

Causeway Coastal Route



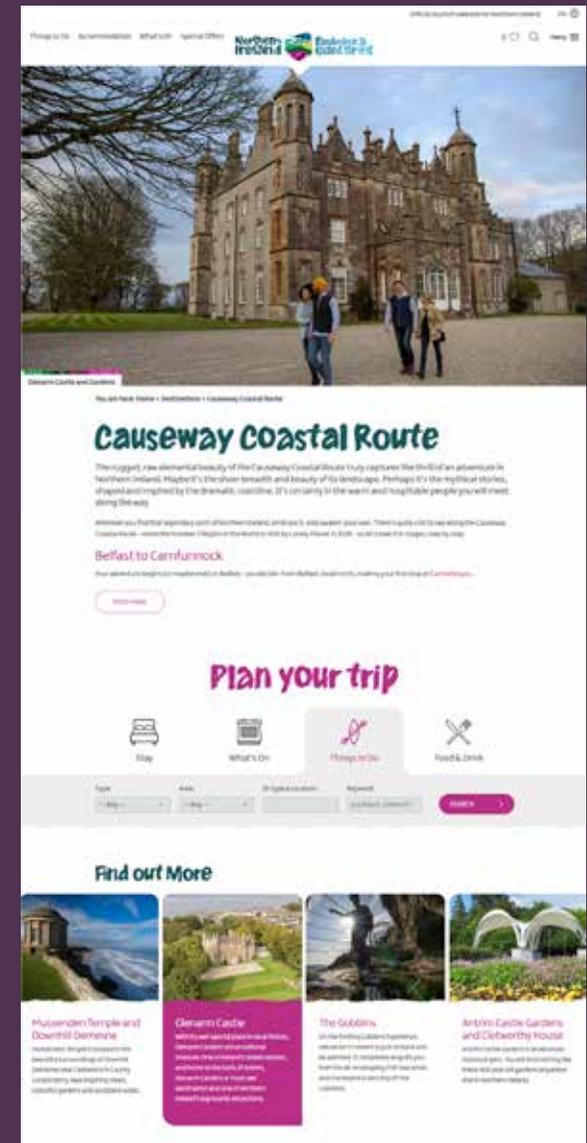
Map - Where to go - What to see - Where to stay
- What to eat and drink - Insider tips



There really is no other journey quite like one along the Causeway Coastal Route. This is a journey into a dramatic landscape of soaring cliffs, swooping glens, rolling waves and silver sands where history is always at your fingertips and legends live on forever. This is a journey made for lingering, for exploring at your own pace, for staying as long as it takes to soak it all up and truly get into the spirit of this very special place and people.

At every twist and turn along the 130-mile route from the Walled City of Derry-Londonderry in the west through the nine majestic Glens of Antrim to Carrickfergus Castle in the east, you'll find one amazing experience after another. Many are giant, some are more human in scale, but each will leave you filled with wonder and a deep appreciation of the natural and man-made forces that have forged this truly unforgettable place. This is one of those journeys that has the power to change how you see a place by bringing you deep into the spirit of it.

