



# Hidden Gems of Ireland

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# Table of contents

01

## Historical Sites

Sites that are not as well known as castles and dolmens! You might have to go into a field to see some, but definitely worth it!

03

## Towns

Cute towns with great food, markets, and more tourist attractions. Near other sites!

02

## Hikes and Views

Ranging from quick to long hikes, all with beautiful views. Some in the mountains and others on the cliffside overlooking the sea!

04

## More Popular + Longer Stays

Great views and near popular towns but you probably need to plan these visits and stay overnight!





# Overview

Through archaeology classes at UCD I discovered many historical and breathtaking sites that are often overlooked by tourists and people new to Ireland. I have been to Ireland many times before and had still never heard of these places before taking these classes! I hope to highlight these places as they are gorgeous and great for picture opportunities as well as memories!

## Transportation:

Many of these places are easy to get to through services such as the DART, Bus Éireann, or through the trains in Ireland. As a visitor, or a student, you should have a Leap card which will provide you easy transportation and students get discounts on travel. You can even take the buses to the train stations in many places. Also look at Eventbrite for affordable and planned out weekend trips! Travel information is easy to find on many travel and international student forums online and through institutions. Get the **TfL Live** Journey Planner, and **Leap Top-Up** apps!

# 01

## Historical Sites

- ★ Brownshill Dolmen, Co. Carlow
- ★ Fourknocks Passage Tomb, Co. Meath
- ★ Castledermot Round Tower, Co. Kildare
- ★ Ballymoon Castle, Co. Carlow
- ★ Charles Fort, Co. Cork



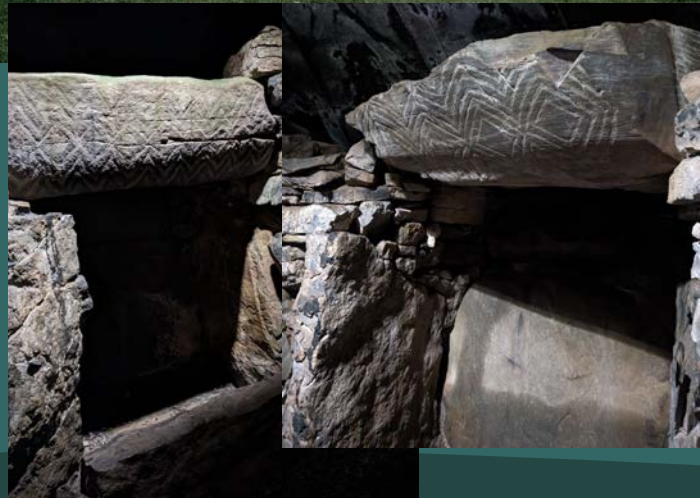
# Brownshill Dolmen, Co. Carlow

- Megalithic portal tomb
- Estimated to be the heaviest in Europe
- **Directions:**
  - Brownshill Portal Tomb (Dolmen), Hackettstown, Hackettstown Rd, Carlow, Ireland
- Dolmens such as portal tombs were likely used as burial chambers or ceremonial sites and can be thought of reflecting practices of early human civilizations
- Often remains of various kinds are found within them: pottery, human remains, tools, jewelry, etc



# Fourknocks Passage Tomb, Co. Meath

- Ancient passage tomb
- Fourknocks is from the Irish ***Fuair Cnoic*** meaning Cold Hills
- **Directions:**
  - Four Knocks Tomb, Fourknocks, Stamullen, Co. Meath, Ireland
- Artifacts and human remains were found during the excavation of the site
- Intricate engravings on the stones within the tomb





# Castledermot Round Tower, Co. Kildare

- National Monument in state guardianship
- Monastic Settlement
- **Directions:**
  - Castledermot Round Tower and St. James' Church, Abbeyview, Co. Kildare, Ireland
- Contains a hogback tomb, the only one in Ireland – reminiscent of viking settlers
- An archway and worn architecture point to where the old building layout would have extended to
- Tower is North of the main church- different than other round towers
- Large high-ringed crosses on the North, West, and South sides of the Church



# Ballymoon Castle, Co. Carlow

- Very little known about Ballymoon's history
- Thought to have been built by Roger Bigod or by a member of the Carew family but never finished
- **Directions:**
  - Ballymoon Castle, Ballymoon, Co. Carlow, Ireland
- A ruined castle - remains show 8 feet thick walls surrounding the inner courtyard
- Access to the castle is through a small timber footbridge that gives you access to a field where the castle is located
  - Watch out for sheep poop! Farmers often let their sheep roam about the field





