

To The Linksland

Blessed with some of the world's most spectacular and challenging golf courses, the southwest region of Ireland is one destination not to be missed.

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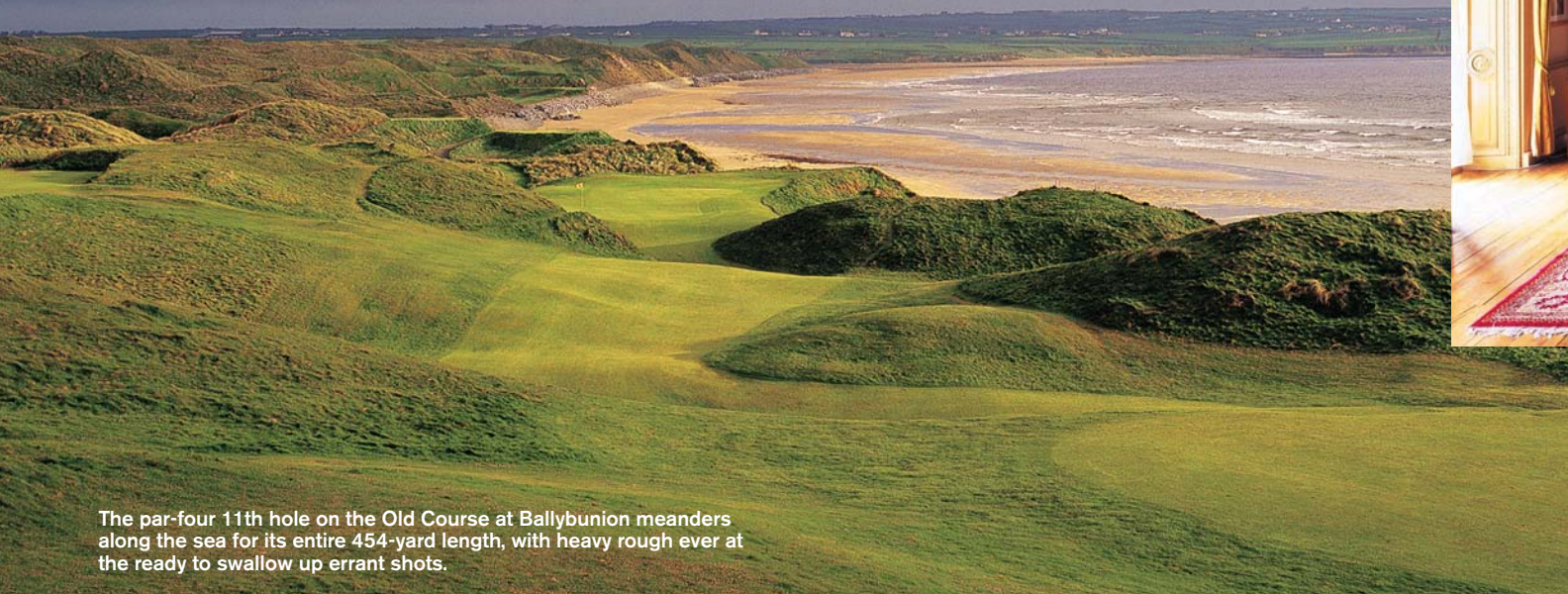
The Southwest region of Ireland is now recognized as one of the premier golf destinations in the world. Natural links courses such as Tralee, Ballybunion, Waterville and Lahinch, combined with traditional and testing parkland courses like Killarney and Adare Manor, offer the visiting golfer an unforgettable experience. Sample from the courses below as you wish, but the historic links of Lahinch, Ballybunion and Waterville should be at the top of anyone's list.

legendary links at lahinch

Frequently referred to as the St. Andrews of Ireland, Lahinch looks out on the ever-changing Atlantic Ocean, and is subject to all her mood swings. However, comparisons between the two famous courses go much further as their respective citizens share a common love and enthusiasm for the game of golf. The two courses at Lahinch were actually first planned by officers of a Scottish Regiment, who considered this rugged and uncompromising countryside of County Clare perfect terrain for golf. The original layout for the course was the brainchild of Old Tom Morris, himself a four-time British Open champion. Subsequent alterations were put in the capable hands of Scottish architect Dr. Alister MacKenzie, who also worked on Augusta and Cypress Point.