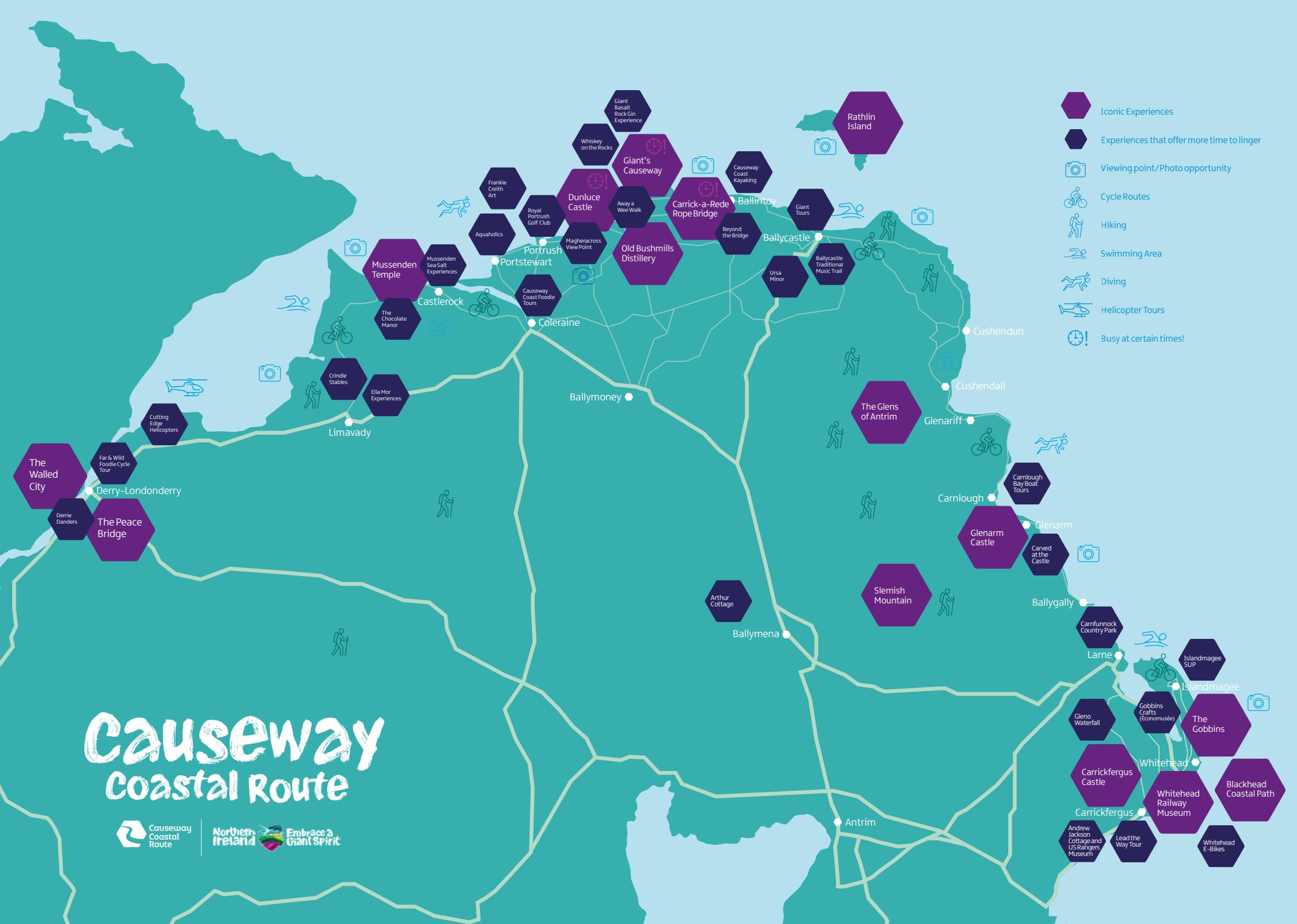
This is your guide to your journey along the spectacular Causeway Coastal Route, showcasing must-see highlights such as the Giant's Causeway, Dunluce Castle and The Gobbins Cliff Path, alongside a host of lesser-known but no less rewarding hidden gems. You'll discover a taster of places to stay, eat and drink, get insider tips on making the most of your trip, and at every stop you'll find the facts and inspiration you need to turn your visit into the unforgettable journey of a lifetime.



www.discovernorthernireland.com/destinations/causeway-coastal-route



Contact our friendly Visitor Information Centre staff for more details.



-  Iconic Experiences
-  Experiences that offer more time to linger
-  Viewing point/Photo opportunity
-  Cycle Routes
-  Hiking
-  Swimming Area
-  Diving
-  Helicopter Tours
-  Busy at certain times!

