



Ireland



THIS EDITION WRITTEN AND RESEARCHED BY

Fionn Davenport, Damian Harper, Catherine Le Nevez,
Ryan Ver Berkmoes, Neil Wilson

PLAN YOUR TRIP

Welcome to Ireland	6
Ireland Map	8
Ireland's Top 21	10
Need to Know	20
First Time Ireland	22
What's New	24
If You Like.....	25
Month by Month	28
Itineraries	32
The Great Outdoors.....	37
Eat & Drink Like a Local	44
Wild Atlantic Way	49
Regions at a Glance....	53

ON THE ROAD

DUBLIN 60

Howth	132
-------------	-----

COUNTIES WICKLOW & KILDARE 134

County Wicklow 135

Wicklow Mountains	135
Western Wicklow	147
The Coast	148
Southern Wicklow	150

County Kildare 153

Maynooth	153
Straffan	154
Along the Grand Canal	154
Newbridge & the Curragh	155
Kildare Town	155
Donnelly's Hollow to Castledermot	157

COUNTIES WEXFORD, WATERFORD, CARLOW & KILKENNY 158

County Wexford 159

Wexford Town & Around	159
Rosslare Harbour	165
South of Rosslare Harbour	166
Kilmore Quay	166
Hook Peninsula	167
New Ross	169
Enniscorthy	170
Ferns	172

County Waterford..... 173

Waterford City	173
Curraghmore Estate	178
Southeast County Waterford	178
Dunmore East	178
Tramore	179
Copper Coast	181

Dungarvan	181
Ring Peninsula	183
Ardmore	184
Cappoquin & Around	185
Lismore	185
Northern County Waterford	187
County Carlow 187	
Carlow Town	187
Borris & Around	190
St Mullins	191
Clonegal	192
County Kilkenny 192	
Kilkenny City	193
Central Kilkenny	200
Northern Kilkenny	206

COUNTY CORK 207

Cork City 210

Around Cork City 222

Blarney Castle	222
Fota Island	222
Cobh	222
Midleton & Around	225
Youghal	226

Kinsale & West Cork ... 227

Kinsale	227
Clonakilty	232
Skibbereen	237
Baltimore	238
Sherkin Island	240
Cape Clear Island	240

Mizen Head Peninsula 241

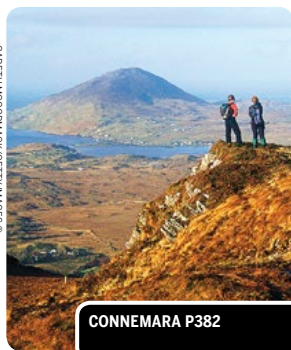
Schull	241
Schull to Mizen Head	242
Durrus & the Sheep's Head Peninsula	243
Bantry	245

Beara Peninsula (Ring of Beara) 247

Glengarriff	247
-------------------	-----



COUNTY KILKENNY P192



CONNEMARA P382

Contents

Castletownbere & Around	250
Dursey Island	250
Northside of the Beara.....	251

COUNTY KERRY ... 253

Killarney.....	255
Around Killarney.....	260
Aghadoe.....	260
Killarney National Park.....	260
Gap of Dunloe.....	266
Moll's Gap	267
Ring of Kerry.....	267
Killorglin.....	268
Caherciveen	269
Valentia Island	271
Portmagee.....	274
Skellig Ring	275
Waterville.....	275
Caherdaniel.....	275
Sneem	277
Kenmare	278
Dingle Peninsula.....	279
Killarney to Dingle Town via Castlemaine	280
Dingle Town.....	281
Slea Head Drive	288
Blasket Islands.....	290
Connor Pass	291
Cloghane & Around	291
Castlegregory & Around	291
Northern Kerry.....	292
Tralee	292
Listowel	295
Around Listowel	296

COUNTIES LIMERICK & TIPPERARY 297

County Limerick.....	300
Limerick City.....	300

County Tipperary	309
Tipperary Town.....	309
Glen of Aherlow & Galtee Mountains.....	310
Cashel	310
Around Cashel	314
Cahir.....	315
Around Cahir.....	316
Mitchelstown Caves.....	316
Clonmel & Around	317
Fethard.....	320
Carrick-on-Suir.....	320
Nenagh & Around.....	321

