of the Monasteries.

CLARE MUSEUM

Clare Museum, Arthur's Row, Ennis,
County Clare, V95 EC92, Ireland

+353 (0) 65 682 3382
claremuseum@clarecoco.ie

ADMISSION IS FREE

www.claremuseum.ie



Twenty minutes north of Ennis is Dromore Wood Nature Reserve, covering about a thousand acres with lakes (Dromore Lake is popular for fishing), flooded meadows (callows), fen peat, limestone pavements, reed beds and deciduous woodlands. Home to many species of wildlife, it has way-marked walking trails ranging from easy to more adventurous, used for walking, hiking, dog walking, running and nature trips. The Wood Loop is just under 6.5 km.



The 17th century O'Brien Castle can still be seen at the lake edge.

Also sites of Cahermacrea Castle, Killakee Church, a lime kiln and two ring forts. The information centre opens just over the summer. The Nature reserve is open all year round from 8am until early evening.

As well as visiting the Friary, Ennis is also home to Clare Museum which has collections ranging from Rolex watches to a Langdale axe from Cumbria in England which was traded across the Irish Sea and across Ireland to north Clare during the Neolithic period.

Medicinal items to emblems and medallions.

It is well worth a visit to discover Ireland's heritage and history.





Nestled in the heart of Ennis Town Centre, Temple Gate Hotel offers a blend of historic charm and modern luxury. Enjoy beautifully appointed rooms, exquisite dining, and warm Irish hospitality just steps away from the vibrant town centre.

Whether you're exploring local shops, savouring traditional music, or visiting nearby attractions like the Cliffs of Moher, our hotel is the perfect base for your adventures. Indulge in a relaxing stay with top-notch amenities and personalised service.



*Experience the magic
of Ennis at
Temple Gate Hotel*

Temple Gate Hotel
The Square, Ennis, Co Clare V95 H0XK

Telephone: 065 682 3300

Email: info@templegatehotel.com

Website: www.templegatehotel.com

The Preachers Pub at the **Temple Gate Hotel** is a charming and lively bar located in the heart of Ennis, County Clare, Ireland. Known for its warm and inviting atmosphere, the pub blends traditional Irish hospitality with contemporary comfort, making it a favourite for both locals and visitors alike. Situated within the historic Temple Gate Hotel, the pub's decor reflects a rich heritage, featuring dark wood panelling, cozy seating, and an intimate ambiance.

Preachers Pub offers a varied menu, specialising in hearty Irish fare, from fresh seafood chowder to succulent steaks, paired with an impressive selection of local craft beers, spirits, and wines.

Guests can enjoy live music performances, which frequently showcase talented local musicians, adding to the pub's vibrant energy. Whether it's for a quiet pint by the fireplace or a lively evening with friends, Preachers Pub delivers a quintessential Irish pub experience.



With its central location in Ennis, Preachers Pub serves as an ideal spot to relax after exploring the town's historic landmarks or engaging in a day of sightseeing around County Clare. Its combination of great food, friendly service, and authentic atmosphere makes it a standout venue in the region.

In 1610, Ennis was granted permission to hold fairs and markets and the market square is still home to stalls each Saturday throughout the year. The town contained many old military barracks, terraced cottages for soldiers and a gaol once stood on Jail Road, now named Station Road. Local industries producing textiles, clothing, corn and flour mills, beer and whiskey started in the town, and their commodities were shipped abroad from nearby Clarecastle.

The Old Ground Hotel banqueting Suite was once the site of Ennis Town Hall. The town contains Ennis Hospital, Clare Fire Brigade and Civil Defence and the head quarters of Clare Divisional Garda.

Erribul

Frank Power has a passionate interest in local history, heritage and culture and the development of our rural communities. His story is interesting... "I grew up on a farm overlooking the Shannon estuary at Erribul and I have always believed that this beautiful scenic, tranquil countryside would be a great holiday retreat for tourists and visitors.

There is a great history associated with our family farm and home 'Erribul House' listed as a protected structure in buildings of Ireland as it was designed and built by Colonel George Wyndham the 1st Baron of Leconfield in 1840. My Mother and Father previously, had plans to develop a holiday facility on the farm but subsequently concentrated on a working dairy farm instead. I decided to set up a glamping tourism business at my home as part of their legacy to provide accommodation as a holiday retreat for visitors and tourists to the Shannon Estuary Way.

I have created a responsible tourist business project that focusses on sustainability by adopting good and positive environmental and social practices following the guidelines set out by Teagasc, an Irish Rural Tourism Program which focusses on the growth and development of rural tourism in Ireland in developing responsible and sustainable tourism projects and am developing a glamping tourism project that protects and celebrates natural, cultural, scenic and historic assets while safeguarding our regions identity and sense of place.

I devised a project plan for the development of tourism on the Shannon estuary, initially, creating a new tourist route linking – Clarecastle, Ballynacally, Kildysart, Labasheeda, Knock to Kilimer and Kilrush. With the support of communities, the Clare Local Development Company, West Limerick resources and Fáilte Ireland we created the Shannon Estuary Way which now links all regions of the Shannon Estuary".

Shannon Estuary Way

The Shannon Estuary Way travels from Listowel in Co Kerry, then over from Tarbert to Killimer, round the coast towards Labasheeda, hugging the estuary through Ballynacally and up into Ennis. From Ennis, through Clarecastle, Newmarket-on-Fergus, Shannon, Bunratty, Cratloe then over to Limerick and continuing in Co Limerick, to Pallaskenry, Foynes and back to Tarbert – or before you reach Foynes, go down to Rathkeale, Newcastle West then Abbeyfeale.

Apart from the wonderful views of the great River Shannon, you will also pass castles, woods, parks, gardens, piers, playgrounds, museums and many other attractions, it really is a great way to see the counties

There are many starting points of the 207km Shannon Estuary Way whether it be from Ennis, Killimer, Limerick, Tarbert or from one of the smaller towns like Kildysart.

Clarecastle, so called after the Castle which stood on an island on the River Fergus, built in 1250. 12th century Clare Abbey is open to visitors. An 80 foot quay was erected in 1815 and the town became the port for Ennis, exporting grain and importing coal.

The loop walks of **Ballybeg Woods** cut through deciduous trees, and Rocky Road.

Running at the southern edge of the woods is part of an ancient Pilgrims road, linking Killone Abbey, Clare and Ennis Abbeys. The Alice and Gwendoline Cave is on the western edge of the wood, which has been dated to 10,500BC.

With a large playground and a regular village market and a Farmer's Market every Saturday, there will be plenty to do here.

Kildysart pier is one of a couple of designated viewing points. You can charter a boat for a fishing trip or there are trout-fishing lakes just a short drive away.

Serving under Michael Collins, was an Irish revolutionary, Peadar Clancy, who is remembered by a statue in Kildysart.

Labasheeda Quay was historically a trading post for crossings to Tarbert in Co Kerry but is now used for swimming, sailing and fishing trips. With a picnic area, small green and an information board detailing the surrounding fauna and flora.

Each August, the village hosts a celebration of Irish Traditional music for a weekend of impromptu céilís, step-dancing and set workshops, in streets and pubs throughout the village.

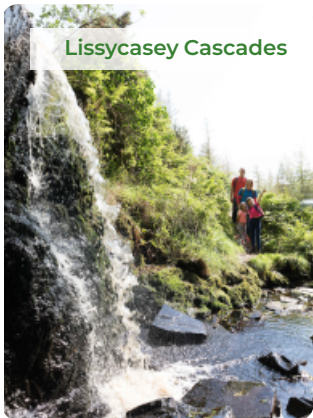
Mountshannon Wood is a mature forest on the banks of the estuary, dense, with many walkway paths.

Lissycasey

Lissycasey is between Ennis and Kilrush. In 1881, it was reported that two men, digging a drain near the village, found what they thought was a grave, with an iron-clad chest, upon which was a large sword, with O'Neill engraved on it. The box below it was opened by police and was reportedly to be full of ancient gold coins!

Loop Walks of Co Clare

Lissycasey Cascades



Near **Lissycasey**, is a 2.6km loop walk, through the Lissycasey Ecology Park, which is home to many protected animals and plants. Fabulous water cascades and wonderful nature is on this heritage trail through the Callans mountain range foothills on heathered ground.

This is a quiet, easy trail, accessed from a small road at the side of a house. Not really suitable for running and it can be a bit muddy, but you can park up the road. The cascades are very near the car park.

12 O'Clock Hills Loop is a 7.5km trail near Castlecrine. A moderately challenging route, taking about 2.5 hours to complete.