Causeway Coastal Route

See more, experience more, enjoy more

All along the Causeway Coastal Route you'll find a wide range of experiences, each of which is guaranteed to reward the time you spend here. No matter how long you stay and linger, these experiences will deepen your understanding of this unique place and enrich every moment and every memory of your journey. You'll find all these and more at discovernorthernireland.com/destinations/causeway-coastal-route

Far & Wild Foodie Cycle Tour

Take a two-hour cycle trail through the very best of quality local food, ingredients suppliers and artisan enterprises.

Derrie Danders

Get the inside track on the Walled City with this fully-guided walking and audio tour in the friendly company of a local history buff and skilled storyteller.

Cutting Edge Helicopter Tours

A thrilling bird's eye view of the Walled City, the majestic River Foyle, the Peace Bridge, or create a giant sky-high adventure all of your own.

Crindle Stables

Go for a scenic horseback ride along the lanes, woodlands and beaches of County Londonderry and beyond with this family-run equestrian centre.

Away a Wee Walk

See more and learn more about the Causeway Coastal Route with a tailor-made walking tour or hike with these local specialists.

Whiskey on the Rocks

Sip Bushmills 12-Year-Old Distillery Reserve whiskey on the basalt columns of the Giant's Causeway while your specialist guide brings the spirit of this epic place to life for you.

Mussenden Sea Salt Experiences

Indulge yourself with luxurious, bespoke dining and wellness experiences in signature locations along the Causeway Coastal Route, including inside Mussenden Temple itself.



Causeway Coast Foodie Tours

Discover the very best food, ingredients and artisan suppliers with a guided tour of the many culinary highlights to be found all along the Causeway Coastal Route.

Causeway Coast Kayaking at Ballintoy

Picturesque Ballintoy harbour is the starting point for an amazing kayaking experience that gets you up close to the dramatic scenery, abundant wildlife and the rolling coastline waves.

Aquaholics

On, in, or even under the water, you can do it all with Aquaholics, Portstewart and Ballycastle's diving, sea sports and boat tours specialists.

Giant Tours – Game of Thrones® Hang Out With Hodor

This is the tour that promises to take you to the places most Game of Thrones® tourists simply cannot reach, visiting many of the iconic filming locations of the legendary series.

Magheracross View Point

The perfect place to park and take in the sweeping views of majestic Dunluce Castle, plus views from the purpose-built viewing platform all the way along the coast.

Royal Portrush Golf Club

Founded in 1888, this is one of the most spectacular and challenging golf courses in the world, playing home to Open Championship in 1951, 2019 and again in 2025.

Frankie Creith Art

Inspired by the dramatic coastline, Frankie's gallery is filled with her paintings, etchings and sculptures and under her guidance you can create your own masterpiece.

Lead the Way Tour

Step back in time and learn how the County Antrim town of Carrickfergus played a hugely significant role in the Second World War.

Arthur Cottage

Experience traditional open fire griddle baking and wool spinning within a traditional thatched cottage, once the ancestral home of Chester Alan Arthur - 21st President of the United States of America.

Whitehead E-Bike Hire or Guided Tour with Pedals 2 Places

Take it easy and see the sights worth seeing all the way around Whitehead and Islandmagee on an e-bike, either independently or with a knowledgeable local guide.

Islandmagee Stand Up Paddleboarding

Take to the waves, or at least the ripples, on a paddleboard and explore the wonders of the coastline around Whitehead and Islandmagee, with expert instruction and equipment provided.

Gleno Waterfall

A short walk takes you to this little hidden gem of a waterfall where river water tumbles down a 30-foot rock face into the pool below.

Carnfunnock Country Park

Over 191 hectares of mixed woodland, colourful gardens, adventure playground, also walking trails, walled garden, dizzying maze, miniature railway and spectacular coastline, with panoramic views of the Antrim Coast and North Channel.

