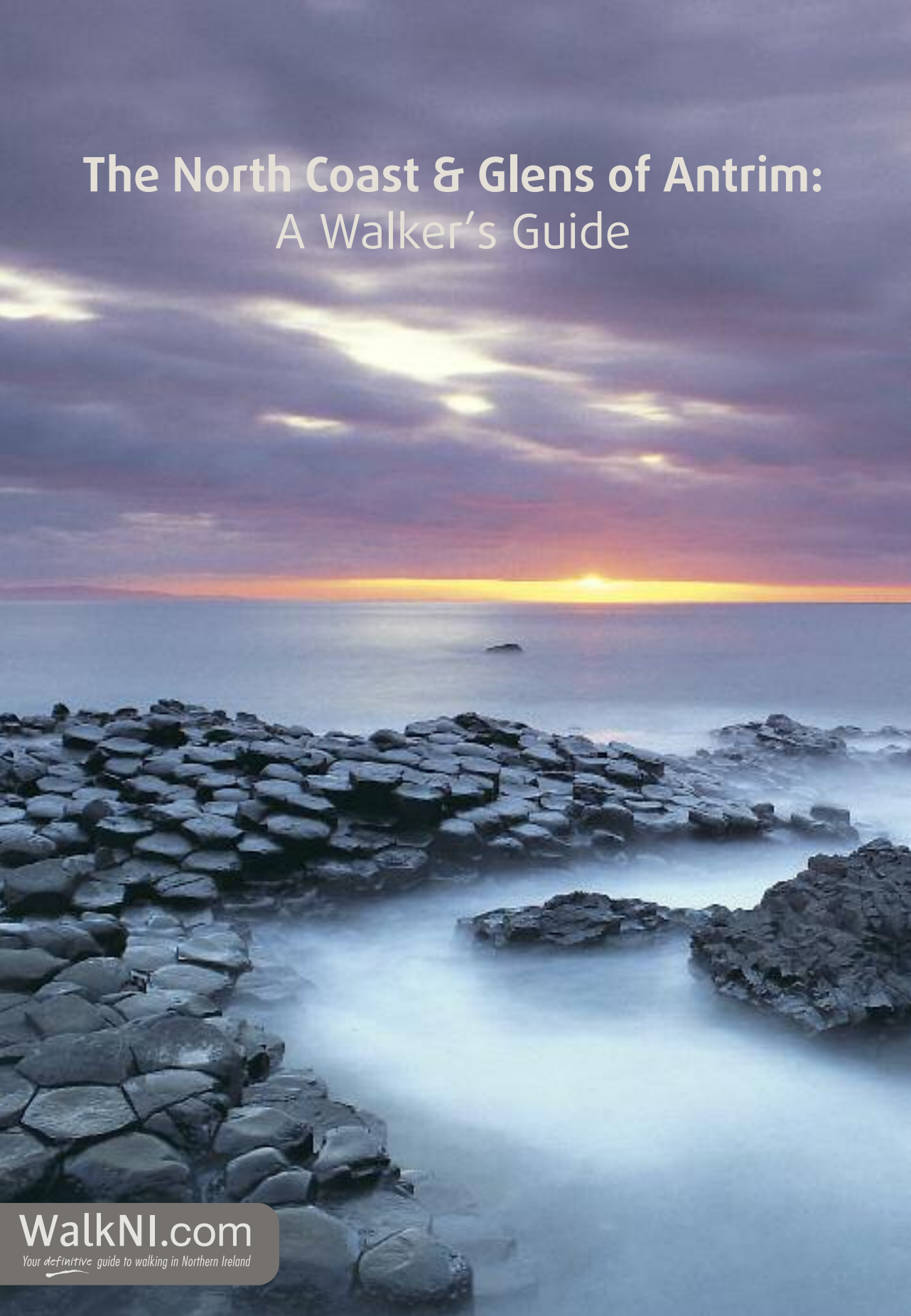


The North Coast & Glens of Antrim: A Walker's Guide



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Also available is **The Mourne Mountains: A Walker's Guide**. This guide will outline the key walking areas in Northern Ireland's highest mountain range, offering 5 varied itineraries sampling the best hillwalking the Mournes have to offer.

