By

THE
WILD
ATLANTIC
WAY

Image: Tourism Ireland
The Wild Atlantic Way is travelled by thousands of Irish Car Rentals customers every year. We decided to ask them about their experiences and with that information we have compiled a useful guide on the most frequented and popular places.

Have you never heard of the Wild Atlantic Way? Here are a few interesting facts to get you started:

- The Wild Atlantic Way is a 2500km touring route along the West Coast of Ireland.
- It features 157 discovery points, 1000 attractions and more than 2500 activities.
- Begins in Kinsale, County Cork and ends at Ireland’s most northerly point, Malin Head, County Donegal.

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Image: Fáilte Ireland
Cork – Known by its population as the ‘Real Capital of Ireland’, the city of Cork is a historic trading port with a long history. Nearby Blarney Castle is a famous attraction, and home to the fabled stone of eloquence while, in Cork itself you can find: the 16th century Blackrock Castle; Holy Trinity Church and St Fin Barre’s Cathedral; the former prison Cork City Gaol; and St Anne’s Church, where you may be invited to ring the Shandon Bells. Accommodation is plentiful and for food, the English Market’s reputation for an excellent shopping and eating experience is second to none. Being just 6.5 kilometres north of Cork Airport makes Cork city many of our customers’ first experience on the Wild Atlantic Way.

The Ring of Kerry – A tour within the tour. The Ring of Kerry is a world renown circuit of the Iveragh Peninsula that takes in some devastating scenery, including pristine beaches, medieval ruins, mountains and lakes. Far smaller, by comparison, to the Wild Atlantic Way, measuring a ‘mere’ 179 kilometres, many of our customers like to base themselves in Killarney and make their journey around the Ring a day trip, while others like to sample a little of the time, finding accommodation in Killorglin, Kenmare or Waterville, for example, where there just happen to be some of the best choices when it comes to dining.

The Beara Peninsula – With its views north and west across Kenmare Bay, Ireland’s highest mountains, and the distant outline of the Skelligs out to sea, our customers recommend taking the 10-minute cable car ride from the coast, over the waves to Dursey Island, to get as far west as can be, and witness Europe’s last sunset.

Mullaghmore Head – Off the coast of Sligo is found a wave like no other. With swells that can reach up to 35 metres, these “prowlers” attract surfers from across the world. Mullaghmore Head hosted Ireland’s first Big Wave contest back in 2011, and involves jet ski riding as well as surfing. It may be cold during the winter months, but wrap up warm and see the full power of the Atlantic Ocean battering itself relentlessly against the ancient coastline.

Some of the most popular attractions

The Wild Atlantic Way is vast in scope, and choosing what you would most like to see, what order to visit where, or even a place to begin your adventure can seem daunting. That being the case, when we asked our customers which parts they loved in particular, we found several places being mentioned time and again.
The Skellig Islands are a twin presence of dark, foreboding rocky mounds, some thirteen kilometres off the coast of the Iveragh Peninsula, sitting steadfastly against the relentless pounding of the Atlantic Ocean’s waves. A popular sight and diversion for those touring the Ring of Kerry, the Islands consist of Little Skellig and Great Skellig. Little Skellig is off limits, a stony, ghostly white home to a fabulous array of birdlife, including the largest colony of northern gannets in Ireland. However, Great Skellig – or Skellig Michael as it’s more commonly known – was occupied by Christian monks who built their settlement on a terraced shelf, 120 metres above the sea, sometime between 500 and 700 AD. The monks fashioned for themselves six beehive cells and festooned their monastery with stone crosses. On the south peak of the island sits a hermitage and, experts suggest, around twelve monks and an abbot would have populated Skellig Michael at any one time. It was sometime between 950 AD and 1044 AD that Great Skellig became Skellig Michael, as Saint Michael’s Church was built there around that time, as a way to celebrate the consecration of the ground as it was dedicated to him. Many of our customers have enthused about the mystical beauty of the island. Only thirteen boat licences are granted to tour operators each year, giving them permission to land on Skellig Michael, and there are no toilets, no shelter, and no refreshments or concessions. The wind can gust and the rain can make the terrain slippery, to the point where visitors are not permitted to land in windy or stormy weather, even during the summer season. Even in pleasant weather, some visitors can still have trouble with the 120 metres of steep, stone steps.
A long time ago on an island not too far away...