Gobbins Crafts (Économusée)

A workshop devoted to jewellery in all its shapes and forms set in a fully restored, stone-built former pig house where you can book jewellery-making workshops and buy selected pieces.

Carved at the Castle – Glenarm

Join a hands-on stone carving class and workshop within the Glenarm Castle estate and learn the skills and stories associated with stone carving, building and heritage restoration.

Carnlough Bay Boat Tours

Take a short 30-minute boat trip across Carnlough Bay through the splashing waves to the Black Rock, with wonderful views of Glenarm, Glencloy and a whole world of sea life.

Andrew Jackson Cottage and US Rangers Museum

Trace the routes of the 7th President of the USA from traditional thatched cottage to the White House. Also learn about the formation of the Elite US Rangers in Carrickfergus.



Carrick-A-Rede Rope Bridge



WHAT IT IS

A 20-metre long rope bridge that crosses a dramatic drop to the Atlantic Ocean and connects Carrick-A-Rede island with the mainland.



WHY VISIT

A rope bridge was first installed here in 1755 to give salmon fishermen access to the rocky outcrop of Carrick-A-Rede. Crossing the 30-metre-deep chasm is an experience in itself.



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

Break bread at Ursa Minor Bakehouse just a few minutes east in Ballycastle, or enjoy a steaming bowl of mussels or seafood chowder at Ballintoy's Fullerton Arms which has its very own Doors of Thrones door carving.



WHERE TO STAY

You can keep those sea views going with a stay at the fabulous Bayview Hotel in nearby Portballintrae.



WHAT TO CAPTURE

You'll be spoiled for choice here. Apart from the rope bridge itself, there are stunning views of Rathlin Island, countless sea birds and the chalk white fishermen's cottage tucked into the cliffs.



WHERE NEXT

The view has probably given you a taste for Rathlin Island, so make for the ferry at Ballycastle, or if a head for heights is now your thing, try the glorious Glens of Antrim or Giant's Causeway.



INSIDER TIP

Carrick-A-Rede is one of the most popular places along the whole Causeway Coastal Route, so it's best to book in advance, and try choosing an early or late slot.

Rathlin Island



WHAT IT IS

A small, fascinating island six miles from the coast with a little over 140 inhabitants living side by side with extraordinary wildlife.



WHY VISIT

Take the short ferry ride across the Sea of Moyle to get an insight into the many wonders of island life in the place where deposed Scottish King, Robert the Bruce, found solace in 1306. Learn about the island's many shipwrecks, its lighthouse-keeping traditions and vast variety of sea birds and sea mammals like dolphins, porpoises and seals.



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

The Manor House is right in the middle of the harbour at Rathlin Island and offers deliciously fresh and locally inspired modern casual cuisine.



WHERE TO STAY

Sleep in sea-washed style at The Manor House or opt for mainland luxury in the beautifully appointed The Salthouse Hotel, Ballycastle, complete with ocean views.



WHAT TO CAPTURE

It really is all about the wildlife here and there's an abundance of photo opportunities, from the native Irish hares on the island's walking trails to the puffins, razorbills, dolphins and seals.



WHERE NEXT

Tap into the Ballycastle Traditional Music Trail and enjoy a short tour of the quaint seaside town, or head to Ballintoy Harbour where Causeway Coast Kayaking will get you back out on the waves.



INSIDER TIP

April to July is puffin season on Rathlin Island - the perfect time to see these colourful and playful sea birds at their very best.

The Glens of Antrim



WHAT IT IS

Nine glorious glens which carve their way across County Antrim to meet the sea in spectacular fashion at the Causeway Coast.



WHY VISIT

This is an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty packed with ancient history and heritage, tumbling rivers, streams and waterfalls, while abundant wildlife fills the forests. Where the glens meet the sea they open out into a series of spectacular bays and estuaries dotted with coastal villages.