COUNTY CLARE ... 322

Ennis & Around.....	324
Ennis.....	324
Around Ennis.....	330
Eastern & Southeastern Clare ...	331
Shannon Airport.....	331
Bunratty.....	332
Killaloe & Ballina	333
Mountshannon	335
Southwestern & Western Clare	335
Kilrush	336
Kilkee	337
Kilkee to Loop Head.....	339
Kilkee to Ennistymon	340
Ennistymon.....	342
Liscannor & Around.....	344
Hag's Head	344
Cliffs of Moher	344
The Burren.....	345
Doolin.....	347
Lisdoonvarna	349
Kilfenora	350
Corofin & Around.....	351
Central Burren	352
Fanore	353

Ballyvaughan & Around	354
Northern Burren.....	355

COUNTY GALWAY...357

Galway City.....	359
Aran Islands	371
Inishmór.....	373
Inishmaan	378
Inisheer	380
Connemara	382
Oughterard & Around	383
Lough Corrib.....	384
Coastal Drive – Galway City to Mace Head.....	385
Lough Inagh Valley.....	386
Roundstone.....	386
Clifden & Around	387
Claddaghduff & Omey Island	389
Cleggan	389
Inishbofin.....	390
Letterfrack & Around.....	391
Leenane & Killary Harbour.....	392
South of Galway City...393	
Clarinbridge & Kilcolgan	393
Kinvara.....	393
EASTERN GALWAY	394
Athenry	394
Loughrea & Around	395
Gort & Around	395

COUNTIES MAYO & SLIGO..... 397

County Mayo.....	400
Cong.....	400
Pigeonhole Cave.....	402
Doolough Valley & Around	402
Clare Island.....	403

ON THE ROAD

Inishturk Island.....	404
Croagh Patrick.....	404
Westport.....	405
Newport.....	408
Achill Island.....	409
Bangor Erris.....	412
Ballycroy National Park.....	412
Mullet Peninsula.....	413
Pollatomish.....	413
Ballycastle & Around.....	414
Killala & Around.....	414
Ballina.....	415
Castlebar & Around.....	416
Knock.....	416
County Sligo.....	417
Sligo Town.....	417
Around Sligo Town.....	421
South of Sligo Town.....	423
Lough Gill.....	426
North of Sligo Town.....	427

COUNTY DONEGAL.....430

Donegal Town.....	431
Around Donegal Town.....	436
Lough Eske.....	436
Rossnowlagh.....	436
Ballyshannon.....	436
Bundoran.....	437
Southwestern Donegal.....	438
Mountcharles.....	438
Dunkineely.....	438
Killybegs.....	438
Kilcar, Teelin & Around.....	440
Glencolumbcille & Around.....	441
Maghera & the Glengesh Pass.....	442
Ardara.....	442
Loughrea Peninsula.....	443
Glenties.....	444

Northwestern Donegal.....	444
Dungloe.....	445
Burtonport & Annagry.....	445
Arranmore Island.....	446
Gweedore & Around.....	446
Tory Island.....	447
Falcarragh & Gortahork.....	448
Dunfanaghy & Around.....	449
Central Donegal.....	451
Letterkenny.....	451
Glenveagh National Park.....	455
Lough Gartan.....	456
Dunlewey & Around.....	456
Northeastern Donegal.....	457
Rosguill Peninsula.....	457
Fanad Peninsula.....	457
Inishowen Peninsula.....	459

THE MIDLANDS...466

County Leitrim.....	468
Carrick-on-Shannon.....	468
North Leitrim.....	472
County Roscommon.....	472
Roscommon Town.....	472
Strokestown & Around.....	473
Boyle & Around.....	474
County Longford.....	476
County Westmeath.....	477
Athlone.....	477
Lough Ree & Around.....	479
Kilbeggan & Around.....	479
Mullingar & Around.....	479
North of Mullingar.....	481
County Offaly.....	482
Birr.....	483
Kinnitty.....	485
Banagher & Around.....	485
Shannonbridge.....	486