And speaking of that long collection of stone steps, our customers that had already visited Skellig Michael had little difficulty in placing the distinctive staircase when it appeared at the end of Star Wars Episode VII: The Force Awakens, as Rey, played by Daisy Ridley, makes the treacherous climb to the top to find Luke Skywalker, played by Mark Hamill, and hand him back his lightsaber. During filming, Mark Hamill turned to those who had ferried him to the island and asked, ‘Any advice for climbing the stairs?’ Declan O’Driscoll, a local boatman, is said to have replied, ‘Just pace yourself, and don’t ever, ever look down.”

In the movie, Skellig Michael stands in for the oceanic planet of Ahch-To, the home of the ancient, first Jedi temple where Luke has been hiding in self-imposed exile. The upcoming Star Wars: Episode VIII, scheduled for release in December 2017, is also said to include more scenes shot on the island, while the actual Jedi temple has been constructed at Ceann Sibeal, further up the Co. Kerry coast.

Why visit the Skelligs?

Skellig Michael’s new found fame as a Star Wars filming location has certainly increased interest in the area, with many die-hard fans now making their way over there. However, our customers who have visited these lonely rocks site many more reasons why travellers of the Wild Atlantic Way should make the effort and brave the seas. The feeling of peace and solitude is said to be unbelievable, despite the crashing surf, and George Bernard Shaw rightly described it as ‘the most fantastic and impossible rock in the world’, as well as ‘part of our dream world’. Like its little brother, Skellig Michael is home to a generous bird population. Despite the monks having to include the eggs and meat of its feathered population in their staple diet, the island now supports storm petrels, gannets, kittiwakes, fulmars, and is a breeding ground for puffins in the spring and summer months.

Back on dry land, the Skellig Experience Visitor Centre offers those unprepared or unable to make the voyage a taste of what life must have been like on Skellig Michael. Housed in an award winning, custom built, stone clad, grass roofed, green building on Valentia Island opposite Portmagee, the Visitor Centre uses models and recreations to exhibit the life and times of the early Christian monks.

Our customers also recommend a trip to the Skelligs Chocolate Factory in Ballinskelligs, which is also very nearby, a fact that was not lost on the Star Wars cast and crew that filmed at Skellig Michael. The factory’s visitor centre and shop get rave reviews by everyone who goes there and they give out free samples of their delicious chocolate. What more could you ask for?

Where to stay?

The Skellig Ring is an out of the way detour, about 18 kilometres in total, off of the Ring of Kerry that runs between Portmagee and Waterville. Customers who have based themselves in Killarney or Kenmare can easily take a day trip out to the Skelligs but, for visitors looking to stop over, establishments like The Ferry Boat or The Waterfront B&B in Portmagee, and the Butler Arms Hotel or Klondyke House in Waterville offer agreeable accommodation. Added to this are several self-catering holiday homes of various sizes.

Where to eat?

Around the Skellig Ring, as with most Irish coastal regions fresh seafood is very popular for those that can tear themselves away from the Skelligs Chocolate Factory. In Portmagee, according to our customers, The Moorings Restaurant does good seafood and Irish dishes while, in Waterville, An Corcan offers Irish and European cuisine and The Fishermen’s Bar is a pub with highly recommended seafood. Cable O’Learys, in Ballinskelligs, is said to have stunning views, food and service while the Puffin Café is also available for lighter and faster meals.
Viewing the Northern Lights: Co. Donegal

Not only does Ireland possess some of the greatest unspoilt natural beauty in Western Europe, it can also offer a breath-taking backdrop to viewing, for visitors fortunate enough and prepared to work for it, the wonder of the Aurora Borealis, or Northern Lights.

While many people connect watching the northern lights with remote destinations in Sweden, Canada, or Greenland, the north coast of Ireland’s amazing views and a lack of light pollution put visitors in a great position to witness the awesome spectacle. The hard part is being in the right place at the right time so, to give “light chasers” the best shot at seeing the lights, www.astronomy.ie and the Aurora forecast at www.aurora-service.eu have tools that can be a huge help.

In the meantime, we asked our customers to enlighten us on the best locations Co. Donegal has when it comes to witnessing nature’s greatest light show.

Malin Head

Malin Head, on the Inishowen peninsula, is Ireland’s most northerly point and, as a result, the place in Ireland where the Lights are most often visible. Banba’s Crown, named for the mythical Irish queen, is the very northernmost tip of the mainland and, on a clear night when solar wind activity is strong, visitors may be lucky enough to glimpse the amazing display. Also nearby are the raised beaches of Ballyhillion, where the skies can be observed to the accompaniment of a booming soundtrack as Atlantic waves constantly roll in.