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

The attractive villages of Cushendun and Cushendall are like gatekeepers to the glens. Try a taste of fine dining in Harry's Restaurant, Cushendall, or go for more casual eats at Mary McBride's in Cushendun.



WHERE TO STAY

Step back in time to when the glens were home to thousands of artisan workers with a night or two at The Quarrymen's Cottages in beautiful Glenarm.



WHAT TO CAPTURE

The wooden viewing point at Glenariff Waterfall is the perfect place to get that iconic time-lapse shot of the water streaming down the rocky precipice.



WHERE NEXT

Head to the coast at beautiful Carnlough or Glenarm.



INSIDER TIP

GlenCorp is the glen through which the Causeway Coastal Route travels in its entirety, leading you to picturesque Cushendall where it meets the sea. Glenariff, Queen of the Glens, is home to the Glenariff Nature Reserve Waterfalls Walk.



Glenarm Castle



WHAT IT IS

The ancestral home of the McDonnell family, Earls of Antrim, and one of Northern Ireland's most historic family houses with over 500 years of history and heritage.



WHY VISIT

Get a unique insight into the history of Glenarm Castle and its people, as George, the castle's very own butler, takes you on a guided tour of the castle and its gardens. From him you'll learn the fascinating living history of the Earls of Antrim, see the castle's unique artefacts and discover its tantalising secrets.



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

The estate itself offers a host of eating and drinking options, including a Tea Room, Pizza Pavilion and Ice Cream Parlour. You can also drink like an earl at the Arkle Whiskey Tasting Experience at nearby Carnlough's Londonderry Arms.



WHERE TO STAY

From one castle to another, with a night at the historic Ballygally Castle in nearby Larne, or try the local Londonderry Arms Hotel.



WHAT TO CAPTURE

There's the impressive castle of course, but don't overlook the historic Walled Garden which is filled with interesting plants and vibrant colour that will pop right out of your album.



WHERE NEXT

It's not far from here to The Gobbins Cliff Path, or make your way to Carnlough Harbour.



INSIDER TIP

Don't miss out on a visit to The Milk Parlour for artisan ice-cream and The Potting Shed for tea, coffee and cake to go, both in the castle grounds.

Slemish Mountain



WHAT IT IS

At 1500 feet this is amongst the highest points in County Antrim, on a clear day offering commanding views of the county, the Irish Sea, the Scottish coast, the Sperrins and Lough Neagh.



WHY VISIT

The views are one thing, the history and legend quite another: Slemish is the legendary first known Irish home of Saint Patrick, Ireland's patron saint, who according to legend worked as a shepherd here. It's also here that his religious conversion is reputed to have taken place.



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

Grab a bite to eat at The Thatch Inn or Halfway House Country Pub in Broughshane, or try The Twilight Café in Carnlough.



WHERE TO STAY

After a day on and around the mountain you can rest, restore and revive yourself at Galgorm, Northern Ireland's leading hotel resort and spa, or set down at the Adair Arms or Tullyglass House Hotel in Ballymena.



WHAT TO CAPTURE

Look for a clear day, preferably a cool, clear morning, and head to the summit for extraordinary 360-degree views and panoramic shots galore.



WHERE NEXT

Slemish makes a great starting point from which to explore the Nine Glens of Antrim, and Arthur Cottage outside Ballymena offers a fascinating insight into country life in bygone times.



INSIDER TIP

There's a long-standing tradition of a pilgrimage to the summit on 17th March, St Patrick's Day, a great occasion to join the crowds on their annual ascent.

The Gobbins Cliff Path



WHAT IT IS

A marvel of engineering when it first opened in 1902, The Gobbins Cliff Path was reimagined in 2015 as a spectacular walkway along the rugged and sheer face of the Antrim cliffs.



WHY VISIT

This is Europe's most dramatic coastal walk. As sea birds soar overhead and waves crash at your feet, make your way along the walkway, tunnel and soaring bridges to wonder at the ingenuity and bravery of the Edwardian engineers who made this path traverse the basalt crevasses and cliff face.