The **Mullaghmore Loop** near Corofin, is a moderate, 2 hour walk. Dogs allowed on a lead.

Dromore Wood, as described in the previous Ennis pages also has a loop walk.



Carran Loop is a 9km loop walk from Cassidy's Pub, Carran village, which is strenuous and takes about 4 hours. No dogs I'm afraid.

Ballyvaughan Wood Loop is a moderate walk, which takes about 2 hours and is almost 9km. No dogs I'm afraid.

A lovely starting point is at **Fanore Beach**, the **Caher Valley Loop**, 3.5 hours, about 13km and again, no dogs.

Doonbeg Loop from Loophead to Doonbeg, where you will find Whitestrand beach, takes around 45 minutes and is well marked, easy and 7km with lovely views.

Another walk, the **Black Head Loop** is a long walk, tough in places but with spectacular views over the ocean around the head. At 26km, it's a long walk round the Gleninagh mountain, taking 7 hours from Fanore across part of the Burren. Dogs are welcome in some parts.

Killimer

At the western point of the Shannon Estuary Way is Killimer, the gateway to and from Co Kerry and Limerick, via car ferries, run by Shannon Ferries.



Shannon Estuary, Co. Clare

Kilrush

Just 7km from Killimer, is Kilrush, a large town with an Aqua Park with inflatables, Rib adventures and its Cappa Blue Flag Beach. There are also daily trips to Scattery Island from the pier. Kilrush has a large marine for yachts to moor.

The Shannon Dolphin and Wildlife Centre on Merchants Quay, is a charity run business, open May to September for visitors. Dolphin Discovery run boat trips daily in the summer if you'd like to try to view these special creatures.



Vandeleur Walled Garden is a pristinely kept area within 170 hectares of woodland and has belonged to the Vandeleur family since the 19th century. The plants thrive in the microclimate of the walled garden and the hedged maze is beautifully kept. Discover a giant chess set, a Victorian glasshouse and water features. You will find an audio visual interpretive experience about the history of the area in the refurbished stables.

Loop Head Peninsula

The Loop Head road trail begins and ends here in the tiny village of Lisdeen or at nearby Kilkee. It is a majestic, immersive loop with raw weather, whether it is warm, wet or windy, you are always part of nature in this part of Clare.

Querrin

There is a mid-19th century fishing pier with panoramic views over the River Shannon and Scattery Island. Next to the pier is a handball site, dating back to the early days of GAA, which was founded by Clare man Michael Cusack. Also Querrin House, which is a recorded monument, is situated near to the pier. There is an intact fairy fort, which is a circular settlement from the Iron Age to early Christian times.

The village has an award-winning eco-camping and glamping site with yoga and cookery retreats. Holiday cottages have also been built here for sustainable tourism.

Doonaha

This is a small village with a - now eroded - Battery which defended the northern shores of the Shannon River.

The village also has a National School dating from 1886. If you're lucky, you may spot alpacas!

Carrigaholt



Visit Ireland's largest resident group of bottlenose dolphins where the Wild Atlantic meets the mouth of the Shannon. Depart from the Castle Pier of Carrigaholt where marine biologist Mary Kate and her crew will take you aboard Murúch, a brand new, custom built vessel in search of these dolphins. Along the way there will be plenty of historic sights to see, as well as stunning cliffs, beautiful birdlife, and even some spots that have inspired magical local folklore. Also enjoy a hot cuppa after breathing in the Wild Atlantic

air. This trip is not just about seeing the dolphins, but also to learn about them and witness their natural behaviour. With the round tower, a 15th century castle, standing guard on the cliffs, and busy piers, seafood restaurants and a small beach, this is a popular village for visitors. Sea-angling trips depart from the pier daily in the summer.

Rent an electric bike from the very knowledgeable Loophead E-Bikes in the village and tour the hills with ease!

The peninsula is known as being one of Europe's best bird-watching regions and the nesting ground of the cliffs and the grassy slopes provide a safe area for many seabirds such as the wonderful red-legged choughs, diving gannets and peregrine falcons. The bay has sea-caves, rocks and sea-stacks, chasms, wild goats on the grassy mounds and grey seals on its stony beaches.

Kilbaha

I love the name of this, 'Church of the Little Ark'! So called, because in the 19th century, landlords in the area refused permission for the building of a Catholic Church on their land, so the locals practised their faith in a wooden box containing an altar, which at low tide, was rolled onto the beach. The Little Ark is on display at the Star of the Sea Church. The village is sheltered in a bay and is the most westerly of Clare's villages.

The 19th century pier was built to accommodate the large amount of fishermen and seaweed gatherers and for those who were pilots for large ships going up the Shannon. The pier is used today for sea angling trips and there are an art gallery and working studio in the village.

Loophead Lighthouse

Right on the tip of the peninsula, is written in stones still, "EIRE 45",



one of eighty signs along the Irish coastline put there during WWII to warn pilots that they were on neutral territory.

It can be seen beside the Loop Head Lighthouse, built ninety metres above the crashing waves, which keeps travellers entering the River Shannon safe from the rocky cliffs of the peninsula.

In 1802, the first 'tower' lighthouse was built, which was then replaced with a new tower in 1854 designed by George Halpin. 1869 was a landmark year for the lighthouse when its light changed from being fixed to flashing.

The flashing pattern of a lighthouse is called its 'character' and Loop Head's is a white light that flashes four times every 20 seconds. In 1898, the fog signal was established, and in 1955 a radio beacon was introduced to transmit its morse signal every two minutes during fog conditions.

In 1971, the lighthouse was converted to operate electrically, and in 1991, it was automated. Today, it is one of 70 lighthouses operated by the Commissioners of Irish Lights, around the coast of Ireland and continues to play a vital role in maritime safety.

Bridges of Ross

Only one 'bridge' remains today, as the others have been eroded by the pounding sea over the centuries. Apparently there were more in Victorian times, and it was a popular sightseeing spot. Park in the car park overlooking the cove and walk down the hill, you can hear the thundering sea, the most, the sheer power of it crashing into the rocks. There are caves still being formed as the sea erodes daily, so there may be more 'bridges' in the future. For now you can walk across the remaining large grass-covered bridge, it is wide, but take care on a windy day!



The next small village you pass through is the farming village of Tullig and Goleen Bay, an inlet crevice in the cliff shoreline

Cliffs of Kilkee, the candlestick & keyhole

The cliffs of Kilkee, voted the best-rated tourist destination in Ireland by Trip Advisor stars, are stunning and you can do a 2-3 hour loop walk, with natural swimming pools called Pollack holes, deep pools teeming with life; huge starfish, anemones, fish and crabs. And the Puffing Hole, a natural blow hole, and cliff views. In 2020, massive waves from storm Bella battered the Candlesticks, which is a sea stack just off the cliffs and a wonder to see in rough weather.

Kilkee

A Victorian town, it retains its atmosphere, yet also has modern facilities too, with its Blue Flag beach for surfing, kayaking, walks and swimming. There is a 108-seat theatre with a gallery in the foyer.

An 18-hole golf course is on top of the cliffs, with breathtaking views.

Just up the road at **Moyasta** is a heritage museum and Slieve Callan steam railway.



Watch me!



The **“Yellow Men”** is a story of how men, probably from the Mediterranean coast, drowned while trying to come to land near Kilbaha. There are conflicting stories passed down the generations, some say this happened in the early 1800s, some say in 1873. Some say there were 9 men, others say 11 - tales are like that as they are passed down! The ship was most likely wrecked off Kerry Head (others say the other side of the Shannon River) They were on a raft or small boat, which seems to have been caught on rocks just offshore on a blustery night. (One tale has it that a local man cut the rope which they were using to save them as it was too long and when the vessel was blown further from the shore, it wasn't long enough to reach and they drowned) Locals tried to save them, but 9 or 11 men perished and were buried at the roadside one kilometre from Kilbaha.

Photo credit: Patrick Comerford, 2020)



In 2010, a Kilkee teacher in Cross National School, Paddy Murray, designed and created the “Grave of the Yellow Men” memorial and a mass was held to commemorate these unfortunate men, at the nine headstones which are at the side of the road and ring the graves.

The Teardrop Memorial to the ‘Yellow Men’ who drowned near Kilbaha
A poem, “The Grave of the Yellow Men” was written by Amy Griffin to commemorate this disaster.

Doonbeg

Doonbeg is the home to drama festivals in March and November, a fair, green sensory garden and jazz festivals. A great day of racing is to be had at the regattas with currachs, competitors travel from Kerry and Galway.