Introduction: A Walker's Guide

"Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves." John Muir

Recreational walking is an outdoor pursuit enjoyed by millions of people throughout the world and Northern Ireland is widely recognised as an attractive destination with tremendous opportunities for unparalleled walking. Spectacular scenery with a diversity of landscape and physical features offer a simply unique walking experience.

John Muir's quote above typifies what walking in Ireland is all about. This 'Walker's Guide' is not going to 'glam up' our key walking areas by claiming that visitors need not pack anything other than shorts and t-shirts! Similarly we're not looking to avoid any possible negative issues, such as access limitations to certain walks. Rather, this document is designed to be an informative walker's guide to enable visitors to better enjoy the natural beauty of Ireland's dramatic, rugged landscape all year round. Our ever-changing natural environment shapes the Irish walking

experience and we are proud of having four distinctive seasons, each bringing their own inspirations.

Northern Ireland is rapidly becoming a 'must see' destination on the world map and in turn, some incredible landscapes are being revealed to walkers of all ages and abilities. Deceptively, this 'wee' country has numerous walking areas each offering their own distinctive take on natural beauty. From the rugged cliffs of the North Antrim Coast to the rounded summits and lush pastoral valleys of the Sperrin Mountains, Northern Ireland really is a walker's paradise if you know where to look!

This Walker's Guide will give you enough information to enable you to plan your walking trip and make your own discoveries in the North Coast and Glens of Antrim.





The North Coast & Glens of Antrim

“The grandeur of the rugged North Antrim Coast and the deep glens set against the pastoral farmland create other worlds away from busy life.” Dawson Stelfox, first Irishman to summit Everest.

The North Coast and the Glens of Antrim are justifiably famous for the Giant’s Causeway, wonderful coastlines and a unique natural beauty. The area includes 3 designated areas of outstanding natural beauty, nine glens including Glengariff the ‘Queen of the Glens’, lush forest parks, secluded coastal tracks and numerous quaint fishing villages.

Exploring this world famous landscape on foot not only enables you to engage first hand with a breath-taking coastline. It also offers an escape from the crowds and the opportunity to lose yourself in the history and geology of an area which has inspired countless myths and legends. Walking on the Causeway Coast is mostly on relatively flat coastal paths and trails. Routes are linear with good transport and accommodation options.



Walking Itineraries

There are 25 Quality Walks in the [North Coast and Glens of Antrim](#) area as part of the Quality Walk Scheme, accommodating all levels of fitness. Whilst the coastal walks on the North Coast are stunning and very popular, there is also some excellent hillwalking in the Antrim Hills and Binevenagh, as well as wonderful walks around Glenariff Forest. To learn more about the Quality Walk Scheme [click here](#)

The WalkNI team have put their heads together and designed a variety of walking itineraries to enable visitors to get the best out of a short break in the North Coast & Glens. We have put together 3 itineraries of what we judge to be the best walking in the North Coast and Glens of Antrim. There are of course many other combinations of walks and part of the joy of recreational walking is mixing and matching routes to create your own personal adventures. Use these itineraries as a guide.

The 3 suggested walking itineraries are:

- **Causeway Coast Way**

This 2 day long-distance linear route, from Portstewart to Ballycastle, passes through the Causeway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, several Areas of Special Scientific Interest and of course the Giant's Causeway, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Staying in coastal towns of Portstewart, Bushmills and Ballintoy, this 33 mile (53km) walk offers unparalleled views of the Atlantic Ocean, dramatic cliffs, sandy beaches and off-shore rocks. This really is one of Northern Ireland's iconic walks.