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

Feed your appetite for adventure with light refreshments at the on-site Gobbins Café or keep that coastal theme alive with ice cream from Rinkha or local seafood at The Lighthouse Bistro, Whitehead.



WHERE TO STAY

The vast views of Belfast Lough from The Blackhead Lightkeeper's Houses are almost as dramatic as those from The Gobbins, or get your head down in the restored Cloghfin or Pink Cottage, or try glamping at Arbor Hills.



WHAT TO CAPTURE

The Tubular Bridge makes the ultimate frame for your visit - keep smiling for the camera while waves crash loudly below.



WHERE NEXT

Head south to Whitehead with its Railway Museum and lighthouse or explore the Islandmagee peninsula.



INSIDER TIP

Booking ahead means you can arrive in plenty of time, walk to The Gobbins when it best suits you, and have time to learn more of its fascinating history in the visitor centre.



Whitehead Railway Museum



WHAT IT IS

A museum with five galleries dedicated to the history and preservation of Ireland's fascinating railway heritage.



WHY VISIT

Step back to a bygone era to rub shoulders with the giants of the locomotive steam age and get up close with an impressive 140-year-old steam engine. Learn how the railways helped transform industry and tourism, and visit the on-site restoration workshop.



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

Check out Platform 3, the Edwardian Tea Room within the museum itself, or a little up the road in Gleno is The Dairy, a café, butchers and farm shop.



WHERE TO STAY

Altahammond House offers bed & breakfast accommodation with a range of tastefully decorated boutique-style rooms.



WHAT TO CAPTURE

Get as close to the front of any big locomotive as you can and crouch down to get that giant perspective on these railway beasts. Better still, get that photo while the steam engine's fired up!



WHERE NEXT

Step back in time once more with a visit to Glenarm Castle, or step out into the landscape with a trek to Slemish Mountain.



INSIDER TIP

Time your visit just right on Saturdays in peak season and you can take a 10-minute steam train trip up and down a siding within the museum – just one of the museum's regular events and entertainments.

Blackhead Coastal Path, Lighthouse & Whitehead Promenade



WHAT IT IS

A striking collection of coastal experiences that reflect much of this part of the Causeway Coast's strong maritime tradition and development as a Victorian-era tourist mecca.



WHY VISIT

Where else can you walk or cycle a Victorian coastal path, get up close to a working lighthouse, stay in a lighthouse-keeper's house and marvel at a row of colourfully painted Edwardian seafront houses?



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

Grab coffee, tea and treats at The Bank House, or more of the same plus light bites to eat at Kings Road Coffee.



WHERE TO STAY

Ideally located for a tour of the Causeway Coastal Route, Larne's Curran Court Hotel offers comfortable rooms, with great food and cosy atmosphere in Katy Jane's Bar & Beer Garden.



WHAT TO CAPTURE

It has to be the row of brightly-painted houses on Whitehead Promenade, awash with vibrant colour in any season, or the lighthouse standing sentinel atop Blackhead.



WHERE NEXT

Carrickfergus Castle for a taste of Norman history and spectacle, or enter the age of steam at Whitehead Railway Museum.



INSIDER TIP

Check out the hand-painted mural of Whitehead in the Whitehead Centre with its hot spots and local tips.

Carrickfergus Castle



WHAT IT IS

An imposing 800-year-old Norman castle built right on the northern shores of Belfast Lough that has been immaculately preserved down through the ages.



WHY VISIT

If you want to see what a truly ancient castle looks like, this is the one for you. It's got everything from battlements, a keep and a murder hole to a portcullis, banqueting hall and plenty of cannons. Its fascinating history reflects the battles fought over and around it between Scots, Irish, English and French clans.



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

Grab a light bite at PaPa Browns Grill just minutes from the castle walls, or head for Castello Italia, the award-winning Italian restaurant.