Cooraclare

The Old Parochial House offers visitors an authentic Irish experience, with renovated outhouses and stables converted into traditional style self-catering cottages. A song, written by local postman Frank O'Brien 100 years ago “The Chapel Gates of Cooraclare” is associated with the village and the Chapel Gate Singers Club was set up in 2012 to promote the art of traditional singing – catch them in one of the local pubs at the weekends! Tasting sessions can be found at Chapel Gate Irish Whiskey, set in an 18th century barn, which has been transformed into a bonded warehouse.

Quilty

Set right on the sea, Quilty beach is rocky on one side and sandy on the other, usable whether the tide is in or out, with lots of free parking. Nearby is Seafield, which has a sandy peninsula set between two large sandy beaches. The views of the mountains of Kerry, the Aran islands, Cliffs of Moher and Doonbeg are amazing from here. Mutton island, which was used as a prison in the 20th century, can also be seen.

On display in the sanctuary area of The Star of the Sea Church, is the bell from "The Leon", a French cargo ship which was wrecked during a violent storm in 1907.

Local fishermen have been making a living from the sea for generations, catching salmon, bass, herring, lobster and mackerel. Traditionally, locals supplemented their income by gathering seaweed, and today Wild Irish Seaweeds sell their seaweed far and wide.



Join a Seaweed Safari and walk along the shore from Caherush, identifying the seaweeds, you can book this from Treacy's West County Hotel.

Spanish Point



This lovely Clare town has a sandy beach, large hotel, various other accommodations and a surf school.

The Point was so named for all the sailors from the Spanish Armada who died here during a bad storm in 1588. Unfortunately, the ones who escaped to the shore, were then executed by the High Sheriff of Clare and Sir Turlough O'Brien. The Lord Duputy of Ireland had issued a command that all Spanish found in Ireland should be executed and their treasure seized. They did not receive news of a victory in time and evidence of the executions was unearthed in 2015 when a mass grave containing the bodies, was found by archaeologists.

In 1810, the Atlantic Hotel was built on Spanish Point, which at the time, was said to be the largest hotel in the British Isles. This later closed in 1930 as a result of the War of Independence as it had relied on members of the British nobility for its trade. It was later demolished but the Armada Hotel stands now just beside the ruins.

Castles and Towers of Clare

Tuamgraney Castle: O'Grady's Castle. Built C1500. Next to 10th century St Cronins Church and Clare Heritage Centre. Visit anytime. Part ruin.

Cratloemoyle Castle: Difficult to access. Part Ruin

Bunratty Castle: Built 1425. The site on which Bunratty Castle stands was in origin a Viking trading camp in 970. The present structure is the last of four castles to be built on the site.

Visitors allowed 9am to 5.30pm (April to September) and 9.30am-5pm (Oct to March). Completely Restored.

Knapogue Castel (and walled garden):

The Castle is a privately owned Medieval dining experience with formal gardens. 3 standing stones in the adjacent field.

Bookings only. Restored.

Dromoland Castle: An ancestral home, now converted to a 5 star hotel. See website to book.

Carrigaholt Castle: 15th century Tower House, with walled grounds. A very slim 5 storey tower. Coming from Kilkee, the castle is on the left after Carrigaholt. Part ruin.

Doonbeg Castle: This is a ruined 16th century fort

Tromora Castle: A partially ruined 14th century tower house.

Dough Castle: 14th century ruined tower house.

Doonagore Castle: A wonderful round tower house with enclosed

walls, on the way to Doolin Pier.

Leamenah Castle: A large fortified manor house, seen from the road. Partially ruined.

Ballyportry Castle: A 15th-century tower house, converted to provide accommodation. See website to book.

Dysert O'Dea Castle and

arch, Corofin: This 15th century tower house has been open to the public since 1986 with a 4km archeological trail past 25 field monuments, The tower contains many Irish antiquities Open 10am – 5pm May until August.

Ballygriffy Castle: A nicely semi-preserved round tower in Ballygriffy, between Corofin and Ennis.

Dromore Castle: A 16th century 4 storey tower house within the nature preserve of Dromore Wood.

Newtown Castle: A gorgeous 16th century round tower house. Lovingly restored in 1994, it sits at the Burren College of Art and is used for weddings and events. Open to the public in the summer between 9am – 5pm, except when booked for events.

Gleninagh Castle: A 16th century tower house owned by the OPW. You can walk round it.



Family-Friendly Activities in Co. Clare

County Clare is a perfect destination for families seeking adventure.

Here are some of favourite family-friendly experiences in Clare:



Boat Trips: Take a relaxing boat trip along the Shannon Estuary to spot seals, dolphins, and enjoy breathtaking views of the coastline. It's a peaceful and fun activity for all ages.

Family Tip: Perfect for nature lovers and young children.



St. Tola's Farm Experience: Internationally recognised as the producer of one of the top cheeses in the world, this is a must stop. Also voted Best Tourism Experience in 2025. Come taste, touch and see this unique farm experience.



Beach Days: Whether it's building sandcastles, exploring tide pools, taking a nice dip (if you're brave enough), or enjoying a family walk, there's plenty for everyone. For Clare's beautiful beaches, see pg 32. **Family Tip:** For water-loving kids, bring a wetsuit and let them embrace the refreshing Irish waters!



Castlefergus Horseriding: Castlefergus Horse riding offers a fantastic equestrian experience. Enjoy guided pony rides, scenic trail rides through the beautiful countryside surrounding the estate. It's a perfect activity for animal lovers and a great way to explore the stunning Clare landscape! **Family Tip:** Leave extra time for petting the horses and taking pictures!



Caherconnell Sheepdog Experience: Watch skilled sheepdogs in action at the Caherconnell Sheepdog Experience in the Burren. It's an entertaining and educational show for all ages. **Family Tip:** Kids will love the interactive demonstrations, and anything with animals is always a hit!



Hazel Mountain Chocolate Experience: For a sweet treat, visit Hazel Mountain Chocolate in the Burren for a guided tour. Learn how this artisanal chocolate is crafted and indulge in tastings of their delicious creations. **Family Tip:** Kids will love the interactive chocolate-making demonstrations and, of course, the tasting at the end!



Doolin Cave: Discover Doolin Cave. The guided tours are fun and informative, ideal for kids to learn about the cave's geology. **Family Tip:** The walk to the cave entrance is short and stroller-friendly.

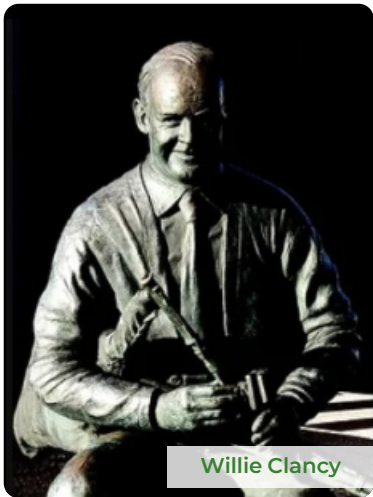


The Burren National Park: Explore the Burren, from wildflowers to monuments. The Burren Centre offers interactive exhibits for children to learn about the park. **Family Tip:** Don't miss the Michael Cusack Heritage centre, with lots of tours and events year-round. We hope you and your family enjoy your adventure in this beautiful part of Ireland!

Miltown Malbay

A relatively new town, Miltown Malbay grew from the early 1800s. After the famine, the Moroney family, who owned property in the town, continued to evict their tenants, until the people had had enough and started a boycott by refusing to serve the Moroney family or their servants. The government then imprisoned all shopkeepers and inn owners who had refused, so by 1888, most of them were in jail!

The town is home to annual festivals, with traditional music on the streets of the town during July at Scoil Samhraidh Willie Clancy, which draws musicians, students and visitors from all over the world, with instrument and dance classes, lectures, workshops, recitals and céilís all through the week. The in-depth documentary, Legacy of the Piper – Miltown Malbay is set around the life of the famous Uilleann piper Willie Clancy and the impact the Scoil Samhraidh had. Filming started on the 50th anniversary of the school in 2022.



Willie Clancy

The West Clare Music Makers Visitor Centre, which is open from May until September, is the venue for the stories behind the music and dance, the instruments played and the musicians.

The community event of Concertina Cruinniú is an annual festival held from 14th to 16th February 2025 featuring leading concertina players in Ireland and many of the towns pubs hold music sessions throughout the year.

Featuring live bands, The Forge has music most weekends.



There are several take-aways in the town, restaurants, a vets, two garage services and two fuel stations. There is a beautiful bakery, An BÁCÚS, which has served the town since July 2021. They have specialty coffees and wonderful breads, such as



Pumpernickle, sun-dried tomato or tahini and activated charcoal sourdoughs.