Moville, Inishowen

On the eastern side of the Inishowen peninsula is Moville, which can provide some sanctuary for those not prepared to brave the wilds of Malin Head. It’s a charming little town that overlooks Lough Foyle. In the large seaside Victorian Park, visitors can find bandstands and other sheltered spots where they can keep out of the elements, yet still be well placed to see the elusive Lights, if they happen to appear.

Arranmore

Arranmore is Co. Donegal largest inhabited island and boasts over 500 residents huddling together in its isolated, unique landscape, five kilometres off the coast of the mainland. There are ferries that run from Burtonport and the island is generally easy to access, with the trip taking from five to fifteen minutes. The towns on the more sheltered south side of the island, such as Leabgarrow, Ballintra, Fallagowan, or the exceptionally named Pollawaddy, if conditions are right, can offer an excellent opportunity to see the Aurora Borealis.

Mamore Gap

Set between the Urris Hills and Raghlin More mountain, the Gap of Mamore offers total blackout and a fantastic panorama of the northern skies, reaching right from west to east. The sheltered Gap is a handy place to park the car during the night, before settling in to wait for the Lights. Also nearby is Ireland’s oldest Neolithic campsite at Dunaff Head, while the Holy Well of Saint Columbanus, where the water dragon Giollamach was vanquished, may be an ideal place to set up for the evening to await the Northern Lights, creating a truly magical experience.

Where to stay?

The pickings for accommodation around Malin Head are pleasant, if a little slim. Nearby towns like Buncrana offer establishments like the Inishowen Gateway Hotel and the Town Clock B&B, or Ballyliffin with its Strand Hotel and Lodge and Spa. For those determined to stay on the isle of Arranmore, our customers say Muldowney’s B&B and Clare’s Bed & Breakfast are comfortable and convenient.

Where to eat?

Farren’s Bar has the honour to be Ireland’s most northerly pub. It offers only good pints and pub grub, but stopping in it crosses something else off the bucket list. The Ubiquitous Restaurant & Bar, and the Drift Inn, both offering Irish dishes and seafood, are reported to be among the best choices in Buncrana, while Nancy’s Barn and the Lynx, serving traditional and modern Irish and European dishes, appear to be enjoyable places to visit in Ballyliffin.
The Burren is 250 square kilometre landscape described by our customers as otherworldly, alien, and out of this world. It’s fitting then, perhaps, that as this unearthly section of ecologically diverse land ends at the Co. Clare coast in a most dramatic fashion. The Cliffs of Moher drop suddenly and dramatically into the Atlantic from a height of around 200 metres and, in the 1987 fantasy movie The Princess Bride, they became the infamous “Cliffs of Insanity”.

The Cliffs of Moher: Co. Clare
What to expect

An old fort called Moher, which was standing in 1780 but demolished in 1808, was once built on Hag’s Head and gave the Cliffs their name. Since 2011, the Cliffs have formed part of the Burren and Cliffs of Moher Geopark, part of a collection of geo-tourism destinations throughout Europe that are members of the European Geoparks Network. The visitor centre, opened relatively recently in 2007, was designed and built to follow a low-environmental-impact philosophy in line with Clare County Council’s initiative to enable visitors to experience the Cliffs without significantly intrusive guest facilities.

Planned and built over 17 years, at a cost of €32 million, the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Experience is embedded into the side of a nearby hill, its appearance barely troubling the local vista, and runs entirely on renewable energy systems, such as solar panels and geothermal heating and cooling. Among its exhibits are interactive displays of the local history, geology, flora and fauna, as well as large multimedia displays of a bird’s-eye view of the cliffs and video from the underwater caves below.

You may notice that little has been written here to try and describe the Cliffs. That’s simply because they almost defy description. When asked, our customers almost always fail to articulate how they felt in the presence of the Cliffs of Moher. A progression of vast headlands, immense and immeasurable tall tracks of dark limestone marching in a rigid formation that astonishes, no matter how many times it’s observed. Add to this, a clear day will display the Aran Islands stand etched permanently into the waters of Galway Bay, with the hills of Connemara lying beyond.

Another unforgettable way to see the Cliffs of Moher, according to our customers, is from the sea, looking up. Boat operators in Doolin offer touring cruises, or there’s the option of taking a ferry to the Aran Islands and seeing them that way. Whichever is chosen, our customers say that timing a journey on the water so that the Cliffs pass just as the setting sun’s rays hit the rocks, gives the most magical view of the imposing landmark.

Where to stay?