- **North Coast Highlights**

A 3 day itinerary walking the best routes along the North Coast and 1 day on Rathlin Island, reached by ferry. Bushmills provides a good base for the 2 days of coastal walking, with 1 night on Rathlin Island. Walkers can either use public transport to reach their start point and walk back or can set off from Bushmills and get public transport home again. Either option enables walkers to enjoy the spectacular North Coast highlights in 2 relaxed days with a further day's walking on Rathlin Island.

- **Antrim Hills Way**

The Antrim Hills Way is a 2 day, 27 mile (43km) linear route through the Antrim Hills. The walk cuts a scenic route through the Antrim Coast and Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It explores a high coastal plateau and encompasses some of the most enjoyable upland walking in County Antrim. Dramatic scenery, isolated hills and fantastic history are just some of the treats on offer. Walkers set off from Glenarm with Linford as the half way point. We have listed a number of accommodation providers who provide transfers to and from Linford and Slemish (end point for this walk).



'Causeway Coast Way' 33 miles (53 km)

This 2 day long-distance linear route, from Portstewart to Ballycastle, passes through the Causeway Coast Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, several Areas of Special Scientific Interest and of course the Giant's Causeway, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. This route also passes the iconic Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge and the spectacular ruins of Dunluce Castle. From sandy beaches to cliff-top paths, from natural heritage to unique geological sites, this 33 mile (53 km) section of the Ulster Way is one of the finest coastal walks in Europe.

Don't just take our word for it. Check out some of the comments left by walkers on our [WalkNI](#) page.

[Full Route Description, Photos and Ordnance Survey Maps](#)

If you are walking the Causeway Coast Way use Sheet 4 and 5 of the OSNI Discovery Series 1:50 000 available from local tourist information centres ([see page 21](#)) or visit www.osni.gov.uk/mapstore

Start Point: Portstewart

The route starts at Portstewart Strand with the nearest accommodation in Portstewart town. There is a wide range of accommodation here however we recommend the following B&Bs and Guest Houses as the most suitable for walkers and walking groups. A full list of accommodation in the North Coast & Glens can be found at www.causewaycoastandglens.com and www.discovernorthernireland.com.

Name	Nearest Town or Village	Phone	Website	Accommodation Type
Cul Erg	Portstewart	+44 (0)28 7083 6610	www.culerg.co.uk	B&B two minute walk from promenade - 10 rooms
Carnalbanagh House	Portstewart	+44 (0)28 7083 6294	www.carnalbanaghhouse.com	A rural B&B less than 2 miles (3km) from Portstewart - 7 rooms
Wanderin Heights	Portstewart	+44 (0)28 7083 3250	www.wanderinheights.com	B&B with spectacular Atlantic views - 5 rooms
Cromore Halt Guest Inn	Portstewart	+44 (0)28 7083 6888	www.cromore.com	Guest Inn with 12 rooms. Restaurant also.

Where to eat/drink?

There are many good places to eat in Portstewart including:

Preference Brasserie is a new arrival to Portstewart promenade. This fine dining restaurant has received excellent reviews Tel: +44 (0)28 7083 3959 www.preferencebrasserie.co.uk

Shenanigans restaurant has a reputation for good food. Tel: +44 (0)78 5580 2252 www.shenanigansportstewart.com

There are two restaurants in Portrush which are definitely worth a visit as they have excellent reputations:

Ramore Wine Bar Tel: +44 (0)28 7082 6969 www.ramorerestaurant.com

55 Degrees North Tel: +44(0)28 7082 2811 www.55-north.com

Day 1: Portstewart to Portballintrae/Giant's Causeway 15 miles (24.5 km)

The walk on day 1 takes walkers on the first 3 sections of the Causeway Coast Waymarked Way and has been hailed by many as one of the best coastal walks in Europe. Beginning at St Patrick's Well at the head of Portstewart Strand, this route follows the coastline via the cliff path as it passes the holiday resort of Portrush and the spectacular 16th Century Dunluce Castle before reaching Portballintrae. The walk continues alongside a section of the Giants Causeway and old Bushmills Railway to reach the Giant's Causeway UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Where to Stay?

