DISCOVER CORK...

Cork is a city steeped in history with a rich cultural past that seeps to the current day - awarded European Capital of Culture in 2005, listed by Yahoo! as one of the Top Ten European Cities to Visit in 2011 and placed by Lonely Planet on their Top Ten Best In Travel in 2010. With over 26 festivals annually in the city alone, it is a stage for various internationally famed festivals such as the Guinness Cork Jazz Festival and Cork International Choral Festival. It's an up and coming destination and is the perfect setting for business or leisure alike, offering top class conference venues, world class golf courses such as The Old Head in Kinsale and a multitude of activities on its doorstep to help unwind and get energised. Nestled in the second largest natural harbour in the world and home to the world's oldest yacht club, Cork was a departure port for emigration and ships such as the Titanic, and today plays host to the world's largest cruise liners.

With 1100kms of coastline, the area is festooned with little ports, bays, inlets, islands, harbours and boats for fishing, sailing and cruising. Award winning cuisine abounds, with Kinsale recognised as the gourmet capital of Ireland and you can follow the West & East Cork Food Trails until your belly is content! Adventure is on your doorstep too with the largest mountain bike trails in Ireland located in North Cork and West Cork claiming to have the best surfing and whale watching in the country! Outdoor fun is guaranteed for all the family in East Cork with its award winning beaches and activities. Marvel at castles, parks and gardens along the Blackwater Valley, relax with some angling or simply indulge at one of Cork's finest spa resorts.

CORK IS WAITING, COME AND SEE WHAT IT HAS TO OFFER...

DISCOVER HERITAGE

Visit the numerous castles and attractions such as Charles Fort – one of the finest examples of a star shaped defensive fort in the country – which will provide an insight into the area's history.

Learn about the interesting characters who once occupied the Cork City Gaol; discover the ecclesiastical story of Saint Fin Barre who founded the city and then try your hand at ringing the famous Shandon Bells.

Explore the historic houses and gardens of Cork by wandering around the internationally recognised arboretum at Fota House, Arboretum & Gardens and spend time at Bantry House & Gardens with its commanding views over Bantry Bay. A head for heights? Then kiss the world famous Blarney Stone to acquire the gift of eloquence.

Visit Cobh for its emigration stories and associations with the Titanic; where the 100 year anniversary will be commemorated with activities and events in 2012.

A Selection of Events

Cork Spring Literary Festival – February
St Patrick's Weekend – March
Racing Home for Easter – Cork Racecourse – April
Titanic 100 Commemoration – April 2012
Cork International Choral Festival - May
Cork Midsummer Festival - June/July
West Cork Chamber Music Festival - June/July
West Cork Literary Festival - June/July
Kinsale Arts Week – July
Cork Craft Month- August
Masters of Tradition- August
A Taste Of West Cork- September
Kinsale Gourmet Festival- October
Beamish Folk Festival- September/October
Guinness Cork Jazz- October Bank holiday weekend
Corona Cork Film Festival – November
Christmas in Cork- December

DISCOVER CULTURE

West Cork Islands – journey to these gems scattered off the West Cork coastline, travel by ferry to Cape Clear an Irish speaking Gaeltacht, Heir Island renowned for its sailing or Dursey via Ireland's only cable car if you dare!

Walks – take one of our themed audio tours of Cork City, available to download free from www.discoverireland.ie/cork

Music – hip new venues offer contemporary music nightly or for more traditional tastes intimate cosy pubs abound!

Visit the many galleries such as the Lewis Glucksman Art Gallery – esteemed for its innovative architecture this building was listed as one of 'The Top 1001 buildings to see before you die'!

Cork Craft – pottery, lace making, fine art and printmaking are just some of the crafts on offer through workshops and studios throughout the region.

DISCOVER BUSINESS

3,000+ rooms available across a selection of internationally acclaimed 5*, 4* and 3* hotels .