Our customers report that there are several decent options when it comes to accommodation around the Cliffs of Moher. In Doolin, Aran View Country House and Tir gan Ean House are good choices, with nearby Lahinch offering the Atlantic Hotel and Vaughn Lodge. Moher Lodge, in Liscannor, has been described as the best B&B in the area.

Where to eat?

Doolin seems to get the nod for being home to all the best places to eat near the Cliffs. The Stonecutters Kitchen, McGann’s, and McDermott’s pub all offer Irish dishes, soups and pub fare, while O’Connor’s Pub has a more European menu, with Cullinan’s specialising in seafood.

The best way to experience the Cliffs

The allure of the Cliffs ensures a steady stream of visitors, especially in the summer months. The vast visitor centre offers access and tours to the main walkways and viewing areas along the cliffs, which are surrounded by a 1.5-metre-high barrier to keep visitors from straying too close to the edge.

However, our customers report that walking for ten minutes, south past the end of the “Moher Wall”, a trail runs along the Cliffs all the way to Hag’s Head, about 5.5 kilometres, is seldom travelled, and possesses amazing uninterrupted views. It’s possible to continue to Liscannor from here, a total distance of 12 kilometres and taking about 3.5 hours. Also recommended is a walk to the north, where the Doolin Trail past O’Brien’s Tower heads to the village of Doolin, after about seven kilometres and 2.5 hours. The entire length of the Cliffs, from Liscannor to Doolin, is a signposted path, but there are still a lot of ups and downs and narrow, cliff-edge stretches.
Backup in Donegal, but on the south-west coast this time, can be found one of the most impressive and achingly beautiful natural sights in Ireland’s already fantastic catalogue of wonders. The Cliffs of Moher may get more publicity, but the cliffs at Slieve League dwarf those in Co. Clare, being nearly three times as high. At over 600 metres in places, Slieve’s cliffs are among the highest sea cliffs in Europe.
Where are they?

To reach the cliffs from Teelin, take the road that twists through the stark landscape until it reaches the lower car park. There are walking routes, signed with hiking maps, beside a gate in the road, or visitors can drive another 1.5 kilometres to the upper car park, although that’s often full in the summer months. Most of our customers recommend taking the walk from the lower car park, as it opens up a whole new world and a breadth of scenery that was previously unimaginable.

From the upper car park and viewing platform, a rough footpath leads up and along the top of the near-vertical cliffs to the aptly named One Man’s Pass, a narrow ridge that leads to the top of Slieve League. It’s ten kilometres in length, though, plus mist and rain can roll in suddenly and quickly, making the walk treacherous.

However, just walking the first 500 metres brings some spectacular sights. Visitors can gaze at the Sligo Mountains and Donegal Bay as they head towards the edge, marvelling as the face of Bunglas cliff as it rises up to 600 metres, from the ocean below.

And it’s also quite possible to reach the summit of Slieve League from Carrick, by following the Pilgrim Path. Watch for a signpost along a minor road on the right before the Slieve League cliffs road. Walkers can take this trail and return via the infamous One Man’s Pass and continue down from the road to the viewpoint. It’s about 12 kilometres, so allow from four to six hours.

The cliffs are said to be particularly pretty at sunset, as the last rays of light are diffused by thin curls of cloud, and cast the dramatically crashing waves far below into reflective pools of gold. Looking down, from the main viewing platform, watch out for two rocks known as the “giant’s desk and chair”. It will become immediately obvious why.

What else to see?

However, there’s far more to Slieve Coast than the cliffs that mark its boundary with the sea. Lake Agh nestles close by to the north and, past that, at Malin Beg is a stunning beach called the Silver Strand which is hidden from the world at large, being only accessible by steep cliff steps or by boat. Our customers say it’s important to count the steps down, as no one ever gets the same number and nobody knows quite why.

Slieve League Mountain has been considered sacred for over 1,000 years, drawing Christian pilgrims from all over Europe throughout the centuries. To celebrate this, the award-winning Slieve League Cultural Centre is in the area too, just waiting to reveal all about the mountain’s religious significance as well as local culture and crafts.

Studio Donegal, in nearby Kilcar, has been hand-weaving tweed for more than a century. Their business is committed to preserving and promoting the original skills that have been passed down from generation to generation, with nature providing the raw materials: wool from the sheep that live in the hills, and dyes from the blackberries, fuchsia, gorse and moss, found in the hedgerows and fields. Visitors are invited upstairs to see spinners and weavers in action, before browsing jackets, hats, throws and other tweed items in the shop.

