

Contents at a Glance

Introduction	1
Part I: Introducing Ireland	7
Chapter 1: Discovering the Best of Ireland	9
Chapter 2: Digging Deeper into Ireland	24
Chapter 3: Deciding When and Where to Go	45
Chapter 4: Following an Itinerary: Four Great Options	55
Part II: Planning Your Trip to Ireland	65
Chapter 5: Managing Your Money	67
Chapter 6: Getting to Ireland	77
Chapter 7: Getting around Ireland	84
Chapter 8: Booking Your Accommodations	94
Chapter 9: Catering to Special Travel Needs and Interests	102
Chapter 10: Taking Care of the Remaining Details	113
Part III: Dublin and the East Coast	121
Chapter 11: Dublin	123
Chapter 12: Easy Trips North of Dublin: Counties Meath and Louth	187
Chapter 13: Easy Trips South of Dublin: Counties Wicklow and Kildare	197
Chapter 14: The Southeast: Counties Wexford, Waterford, Tipperary, and Kilkenny	215
Part IV: Counties Cork and Kerry	249
Chapter 15: County Cork	251
Chapter 16: County Kerry	279
Part V: The West and the Northwest	317
Chapter 17: Counties Limerick and Clare	319
Chapter 18: County Galway: Galway City, the Aran Islands, and Connemara	344
Chapter 19: Counties Mayo and Sligo	369
Chapter 20: County Donegal	386
Part VI: Northern Ireland	397
Chapter 21: Counties Derry, Fermanagh, and Tyrone	399
Chapter 22: Belfast and County Antrim	415
Chapter 23: Counties Down and Armagh	434

***Part VII: The Part of Tens*.....445**
 Chapter 24: Top Ten Traditional Irish Dishes and Drinks447
 Chapter 25: The Top Ten Items to Buy in Ireland.....449
***Appendix: Quick Concierge*.....453**
***Index*.....459**

Maps at a Glance

Ireland	10
Suggested Itineraries	56
Irish Rail Routes	92
Dublin Accommodations and Dining	130
Temple Bar	138
Dublin Attractions	148
Attractions around County Dublin	165
Dublin Shopping	172
Dublin Nightlife	178
Counties Meath and Louth	188
Counties Wicklow and Kildare	198
The Southeast	216
Wexford Town	219
Waterford City	228
Kilkenny City	240
County Cork	252
Cork City	253
Kinsale	267
County Kerry	280
Killarney	282
Killarney National Park	287
Tralee	304
Counties Limerick and Clare	320
Limerick City	321
County Galway	345
Galway City	346
Inishmore, Aran Islands	359
Counties Mayo and Sligo	370
Sligo Town	372
County Donegal	387
Donegal Town	389
Counties Derry, Fermanagh, and Tyrone	400
Derry/Londonderry City	402
County Antrim	416
Belfast	418
Counties Down and Armagh	435

Table of Contents

<i>Introduction</i>	1
About This Book.....	1
Conventions Used in This Book	2
Money matters	2
Other matters.....	2
My Assumptions.....	3
How This Book Is Organized.....	3
Part I: Introducing Ireland.....	4
Part II: Planning Your Trip to Ireland.....	4
Part III: Dublin and the East Coast.....	4
Part V: Counties Cork and Kerry	5
Part V: The West and the Northwest.....	5
Part VI: Northern Ireland	5
Part VII: The Part of Tens.....	5
Icons Used in This Book.....	5
Where to Go from Here.....	6
<i>Part 1: Introducing Ireland</i>	7
Chapter 1: Discovering the Best of Ireland	9
The Best Travel Experiences	9
The Best Hotels	13
The Best B&Bs	13
The Best Restaurants	15
The Best Castles.....	16
The Best Ruins and Archeological Sites.....	17
The Best Scenic Drives.....	18
The Best Golf Courses	19
The Best Natural Wonders	20
The Best Pubs.....	21
The Best Literary Sightings.....	22
Chapter 2: Digging Deeper into Ireland	24
History 101: The Main Events.....	24
Invaders welcome.....	24
Rebels with a cause	25
The Celtic Tiger and immigration.....	28
Who's Who in Irish Mythology	28
Who's Who among Irish Saints.....	29
Who's Who in Irish Literature	30