Clonmacnoise.....	486
Tullamore.....	488
Durrow Abbey.....	489
Clara.....	490
County Laois.....	490
Abbeyleix.....	490
Durrow.....	491
Slieve Bloom Mountains.....	492
Mountmellick.....	492
Portarlinton.....	493
Rock of Dunamaise.....	493
Timahoe.....	493

COUNTIES MEATH, LOUTH, CAVAN & MONAGHAN.....494

County Meath.....	495
Brú Na Bóinne.....	495
Battle of Boyne Site.....	500
Laytown.....	500
Slane.....	500
Tara.....	504
Dunsany Castle.....	506
Trim.....	506
Kells.....	509
Loughcrew Cairns.....	510
County Louth.....	511
Drogheda.....	511
Dundalk.....	516
Cooley Peninsula.....	517
County Cavan.....	520
Cavan Town.....	520
Lough Oughter & Killykean Forest Park.....	521
Butlersbridge.....	521
Cloverhill.....	521
Belturbet.....	522
Ballyjamesduff & Around.....	522
Eastern Cavan.....	523
Northwestern Cavan.....	523

Contents

UNDERSTAND

County Monaghan	524
Monaghan Town	524
Rossmore Forest Park	525
Clones & Around	525
Carrickmacross & Around	526
Inniskeen	527

BELFAST **528**

COUNTIES DOWN & ARMAGH **562**

County Down	564
Bangor	564
Ards Peninsula	565
Newtownards & Around	568
Strangford Lough	569
Downpatrick	571
Lecale Peninsula	572
Newcastle	573
Dundrum & Around	575
Mourne Mountains	576
Mournes Coast Road	577
Newry	580
Central County Down	581
County Armagh	583
Armagh City	583
Navan Fort	586
Lough Neagh	586
South Armagh	587

COUNTIES LONDONDERRY & ANTRIM **588**

County Londonderry	589
Derry	589
Limavady & Around	600
Magilligan Point	601
Downhill	601
Portstewart	602

County Antrim	603
Portrush	603
Dunluce Castle	605
Bushmills	605
Giant's Causeway	606
Giant's Causeway to Ballycastle	608
Ballycastle	612
Rathlin Island	613
Glens of Antrim	614
Larne & Around	617
Carrickfergus	617
Inland County Antrim	618

COUNTIES FERMANAGH & TYRONE **620**

County Fermanagh	621
Enniskillen & Around	621
Lough Erne	628
County Tyrone	633
Omagh	633
Sperrin Mountains	635
East Tyrone	635

Ireland Today	638
History	640
The Irish Way of Life	653
Music	656
Literary Ireland	659
Irish Landscapes	662
Sporting Ireland	666

SURVIVAL GUIDE

Directory A–Z	670
Transport	678
Language	684
Index	691
Map Legend	702

SPECIAL FEATURES

Trinity College 3D illustration	68
Glendalough 3D illustration	142
The Cuisine of County Cork	216
Wildlife in Killarney National Park	264
Rock of Cashel 3D illustration	312

Aran Islands Scenery	376
Yeats' Country	424
The Shannon–Erne Waterway	470
Down & Armagh: Walking & Wildlife	578
Londonderry & Antrim: The Causeway Coast	610

Itineraries



1
WEEK

Ireland Highlights

This 300km-tourist trail takes you past some of Ireland's most famous attractions and through spectacular countryside. Start with a whistle-stop tour of **Dublin**, including visits to Trinity College and the *Book of Kells* as well as a sample of Guinness in its hometown. The next day, head west to **Galway**, from where you should take a drive through stunning, brooding **Connemara National Park** (which can be driven in a nice loop) before heading south through the moonlike landscape of the **Burren**. Take a detour to the **Cliffs of Moher**, then head to **Ennis**, a good spot to enjoy a bit of traditional Irish music. Keep going south through the **Connor Pass** into County Kerry, stopping for a half-day in **Dingle** before setting out to visit its peninsula, taking in the views and pre-historic monuments of **Slea Head**. Via the ferry, continue on to **Killarney**, the perfect base from which to explore the famous **Ring of Kerry**, a much-trafficked 179km loop around the Iveragh Peninsula.