There are some great locations to stay in this area including Portballintrae, a picturesque fishing village, and Bushmills, a historic village with many pubs, restaurants and the home of Bushmills Whiskey.

Name	Nearest Town or Village	Phone	Website	Accommodation Type
Bayview Hotel	Portballintrae	+44 (0)28 2073 4100	www.bayviewhotelni.com	Hotel with 25 rooms. Very accommodating for walking clubs.
Manor House B&B	Portballintrae	+44 (0)28 2073 2002	www.portballintrae.org	Located on the seafront. This is a B&B with 5 good-sized rooms
The Bushmills Inn	Bushmills	+44 (0)28 2073 3000	www.bushmillsinn.com	Luxury hotel in the village with a fine restaurant
Carnside Guest House	Bushmills	+44 (0)28 2073 1337	www.carnsideguesthouse.co.uk	B&B with 11 rooms Under 2 miles (3km) from Bushmills.
Mill Rest Youth Hostel	Bushmills	+44 (0)28 20731222	www.hini.org.uk	Top rated youth hostel. Ensuite rooms for up to 22 people. Dorms available.
The Smugglers Inn	Bushmills	+44 (0)28 2073 1577	www.smugglers-inn.co.uk	Guest house with 12 ensuite rooms & restaurant.
Causeway Hotel	Giant's Causeway	+44 (0)28 2073 1210	www.giants-causeway-hotel.com	Great location if a little dated. 28 rooms

A full list of accommodation in the North Coast & Glens can be found at www.causewaycoastandglens.com and www.discovernorthernireland.com.

Where to eat/drink?

There are a number of places to eat in the Bushmills area frequented by walkers, including:

The Bushmills Inn has a fine dining restaurant renowned for its award winning food. Tel: +44 (0)28 2073 3000 www.bushmillsinn.com

The Smugglers Inn serves good bistro-style food. Tel: +44 (0)28 2073 1577 www.smugglers-inn.co.uk

The Nook, near the Giant's Causeway, is a pub with good food in an old school house Tel +44 (0)28 2073 2993

Did you know?

The Giant's Causeway was formed during the early Tertiary period some 62 to 65 million years during a long period of igneous activity. The fascinating hexagonal pattern that we see in the causeway stones formed as a result of rock crystallisation under conditions of accelerated cooling, this usually occurs when molten lava comes into immediate contact with water, as happens today in Hawaii, the resulting fast accelerated cooling process causes cracking and results in what we see today at the causeway.

Day 2: Portballintrae/Giant's Causeway to Ballintoy/Ballycastle 16 miles (25.5 km)



Day 2 of this itinerary takes walkers round Benbane Head and past the ruins of Dunseverick Castle. This section of coast from Giant's Causeway to Dunseverick Castle is officially referred to as the North Antrim Cliff Path and is maintained by The National Trust. After reaching the tiny hamlet of Portbraddan, the route follows the sweeping sands of White Park Bay around a headland of jumbled boulders and sea stacks to the picturesque harbour at Ballintoy. A short detour here will take walkers to Carrick-a-rede with the opportunity of an exhilarating walk across the world famous rope bridge.

Note: The final 6 miles (10km) of the route, Ballintoy to Ballycastle, is all on-road. For many walkers this is not a highlight, so we suggest you cut the route short and finish at Ballintoy.

However, some may want to finish at Ballycastle as this gives you the opportunity to go over to Rathlin Island on the ferry from Ballycastle. For information on Rathlin Island Ferries phone +44 (0)28 2076 9299.