Word to the Wise: The Local Lingo	31
Getting the lingo.....	31
Avoiding misunderstandings.....	33
Taste of Ireland: Irish Cuisine and Dining	34
Checking out meal prices	34
Minding your manners: Irish meal times and dining customs	35
Deciphering the menu	35
Living the Pub Life	36
Figuring out pub hours and drink prices	37
Paying attention to pub etiquette.....	37
Savoring the black stuff: Guinness	38
Sampling other Irish brews.....	39
Sipping some Irish whiskey	39
Appreciating Irish Music	40
Background Check: Recommended Books and Movies ...	42
Fiction.....	42
Autobiography	42
Poetry.....	43
History and politics	43
Movies	43
Chapter 3: Deciding When and Where to Go	45
Going Everywhere You Want to Be	45
Experiencing the vibrant Dublin area	45
Touring the southeastern counties	46
Swinging by the southern and southwestern counties.....	46
Wandering the western counties	46
Rambling through Northern Ireland.....	46
Scheduling Your Time.....	46
Settling on the base-camp approach.....	47
Opting for the nomadic approach	47
Revealing the Secrets of the Seasons	47
Summer	47
Fall	48
Winter	48
Spring	49
Walking on Sunshine and Singing in the Rain:	
Ireland's Climate.....	49
Perusing a Calendar of Festivals and Events	51
March	51
April.....	51
May	51
June.....	52
July.....	52

August	53
September	53
October	53
December	54

Chapter 4: Following an Itinerary:

Four Great Options55

Seeing Ireland’s Highlights in One Week	55
Day 1: Dublin	55
Day 2: Dublin to Kilkenny.....	57
Day 3: Kilkenny to Kinsale	57
Day 4: Kinsale to Killarney.....	57
Day 5: Killarney to Ennis	57
Day 6: Ennis to Galway City.....	58
Day 7: Galway City to Shannon or Dublin.....	58

Touring the Best of Ireland in Two Weeks:

A Whirlwind Tour	58
Day 10: Galway City to Westport	59
Day 11: Connemara to Sligo.....	59
Day 12: Sligo to Derry	59
Day 13: Derry to Belfast	59
Day 14: Belfast to Dublin.....	59

Discovering Ireland with Kids	59
Day 1: Dublin	60
Day 2: Dublin to Kilkenny.....	60
Day 3: Kilkenny to Cork City.....	60
Day 4: Cork to Killarney	60
Day 5: Killarney to Limerick City	60
Day 6: Limerick City to Galway City	60
Day 7: Galway City to Dublin or Shannon.....	61

Hitting the Links: The Nine-Day, All-Golf Ireland Tour.....	61
First hole: Portmarnock	62
Second hole: K Club.....	62
Third hole: Mount Juliet.....	62
Fourth hole: Old Head Golf Links.....	62
Fifth hole: Killarney Golf and Fishing Club	62
Sixth hole: Ballybunion	63
Seventh hole: Lahinch Golf Club.....	63
Eighth hole: County Sligo Golf Club	63
Ninth hole: Royal Portrush.....	63