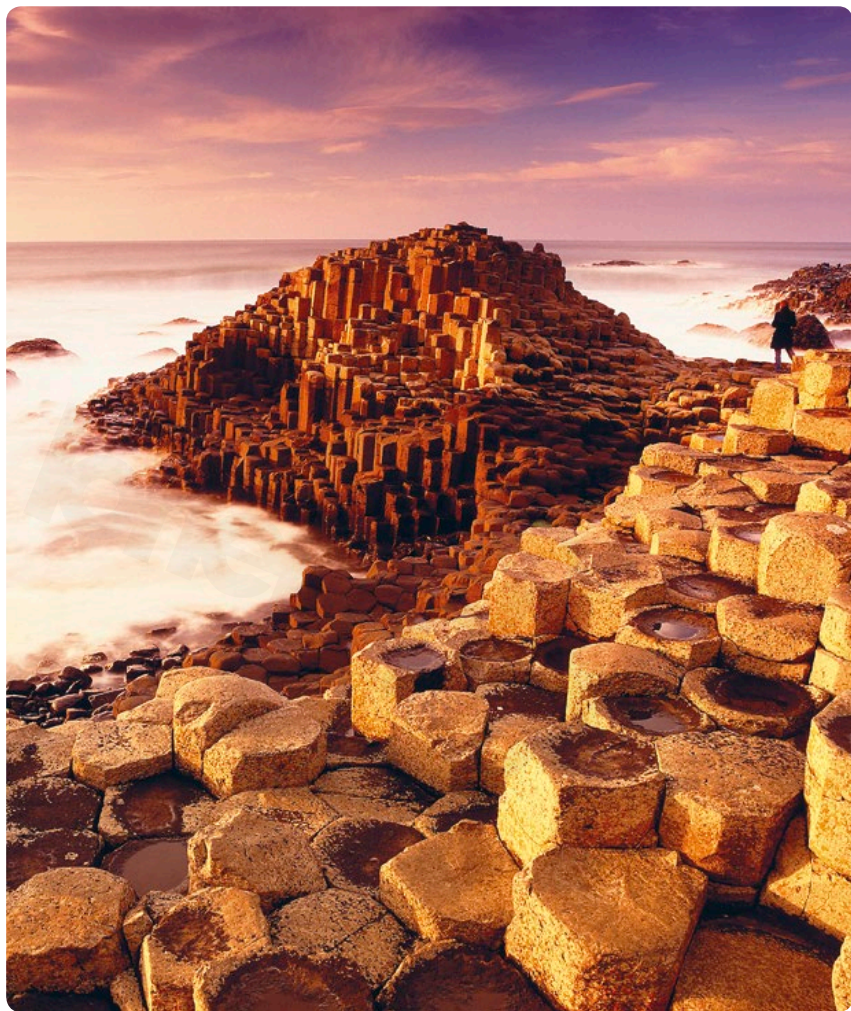


Best of the West

The west of Ireland is rightly at the top of most people's must-visit lists. Start in County Sligo, where prehistory and panorama combine to wonderful effect at **Carrowmore Megalithic Cemetery**. Wind your way south along the coast, stopping at some of Ireland's best surf beaches like **Strandhill** and **Enniscrone**, to the pretty village of **Pollatomish**. Continue south to the pub-packed heritage town of **Westport**. Southwest of here is magnificent **Croagh Patrick**, which is worth a climb if only to feast your eyes on island-studded Clew Bay. Go west to **Louisburgh**, from where you can head offshore to craggy **Clare Island** (home of the pirate queen Grace O'Malley), before turning south along the beautiful Doolough Valley to **Leenane**, situated on Ireland's only fjord. This is the northern gateway to **Connemara National Park**, which you can explore via the beautiful coastal route, passing **Kylemore Abbey**, venturing onto Clifden's scenic Sky Road and then winding your way around the coast through pretty **Roundstone**. Alternatively, you could savour the stunning wilderness of the inland route through **Maam Cross** to **Galway**, where you should devote at least a day to exploring the colourful streets and wonderful pubs.