# Charles Fort, Co. Cork

- Withstood a 13-day siege before falling during the Williamite Wars, also involved in the Civil War of the 1920's
- Unique star-shaped structure built during the 17th century
- **Directions:**
  - Charles Fort, OPW, Summercove, Kinsale, Co. Cork, Ireland
- Designed by William Robinson who also designed the Royal Hospital in Kilmainham, Dublin
- Overlooks Kinsale Harbor
- Some spooky ghost stories you can ask tour guides about regarding the history



# 02

## Hikes and Views

- ★ Djouce Mountain Walk, Co. Wicklow
- ★ Howth Cliff Walk, Co. Dublin
- ★ Ticknock Fairy Castle Loop, Co. Dublin
- ★ Mahon Falls, Co. Waterford



# Djouce Mountain Walk, Co. Wicklow

- 74th tallest peak in Ireland - part of the Wicklow Mountains National Park
- Can take 2-3 hours to complete
  - This depends on the weather, it gets extremely windy up in the Wicklow Mountains, dress appropriately
- **Directions:**
  - Djouce, Glasnamullen, Co. Wicklow, Ireland





# Howth Cliff Walk, Co. Dublin

- There are many paths to choose from that you can walk! They vary in length, views, and difficulty
- All have great views, some are more inland, and others are more coastal
- **Directions:**
  - Howth Cliff Walk, Howth, Dublin, Ireland
- Howth is easy to get to from Dublin, just take the Irish Rail





# Ticknock Fairy Castle Loop, Co. Dublin

- Two versions - Fairy Castle Loop and the long trail from Kilmashogue
- Versions vary from 1.5-2.5 hours, to 2.5-3.5 hours to complete
- **Directions:**
  - Ticknock Fairy Castle Loop, Co. Dublin
- Located in the Dublin Mountains
- This hike is also very windy and has wooden planks for some of the walk similar to Djouce- be careful in wet conditions





# Mahon Falls, Co. Waterford

- Positioned in the Comeragh Mountains near the village of Lemybrien
- Views of the mountains, a waterfall, as well as towards the sea and the town of Dungarvan
- **Directions:**
  - Mahon Falls, Mountain Breeze, Comeragh, Co. Waterford, Ireland
- Sheep roam free in the valley and hills! Farmers mark their sheep with different colors to know which is theirs. Super cute
- Lore of the “magic road” of Waterford. It’s the road that leads up to the Falls
  - You park your car at the bottom of the hill and take the handbrake off and your car will roll backwards



# 03

## Towns

- ★ Kinsale, Co. Cork
- ★ Howth, Co. Dublin
- ★ Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny
- ★ Dingle, Co. Kerry



# Kinsale, Co. Cork

- There are lots of weekend trips here on Eventbrite
- I would recommend visiting here and Charles Fort as they are not too far from each other
- **Directions:**
  - Kinsale, Co. Cork, Ireland
- Kinsale is known for having amazing food and dining experiences
- Super colorful, small oceanside town, lots of photo opportunities and very nice locals
- Its “sister city” is Newport, Rhode Island!
- There is a tour guide center in the town center
  - Again, ask about the ghost stories and fun lore of the town!



# Howth, Co. Dublin

- Easy to get to from the Dublin city area
- A scenic harbor town with restaurants, hikes, museums, a castle, and lots of activities
- Lots of history to be explored, you can also get walking tours here to learn about the town's history
- There is a market in the city center as well! The market sells produce, freshly baked goods, jewellery, clothing, antiques and more. It is open every weekend, and the front five retailers serve are open seven days a week!
- **Directions:**
  - Howth, Dublin, Ireland





# Kilkenny, Co. Kilkenny

- Kilkenny is a city with rich history and a lot of activities. There are walking tours available to book
- It is home to Kilkenny castle, you can tour the outside for free, or tour the inside for a small fee
- It is easy to get to, there is a train that will stop there from the Dublin Heuston Station
- Kilkenny is a great city for shopping as there is a mall as well as many boutiques and many places to eat
- Kilkenny is also known for their Hurling team, see if there are any games playing and you can buy tickets to watch!
- **Directions:**
  - Kilkenny, Ireland





# Dingle, Co. Kerry

- Amazing views and beaches such as small surf towns near Ventry Bay Beach and Inch Beach
- Dingle is one of the few regions where Gaelic is still widely spoken so it is a very cool and traditionally Irish town
- There is an aquarium you can visit! The Dingle Oceanworld Aquarium
- Dingle is also where the popular Sleah Head Drive is, a very scenic drive with lots of stops for places to see and eat at
- Some stops on the drive:
  - Fairie Lios – fortified settlement from 1000 AD, stone fairy ringfort
  - Fahan Beehive Huts – cone-shaped houses made from stone, 8th-12th centuries AD
- During the right months, it is also popular to hold a baby lamb at the Beehive huts!