Also note: It is worth checking the tide timetable for White Park Bay as this part of the walk can only be accessed at low tide (www.bbc.co.uk/weather/coast/tides - check Ballycastle and Portrush). There is an alternative route along the A2 Whitepark Road however the walk along White Park Bay will certainly enhance your experience.

Where to Stay?

Ballintoy is a small, picturesque harbour village located between the Giant's Causeway and Carrick-a-rede rope bridge. Ballintoy's hidden beauty is found at the end of the harbour road where you will find a small beach and a limestone harbour dating back to the 18th Century. The following places to stay are walker friendly. A full list of accommodation in the North Coast & Glens can be found at www.causewaycoastandglens.com and www.discovernorthernireland.com.

Name	Nearest Town or Village	Phone	Website	Accommodation Type
Fullerton Arms	Ballintoy	+44 (0)28 2076 9613	www.fullertonarms.com	Guesthouse with bar & restaurant. 13 ensuite rooms.
Glenmore House	Ballintoy	+44 (0)28 2076 3584	www.glenmore.biz	4km from Ballintoy. Walking friendly country house and restaurant
Sheep Island View	Ballintoy	+44 (0)28 2076 9391	www.sheepislandview.com	Modern hostel for up to 110 people close to the coast. Pick-up service for local areas.
Whitepark Bay Youth Hostel	Ballintoy	+44 (0)28 2073 1745	www.hini.org.uk	Ensuite facilities and sea views. Sleeps 40.

Where to eat/drink?

There are 2 places to eat in Ballintoy. There is a delightful café down at the harbour that is open during the day and serves homemade food.

The Fullerton Arms serves traditional food using mostly local produce. Tel +44 (0)28 2076 9613 www.fullertonarms.com

If you want a bigger choice of places to eat, Bushmills is only a few kilometres away. See previous page.

Did you know?

Portbradden is a beautiful small hamlet with stunning views out across Whitepark Bay. There is a local myth that Portbradden is the location of the smallest church in Ireland. Picturesque it might be, however it was originally a cow byre built in the 1950's with the building mistakenly listed without adequate research. When the true facts emerged the church had to be de-listed! However, the myth lives on.



'North Coast Highlights'

123 miles (37 km)

Using Bushmills as a base, this 3 day itinerary takes in 2 outstanding sections of the Causeway Coast Waymarked Way. Highlights include the Giant's Causeway, stunning views across the Atlantic Ocean, Dunluce Castle and the wonderful array of flora and fauna along the way. The final day of this itinerary is a stunning walk for nature lovers out to the RSPB bird sanctuary on the rugged wilds of Rathlin Island.

This itinerary is suitable for those who don't want to do the complete Causeway Coast Way linear route ([see page 5](#)) preferring instead to enjoy the highlights of the North Coast from a base in Bushmills village with 1 night on Rathlin Island. This itinerary is ideal for those with good fitness levels who enjoying walking on spectacular cliff paths.

Where to Stay?

For this itinerary we suggest that walkers base themselves in or around the historic village of Bushmills for the first 2 days. Day 3 is on Rathlin Island. A selection of walker friendly accommodation ideal for the 'North Coast Highlights' are listed below. A full list of accommodation in the North Coast & Glens can be found at www.causewaycoastandglens.com and www.discovernorthernireland.com