The main championship links at Lahinch (Par 72, 6,950 yards) is justifiably proud of its reputation as a stern challenge to even the most gifted of golfers. The notorious Klondyke par-five 4th hole forces the golfer to play over an intimidating dune wall to a "blind" green.

Of the twin courses at Lahinch, the Castle Course (Par 70, 5,653 yards) presents golfers with a slightly less formidable, though equally interesting, challenge.



The par-four 11th hole on the Old Course at Ballybunion meanders along the sea for its entire 454-yard length, with heavy rough ever at the ready to swallow up errant shots.

Ballybunion: A Breathtaking Challenge

Five-time British Open champion Tom Watson described the glorious links at Ballybunion as “the best in the world.” High praise indeed for this magnificent test of golf, which meanders menacingly through massive dunes on the shores of the Atlantic.

Ballybunion actually boasts two separate courses. The Old Course (Par 71, 6,598 yards), which dates back to 1893, and the Cashen Course (Par 72, 6,306 yards), which was created by golf architect, Robert Trent Jones, Sr. The Old Course, which is consistently ranked as one of the world’s top ten courses, features a graveyard by the first tee, which some say is a warning to golfers who breeze through the first five holes only to come face to face with the difficult 6th, soon to be followed by three more unusually stern tests at the 8th, 11th and 15th holes. Close by, the Cashen Course, with its succession of formidable par

fives and breathtaking beauty, amply qualifies as one of the world’s masterpieces as well.

Doonbeg: The last Great Piece of Linksland on the Irish Coast

Set along 1.5 miles of crescent-shaped beach and dunes on Ireland’s southwest coast, Doonbeg allows views of the ocean from the green, fairway or tee on 16 of 18 holes. The majestic dunes, centuries old, reach almost 100 feet. Two-time British Open champion Greg Norman designed the course, applying his “least disturbance” philosophy of routing courses to fit existing terrains. Norman’s layout follows a course designed by nature—14 of Doonbeg’s greens and 12 of its fairways were simply mowed.

The par-72 layout features a loop of nine holes out and nine back. Variations in wind speed and direction ensure that the course plays differently almost every day. On the 111-yard 14th, for example,

the average golfer will play anything from a sand wedge to a 5-iron. To allow for a range of conditions and abilities, most holes feature five or more tee locations. The course officially opened on July 9, 2002, with an exhibition match between Norman and Padraig Harrington.

Tralee: Built by Palmer/ Created by Nature

Arnold Palmer may have been commissioned in the early ’80s to design and construct the golf course at Tralee but centuries before that, nature created the cliffs, the dunes, the rugged terrain and the wild Atlantic Ocean, all of which make Tralee one of the world’s most scenic and spectacular true links golf courses. Beauty abounds with Barrow Strand of Ryan’s Daughter fame only an errant chip away and the Sliabh Mish and Brandon mountain ranges providing a panoramic and spectacular backdrop.

Each hole on this unique golf course



The elegant Carton House dining room reflects its long and storied past.

while you're there...

Should your golf vacation take you anywhere near Dublin, you might want to consider a visit to one of the newest stars on the golf scene in Ireland. With historical roots extending as far back as the twelfth-century, Ireland's Carton House has played host to a pageant of Anglo-Irish history as storied as any of the region's great estates. Traded back and forth over the centuries by a succession of Irish and English dukes and earls, weathering the vicissitudes of rebellions and executions—and even lost as payment for a gambling debt—the estate finally passed to the Mallaghan family in 1977. Since then, the Mallaghans have labored to develop the 1,100-acre estate and its grand eighteenth-century manor house into an internationally recognized resort.