South of Galway, the fishing villages of **Kinvara** and **Ballyvaughan** are at the edge of the strange, karst landscape of the Burren, home to all manner of flora and fauna, as well as big-ticket attractions like the ancient **Aillwee Caves** and the **Cliffs of Moher**. Going south, be sure to sample some of Ireland's exquisite traditional music by attending a session in one of the pubs of **Miltown Malbay**; beach lovers should also opt for a stop in **Kilkee**, a favourite with surfers.

The easiest way to cross into County Kerry is via the ferry at **Killimer**. Take a day to explore the **Dingle Peninsula**, with its rich menu of ancient sites and stunning views, before overnighing in **Dingle** – one of the prettiest towns along the entire west coast. Take another day to explore the world-famous **Ring of Kerry**, ending in **Killarney National Park**, right on the edge of **Killarney** itself. Take the scenic route across the middle of the **Beara Peninsula** and make your way to the Italianate **Garinish Island**, with its exotic flowers. Then follow the coast through **Castletownshend** and the fishing village of **Union Hall** to the city of **Cork**.



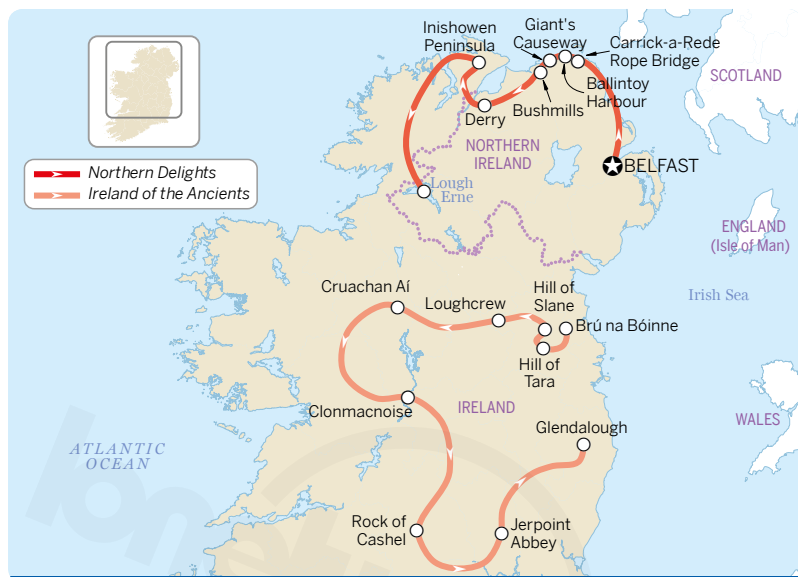
BRIAN LAWRENCE/GETTY IMAGES ©



DAVID EPPERSON/GETTY IMAGES ©

Top: Giant's Causeway
(p606), County Antrim

Bottom: Stone circle,
Beara Peninsula (p247)

1
WEEK

Northern Delights

Start in **Belfast**, where you should visit the Titanic Experience and take a black-taxi tour, before heading north toward the Antrim coast and the **Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge**. Head west toward the Unesco World Heritage-listed **Giant's Causeway**, a highlight of any trip to Northern Ireland; along the way, Game of Thrones fans can check out **Ballintoy Harbour**, which stood in for the Iron Islands' Lordsport Harbour in the TV series. The causeway coast finishes in the fascinating village of **Bushmills**, home to the famous distillery. **Derry** is worth a day – walk the city's walls and explore its more recent past in the Bogside district, and then cross the invisible border into the Republic by visiting the **Inishowen Peninsula** in County Donegal. Back in the North, finish your visit in **Lough Erne**, taking in both White Island and the carved stones of Devenish Island.

