



County Cork

POP 519,000 / AREA 7508 SQ KM

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Best Places to Eat

- ➔ Finn's Table (p231)
- ➔ Manning's Emporium (p246)
- ➔ Farmgate Restaurant (p225)
- ➔ Scannells (p233)
- ➔ Market Lane (p215)

Best Places to Stay

- ➔ Garnish House (p214)
- ➔ Ballymaloe House (p225)
- ➔ Gilbert's (p224)
- ➔ Blairscove House (p244)
- ➔ Old Presbytery (p230)

Why Go?

Everything good about Ireland can be found in County Cork. Surrounding the country's second city – a thriving metropolis made glorious by 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 food markets and ever-evolving cast of creative eateries, and in its selection of pubs, entertainment and cultural pursuits.

Further afield, you'll pass inlets along eroded coastlines 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 Head, 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 time.
- ➔ 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.



County Cork Highlights

- 1 Revel in buzzing **Cork city** (p210), with its brilliant selection of restaurants, pubs, music and theatre.
- 2 Hike to the tip of the windswept, wonderfully

- remote **Sheep's Head Peninsula** (p244).
- 3 Catch a culinary demonstration or take a cookery class at **Ballymaloe Cookery School** (p225).

- 4 Meander the medieval streets of **Kinsale** (p227) and walk along the shoreline to mammoth Charles Fort.
- 5 Spot seals and sea eagles as you sail to