Friday is Market Day in the town, held in the community hall between 4pm and 6.30pm from May to September.

White Strand is a fairly small, sandy beach with a rocky shoreline and life guards in the summer. Awarded a Blue Flag and popular for swimming and watersports. There is a loop cycle from Miltown Malbay to Ennistymon and a walking loop from Drumbaun Church.

The former President of Ireland from 1976 – 1990 was Patrick Hillery and Miltown Malbays' library is named after him.

A relative of Patrick Comerford, who has a brilliant blog The Comerford Way, Georgie Comerford, born in Whitegate, Co Clare, on 25 January 1911, was only two when his father died. He attended primary school in Miltown Malbay and secondary school in Ennistymon. Miltown won the first minor championship in Co Clare in 1924, and won it again in 1926 and 1927. Georgie Comerford was on all those teams and played with the Clare minors in 1929 when they won the All-Ireland.



TEENAGE YEARS UNDERAGE SUCCESS

- In 1929 George captained Clare to win the inaugural All – Ireland minor championship
 - In the Munster final Clare defeated Waterford 1-6 to 0-4
 - In the All - Ireland final Clare defeated Longford 5-3 to 3-5, with George scoring 3-2 of the Clare total from full forward.
 - This remains Clare's only All – Ireland title at this grade.
- In 1930 George was on the Clare minor team that retained the Munster title defeating Tipperary 2-3 to 1-3, but Clare were unable to repeat success at All – Ireland Level.

Georgie Comerford is remembered as as Miltown Malbay's greatest-ever footballer and played for four counties and two provinces.....



An Taisce

CLARE'S BLUE FLAG BEACHES

There are eight beaches across Co Clare given the Blue Flag award – this is designated to demonstrate good environmental standards and have good sanitary and safety facilities.

 Two of these beaches are inshore, on the shores of **Lough Derg**; **Ballycuggaren, Killaloe and Mountshannon Beaches** are small lakeside bathing beaches, on the edge of mature woodland. Mountshannon is lifeguard patrolled in the summer season as the harbour gets very busy.

 **Kilkee Beach** is known for its golden expanse of sand, with bathing areas and pollock holes. This is on the Loophead peninsula and is 1.5km long. Surfing, kayaking and scuba diving are popular here in the clear waters.

 **Mal Bay at Spanish Point** has bathing and surfing year round, with a lifeguard present during the summer months. A surf school and surfboard rental, shower facilities, toilets, free parking, picnic tables and wildlife information point make this beach a great place to bring the family. If you're brave, join the early morning bathers at 9am for a dip or swim, then a cuppa and chat.

 **Miltown Malbay's White Strand Beach** is popular for water sports and swimmers and has a lifeguard in the summer.

 Another **White Strand Beach** is at **Doonbeg**, and is famous for its white sands and pristine water. It is sheltered by low rocky cliffs and is a secluded beach which gets busy in the summer, and has a life guard in high season. You will see water sports such as windsurfing, surfing, kayaks and paddleboards (which you can hire in summer) Horse riding and angling are also popular here. The beach is in a designated Natural Heritage Area of ecological importance and is a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

 **Lahinch Beach** is a huge crescent-shaped beach at the head of Liscannor Bay and is probably the most well known beach in Clare with 2km of golden sands. There are Atlantic breakers brought on from the curved shape of the beach, which attracts surfers and is the leading surf centre in Western Europe. You can also swim, kite surf, scuba dive and sea kayak here.

 Last but not least is **Fanore Beach**, near the village, with extensive sands, popular for surfers, with a surf school, swimmers and walkers. Lifeguard patrolled in the summer. European Habitats Directive protect the dunes which back onto the beach. These were formed thousands of years ago when sand was blown and trapped in the sheltered bay and then vegetation grew to make it stable and help build the dunes up further by trapping more sand. The only surface river which flows over the Burren enters the sea here.

Lahinch



From 1887, with the opening of the West Clare Railway, Lahinch saw tourists visiting from all over Ireland. Closing over 50 years ago, visitors still flock here for the 2km of golden sands and surfing, which are known world-wide.

Plenty of parking is available on the promenade for the many walks, wonderful scenery and all types of water sports, including kite-surfing, skin-diving and deep-sea fishing, sailing and swimming. Find all your sports requirements at Lahinch Surf Shop, with boards, wetsuits, dry robes and everything inbetween!



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Lahinch Surf Shop
First Lane, Lahinch V95D3TC

Tue-Sun: 11am - 5pm | Monday: Closed
Summer months open all week

There are two 18-hole golf courses and a leisure centre. Restaurants, pubs, hotels and shops line the main street making Lahinch a fantastic base for families.



bærrtrá

SEAFOOD RESTAURANT

With its intimate atmosphere and breathtaking backdrop, Bærrtrá is the perfect venue for any occasion—whether it's a romantic dinner, a family gathering, or an unforgettable boutique wedding.



The combination of exquisite food, personalized service, and panoramic views of Liscannor Bay makes each visit truly special.

For a memorable dining experience with world-class seafood, expertly prepared steaks, and a focus on sustainability, Bærrtrá offers the perfect setting, combining culinary excellence with the stunning beauty of Ireland's coast.



Saint Tola Cheese Award

- Super Gold ! 2025 World Cheese Awards
- Best Irish Cheese 2025 World Cheese Awards
- Supreme Champion Best Cheese Award 2025 at Listowel Food Fair
- 2 Star at The Great Taste 2025
- The Georgina Campbell Inaugural Food Tourism Experience 2025
- Bronze Award Family Food & Drink Producer of the Year at The Family Business Awards
- One of the Top 100 Cheeses in the World in “One Cheese To Rule Them All”



Ccoastline. Credit: Chris McMorrow www.chrismcmorrow.net

Lahinch and Liscannor stand on opposite sides of a big beautiful bay, with plenty of sandy beach to swim and enjoy water sports. On the N67, Miltown Malbay road, there is a car park on the sea-side of the road, just before the bend into Station road, which has an ESB e-cars charging station and also a Pittman bicycle maintenance point.

While in Lahinch, don't miss the Lahinch Art Gallery, you'll find it in the Kenny Woollen Mills on Main street.

There is some stunning artwork here, and really worth a visit. It's open all year round too, which is great for wetter and wilder days when outdoors isn't too appealing.

Specialising in naturally leavened bread, viennoiserie & pastel de nata, Hugo's Deli and Bakery is a must stop for barista coffee, cake, your daily bread and really friendly service.

Baked on the premises, their bread and cakes have rave reviews online, and is very popular with locals – always the best sign of an excellent place to go!

Ennistymon

Ennistymon is a lovely market town with small rapids called the Cascades, which run through the town and are awesome after heavy rains. Nearby Lahinch is accessed across a bridge over the river.



Photo credit: Patrick Comerford

Growing from only three cabins in 1775 to 120 houses in 1810, the town now has large supermarkets, galleries, bookshops, cafés and restaurants, hairdressers and a butcher.

There are several pubs which have live sessions with traditional musicians, bed and breakfasts and hotels.

Phone repairs are made easily or even if you're thinking of treating yourself to a new phone while you're on holiday, at HH Phones.

The Salmon Bookshop and Literary Centre on Main St, Ennistymon,



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is home to one of Ireland's major poetry publishers, Salmon Poetry (est 1981) which has commissioned and published over 600 books of poetry and prose. The Bookshop and Literary Centre and was set up by Jessie Lendennie (a published poet) and Siobhan Hutson in 2012.

They are particularly proud of their large walled garden. It was in terrible shape and is now a showpiece and the location for many successful readings and book launches. The Ennistymon Book Town Festival, annually in May, has hosted the best of Irish and international poetry and music in the bookshop garden.

If you're looking for really healthy food while you're away, try The

Aloe Tree, they have a huge selection of goodies; organic and funky! Established in 2014, The Aloe Tree is a family run health food store with good food, natural remedies and community at its heart. Stop by on your journey and say hi, they love meeting everyone from around the globe.



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The poet Brian Merriman is sitting, in stone, on Church Street. Born in Ennistymon in 1747, it was said he was illegitimate, born of a priest (or so the tale goes). One of his greatest comic works of literature, written in Irish, of around 1000

words, called Cúirt An Mhean Oíche. The poem is quite raunchy and one English translation was banned in 1946!



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Check www.st-tola.ie for tour details



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With historic buildings lining every street, the cascading river flowing under bridges and alongside the roads, Ennistymon is a fantastic place to stay, full of charm and unspoiled.