Name	Nearest Town or Village	Phone	Website	Accommodation Type
Ballylinny Cottages	Bushmills	+44 (0)28 2073 1683	www.giantscauseway.co.uk	3 self-catering cottages just over half a mile (1km) from Bushmills
The Bushmills Inn	Bushmills	+44 (0)28 2073 3000	www.bushmillsinn.com	Luxury hotel in the village with a fine restaurant
Carnside Guest House	Bushmills	+44 (0)28 2073 1337	www.carnsideguesthouse.co.uk	B&B with 11 rooms Under 2 miles (3km) from Bushmills.
Giant's Causeway Holiday Cottages	Giant's Causeway	+44 (0)28 2073 1673	www.giantscausewaycottages.com	8 self-catering cottages close to the Giant's Causeway
Mill Rest Youth Hostel	Bushmills	+44 (0)28 20731222	www.hini.org.uk	Top rated youth hostel. Ensuite rooms for up to 22 people. Dorms available.
Rathlin Manor House	Rathlin Island	+44 (0)28 2076 3964	www.rathlinmanorhouse.co.uk	Georgian house B&B and restaurant run by National Trust. Sleeps 10.
The Smugglers Inn	Bushmills	+44 (0)28 2073 1577	www.smugglers-inn.co.uk	Guest house with 12 ensuite rooms & restaurant.
Soerneog View Hostel	Rathlin Island	+44 (0)28 2076 3954	www.n-irelandholidays.co.uk/rathlin	Hostel catering for 6 people.

Where to Eat?

There are a number of places to eat in the Bushmills area frequented by walkers. Below are some of our own personal favourites.

The **Bushmills Inn** has a fine dining restaurant renowned for its award winning food
Tel: +44 (0)28 2073 3000 www.bushmillsinn.com

The **Smugglers Inn** serves good bistro-style food. Tel +44 (0)28 2073 1577 www.smugglers-inn.co.uk

The **Nook**, near the Giant's Causeway, is a pub with good food in an old school house
Tel +44 +44 (0)28 2073 2993

There are two restaurants in Portrush which are definitely worth a drive to as they have excellent reputations:

Ramore Wine Bar Tel: +44 (0)28 7082 6969 www.ramorerestaurant.com

55 Degrees North Tel: +44(0)28 7082 2811 www.55-north.com

Day 1: Bushmills to Ballintoy 12.4 miles (20km)

The first day of the 'North Coast Highlights' itinerary takes in the famous Giant's Causeway and some wonderful coastal views. From the cliffs past Benbane Head you look out not just on the Causeway itself but also over the wreck site of the Girona, one of the ships of the ill-fated Spanish Armada which foundered here in 1588. In good visibility you can even see Scotland's Mull of Kintyre and the Hebridean islands of Islay and Jura.

When the cliffs end, the path descends past the ruins of Dunseverick Castle and through a natural rock arch to reach the tiny hamlet of Portbradden. Beyond Portbradden the route follows the sweeping sands of White Park Bay to the picturesque harbour at Ballintoy. The adjacent tearooms are perfect for a coffee and snack.

Full Route Description, Photos and Ordnance Survey Maps

This is a linear route, so most walkers prefer to make their way to Ballintoy (ideally by bus) and walk back to their accommodation in the Bushmills area or vice versa. Check out the timetable for the Causeway Rambler (Service 402) which operates from the beginning of June to middle of September. Visit www.translink.co.uk/ramblerservices or Tel: +44 (0)28 9066 6630.

Did you know?

The Old Bushmills Distillery is Ireland's oldest licensed whiskey distillery having received its licence to distill in 1608. In 1608 Sir Thomas Phillips was granted a licence to distil whiskey by James I of England, however, mentions of distilling traditions in the surrounding environs date back to 1276. Bushmills is a popular visitor attraction. Tel: +44 (0)28 2073 3218 or visit www.bushmills.com

Day 2: Bushmills to Portrush 6.6 miles (10.6 km)

Day 2 is a moderate 7 mile (11km) walk taking in the stunning Dunluce Castle, the pretty village of Portballintrae, not to mention the jaw dropping coastal scenery along the way. Beach walking, through fields and coastal paths. This day's walking is over a mix of terrain offering varied walking through simply breath-taking landscape.

Full Route Description, Photos and Ordnance Survey Maps

This is a linear route, so most walkers prefer to make their way to Portrush (ideally by bus) and walk back to their accommodation in the Bushmills area or vice versa. Check out the timetable for the Translink Antrim Coaster Bus (Service 252) which operates from March to October. Visit www.translink.co.uk/ramblerservices or contact +44 (0)28 9066 6630.