Those labors began to bear fruit with the opening of two instantly acclaimed new golf courses on the estate in 2002 and 2003. The first to open was the O'Meara course, which reflects the vision of 1998 Masters and British Open winner Mark

O'Meara and takes advantage of the estate's rich parkland setting, winding through pastures and around towering trees to cross the brisk waters of the Rye River. The course's signature holes are the 14th and 16th—two testy par 3's that bookend the daunting 552-yard par-five 15th.

Designed by its namesake, Scottish golfer Colin Montgomerie, the second course is a very different "inland links" style layout, whose 18 holes meander across 7,300 yards through rolling meadows and a complicated bunker system. The Montgomerie course won *Golf World's* "Best New Design of the Year" award in 2004 and was ranked as the tenth best Irish golf course by *Golf Digest* in 2005.

The two courses play to different strengths. "We wanted two competitive, but complementary courses," explains Conor Mallaghan, managing director of Carton House Golf Club. "One of the follies that multi-course resorts commit is to have two similar courses, one of which is better than the other. We wanted to avoid that, so we made them quite different. People say they have different golfing experiences when they come to Carton because each course has its own unique challenges."

This year, Carton played host to both the Irish Amateur Open and the Irish Open, within just two weeks of each other. The Golfing Union of Ireland is relocating its headquarters to a new office located on the estate, not far from the manor house, complete with an Irish golf museum. A four-star, 165-room luxury hotel will soon be completed. Guests will be able to enjoy not only the two courses, but also salmon and trout fishing from the Rye as well as pheasant hunting and clay pigeon shooting. A 150-unit residential complex is also under development. Go to www.cartonhouse.ie for information on the club's attractive international memberships. Everyone at the MGA enjoyed the hospitality—and the golf—at Carton House during the 2005 Carey Cup this past May and heartily recommends this exciting new golfing destination.

offers its own special challenge. A brave heart and steady nerve will be required to tackle the par-five 2nd, the par-three 3rd and the par-four 8th. The 12th, 13th, 16th and 17th have each wreaked havoc with many a fine score on this *Golf World* Top 100 golf course. The treacherous bunkers and undulating greens all combine to make this a golf course you will want to tackle again and again.

After all that exhilaration you will want to sit back, relax, enjoy a long drink, some wholesome food and behold the panorama that is all around you. You will know you deserve it.

Waterville: a mystical experience

Linksland is a geological rarity. Less than one percent of all courses in Europe are championship links. Waterville is honored to be included among the very best of these in a prestigious *Golf World* survey. It is one of the oldest Irish Clubs, having been founded in 1889 with the arrival of the trans-Atlantic telegraph cable from the United States. After 80 years of play, the original nine-hole course was redesigned by the famous Irish golf architect, Eddie Hackett, and

CONSIDER A CADDIE



If you're not ready for some hard physical exercise, then it's important to take special care in planning your golf vacation in Ireland. Some clubs have motorized carts available, but they are often in

short supply. And some clubs will only provide carts to those with a valid medical certificate.

That leaves you with three basic options. You can carry your own bag. You can rent a trolley (pull cart), for the equivalent of \$3 to \$5. Or, you can hire a caddy, which we highly recommend.

You don't want to tackle courses such as Ballybunion and Lahinch—especially for the first time—without a caddy at your side. Links courses are characterized by frequent blind shots off tees and fairways. Caddies will provide aiming points on the horizon, and sometimes will bravely position themselves as targets on distant hillsides. "A drive right over my head would be grand, sir."

Then there are the unseen hazards. The Old Course at St. Andrews, for example, has 112 bunkers, many of which are hidden from view from the tees, but their location is well known to every caddy. Unlike American courses, most links courses do not provide fairway yardage markers. Experienced caddies use landmarks—rocks, shrubs, fence posts and bunkers—to calculate yardages and recommend club selection.

And then there's the problem of losing your golf ball in the heather and gorse, and the deep rough of the dunes. With some balls selling at \$4 each, a ball-hawking caddy can provide a sound return on your investment.

Fair warning! There are some crusty characters who tote bags for a living in Ireland and Scotland. Through years of practice, some have developed a repertoire of cheeky remarks to fit every occasion and question. Like deliberately rude waiters, they can be entertaining—or annoying—depending on your frame of mind. Our thanks to the Scottish Golf Newsletter, which recently recounted a sampling of caddy repartee that has become a part of golfing folklore:

Golfer: "What do you think of my game?"