Abbeys and Monasteries around Co Clare

Photo credit: Patrick Comerford



Quin Abbey

Quin Abbey

Founded in 1433 for the Franciscan Friars.

Open until 4pm. 9 miles south of Ennis.

Partly ruined but sturdy walls and lots to see. Opening times vary from 10am – 4pm/5pm open Thursday to Sunday

Dysert O'Dea Monastery

This early Christian monastery was founded by St Tola in the 8th century. Most of the remains are from the 12th century. Part of the 5km trail from Dysert Castle. Stunning stonework. The castle is open 10am – 5pm

Clare Abbey

Founded by the King of Thomond for the Augustinian Canons in 1189, the belfry tower was added in the middle of the 15th century. Open 24 hours.

Cannon Island Abbey

Canon Island is the largest of 29 small islands that span the crossing of the Shannon and Fergus estuaries, and the 12th century abbey ruins stand on the north-east corner of the island. Access only by boat. A mass is held here but infrequently.

Photo credit: Patrick Comerford



Canon Island Abbey

Ennis Friary

Dating from the 13th century and through the years, this has been a Franciscan house, a royal seat of the Kings of Thomond, a courthouse, a jail, and a Church of Ireland parish church. Under the auspices of the OPW, many fine stone carvings can be seen in the refurbished nave. Open 10am – 4.15pm

Corcomroe Abbey

On the edge of the Burren, this abbey was constructed in the late 12th century, and added to, between the 14th & 16th century. Open 24 hours, free.

Liscannor

This is a lovely 19th century village set in Liscannor Bay, whose pier curls around a safe harbour. Renowned for its Liscannor Stone flagstones, popularly used in housing, walls, paving stones and flooring, since it was quarried in the 1800s.

Discover the magic of outdoor fun at Moher Hill Open Farm and Petting Zoo — the perfect day out for curious kids and animal lovers alike. Little adventurers can **pet and feed** friendly pygmy goats, meet gentle **Highland cows**, and enjoy hands-on encounters with lambs, rabbits and much more. Beyond the barns, children can explore **imaginative play areas**, dive into a colourful **ball pool**, or soar with laughter on the **bouncing castle**. For extra excitement, race around the **go-kart track** or challenge the family to a round of **miniature golf**.



MOHER HILL OPEN FARM

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- Challenge yourself on the Mini-Golf Course

www.moherfarm.com

Designed to delight visitors of all ages, Moher Hill Open Farm blends gentle animal encounters with energetic attractions. Visit today for a day of laughter, learning, and unforgettable family fun!

The Holy Well of Saint Brigid is one of the oldest in Ireland, and is said to have healing powers. Pilgrims travel on the last day of July from all over to visit the well. Cornelius O'Brien MP was healed of an ailment by the well water in 1853 and he erected a high pillar nearby to express his gratitude.



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Cliff Face Seafood doesn't just have really fresh, locally caught Lobsters and Oysters, they also serve excellent Fish & Chips and Pizzas! Find them on Main Street, Corofin at O'Rians Bar.

Cliffs of Moher

The Cliffs of Moher must be one of the best known natural features of county Clare, with majestic views over the Atlantic ocean, whose powerful waves crash directly below, spraying up the face of the cliffs in windy weather. Seen from the edge of the cliffs (safely cordoned off with a path) looking out, over the magnificent sea below. I can say this, as I visited one November a few years ago and it was simply breathtaking!



Or take an amazing boat trip on the Doolin Ferry, giving a totally different aspect!



Doolin Ferry At Cliffs of Moher

Back in 1835, Cornelius O'Brien built an observation tower right on the edge of the cliffs. This man thought ahead of his time, and was reported to have believed that local economy and tourism brought by the spectacular cliffs would bring local people out of poverty. He planned the tower for the hundreds of tourists to see out to the Aran Islands – he was right, today the cliffs have around 1.5 million visitors every year!

The Cliffs of Moher Trail takes 4.5 hours to complete and is about 20km long. It connects Liscannor and Doolin. The cliffs rise from 120 metres on the southern end to 214 metres to the north, by O'Brien's Tower and are 14km long.

Kilfenora

Kilfenora is home to Céilís, and one of the oldest music ensembles was set up here in 1909, the Kilfenora Céilí Band, which is going strong to this day! They have an annual traditional music festival and their dancing tradition has been built up over the centuries.

Gateway to the Burren landscape, explore the limestone paving, exotic species of plants and flowers and visit the Burren Visitor Centre and Café in the village.

This tiny village is not a village at all, it is actually the smallest city in the world! It has a 12th century cathedral right at the heart of the village/city! It was built in the Transitional style with nave and chancel. According to locals, this had an oak ceiling, decorated in gold stars, which survived until the end of the 18th century. In 2013 Pope Francis took on the role of Bishop of Kilfenore Cathedral! But the Bishop of Kilfenora is not expected to make many visits to his parish as the Bishop of Galway handles all of the clerical and administrative duties.



Kilfenora Cathedral

Named City of the Crosses as it has a unique array of ancient Celtic crosses. Some of the finest ancient tombs, iron age forts and castles surround this village/city.

The story of Kilfenora dates back to the 6th century when Saint Fachtna first built a church here (he has also been identified with Saint Fachtna, founder of Roscarbery in West Cork) The first church, built of wood, was followed by a stone building but this was burned down in 1055, rebuilt and accidentally burned again in 1100.

Father Ted filmed many of its famous scenes here, maybe you would recognise some of them when you visit?
you might, you might!

Doolin

Doolin is well known for its colourful village, great welcome and traditional music. Live sessions and craic can be found most nights in one of the many bars and it has a large choice of eateries.



Awarded Ireland's Cruise Company of the Year 2024, Doolin Ferry offers the fastest route to the Aran Islands, where visitors can explore stunning landscapes and enjoy an unforgettable island adventure. Or how about a Cliffs of Moher Boat Tour for a unique perspective of this iconic County Clare attraction. Better again, combine both trips for the ultimate holiday experience!

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Doolin was designated a Tourism Destination of Excellence by Fáilte Ireland in 2019.

Doolin doesn't really have a 'town centre', you will find pockets of scattered areas. The harbour for the cliffs of Moher cruises with Doolin Ferry and trips to the Aran islands, with a camp site nearby.

Fitz's Cross with another camp site, hotels, pub and hostel. Roadford, with pubs, restaurants, hostels and BnBs and visits to the cave. Some pubs have been around since the 19th century.

Fisher Street is home to more pubs and also the Atlantic View BnB, which is run by the lovely Eileen, who will give you a super warm welcome, with comfortable rooms and it is within walking distance to the harbour and shops.

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From the hills of the Burren, the Aille River runs down past Doolin, meeting the sea, and you will see the tiny Crab Island from the harbour, which now only has the remains of an 1830s constabulary outpost and the occasional goat on it.

The harbour bears the brunt of the wind from the Atlantic ocean but the islet does help somewhat to break the waves before they get to the harbour and makes Crab Island a good surfing spot .

A break which generates Ireland's largest wave is just off the Cliffs of Moher.

Several climbing routes are on Doolin's sea cliff, rock-climbing area but the cliffs are tidal and the limestone is not good quality – more popular is the area of Ailladie, 8km away.

There is an 18 hole Pitch n Putt links course overlooking the Atlantic ocean

You can reach Doolin (and the cliffs) by bus from both Ennis (Éireann route 350) which also calls at Ennistymon, the Cliffs of Moher, Lisdoonvarna, Fanore Kinvara and Galway several times a day. Rail and bus connections for further afield are in Ennis and Galway.

Fun Facts

- *Doolin was the main setting for the 2007 Playstation 3 game "Folklore" – in the game, the "Netherworld" can only be accessed from one place in the world – Doolin!*

- *Celtic Storm, a Celtic band, plays a fiddle tune called "The Devil Went Down to Doolin" (probably instead of Georgia!)*

- *Steve Wickham of the Waterboys played in the pubs in Doolin*

- *The stalactite in Doolin Cave measures 7.3 metres, discovered in 1952, it was recognised as the longest stalactite in the Northern hemisphere.*

- *The Cliffs of Moher are just 7km south of Doolin*

- *Séamus Ó'Duilearga recorded almost 500 stories, mostly in Irish from storytellers, singers and musicians who visited him while he stayed in Doolin.*

- *Gigantic boulders, two and three times the height of a person, used by rock climbers and for bouldering, can still be moved by the power of the Atlantic ocean.*

Lisdoonvarna

The town is built on Clare Shales, formed over 300 million years ago, which are a thin unit of rock, about 12 metres thick, impermeable to water and dark grey in colour, which can colour your hands like coal. The mineral pyrite (fools gold) is present here, which provides iron and sulphur, giving the water in the town a distinct flavour and smell.