WHERE TO STAY

You'll find history and heritage alive and well in Dobbins Inn in the heart of the town and you might even be entertained by the resident ghost.



WHAT TO CAPTURE

The huge castle walls here reach right out into the waters of Belfast Lough, so any shot with water between you and the castle beyond is the one to get.



WHERE NEXT

Your next stop east along the coast is Whitehead Railway Museum, or head west to Belfast itself.



INSIDER TIP

If you have children in tow then this is their chance to play prince and princess of the castle with the on-site costumes and accessories.



The Walled City of Derry-Londonderry



WHAT IT IS

The only remaining completely enclosed walled city in Ireland, and amongst the finest walled cities in Europe.



WHY VISIT

Built between 1613 and 1618, the mighty walls enclose a very walkable city centre and feature bastions, battlements, seven impressive gates and 24 cannons, and offer spectacular views. The city's rich history and colourful culture echo through its cobbled lanes and archways.



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

Even a short walk deserves the super-tasty small plates on offer at El Tapas Grá at 7 Waterloo Place, inspired by Spain and imbued with local flavour.



WHERE TO STAY

In a city filled with historic atmosphere, embrace the best of it at the luxury boutique Bishop's Gate hotel, a listed Edwardian-era premises perfectly positioned within the city walls.



WHAT TO CAPTURE

The views from high up on any of the bastions are spectacular, as are views of the Guildhall framed within the battlements.



WHERE NEXT

If you really want to get under the skin of the city, Derrie Danders will walk and talk with you to your heart's content, with unique insights on the city, its history and its people.



INSIDER TIP

The already iconic and very popular Derry Girls mural is tucked away between Orchard Street and Market Street.

Derry-Londonderry Peace Bridge



WHAT IT IS

A spectacularly curving 771-foot-long pedestrian and cycle bridge across the majestic River Foyle.



WHY VISIT

Designed in 2011 to represent a coming together of the two Waterside and Cityside communities, the Peace Bridge has quickly become one of the city's most loved, photographed and visited attractions, offering amazing views of the River Foyle and the city.



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

The Exchange Restaurant and Wine Bar on Queen's Quay is just a few steps away from the Peace Bridge, offering high quality food and drink in a friendly, informal atmosphere.



WHERE TO STAY

For character, charm and timeless style, The Shipquay Hotel, a boutique hotel set in a former bank building, is hard to beat.



WHAT TO CAPTURE

From the middle of the Peace Bridge you'll get a perfect shot of the Walled City with the Guildhall's clock tower and the many church spires rising beyond.



WHERE NEXT

For a completely different view of the Peace Bridge take to the skies with Cutting Edge Helicopter Tours, or take to two wheels with the Far and Wild Foodie Tour.



INSIDER TIP

At night the Peace Bridge is beautifully lit up and makes for a magical walk and multiple photo opportunities of the Walled City.

Mussenden Temple



WHAT IT IS

Built in 1785, Mussenden Temple was designed in a flamboyant Italian style as a summer library and forms part of the extensive Downhill Demesne.



WHY VISIT

Perched on the edge of a plunging cliff, Mussenden Temple is a curiosity in itself, but the views from here are out-of-this-world spectacular, offering uninterrupted views for miles along Benone Beach to the west and Castlerock Beach to the east.



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

Do the Truffle Shuffle at the Chocolate Manor or enjoy the Spirit of the Bann whiskey tasting experience with a White River Charters cruise along the River Bann.



WHERE TO STAY

If Mussenden Temple gives you a head for heights, check out the treetop boutique lodges at Burrenmore Nest and the panoramic forested views from their floor-to-ceiling windows.



WHAT TO CAPTURE

The wide-open views from Mussenden Temple. Make sure you use panoramic mode on your camera/phone to take it all in.



WHERE NEXT

Magheracross View Point for more amazing views; Mussenden Sea Salt Experiences for handcrafted local sea salt and fine dining experiences; Ella Mor Experiences on Binevenagh's summit with panoramic views of Lough Foyle and Inishowen.