In addition, there’s another option to consider when experiencing the Slieve League cliffs, and that’s from the waters below. The Nuala Star, sailing out of Teelin pier, is highly praised by some of our customers as her captain runs regular tours and knows where to find all types of marine life, including dolphins, whales and seals. Also, during May and June, gigantic basking sharks can be seen off the Slieve coast, peacefully gorging on plankton. The Nuala Star also offers fishing and angling trips.

Where to stay?

Being a less popularised destination than some means that fewer crowds fill the Slieve League region than others in Ireland, but it also means fewer choices for accommodation. Carrick seems to be the best option for somewhere to stay, with the Slieve League Lodge, Cairsmore B&B, Teelin Bay House, O’Neill’s and Young Jim’s Bed & Breakfast getting the best reviews from our customers.

Where to eat?

As with rooms, eating options are slightly limited in the area. Slieve League Lodge again is recommended for its tradition Irish food and fresh seafood, otherwise, there is the Bridge Bar in nearby Ramelton, serving steak and seafood, or head towards Donegal town, about an hour’s drive.
Father Ted was an incredibly popular Irish sitcom broadcast between 1995 and 1998 in the UK and Ireland. Both a critical and commercial success, many fans still enjoy visiting the locations used in the production even now, decades after it finished.

Number one on the list for Father Ted fans to visit is the parochial home of the hapless priests, which was set in the fictional parish of Craggy Island. The house itself is actually Glenquin Farmhouse, part of an organic farm owned and lived in by the McCormack family, in Lackareagh, by Cloon, on the Boston road from Kilnaboy, at the edge of the Burren National Park in Co. Clare. Driving there isn’t too hard and the family are happy to welcome enthusiasts, but by appointment only.

**Father Ted**

The show Father Ted focussed on the adventures of three luckless priests banished by their tyrannical bishop to a remote island as punishment for previous transgressions. Father Ted Crilly – played by Dermot Morgan – is an opportunistic, occasionally devious, yet mostly kind-hearted priest who was sent to Craggy Island for misappropriating church funds for his own trip to Las Vegas. Ted lives with Father Dougal McGuire – portrayed by Ardal O’Hanlon – who is young, innocent, hopelessly dim-witted, and was expelled to the island after the mysterious “Blackrock incident” which left hundreds of nuns’ live “irreparably damaged”. The third priest to be exiled to Craggy Island is Father Jack Hackett – played by Frank Kelly – an elderly, decrepit, foul-mouthed, ill-tempered, lecherous alcoholic prone to bouts of drunken unconsciousness and violent behaviour in equal measure, and was disappeared to the parish for relentless drinking and womanising. They are constantly served tea and cakes by their hyperactive housekeeper, Mrs Doyle – played by Pauline McLynn.

The show revolved around the chaotic lives of the three priests, normally proceeding with some sort embarrassing misfortune or unfortunate incident occurring and Father Ted having to scheme their way out of it. Often involved was the Craggy Island’s rivalry with the nearby parish of Rugged Island, as well as dealings with the higher echelons of the Roman Catholic Church.

A total of twenty-five episodes were made in total, filmed in locations all over southern Ireland, including three series and a Christmas special. All the series won awards, including BAFTAs for Best Comedy and Best Comedy Performance for Dermot Morgan, with notable fans including Steven Spielberg, Madonna, Cher, Jim Carey, Steve Martin and Ricky Gervais. Maurice Gibb of the Bee Gees was buried with a copy of the DVD box set, while Bono from U2 made repeated requests to be on the show.

Only one day after production finished on series three, Dermot Morgan sadly died of a heart attack. He was 45. The creators and writers, Arthur Mathews and Graham Linehan, declined all offers to continue the show with another actor or make any spin-offs without the Father Ted role.

**Filming locations**

Aside from the parochial house, there are numerous spots around Ireland where scenes or shots from Father Ted were filmed. The opening credits included an aerial sequence of the fictional Craggy Island, which was stood in for by Inishmore, the smallest of the Aran Island’s – could claim to be Craggy Island, while Inisheer was given the title Rugged Island. The Friends of Ted Festival, better known as TedFest, has been held annually ever since.

Where to stay?

There’s really not much around the actual parochial house itself, so most nearby accommodation recommended by our customers are the same as those one would normally stay in when visiting the Burren or the Cliffs of Moher, like those mentioned in and around Doolin. Alternatively, there is Ennis, where The Old Ground and Temple Gate are said to be very nice.

Where to eat?

