



# County Cork

POP 518,000 / AREA 7508 SQ KM

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## Why Go?

Everything good about Ireland can be found in County Cork. Surrounding the country's second city – a thriving metropolis made glorious by its location and its almost Rabelaisian devotion to the finer things of life – is a lush landscape dotted with villages that offer days of languor and idyll.

The city's understated confidence is grounded in its plethora of markets and ever-evolving cast of creative eateries, and its selection of pubs, entertainment and cultural pursuits.

Further afield, you'll pass inlets of eroded coasts and a multitude of perfectly charming old fishing towns and villages. The scenery is every bit as enchanting as the best bits of Ireland, particularly along the long Mizen, Sheep's Head and Beara peninsulas, where you can tackle mountain passes and touch Ireland's ancient past.

## When to Go

Although the summer months promise the best weather, the shoulder seasons are festival times.

- ➔ Springtime is heralded in Baltimore with a fiddle fair, followed by a seafood and jazz festival in May.
- ➔ Autumn sees West Cork go food crazy, especially in Skibbereen, which hosts the Taste of West Cork Food Festival in September, and in the culinary capital of Kinsale, which has an excellent, long-established gourmet festival in October.
- ➔ Cork city's perennially popular jazz festival swings into town in late October.

## Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Finn's Table (p237)
- ➔ Manning's Emporium (p252)
- ➔ Josie's Lakeview House (p261)
- ➔ Glandore Inn (p243)

## Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Garnish House (p222)
- ➔ Ballymaloe House (p232)
- ➔ Gilbert's (p230)
- ➔ Blair's Cove House (p250)



## County Cork Highlights

- 1 Revel in buzzing **Cork city**, with its brilliant selection of restaurants, pubs, music and theatres (p218)
- 2 Retrace the footsteps of the final passengers to board

the fateful *Titanic* ocean liner at the **Titanic Experience Cobh** (p116)

- 3 Cycle along the windswept, wonderfully

remote **Sheep's Head Peninsula** (p253)

- 4 Catch a culinary demonstration or take a class at the renowned **Ballymaloe Cookery School** (p119)