



Belfast

POP 280,900 / AREA 115 SQ KM

Includes ➔

| | |
|----------------------------|-----|
| History | 530 |
| Sights | 530 |
| Activities | 543 |
| Tours | 544 |
| Festivals & Events | 546 |
| Sleeping | 547 |
| Eating | 548 |
| Drinking & Nightlife | 553 |
| Entertainment | 556 |
| Shopping | 558 |
| Information | 558 |

Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Mourne Seafood Bar (p549)
- ➔ OX (p549)
- ➔ Barking Dog (p552)
- ➔ Holohan's (p549)
- ➔ Saphyre (p553)

Best Places to Drink

- ➔ Crown Liquor Saloon (p554)
- ➔ Filthy Quarter (p554)
- ➔ Duke of York (p554)
- ➔ Love & Death Inc (p554)
- ➔ Eglantine (p556)

Why Go?

Belfast is in many ways a brand-new city. Once lumped with Beirut, Baghdad and Bosnia as one of the four 'Bs' for travellers to avoid, in recent years it has pulled off a remarkable transformation from bombs-and-bullets pariah to a hip-hotels-and-hedonism party town.

The old shipyards on the Lagan continue to give way to the luxury apartments of the Titanic Quarter, whose centrepiece, the stunning, star-shaped edifice housing the Titanic Belfast centre, covering the ill-fated liner's construction here, has become the city's number-one tourist draw.

New venues keep popping up – already this decade historic Crumlin Road Gaol and SS *Nomadic* opened to the public, and WWI warship HMS *Caroline* is set to become a floating museum in 2016. They all add to a list of attractions that includes beautifully restored Victorian architecture, a glittering waterfront lined with modern art, a fantastic foodie scene and music-filled pubs.

When to Go

- ➔ April can be a great time to visit Belfast, with spring flowers blooming throughout the city's parks and gardens, and the Belfast Film Festival showcasing Irish and international filmmakers' works.
- ➔ August brings good weather for walking and cycling, along with celebrations of Irish music and dance in West Belfast during Féile An Phobail, plus street parties and a carnival parade.
- ➔ October can start to get chilly, but the Festival at Queen's, the UK's second-largest arts festival (after Edinburgh's), warms things up during its three-week run.



Belfast Highlights

- 1 Learn about the world's most famous ocean liner at **Titanic Belfast** (p537).
- 2 Discover prehistoric treasures, an ancient Egyptian mummy and Armada gold at the **Ulster Museum** (p538).
- 3 Down a Guinness in Belfast's most beautiful

- Victorian pub, the **Crown Liquor Saloon** (p531).
- 4 Take a **taxi tour** (p545) of powerful political murals in West Belfast.
 - 5 Enjoy the city views from the top of **Cave Hill** (p531).
 - 6 Walk through history among reconstructed

- farmhouses, forges and mills at the **Ulster Folk Museum** (p541).
- 7 Cycle along the **Lagan Towpath** (p536) to the former linen town of Lisburn.
 - 8 Visit the birdcage-domed Palm House in the peaceful **Botanic Gardens** (p540).