Lisdoonvarna spa waters are well known for their healing powers for all aches and pains and have attracted visitors for over 200 years for their curative properties. Flowing from Slieve Elva and underground through limestone passages until it reaches the Clare Shale of the town. The first bath house was built in 1875 and twenty years later, over 20,000 visitors were arriving annually.

Europe's biggest match-making festival is held in the town every September and the Burren Slow Food festival is in mid-May.



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Islands of Clare

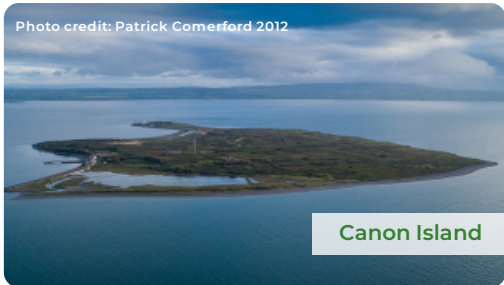
There are many islands scattered in the River Shannon, Lough Derg and surrounding the County, I have only touched on a few in this edition, I will try to visit more in the spring and include those next time too!

Inis Cealtra/Holy Island

Lough Derg has 376 islands, though some have been submerged due to rising water levels, but Inis Cealtra/Holy Island is one of the most famous monastic sites in Ireland and home to an iron age ring fort, a roofed church and five ruins, a kissing stone, a bargaining stone (a low boulder with a hole through it, said to be where monks shook hands through the hole, to seal a contract) a round tower, 10th century high crosses, 8th century grave markers and baullaun stones from pagan times (their shallow depressions perhaps used for grinding cereal) and over one hundred large grave-slabs dating to the eleventh and twelfth centuries still survive.

For over a thousand years, pilgrims have been making their way to the island and you can tour the island by taking a boat trip from Mountshannon on Lough Derg, on the river Shannon.

Canon Island



About 2.5km east of Kildysart, is the 270 acre Canon Island and the largest of 29 small islands spanning across the Fergus and Shannon estuaries. The island was granted

to the monks of Clare Abbey in 1189 and is home to Canon Abbey, a monastery, now ruined, built in the late 12th century.

Coney Island

Or Innisdadrom, the island of the two backs, is in the centre of the Fergus estuary and its 226 acres of fertile land was farmed by about ten families in 1837. There were ruins of two ancient churches at one time, one founded in 550 AD by St Brendan. In Dineley's Journal of 1680, the name of the island was said to have been taken from the great number of rabbits on the island.

From the summit of the hill on the island, you would have a great view of Shannon Airport and the town of Shannon.

Finish Island

Is opposite Coney island and the nearest to the eastern shore, consisting of 160 acres of land which was used for good cattle grazing in the 1800s, when the ruins of the old church were still to be seen.

Deer Island

Is close to the shore at Rossclyff jetty, was once home to a thriving farming community but has been uninhabited for years now.

Rat Island

Is near Ballynacally, so called probably because it may have had a population of rats, coming from all the trade ships passing by or maybe from a derivative of the name Red Island.

Hog Island

This 43 acre island was home to just one family of eight, 150 years ago and was farming land (presumably they had pigs). Now there is the remains of rusty metal shafts, maybe related to fishing, on the eastern shore. There are two lovely hills and you will see a population of goats if you walk them, with a salt-water lagoon on the eastern side and a coastline of cliffs.

Inis Cathaigh/Scattery Island



Scattery Island

Photo credit: Patrick Comerford

Now uninhabited, Scattery Island has a lighthouse, the remains of several medieval churches, cathedral and round tower. There is a deserted village which was once inhabited by islanders and an assortment of wild birds, animal and plant life thrive on semi-natural grassland. Board the ferry at Kilrush Marina, exiting through the marina's Locke gates, passing Cappa and Hog Island.

Mutton Island

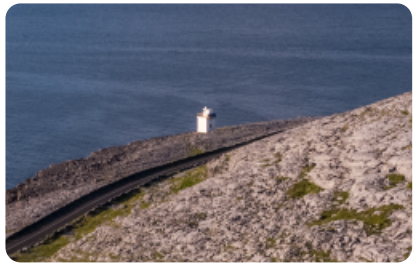
In 2023, this 185 acre island went up for sale. It is mainly arable land, with a 19th century round tower and small cottage. Once home to fishing families, the last left in 1956.

Crab Island

In 1918, a man was arrested for alighting on Crab island in a collapsible boat. He carried 45 in silver and told police that he had escaped from an American boat, sunk by a German submarine. This boat had not been sunk and the gentleman was taken to Scotland Yard!

Fanore

Fanore really is worth a visit. It is on the northern tip of the county, with a stunning Blue Flag sandy beach and loop walks taking in views across to the Aran Islands, Cliffs of Moher and Galway Bay. Black Head lighthouse is an hour or so's walk from Fanore, on the very northern tip, which was established in the 1930s for visiting transatlantic liners, who anchored off Ballyvaughan.



You should try to book ahead for this, the magnificent Caher Bridge Garden, which is open to the public April to October but strictly by appointment only! Contact Carl on 065 707 6225 or message on their Facebook page to arrange a guided tour. This award-winning garden is in the heart of the Burren and features ponds, the Caher river, unique stone work, a hazel woodland and a huge range of unusual plants. It is well worth a visit whilst in the area, you may have already heard of it on television, radio and in magazines.



Ballyvaughan

Close to the Atlantic, Ballyvaughan is a great base from which to explore the Burren, away from the crowds of the larger towns in the summer. You can walk for miles over these limestone rocks, which hide amazing flowers, unseen anywhere else in Ireland.

There are many Bed and Breakfasts around the town and in the outskirts, and hotels, shops and a service station.

Surf boarding and yachts are a familiar sight in the harbour, using the clear blue waters for water sports and relaxation, from the new pier built in 2006.



Photo credit: Patrick Comerford

Newtown castle is only half an hour away by foot, 4 minutes in the car, heading down the N67 towards Glenfort. At the heart of the village is a historic fountain, dry now but was used back in its heyday, it would have been well-used by those that frequented this thriving port. The village extended from the harbour, in the 19th century, when a new pier was designed by Scottish engineer Alexander Nimmo and built in 1829. He also designed a new harbour in Co Waterford and an improved harbour in Cobh, a new village on Valentia Island, Knightstown and the road from Galway to Clifden, and Sarsfield Bridge in Limerick.

This new pier in Ballyvaughan allowed great quantities of turf from Connemara to be landed, as the Burren had no trees, therefore no fuel. Grain, vegetables and bacon were exported and allowed the importation of supplies from Galway. The village had its own workhouse, police barracks and coastguard station for some time but its popularity waned with improvement in roads and other

towns were used for goods.

More recently, Ballyvaughan was known as Ireland's Gold Coast as property prices rose during the boom years.



Photo credit: Patrick Comerford

Ballyvaughan Harbour

Ring forts and burial sites of the Burren

11 minutes drive from Carran is the dolmen Poul nabrone which is the best known of Ireland's 172 (approx) dolmens. Estimated to have been erected between 4200 to 2900BC, it is not the largest but this single-chamber portal tomb with three standing stones and a large horizontal capstone was built by Neolithic farmers, as the site of a ritual or burial site. Before erosion, it would once have been covered in soil and a cairn would have been on the capstone. The limestone from the karst landscape was laid down 350 million years ago.



Poul nabrone Dolmen

The site was excavated twice in the 1980s, and 33 human remains of adult and children were found – also, the remains of a Bronze age infant, which would have been much later. Bone and stone objects, which would have been buried with them were also found with the rest of the bodies, estimated to have been buried between 3800 and 3200BC.

Carran church is between Ballyvaughan and Leamaneh castle and is a ruin. Another church, the 12th century Temple Cronan isn't far from the village travelling north, and has some grotesque heads on its walls.

A nice hike is to Cahercommaun, a large, impressive ring fort, at the end of the road leading east from Clonhouse. From the crossroads at Ballydoora Cross, heading west, then turning left, there are many ringforts, cairns and monuments. First an amazing ringfort and souterrain near the cairn and road. Then, heading south, is Poulawack Cairn, easy to get to, and excavated in 1934. This cairn is about 21 metres in diameter and was built over 1800 years from 3500 to 1400 in three phases, Neolithic – the remains of 3 adults and 1 child's bodies from this period were found, then 8 people have been found who were buried around 2000BC, lastly in 1600 – 1400 the original cairn was covered with a larger cairn and surrounded by new kerb stones. Further south is a ringfort.