Caddy: "It's not bad. But I prefer golf."

Golfer: "You've got to be the worst caddy in the world."

Caddy: "Oh no, sir. That would be far too much of a coincidence."

Golfer: "This is the worst course I've ever played on."

Caddy: "This isn't the golf course. We left that an hour ago."

Golfer: "Please stop checking your watch. It's very distracting."

Caddy: "It's not a watch, sir. It's my compass."

Golfer: "I've played so poorly, I think I'll drown myself in the lake."

Caddy: "You couldn't keep your head down that long."

Rates vary from one club to the next, and from one caddy to the next. Always check with the Caddy Master and establish the correct rate before your round. While tipping is left to the golfer's discretion, the equivalent of \$10 per bag is considered a minimum gratuity.



the late owner, John A. Mulcahy. The course gradually introduces the player to its special tempo and rhythm and concludes with a symphony of links beauty. From Henry Cotton to Mark O'Meara and Tiger Woods, all have praised its perfection.

Mulcahy, an Irish-American philanthropist, began the long connection between Waterville and the States. Late in his life, with the club falling behind the times, he sold the course to a group of Met Area golfers. Headed by Jay Connelly, the new owners have made many enhancements to the course, the latest being a subtle redesign by the Fazio Group.

The clubhouse combines stunning vistas, golf art and antique memorabilia with the welcoming warmth of its members. The restaurant and pub feature fresh seafood, Irish fare, and the best pint in Kerry, all served by the glow of turf fires.

The Links resort includes Waterville House, the Directors residence and a four-star 18th century manor. Guests enjoy preferential access to the Links and one of the finest salmon and sea trout fisheries in Ireland.

Killarney-Killeen Course: Spectacular Golf/ Spectacular Scenery

After the challenge of the Irish links courses, the tranquil beauty and somewhat gentler pace of Killarney's three classic parkland courses offers a welcome respite. Killeen—host of the 1991 and '92 Irish Open Championship and the 1996 Curtis Cup—Mahony's Point and the exciting new addition, Lackabane, greatly admired by the successful European Solheim Cup players during the 2002 Women's Irish Open, are nestled amidst the serene splendor of the famous Lakes of Killarney in the shadow of the majestic Macgilly-



The links at Lahinch has more than a passing connection to the Old Course at St. Andrews.

Golf in Ireland

it's Ryder Cup Year...

...and the party starts in April!

Ireland is in party mood and ready to welcome you.

- We have a range of golf packages which can be tailored to your needs.
- This is the year to play Ireland's magnificent Links courses.
- From touchdown to takeoff, let Golf VIP Ireland wrap you in a warm Irish embrace.
- Ryder Cup packages are now available.
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Ireland

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The setting's incomparable beauty has moved many an overseas golfer to extol it as "the most enchanting place on earth." The richly wooded grounds for the courses were originally made available by Lord Castlerosse, an avid golfer, whose passion for horticulture is evident in the colorful and varied shrubbery throughout.

Adare Manor: In a historic village

Designed by Robert Trent Jones Sr., the course is situated on the 840-acre estate of Adare Manor, located 22 miles from Shannon Airport. Stretching 7,138 yards from the tips, this majestic parkland course includes lakes, historic ruins, subtly undulating greens, many mature trees and Jones' signature clover leaf bunkers.

The front nine is dominated by a 14-acre lake and the back nine is routed through a heavily wooded area of the estate, with the beautiful River Maigue dominating the finishing holes. With the five-star Manor as a backdrop, the last four holes are among the finest on any course, with the 18th hole ranking as one of Jones' finest finishers.

Adare Manor Hotel, with 63 elegant bedrooms and more than 50 individually carved fireplaces, resembles a museum of architecture. The luxury golf clubhouse measures 18,000 square feet, with 11 en-suite clubhouse bedrooms and 25 two and four-bedroom garden cottages. ■

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