"It's amazing that Cork is so small but with very big venue options. I will definitely recommend this destination to my clients" – Mr. Shao Qun, Manager of China, Space Travel.

A diverse range of gala dinner options are available, including luxury private residences, historic castles, a 19th century gaol, racecourses, country houses, distilleries and more.

Cork has world class conference facilities for up to 1,000 delegates and 55 direct access routes from the UK & Europe. www.corkconventionbureau.com

DISCOVER FUN

Cycling routes – West Cork offers epic cycling routes suitable for all abilities along quiet and scenic roads.

Golf – Cork possesses spectacular backdrops and unspoilt landscapes. Discover for yourself at courses such as the Old Head, Lee Valley Golf and Country Club, Castlemartyr and Fota Resort, to name but a few.

Fota Wildlife Park – awarded best family day out in Cork, it is one of the area's most visited tourist attractions. www.fotawildlife.ie

Cork Harbour & Kinsale – offers a variety of activities from fishing, scuba diving and rib rides to more leisurely cruises. www.allaboardkinsale.com

Blackrock Castle Observatory – international award – winning interactive astronomy exhibit located in historic Blackrock Castle. www.bco.ie

Atlantic Sea Kayaking – rated by Tripadvisor as one of the world's 10 most exciting alternatives to the typical tourist holiday – discover the city from its myriad of waterways or go moonlit kayaking in West Cork. www.atlanticseakayaking.com

Cork Sea Safari – take to the water for high speed thrills coupled with the harbours unique wildlife. www.safari.ie

Model Railway Village – a haven for all railway enthusiasts, children and young and old alike – discover West Cork in miniature form!

Curraheen Park – perfect for corporate entertainment or anyone who fancies a flutter on the dogs!

DISCOVER FLAVOURS

Cookery Schools – choose from the prestigious Ballymaloe to Island Cottage – reputed to be the smallest cookery school in the world!

West & East Cork food trails – trace your way around beautiful countryside in pursuit of some of the finest food producers, restaurants, cookery schools, farmer's markets and foodie highlights the country has to offer!

Jameson Whiskey Distillery – visit the home of Jameson Whiskey and become a certified whiskey taster!

English Market – the oldest indoor market of its kind in Europe, it is a mecca for food lovers and locals alike! www.corkenglishmarket.ie

Chocolates – from O'Connaill's in the city to Gwen's in West Cork you will never be short of indulging your sweet tooth!

Kinsale – reputed to be the Gourmet Capital of Ireland offering an abundance of award winning eateries.

Festivals – tantalise your taste buds at one of the many food festivals in Cork.

You will find well established masters of stout such as Beamish and Murphys or artisan brews at the Franciscan Well brewery.

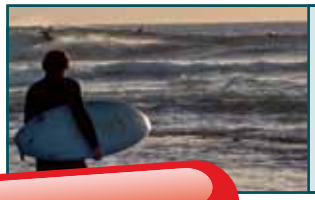
DISCOVER ADVENTURE

National Way Marked Ways – these signposted walking trails, are suitable for walkers of all ages and abilities. The Beara Way and Sheep's Head Way (winner of the 2009 European Destination of Excellence award) are both located on breathtaking peninsulas in West Cork.

Whale Watch West Cork – The clear, unpolluted waters of West Cork make them one of the richest areas for whale watching in Ireland. To date 24 species of the world's whales and dolphins have been recorded in Irish waters. www.whalewatchwestcork.com

Angling – the coast and harbour are world renowned for their excellent fishing, as are the rivers and lakes such as Ballyhass Lakes which is Ireland's best known still spring water trout fishery.

Ballyhoura Mountain biking – come for a spin at the largest mountain bike network of trails in Ireland.



Surfing – Open to swells rolling in from all sides of the Atlantic Ocean, Bay of Biscay and the English Channel, beaches such as Inchydoney and Garrettstown are hard to beat for consistent year round surfing.

TOURIST INFO

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