



County Galway

POPULATION 250,000 / AREA 3760 SQ KM

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Why Go?

County Galway is a problem: its namesake city is such a charmer that you might not manage to tear yourself away to the countryside. Conversely (perversely?), the wild and beautiful Aran Islands and Connemara Peninsula might keep you captive such that you'll never have time for the city. What to do? Both, of course!

Galway city is a swirl of enticing old pubs that hum with trad music sessions throughout the year. More importantly, it has an overlaying vibe of fun and frolic that's addictive.

Offshore, the eroded, sheer swaths of land known as the Aran Islands have a desolate, windswept aura that entrances. Tiny villages cling to the rocks while soft-hearted locals welcome their modern lifeblood: visitors.

In the west, the Connemara Peninsula matches the beauty of the other Atlantic outcrops like Dingle. Tiny roads wander along a coastline studded with islands, surprisingly white beaches and intriguing old villages.

Best Places to Eat

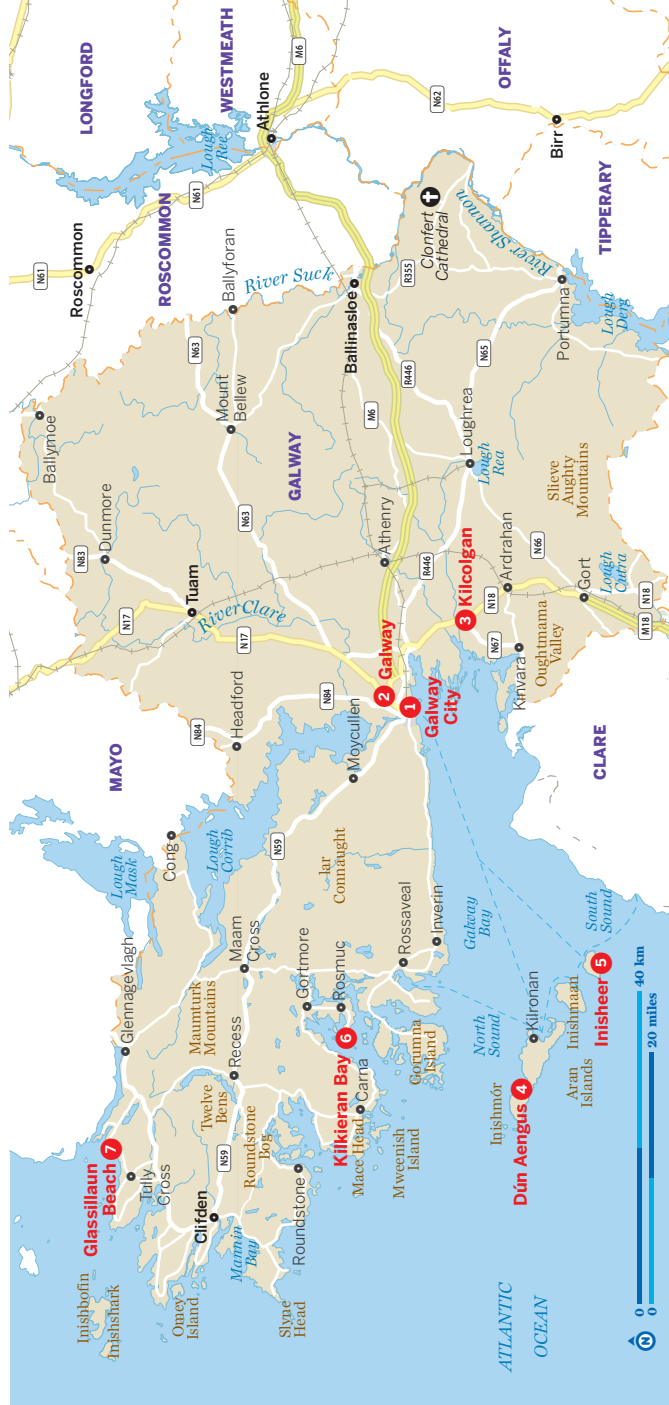
- » Griffin's (p391)
- » Cava (p391)
- » Mitchell's (p417)
- » Moran's Oyster Cottage (p421)

Best Places to Stay

- » House Hotel (p389)
- » Kilmurvey House (p401)
- » Delphi Lodge (p421)
- » Dolphin Beach (p416)

When to Go

Galway City with its excellent restaurants, roaring pubs and student culture is a year-round destination. Elsewhere in more rural parts of the county, you'll be rewarded for visits during the more moderate months. Moody in the depths of winter, the Aran Islands may be unreachable during storms. In scenic Connemara country, many country inns close during December and January and even February. June is a great month across the county as all the seasonal attractions are open but crowds are still low.



County Galway Highlights

- 1** Sample **Galway city's** (p393) array of atmospheric pubs and their high-energy trad sessions each week
- 2** Walk the Prom in **Galway** (p391), absorbing the moods of the bay and gazing out at County Clare and the Aran Islands
- 3** Enjoy oysters direct from the bay at an iconic oyster restaurant in **Kilcolgan** (p421)

- 4** Ponder the people who built the enigmatic fort **Dún Aengus** (p400) on Inishmór
- 5** Visit ancient holy sites and springs, crawl over a famous

- shipwreck and commune with the rocks on **Inisheer** (p406)
- 6** Marvel at the range of marine life in **Kilkeran Bay** (p413)

- 7** Frolic on postcard-perfect **Glassillaun Beach** (p420) on Connemara's north coast, and consider plunging into the inky depths on a scuba adventure