1
WEEK

Ireland of the Ancients

Begin at the stunning Neolithic tombs of Newgrange and Knowth in County Meath, in the heart of **Brú na Bóinne**. Nearby, stand at the top of the celebrated **Hill of Tara**, a site of immense folkloric significance and seat of the high kings of Ireland until the 11th century. Across the plain is the **Hill of Slane**, where St Patrick lit a fire in 433 to proclaim Christianity throughout the land. To the west is the Neolithic monument of **Loughcrew** – a quieter alternative to Brú na Bóinne. Keep going west to County Roscommon. Just outside Tusk village is **Cruachan Aí**, the most important Celtic site in Europe. Head south to **Clonmacnoise**, the 6th-century monastic site in County Offaly, then continue through the heart of the country to the impressive **Rock of Cashel** in County Tipperary. Turn east and head through County Kilkenny, stopping at the Cistercian **Jerpoint Abbey**, at the pretty village of Thomastown. From here, travel north-east to Wicklow and magnificent **Glendalough**, where the substantial remains of a monastic settlement linger by two beautiful lakes.

Map Legend

Sights

- Beach
- Bird Sanctuary
- Buddhist
- Castle/Palace
- Christian
- Confucian
- Hindu
- Islamic
- Jain
- Jewish
- Monument
- Museum/Gallery/Historic Building
- Ruin
- Shinto
- Sikh
- Taoist
- Winery/Vineyard
- Zoo/Wildlife Sanctuary
- Other Sight

Activities, Courses & Tours

- Body surfing
- Diving
- Canoeing/Kayaking
- Course/Tour
- Sento Hot Baths/Onsen
- Skiing
- Snorkelling
- Surfing
- Swimming/Pool
- Walking
- Windsurfing
- Other Activity

Sleeping

- Sleeping
- Camping

Eating

- Eating

Drinking & Nightlife

- Drinking & Nightlife
- Cafe

Entertainment

- Entertainment

Shopping

- Shopping

Information

- Bank
- Embassy/Consulate
- Hospital/Medical
- Internet
- Police
- Post Office
- Telephone
- Toilet
- Tourist Information
- Other Information

Geographic

- Beach
- Gate
- Hut/Shelter
- Lighthouse
- Lookout
- Mountain/Volcano
- Oasis
- Park
- Pass
- Picnic Area
- Waterfall

Population

- Capital (National)
- Capital (State/Province)
- City/Large Town
- Town/Village

Transport

- Airport
- Border crossing
- Bus
- Cable car/Funicular
- Cycling
- Ferry
- Metro station
- Monorail
- Parking
- Petrol station
- S-Bahn/Subway station
- Taxi
- T-bane/Tunnelbana station
- Train station/Railway
- Tram
- Tube station
- U-Bahn/Underground station
- Other Transport

Routes

- Tollway
- Freeway
- Primary
- Secondary
- Tertiary
- Lane
- Unsealed road
- Road under construction
- Plaza/Mall
- Steps
- Tunnel
- Pedestrian overpass
- Walking Tour
- Walking Tour detour
- Path/Walking Trail

Boundaries

- International
- State/Province
- Disputed
- Regional/Suburb
- Marine Park
- Cliff
- Wall

Hydrography

- River, Creek
- Intermittent River
- Canal
- Water
- Dry/Salt/Intermittent Lake
- Reef

Areas

- Airport/Runway
- Beach/Desert
- Cemetery (Christian)
- Cemetery (Other)
- Glacier
- Mudflat
- Park/Forest
- Sight (Building)
- Sportsground
- Swamp/Mangrove

Note: Not all symbols displayed above appear on the maps in this book



Neil Wilson

Counties Wexford, Waterford, Carlow & Kilkenny; County Cork; County Kerry

Neil's first visit to Ireland was on a sailing trip to Kinsale in 1990. Since then he has travelled most of the Republic and all of Northern Ireland, often while researching for Lonely Planet guidebooks. Working on this edition allowed him to hike the main ridge of MacGillicuddy's Reeks, cycle to the top of Priest's Leap, and eat far too much farmhouse cheese in West Cork (mmm, Gubbeen...). Neil is a full-time travel writer based in Scotland, and has written more than 70 guidebooks for half a dozen publishers. Neil also wrote the Great Outdoors chapter.