Part II: Planning Your Trip to Ireland.....65

Chapter 5: Managing Your Money67

Planning Your Budget	67
Cutting Costs — But Not the Fun	69

Making Sense of the Currency in Ireland	72
Handling Money	73
Using ATMs and carrying cash.....	73
Charging ahead with credit cards.....	73
Exchanging money.....	74
Toting traveler's checks.....	74
Taking Taxes into Account.....	75
Dealing with a Lost or Stolen Wallet	76
Chapter 6: Getting to Ireland	77
Flying to Ireland.....	77
Picking an arrival airport	77
Finding out which airlines fly to Ireland	78
Getting the Best Deal on Your Airfare	79
Getting to Ireland by Ferry.....	80
Joining an Escorted Tour	81
Choosing A Package Tour	82
Chapter 7: Getting around Ireland	84
Seeing Ireland by Car	84
Booking a rental car.....	84
Getting the scoop on driver's licenses and insurance.....	88
Figuring out the rules of the road	88
Traveling by Bus.....	90
Getting to know the major bus companies.....	90
Finding bus packages and tours	90
Riding the Rails.....	91
Finding train packages and tours	91
Bus and rail passes for extended travel.....	91
Chapter 8: Booking Your Accommodations	94
Knowing Your Options	94
Opting for hotels.....	95
Staying in casual comfort: Choosing B&Bs	96
Enjoying self-catering accommodations	96
Staying at a hostel.....	97
Frolicking at Farmhouse accommodations	98
Seeking out alternatives.....	99
Figuring Out Accommodation Prices	99
Finding the Best Room Rate at Hotels.....	100
Surfing the Web for Hotel Deals	101
Chapter 9: Catering to Special Travel Needs and Interests	102
Traveling with the Brood: Advice for Families	102
Making Age Work for You: Advice for Seniors	103

Accessing Ireland: Advice for Travelers
with Disabilities104
Studying Up on Ireland: Advice for Students.....105
Following the Rainbow: Advice for Gay and Lesbian
Travelers105
Exploring Your Special Interests106
 Doing genealogy research.....106
 Rambling your way around Ireland by foot.....108
 Teeing off on the greenest greens.....109
 Bicycling around Ireland.....109
 Fishing Ireland’s waters110
 Sailing the Irish seas and cruising
 the Irish rivers.....110
 Horseback riding.....110
 Spectator sports111

Chapter 10: Taking Care of the Remaining Details...113

Getting a Passport.....113
 Applying for a U.S. passport.....113
 Applying for other passports113
Playing It Safe with Travel and Medical Insurance114
Staying Healthy When You Travel.....116
Calling the Folks Back Home116
 Using a cellphone outside the U.S.116
 Using pay phones.....117
 Using a U.S. calling card117
 Using Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP).....118
Accessing the Internet Away from Home.....118
 Without your own computer118
 With your own computer.....118
Sending and receiving snail mail in the Republic
and Northern Ireland118
Figuring Out Electricity in Ireland.....119
Keeping Up with Airline Security119

Part III: Dublin and the East Coast 121

Chapter 11: Dublin 123

Getting to Dublin124
 By plane124
 By ferry124
 By train.....125
 By bus.....125
 By car125
Orienting Yourself in Dublin125
 Introducing the neighborhoods126
 Finding information after you arrive127

Getting Around Dublin.....	127
By bus.....	128
By taxi.....	128
By train.....	128
By car.....	129
By Luas (tram).....	129
Spending the Night in Dublin.....	129
Runner-up hotels.....	136
Dining in Dublin.....	137
Lunch on the move: quick, delicious, inexpensive options.....	137
Pub grub.....	139
Dublin's Top Restaurants A to Z.....	139
Exploring Dublin.....	147
The top attractions.....	150
More cool things to see and do.....	158
Attractions a little out of town.....	166
Seeing Dublin by guided tour.....	168
Suggested one-, two-, and three-day sightseeing itineraries.....	170
Shopping in Dublin.....	171
Locating the best shopping areas.....	171
Finding Ireland's best wares.....	174
Clothes.....	175
Irish music and musical instruments.....	176
Souvenirs and gifts.....	177
Hitting the Pubs and Enjoying Dublin's Nightlife.....	177
Hitting the pubs.....	180
Pulling an all-nighter: Late-night bars.....	182
Taking in some music.....	182
Checking out Dublin's excellent theater scene.....	184
Going to the movies.....	184
Fast Facts: Dublin.....	185

Chapter 12: Easy Trips North of Dublin:

Counties Meath and Louth..... 187

Getting To and Around Meath and Louth.....	188
Spending the Night in Meath and Louth.....	189
Dining Locally in Meath and Louth.....	191
Exploring Meath and Louth:The Top Attractions.....	192
Other Cool Things to See and Do.....	193
Shopping.....	195
Hitting the Pubs.....	195
Fast Facts: Counties Meath and Louth.....	196