South of Carran, on the limestone hill of the Burren at map ref: XVQV+XX Ballycashin are more ruins, a Bronze age house, not much to see, but imagine people living here so long ago! Then south about 300 metres are megalithic monument ruins and a kilometre north east of this (passing a wedge tomb) is another ringfort, with 5 historical tombs on the hill above. East of this is a wedge monument in ruins but the huge slabs can still be seen. Back onto the small road here and walk north, then to your right between the larger road, and this one is what must have been a pretty impressive wedge tomb when it was standing.

Myths and Legends of Clare

Young **Fuen-Vic-Couil** was captured by a giant and made to serve him for 7 years. The giant was trying to catch the elusive salmon who would give the first one to take a bite, the gift of prophecy. To obtain this, the only food the giant could eat was that from a sheaf of oats, blown through the eye of a needle towards him. He was rewarded with the salmon and instructed Fuen-Vic-Couil to cook it for him. However, the boy forgot to turn it and the fish scorched – resulting in a bubble, which the young boy tried to squash but burned his finger, and you've guessed it, he sucked on the sore bit, thus being the first to eat the fish! Fleeing from the vengeful giant, his new gift of prophecy helped him, as his thumb would smart and he knew how to escape when the giant came near. Eventually he managed to kill the giant, but his thumb still pained him and when he put it to his mouth, he would gain knowledge.

At **Tiermacbran**, (The lordship of Bran), Fuen-Vic-Couil lost his faithful hound Bran in a long chase after a deer. The deer, then Bran, leapt into a lake, the deer disappeared and was replaced by a beautiful woman, who pushed Bran's head down under the water and he disappeared for ever.

The Lake of Inchiquin, nearby to Tiermacbran, is once said to have been a busy and flourishing city but a holy man deemed that it should disappear under deep water. You can still see the towers and spires on a calm night. The dark king of this part of the country lived in a nearby mile-long cave in a hill and once every 7 years he would ride his white horse all the way round the lake at full speed until the silver hooves of the horse were worn until the curse of the city would be removed. Until this day, the curse still lies.

The Lost City of Kilstiffen so became when the chieftain lost the golden key which opened the door of the castle. Until this key is returned, the city will remain underwater. The key is said to be under an Ogham-stone east of Milltown Malbay on Slieve Callan. There are submerged bogs and forests within the reef of Liscannor Bay, which could be the basis for this legend.

St Senan's mother grabbed a branch during childbirth, which blossomed at her touch, starting tales of this man from birth. The seas parted for him whilst driving his cattle home across the estuary, saving him and this miracle was the source of his dedication to the Church. Living as a monk on remote islands, he was known to have travelled as far as Rome, back in 500AD, that was no easy feat. When settling on Scattery island, he faced off a terrifying sea monster and forbade it to return.

Father Ted's House

Near Corofin, is the house used for the exterior shots of the Parochial House in the immensely popular TV series Father Ted.

I was lucky enough to have visited in the days when you were welcomed for a cup of tea and a slice of cake – you will, you will, you will! Not by the wonderful Mrs Doyle, but the lovely lady who lived in the house.

It was a wet day, in fact it was November when we visited and the roads were lakes! We drove our old trusty Volvo all round County Clare for a two week holiday – the sun rarely shone, there was hail and snow, but we had a wonderful time nevertheless! That day, the car had splished and splashed through many huge puddles to get to the house, which resulted in the water seeping into the electrics



of the alarm and as soon as we sat down to tea - a magnificent spread of cardboard and wooden sandwiches – the alarm decided to go off - every 3 minutes, we were popular!!

I went upstairs, climbing rickety wooden stairs, old and wonderful. Inside the house bore no resemblance to the TV show – although the window Mrs Doyle fell out of when ear-wiggling and ‘cleaning’ the windows did look very similar!

After our real (delicious) tea and cakes and a few photos with the actual ones they used on the show, we went outside for the obligatory photo from outside the gates!



The road to the house is narrow and you can't park there but you can admire from afar and snap a couple of shots. Please respect the owners privacy and don't go into the grounds or park in neighbouring driveways.

Fun Facts about The Burren

- For thousands of years, cattle are brought to the Burren from all over Co Clare around October, once their calves are weaned, to graze freely there all winter



- There is a Winterage Festival Weekend at the end of every October which is a celebration of the Burren's farming traditions and cultures and is key to the area's famous flora and fauna

- The smallest lake in Ireland sits on the top of Slieve Elva and is only a couple of metres across. Lough Garrig sits unnoticed in the bog which covers the Burren, but is important as bogs act as carbon sinks (where carbon is stored so it doesn't end up as CO₂ in the atmosphere) and the presence of this tiny lough, which has been recorded for over 150 years, means the bog is able to store water consistently and is a water reservoir. If it wasn't for the huge sponge effect of the bog when it rains on the top of this mountain, water supply would dry up in a few days and water to local farms, houses and rivers would be cut off.



- Bogs have given our predecessors iron to forge for tools, then fuel for our fires and organic soil for our gardens.

- The Burren is known for its lunar-like limestone landscape, brought about by the erosive action of glaciers during the

ice-age, but actually, scrubland is common too, with hazel, holly, white and blackthorn been dominant. Soil and vegetation are sparse but orchid-rich calcareous grasslands, heaths, wet grasslands, turloughs (the name from the Irish 'Tur' meaning 'dry' and 'Lough' meaning lake) with chalky springs and peatlands.

- Aillwee mountain on the Burren is home to an interactive birds of prey centre, you can even go on a guided tour of the area with your hawk.
- You can visit underground caves to see stalactites and stalagmites, buy Burren Gold cheese and eat fudge in the café.

Festivals in Co Clare 2026/2027

August 2026

- Feakle Festival of Traditional Irish Music, 6th – 11th



September 2026

- QuareClare LGBTQIA Pride, 16th – 20th



October

- Burren Food Fayre, Bank Holiday

November

- Ennis Trad Fest, 5th – 9th

Dates TBC : • Ennis International Film Fest

February 2027

- The Outing Festival, Inn at Dromoland, 12th – 14th
- The Russell Festival, 26th – 1st March
- Corofin Traditional Festival, last full weekend
- Resonance, Lough Derg dates TBC

March

- Ennis Book Club Festival, 5th – 7th
- <https://ennisbookclubfestival.com/>



April

- Consairtín, Ennis, 1st – 4th
- Kilfenora Trad Festival, last weekend

Dates TBC:

- Cliffs of Moher Cycling Challenge,
- Piping Heaven/Piping Hell Tionól; na Cásca



May

- Clare Food & Drink Fleadh
- Festival of Finn, Corofin, May bank holiday
- Lark in Ennis

June bank holiday

- The Doonbeg International Jazz Festival
- Fleadh Nua, The Fleagh Down in Ennis
- Vandeleur Festival, Kilrush



July

- Willie Clancy Summer School of Traditional Music,
- The Junior Tour of Ireland International Cycle Race,
 - Féile Brian Ború
 - Ring of Clare Cycle



August bank holiday

- Kilmihiil Festival of Fun
- Scarriff Harbour Festival
- Kilrush Traditional Music Festival

Feakle

Feakle's annual International Festival is host to musicians, dancers, singers and poets. The town itself is known for its traditional Irish music and you can hear sessions in Pepper's, Moloney's and Shortt's bars. Pepper's, established in 1810, is known internationally for the local fiddle player, Martin Hayes.

Also native to Feakle were poet Brian Merriman, playwright Kieran Sheedy and composer Johnny Patterson.

East Clare Golf Club is 8km away, set in 150 acres of countryside with spectacular views. Several walking trails, the Cahermurphy Forest and Slieve Aughty Mountains are nearby and it is near to the East Clare Way.



Tulla

Surrounded by several small lakes, loved by fishermen, and built into a steep hill, Tulla also has a tradition of Irish music and is the base for Irish Tulla Céilí band. In the former convent is Cnoc na Gaoithe Culture Centre, which promotes the musical heritage of the area. It holds an annual festival of traditional song, dance and music. Music sessions are held in the various pubs year-round.

A monastery was built in the early 7th century on the Hill of Tulla and the market town grew up around it. Still in use today are some of the important buildings of those days, the courthouse and market houses. There are also ruins of several tower houses around the town, Fortane Castle being one, 1km east.

Clare's oldest GAA club is Tulla, founded in 1885 and is home to many a game in the summer months. North of the town are several forest walks and in the grounds of 18th century Cullane House is a lovely wood. The 12 O'clock Hills are 10km south of Tulla and the town is also on the East Clare Way, the 180km circular route.