## Directions:

- Dingle, Co. Kerry, Ireland



# 04

## More Popular + Longer Stays

- ★ Belfast, The Giant's Causeway, and The Dark Hedges
- ★ Galway and The Cliffs of Moher



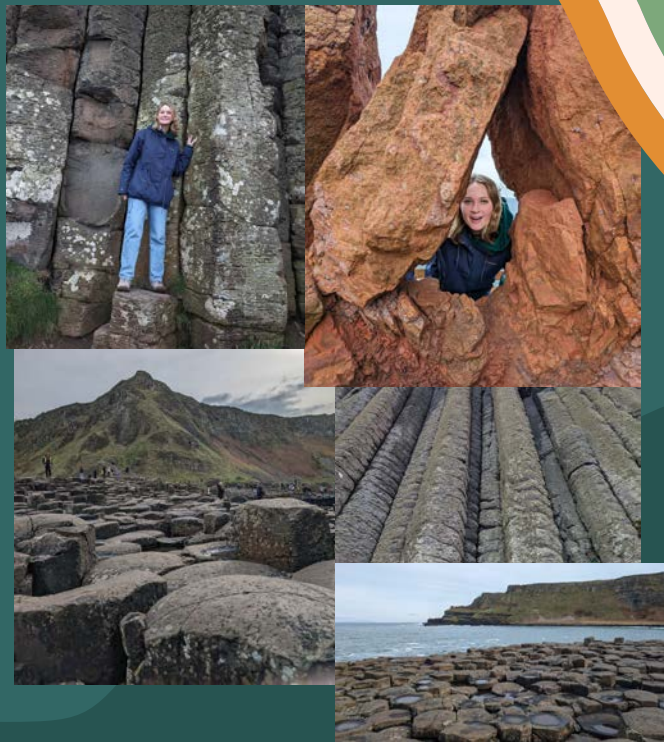
# Belfast, Co. Antrim, NI

- To get to Belfast you might have to take a train, fly, or source a trip through a travel site
- Belfast is different from many Irish cities as it is more influenced by the UK as it is part of Northern Ireland
  - The roads are bigger, sidewalks are bigger, and even the architecture is different! It is interesting to notice while walking through the city
- Lots of museums, such as a Titanic museum and many explaining the history between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland and the UK
- If you want to see Belfast and the Giant's Causeway or The Dark Hedges, you will need more than a day in Northern Ireland
- **Directions:**
  - Belfast, UK



# Giant's Causeway, Co. Antrim, NI

- Unique geological formations - interlocking basalt columns
- The result of ancient volcanic activity
- It is a UNESCO World Heritage site
- Lower and upper trails to walk that display the unique geological formations
- You will want 2-3 hours to walk and tour the site
- There is also unique reddish rock on the upper trails that is laterite, an iron-rich layer of weathered lava
- **Directions:**
  - Giant's Causeway, 44 Causeway Rd, Bushmills BT57 8SU, United Kingdom





# The Dark Hedges, Co. Antrim, NI

- The Dark Hedges were used as a filming location in Game of Thrones!
- It is a long path that has unique beech trees on both sides that creates a dark and spooky view
- **Directions:**
  - The Dark Hedges, Bregagh Rd, Stranocum, Ballymoney BT53 8PX, United Kingdom





# Galway, Co. Galway

- If you are starting in Dublin, this is far west, so if you plan to spend time in the city as well as see the Cliffs of Moher, you will want a full day
- It's a city that is colorful and full of restaurants, shops, and lots of traditional and new music
- **Directions:**
  - Galway, Ireland
- You can visit Connemara National Park, Kylemore Abbey or Ashford Castle which are all nearby



# Cliffs of Moher, Co. Clare

- Cliffs of Moher is a staple attraction when visiting Ireland
- It is just over an hour from Galway but it's usually paired together as they are the most popular towns/attractions on that strip of Western Ireland
- The number one thing to pay attention to when visiting the Cliffs is the weather, do not take the wind lightly as well as any weather advisories - locals know best
- Unique and beautiful views as the Cliffs are vertical and the cliff edge is abrupt. With a good view, you may see the Aran Islands out on the Galway Bay
- **Directions:**
  - Cliffs of Moher, Co. Clare, Ireland



# Thank you!

Hope you visit and find it as enjoyable as I did!  
These places were easy and affordable to get to  
while studying abroad. They were also easy to see  
successfully within a day aside from a few!