**Chapter 13: Easy Trips South of Dublin:
Counties Wicklow and Kildare197**

County Wicklow197
 Getting to and around County Wicklow199
 Spending the night in County Wicklow199
 Dining locally in County Wicklow201
 Exploring County Wicklow203
 Shopping in County Wicklow208
 Hitting the Pubs209
 Fast Facts: County Wicklow209
 County Kildare.....210
 Getting to and around County Kildare210
 Spending the night in County Kildare210
 Dining locally in County Kildare211
 Exploring County Kildare.....211
 Hitting the pubs213
 Fast Facts: County Kildare214

**Chapter 14: The Southeast: Counties Wexford,
Waterford, Tipperary, and Kilkenny.....215**

County Wexford215
 Getting to and around County Wexford218
 Spending the night in County Wexford218
 Dining locally in County Wexford221
 Exploring County Wexford222
 Shopping in County Wexford.....225
 Hitting the pubs in County Wexford226
 Fast Facts: County Wexford227
 Visiting County Waterford and Waterford City227
 Getting to and around Waterford City227
 Spending the night in County Waterford228
 Dining locally in County Waterford230
 Exploring County Waterford: The top
 attractions231
 Shopping in Waterford City234
 Hitting the pubs in County Waterford234
 Fast Facts: County Waterford235
 Roaming in County Tipperary235
 Getting to and around County Tipperary236
 Spending the night in County Tipperary236
 Dining locally in County Tipperary236
 Exploring County Tipperary:
 The top attractions237
 Shopping in County Tipperary.....239
 Fast Facts: County Tipperary239

County Kilkenny	239
Getting to County Kilkenny	239
Spending the night in County Kilkenny	241
Dining locally in County Kilkenny	242
Exploring County Kilkenny	243
Shopping in County Kilkenny	246
Hitting the pubs in County Kilkenny	246
Fast Facts: County Kilkenny	247

***Part IV: Counties Cork and Kerry* 249**

Chapter 15: County Cork 251

Cork City and East County Cork	251
Getting to Cork City and East County Cork	254
Getting around Cork City	254
Spending the night in Cork City and East County Cork	255
Dining in Cork City and East County Cork	256
Exploring Cork City and East County Cork	258
Shopping in Cork City and East County Cork	264
Nightlife and pubs	264
Fast Facts: Cork City and East County Cork	265
Kinsale and West County Cork	266
Getting to Kinsale and West County Cork	266
Spending the night in Kinsale and West County Cork	268
Dining locally in Kinsale and West County Cork	270
Exploring Kinsale and West County Cork: The top attractions	273
Shopping	276
Hitting the pubs	277
Fast Facts: Kinsale and West County Cork	278

Chapter 16: County Kerry 279

Killarney and Killarney National Park	279
Getting to Killarney	281
Getting around Killarney	281
Spending the night in Killarney	281
Dining in Killarney	284
Exploring Killarney	286
Shopping in Killarney	291
Hitting the pubs	291
Fast Facts: Killarney	292
The Ring of Kerry and the Iveragh Peninsula	293
Getting to and around the Ring of Kerry	293
Spending the night on the Iveragh Peninsula and the Ring of Kerry	294

Dining in Kenmare and along the Ring.....	296
Exploring the Iveragh Peninsula and the Ring of Kerry.....	298
Shopping.....	301
Hitting the pubs	302
Fast Facts: The Iveragh Peninsula and the Ring of Kerry.....	302
Tralee and the Dingle Peninsula.....	303
Getting to and around Tralee and the Dingle Peninsula.....	304
Spending the night in Tralee and on the Dingle Peninsula.....	305
Dining locally in Tralee and on the Dingle Peninsula.....	307
Exploring Tralee and the Dingle Peninsula.....	310
More outdoor activities	314
Shopping.....	314
Hitting the pubs	315
Fast Facts: Tralee and Dingle Peninsula.....	316