OUR STORY

A beat-up old car, a few dollars in the pocket and a sense of adventure. In 1972 that's all Tony and Maureen Wheeler needed for the trip of a lifetime – across Europe and Asia overland to Australia. It took several months, and at the end – broke but inspired – they sat at their kitchen table writing and stapling together their first travel guide, *Across Asia on the Cheap*. Within a week they'd sold 1500 copies. Lonely Planet was born.

Today, Lonely Planet has offices in Franklin, London, Melbourne, Oakland, Beijing and Delhi, with more than 600 staff and writers. We share Tony's belief that 'a great guidebook should do three things: inform, educate and amuse'.

OUR WRITERS



Fionn Davenport

Dublin: **Counties Wicklow & Kildare** Irish-born and raised, Fionn has been writing about his native country for close to two decades and is constantly surprised by its ability to surprise him. From his home in Dublin he's struck out to find the best new attractions and distractions, restaurants, cafes and hotels. It's a dirty job but he's happy to do it. You'll also find his work in the travel section of the *Irish Times*. Fionn also wrote the Welcome to, Ireland's Top 21, Need to Know,

First Time, What's New, If You Like, Month by Month, Itineraries, Eat & Drink Like a Local, The Wild Atlantic Way, Regions at a Glance, and the Understand chapters.



Damian Harper

Counties Limerick & Tipperary: **County Clare:** **County Galway** A Lonely Planet author for almost two decades, Damian first visited Ireland when he worked for a year in Dublin as a bookseller at Waterstones' first international branch on Dawson St. With two university degrees, Damian has contributed to a host of Lonely Planet titles from *London to Shanghai*, *Vietnam* and *England*, and seized the opportunity to explore the astonishingly beautiful west coast of Ireland. Damian

also wrote the Directory chapter.



Catherine Le Nevez

Counties Meath, Louth, Cavan & Monaghan: **Belfast:** **Counties Down & Armagh:** **Counties Londonderry & Antrim** Catherine's wanderlust kicked in when she road-tripped across Europe aged four and she's been hitting the road at every opportunity since, completing her Doctorate of Creative Arts in Writing, Masters in Professional Writing, and post-grad qualifications in Editing and Publishing along the way. Catherine's Celtic connections include Irish and

Breton heritage, and a love of Guinness. She's travelled throughout every county in the Emerald Isle, and has covered the vast majority for Lonely Planet, including numerous editions of this guide.



Ryan Ver Berkmoes

Counties Mayo & Sligo: **County Donegal:** **The Midlands:** **Counties Fermanagh & Tyrone** From Malin Head to Durrow, with plenty of pleasures in between, Ryan Ver Berkmoes has delighted in great swaths of Ireland. He first visited Galway in 1985 when he remembers a grey place where the locals wandered the muddy tidal flats for fun and frolic. How things change! From lost rural pubs to lost memory, he's revelled in a place where his first name brings a smile and his surname brings a 'huh?' Ryan also wrote the Transport chapter.

Follow him at ryanverberkmoes.com; @ryanvb

OVER
PAGE MORE
WRITERS

Published by Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd

ABN 36 005 607 983

12th edition – March 2016

ISBN 978 1 74321 686 6

© Lonely Planet 2016 Photographs © as indicated 2016

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Printed in China

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be copied, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form by any means, electronic, mechanical, recording or otherwise, except brief extracts for the purpose of review, and no part of this publication may be sold or hired, without the written permission of the publisher. Lonely Planet and the Lonely Planet logo are trademarks of Lonely Planet and are registered in the US Patent and Trademark Office and in other countries. Lonely Planet does not allow its name or logo to be appropriated by commercial establishments, such as retailers, restaurants or hotels. Please let us know of any misuses: lonelyplanet.com/ip.

Although the authors and Lonely Planet have taken all reasonable care in preparing this book, we make no warranty about the accuracy or completeness of its content and, to the maximum extent permitted, disclaim all liability arising from its use.

© Lonely Planet Publications Pty Ltd. To make it easier for you to use, access to this chapter is not digitally restricted. In return, we think it's fair to ask you to use it for personal, non-commercial purposes only. In other words, please don't upload this chapter to a peer-to-peer site, mass email it to everyone you know, or resell it. See the terms and conditions on our site for a longer way of saying the above - 'Do the right thing with our content.'