The same issue is there when it comes to dinner, except that, for a small fee, tea and cakes can be provided during the tour of Glenquin Farmhouse, if that counts. Vaughn’s in Kilfenora, a pub that was featured in the show, is said to do good Irish food, as does Kitty’s Corner along with well-recommended seafood.
From one end of the Wild Atlantic Way to the other? Well, not quite. Mizen Head, the most southerly point of mainland Ireland, is about two hours’ drive from Kinsale, the Wild Atlantic Way’s official beginning, but the tour does end at Malin Head, the Irish mainland’s most northerly point. However, as both are so near to the beginning or end of the adventure, it means that almost all of our customers have experienced one, or the other, or both.
Malin Head – Co. Donegal

The furthest north you can drive in Co. Donegal has already been touched on briefly, however, it bears a little more investigation. The Atlantic Ocean has spent millions of years pounding at the coastline, carving a ragged character into the dramatic scenery. It’s a popular hang-out all types of wild birds, including regular visitors all the way from Greenland, Iceland and North America, such as shearwaters, skuas, gannets, auks and many more, as they pass by on their southward migration flights. On occasion, even the rare, distinctive and loud call of the landrail can be heard on Malin Head.

And it’s not just birds that can enjoy the curious rock formations. Huge crevices, particularly one known as Hell’s Hole, attract walkers and visitors. Hell’s Hole is an especially long, deep and narrow chasm that echoes to the constant roar of sea water being tossed through it. Banba’s Crown offers an outstanding panorama of the surrounding coastline, and was the spot where loved ones would gather to waved goodbye to their families as they embarked on the long and treacherous voyage across the sea, to America.

An otherworldly scene

Many other ships are also spotted off Malin Head, some considerably rarer than others. Picked as another location for the upcoming Star Wars: Episode VIII, locals eventually spotted that the strange shape surrounded by security was, in fact, the Millenium Falcon. The set, featuring the underside of the ship that made the Kessel Run in less than twelve parsecs, was constructed on the tip of Malin Head, which was presumably standing in for the planet Ahch-To once more.

Unlike previous filming sessions in Kerry, when the crew required Malin Head to engulfed in rain and cloud, as it can usually be relied on to be, they were treated to nothing but warm sunshine and blue skies. This necessitated the enlistment of twenty water tankers to simulate the rain-washed conditions the filmmakers were hoping for. Before leaving two days later, to film again down in Kerry, Mark Hamill, the actor who has portrayed Luke Skywalker since 1977’s Star Wars: Episode IV – A New Hope, visited Farrens Bar, Ireland’s most northerly pub, to take pictures with locals and fans. He was quoted as saying Donegal was ‘gorgeous’, and it was reported that they would likely be returning for Star Wars: Episode XI.

Mizen Head – Co. Cork

When arriving at the dramatic Mizen Head, visitors are often surprised to find there is no more land; nothing at all heading due south until Portugal. Also known as “Ireland’s Last Teardrop”, Mizen Head is the furthest south anyone can stand on Ireland’s mainland. Another major attraction along the Wild Atlantic Way, a main transatlantic shipping route passes nearby, making Mizen Head many seafarers’ last glimpse of Europe as they head out into the unforgiving ocean. Characterised by its dramatic cliff scenery, visitors come from all over to take in the beauty and to brave stepping off the mainland.

By climbing down the steps at the very end of the peninsula, adventurers can cross a high arched suspension bridge connecting Ireland proper to a rocky precipice, which stretches further out into the cold Atlantic. Happily, this bridge is built to withstand the full force of nature, allowing travellers to cross safely onto Mizen Head itself. There can be found on old signal station, a working weather station, and Fastnet lighthouse which has been guiding ships safely past for over a hundred years. The signalling station, once operational and manned permanently, is now the Head’s visitor centre and a museum dedicated to the important role of Mizen Head in Ireland’s naval and maritime history. A little further out to sea is Fastnet Island, the real teardrop of Ireland, with its lighthouse standing unwaveringly on top.

Where to stay?

Accommodation suggestions for Malin Head can be found under the Northern Lights section above. While around Mizen Head, The Heron’s Cove in Ballyshannon, The Barleycove Beach Hotel in Goleen, as well as Fortview House in Gurtyowen, get high recommendations from our customers.

Where to eat?

A gain, see above for Malin Head suggestions. Near Mizen, The Heron’s Cove – a different one, in Goleen – serves good seafood, as does O’Sullivans Bar, in Crookhaven.
Thank you for taking the time to read our magazine. We at Irish Car Rentals hope you have found some useful insights for your trip.