Part V: The West and the Northwest.....317

Chapter 17: Counties Limerick and Clare.....319

County Limerick: Limerick City and Adare.....	319
Getting to County Limerick	322
Spending the night in Limerick City and Adare	322
Dining locally in Limerick City and Adare	324
Exploring Limerick City and Adare.....	326
Fast Facts: County Limerick.....	330
County Clare	330
Getting to and around County Clare.....	331
Spending the night in County Clare.....	331
Dining locally in County Clare.....	334
Exploring County Clare	336
Shopping.....	340
Nightlife in County Clare.....	341
Fast Facts: County Clare.....	343

**Chapter 18: County Galway: Galway City,
the Aran Islands, and Connemara.....344**

Galway City	344
Getting to and around Galway City.....	345
Spending the night in Galway City.....	347
Dining in Galway City	349
Exploring Galway City: The top attractions	352
Taking short side trips from Galway City	354

Shopping in Galway City	355
Enjoying Galway City nightlife	356
The Aran Islands	358
Getting to and around the Aran Islands	358
Spending the night on the Aran Islands	359
Exploring the Aran Islands	360
Connemara	361
Getting to and around Connemara	361
Spending the night in Connemara	361
Dining locally in Connemara	363
Exploring Connemara	365
Shopping in Connemara	367
Hitting the pubs	367
Fast Facts: County Galway	368
Chapter 19: Counties Mayo and Sligo	369
Getting to and around Counties Mayo and Sligo	369
Spending the Night	371
Dining Locally	375
Exploring Mayo and Sligo	376
The top attractions	377
Other cool things to see and do	382
Shopping	383
Hitting the Pubs	384
Fast Facts: Counties Mayo and Sligo	385
Chapter 20: County Donegal	386
Getting to and around County Donegal	386
Spending the Night	388
Dining in County Donegal	391
Exploring County Donegal	392
The top attractions	392
Other cool things to see and do	395
Shopping	395
Hitting the Pubs	395
Fast Facts: County Donegal	396
Part VI: Northern Ireland	397
Chapter 21: Counties Derry, Fermanagh, and Tyrone	399
Getting to Counties Derry, Fermanagh, and Tyrone	399
County Derry	401
Spending the night in County Derry	401
Dining in County Derry	404
Exploring County Derry	405

Counties Fermanagh and Tyrone	408
Dining in Counties Fermanagh and Tyrone	410
Exploring Counties Fermanagh and Tyrone	410
Shopping in County Fermanagh	413
Fast Facts: Counties Derry, Fermanagh, and Tyrone.....	414

Chapter 22: Belfast and County Antrim.....415

Belfast and the Surrounding Area	415
Getting to Belfast and County Antrim	415
Getting around Belfast and the surrounding area	417
Spending the night in Belfast and the surrounding area	417
Dining in Belfast and the surrounding area.....	421
Exploring Belfast and the surrounding area.....	422
Shopping in Belfast	426
Enjoying nightlife in Belfast	426
North Antrim	428
Spending the night in North Antrim	429
Dining in County Antrim	430
Ramore Wine Bar	430
Exploring North Antrim	431
Fast Facts: Belfast and County Antrim	433

Chapter 23: Counties Down and Armagh434

Getting to Counties Down and Armagh.....	436
County Down	436
Spending the night in County Down.....	436
Dining in County Down	437
Exploring County Down	438
Hitting the pubs in County Down	441
County Armagh	442
Fast Facts: Counties Down and Armagh.....	443

Part VII: The Part of Tens445

**Chapter 24: Top Ten Traditional Irish Dishes
and Drinks447**

Apple and Rhubarb Tarts.....	447
Brown Bread	447
Guinness	447
Hard Cider	447
Irish Breakfast.....	448
Irish Farmhouse Cheeses	448
Irish Stew.....	448

Irish Whiskey	448
Potatoes (and Curry Chips).....	448
Seafood	448
Chapter 25: The Top Ten Items to Buy in Ireland.....	449
China.....	449
Crystal	449
Irish Whiskey	450
Jewelry	450
Lace.....	450
Linen	450
Musical Instruments	450
Pottery.....	450
Sweaters	451
Tweed	451
Appendix: Quick Concierge	453
Fast Facts	453
Toll-Free Numbers and Web Sites	457
Where to Get More Information	458
National Tourist Information Offices.....	458
Other sources of information.....	458
Index	459