INSIDER TIP

As the sun rises or sets make your way down to Benone Beach where you'll see the Temple's profile in all its glory, or book a magical sunset beach ride with Crindle Stables.



Dunluce Castle



WHAT IT IS

The spectacular ruins of a majestic medieval castle, first built here in the 1500s by the MacQuillan family and added to over the centuries.



WHY VISIT

The brooding ruins, dramatically perched on the edge of sweeping cliffs against which Atlantic waves crash, inspired the House of Greyjoy in Game of Thrones®, and have their own fascinating story of family and tribal conflict.



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

It's just a few minutes from here to Babushka on Portrush's South Pier, a popular spot for tea, coffee, treats and more.



WHERE TO STAY

Try Blackrock B&B for a personalised experience or choose the luxurious 5-star self-catering Rockdene Beach House in Portrush with its extraordinary seafront location and views.



WHAT TO CAPTURE

The most stunning views of dramatic Dunluce Castle are actually from the nearby Magheracross View Point, purpose-built for sightseers and snappers alike. Sunset sees the crumbling battlements come vividly to colour.



WHERE NEXT

Choose a taste of something completely different at the nearby Old Bushmills Distillery.



INSIDER TIP

There is very limited car parking at Dunluce, so head on up to nearby Magheracross View Point where there's plenty of parking, plus stunning 180-degree views of the castle itself.

Old Bushmills Distillery



WHAT IT IS

The world's oldest licensed whiskey distillery, first licensed by King James 1st in 1608, and home of the world-renowned Bushmills whiskey.



WHY VISIT

You won't get a better insight into the history, tradition and timeless craft of Irish whiskey-making than on a fascinating tour of this working distillery. Get a first-hand view of the mash tuns, copper pot stills and barrels on a complete grain-to-glass tour, and enjoy a taste of the world's finest.



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

There's lots of options in nearby Bushmills village. Say cheese at least once and grab coffee, cakes and yes, cheese, in the hugely popular Maegden.



WHERE TO STAY

Try the atmospheric surroundings of The Bushmills Inn Hotel, combining 400 years of history with the latest standards of comfort and service.



WHAT TO CAPTURE

The majestic copper pot stills really stand out, but a shot of the iconic Bushmills sign painted on the distillery roof is probably the one for the collection.



WHERE NEXT

Clear your head at Dunluce Castle, where on a clear day you can see for miles, or try crossing the rope bridge at Carrick-a-Rede.



INSIDER TIP

The distillery tour is very popular indeed and well worth doing, so book ahead to get a day and a time that suits you best.

Giant's Causeway



WHAT IT IS

About 40,000 interlocking hexagonal basalt rock columns that form a series of spectacular steps out into the North Atlantic Ocean.



WHY VISIT

Not only is The Giant's Causeway a UNESCO World Heritage Site, but the basalt columns tumbling down from the cliffs and into the sea are amongst the most truly epic sights you'll see anywhere. Once seen, never forgotten!



WHERE TO EAT AND DRINK

There's an impressive café within the on-site Visitor Centre, try anything from the mouth-watering menu at Tartine in Bushmills, or go for the Giant Basalt Rock Gin Experience at the nearby Causeway Hotel.



WHERE TO STAY

After your Causeway visit you'll have lots to talk and think about. You'll find no better place for that than the sophisticated surroundings of Me & Mrs Jones boutique hotel in Portstewart.



WHAT TO CAPTURE

Sunrise and sunset can deliver strikingly geometric shapes and dramatic silhouettes all along the Causeway's basalt columns.



WHERE NEXT

To enjoy more coastal wonder, head a little further east to Carrick-A-Rede Rope Bridge.



INSIDER TIP

For even more extraordinary facts and legends about the Causeway and environs, as well as incredible views, take a guided clifftop experience with Away A Wee Walk.