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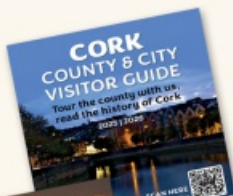
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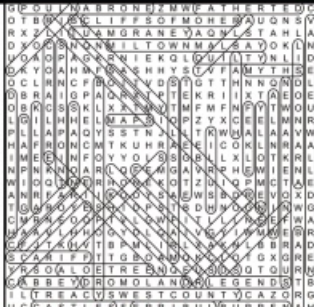


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Tips for Tourists Visiting Co. Clare

• Weather Preparedness:

Pack for Changeable Weather:

Clare's weather can be unpredictable, even in summer. Always carry a **light waterproof jacket or raincoat** and layers to stay comfortable.

Bring Sturdy Footwear: If you're exploring sites like the **Cliffs of Moher** or the **Burren National Park**, comfortable, waterproof hiking boots are recommended due to uneven and rocky terrain.

• Transportation Tips:

Renting a car is highly recommended to explore beyond Ennis and the major towns. Clare's coastal roads along the **Wild Atlantic Way** offer stunning scenic views.

Local Taxis: Taxi services may be sparse in smaller towns or villages, so it's best to book in advance,

especially if you're travelling to remote locations.

Cycling: Clare is a great destination for cycling enthusiasts. Popular routes like the **Loop Head Peninsula** and **The Burren** offer picturesque cycling experiences.

• Respect Nature and Wildlife:

Cliffs of Moher: Always stay within designated areas at the **Cliffs of Moher**. The cliffs can be windy, and while most areas are fenced off, it's important to follow safety guidelines.

Wildlife Spotting: Clare's coastline is perfect for spotting **dolphins, seals, and birds of prey**. While these animals are typically non-threatening, always maintain a safe distance and respect their natural habitats.



Curran's Pharmacy

Church St., Ennistymon

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- ✓ **Skincare:** green angel irish skincare | sanctuary spa | Eucerin | CeraVe
- ✓ **Cosmetics:** Rimmel | Flormar | elf | sosu
- ✓ **A wide range of fragrances:** Inis fragrances | ck | Boss | paco rabane | ysl | lancome | plus many more

✓ **Extensive range of gifts**

f curranspharmacy.ennistymon

Open Monday to Saturday 9.30 to 6.00 (closed for lunch 1 – 2pm)



24-Hour emergency Breakdown Recovery Services:

• Dermot Cleary Motors

086-2589925 | Ashline, Kilrush Road, Ennis, V95 T862

• PARC | Perfect Accident Repair Centre

065 686 8444 | Units 5 & 6, Block F, Quin Road Business Park, Ennis

• Alan Murnane Car Sales

085-1832174 | Quilty West, Ennis



Emergency Numbers

For urgent assistance, dial:

**Fire / Police / Ambulance:
112 or 999 (Available 24/7)**

Ennis Injury Unit (for ages 5 and over)
Ennis Injury Unit, Ennis Hospital, Gort Road, Ennis, V95 HN29 | 065 686 3121



Pharmacies

• **Sean Hilery Pharmacy** (Emergency Number): 086 270 6217 | 32/33 Skycourt Shopping Centre, Shannon



Emergency Dental Services

• **Dental Care Ireland:** 065 682 8486
Roslevan Shopping Centre, Tulla Road, Ennis



24-Hour Fuel Stations

• **Circle K Shannon:** +353 85 748 3780 |

Tullyvarraga, Shannon, V14 K201

• **Day Break:** 094 936 2460 | Ballyhaunis

Rd, Clare F12 C2F3

• **Apple Green:** 065 682 8889 | Limerick

Rd, Clonroad More, Ennis, V95 C3XW



Electric Car Hook-up Points

• **Lidl:** 12 Gort Road, Ennis, V95 CTD7

• **Ennistymon Road:** 1 Greenfield Park, V95 A2H2, Ennis

• **Public Car Park:** (Off Abbey Street & Bank Place) High Street, Ennis

• **Car Park Off Milltown Malbay Road** Lahinch

• **East End Car Park:** East End, Kilkee

• **Place de Plouzane:** Burton Street, Kilrush



Emergency Vet Services

• **Killaloe Veterinary Clinic:** 061-374104
Unit 3, Hill Rd, Killaloe

• **Ennis Veterinary Clinic:** (065) 6829599
Ennis Veterinary Surgery, Quin Road, Ennis

Tourist Information Office

• **Ennis Tourist Information Centre**

+353 65 682 8366 | Arthur's Row,
O'Connell Street, Ennis, V95 RX78

**John Sharry
TYRES & TYRE
Repair**

+353 (0) 872750315

Boherboy, near Doolin.

Just off the R479 2 minutes before
Doolin when driving from Ennistymon



Markets around Co Clare

Thursdays

Kilrush 9am - 2pm in The Square.

Shannon Farmers Market 10.30pm - 2pm Shannon Town Centre

Fridays

Ennis Farmers Market 8am - 2pm Upper Market St car park

Kildysart Farmers Market 9am - 1pm in The Square

Miltown Malbay Market 4pm - 6.30pm in the Community Hall

Saturdays

Ennistymon Farmers Market 10am - 2pm on the Ennis Road

Ballyvaughan Farmers Market 10am - 2pm in the Village Hall car park

Kilkee Community Market 10am - 2pm on O'Curry St – summer only

**BALLYVAUGHAN
FARMER'S
MARKET**

LOCALLY MADE CRAFTS, BAKING,
PRODUCE, MUSIC AND MORE!



Sundays

Doolin Craft and Food Fair 10.30am - 3.30pm (May til Sept)
in Hotel Doolin

Clonlara Country Market 9am - 12 noon in the Community Centre

Killaloe Farmers Market 11am – 3pm in 'Between the Waters', near
the Killaloe to Ballina Bridge

Kilrush 9am - 2pm in Kilkee.

Monthly

Malachy's Farmers Market in Quin, one Sunday each month

Tulla Country Market on the 2nd and 4th Saturday each month

Mountshannon Farmers Market 1st Saturday of the month,
11am - 3pm in 'The Snug' Mountshannon Main St.

I would like to thank Patrick Comerford for all his help with letting me use photos he has taken on his travels around Co Clare and for the wealth of knowledge he imparts to all who read his wonderful blogs: www.patrickcomerford.com It really has to be The Comerford Way!!

I would also like to thank Sile at Clare County Council Tourism for all her help! The Clare Tourism Group is so forward thinking, allowing fabulous photos to be used in publications to promote the beautiful County Clare and Sile went out of her way to help me.



Map References:

Ennistymon |

-  The Aloe Tree
-  HH phones
-  The Salmon Bookshop and Literary Centre
-  St Tolas Goats Cheese and Farm
-  Currans Pharmacy

Liscannor |

-  Moher Hill Open Farm & Leisure Park

Doolin |

-  Doolin Ferries
-  Atlantic View B&B

Lisdoonvarna |

-  Doreen Drennan Art

Fanore |

-  Caherbridge Garden

Carrigaholt |

-  Dolphin Watch

Lahinch |

-  Barrtra Seafood Restaurant
-  Lahinch Surf Shop



DOLPHINWATCH
CARRIGAHOLT

www.dolphinwatch.ie

info@dolphinwatch.ie | +353 (0) 86 8429505

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about dolphins!



Foynes, Co Limerick |



Foynes Flying Boat Museum

Bunratty |



Jilly and Joes



Bunratty Village Mills



The Carriage Houses
at Beechpark House

Corofin |



Cliff Face Seafood

Ennis |



Temple Gate Hotel



Treacys West County Hotel

Killaloe |



River Spice

Cratloe |



Ballymorris Pottery

Shannon |



Shannon Aviation Museum



Shannon Springs Hotel

barrtrá

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CLARE MUSEUM

Some of the objects to be seen in the museum



www.claremuseum.ie

ADMISSION IS FREE

Contact details and times

Clare Museum, Arthur's Row, Ennis, County Clare, V95 EC92, Ireland

+353 (0) 65 682 3382

claremuseum@clarecoco.ie

June to September

Monday to Saturday:

9:30am to 1:00pm

(last admission 12:30pm)

and 2:00pm to 5:00pm

Closed Sunday and

bank holiday weekends

(Saturday, Sunday and Monday)

October to May

Tuesday to Saturday:

9:30am to 1:00pm

(last admission 12:30pm)

and 2:00pm to 5:00pm

Closed Sunday, Monday, and

bank holiday weekends

(Saturday, Sunday and Monday)