Did you know?

Dunluce Castle is sited dramatically close to the edge of a headland, along the North Coast. Surrounded by stunning coastal scenery, this medieval castle stands where an early Irish fort was once built and where its history can be traced back to early Christians and Vikings. You can visit the castle and visitor centre from Easter to end of September. Tel: +44 (0)28 2073 1938

Day 3: Rathlin Trail to the RSPB Seabird Viewpoint 4 miles (6.4 km)

This 4 mile (7km) linear walk on Rathlin Island leads from the harbour to the RSPB Seabird Centre located by the West Lighthouse. After an initial steep section out of the village, it is a fairly gentle walk on an almost traffic-free road. There are only 70 inhabitants on the island and visitor traffic is restricted. One of the highlights of the walk is a visit to the RSPB Seabird Centre where puffins, guillemots, razorbills and kittiwakes can be viewed during the summer months. From here, on clear days, Donegal, the North Antrim coastline, the island of Islay and the Mull of Kintyre can be seen.

Full Route Description, Photos and Ordnance Survey Maps

The ferry from Ballycastle to Rathlin Island travels just six miles across the "Sea of Moyle". It is advisable to book in advance in the summer season. Contact Rathlin Island Ferries on +44 (0)28 2076 9299 or email www.rathlinballycastleferry.com

There are good facilities on the island including a pub and restaurant, Little Treasures gift shop where visitors can pick up a souvenir and the Boathouse where you can discover the history of present day island life.

Did you know?

There are many tales of myth and mystery surrounding Rathlin, the most famous tells of Robert the Bruce. In 1306, the Scottish King was driven from Scotland by Edward I of England and took refuge on Rathlin. While he was on Rathlin, it is said that he watched a spider persevering again and again to bridge a gap with its web. Eventually it succeeded. Robert the Bruce took heart from the spider's efforts, raised fresh forces and returned to Scotland to fight for his kingdom. He too, eventually succeeded and in 1314, regained the crown of Scotland.



'Antrim Hills Way'

22 miles (35 km)

The Antrim Hills Way is a 2 day 27 mile (43km) linear route through the Antrim Hills. The walk cuts a scenic route through the Antrim Coast and Glens Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. It explores a high coastal plateau and encompasses some of the most enjoyable upland walking in County Antrim. Dramatic scenery, isolated hills and fantastic history are just some of the treats on offer.

[Full Route Description, Photos and Ordnance Survey Maps](#)

Start Point: Glenarm

The Antrim Hills Way starts in the village of Glenarm. There is only one B&B in Glenarm, but in the nearby village of Carnlough, there are more accommodation options. A full list of accommodation in the North Coast & Glens can be found at www.causewaycoastandglens.com and www.discovernorthernireland.com

Name	Nearest Town or Village	Phone	Website	Accommodation Type
Castleview	Glenarm	+44 (0)28 2884 1587	www.castleviewbandb.net	Only accommodation in Glenarm apart from self-catering. B&B with 2 beds.
Londonderry Arms	Carnlough	+44 (0)28 2888 5255	www.glensofantrim.com	Traditional hotel with 35 rooms.
The Cove	Carnlough	+44 (0)28 2888 5570		B&B in Carnlough with 3 rooms
Glenview	Carnlough	+44 (0)28 2888 5546		B&B with 3 rooms - Just outside Carnlough. Will do pick ups.

Where to Eat?

Sally's Coffee Shop in Glenarm serves fresh coffee and snacks open daily 9am to 5pm from April onwards.

Walkers can also visit the Walled Garden Tea Rooms in Glenarm Castle open Monday to Saturday 10am to 5pm and Sunday 12pm to 6pm. <http://www.glenarmcastle.com/walledgarden/tearoom.html>

For a hearty meal The Londonderry Arms Hotel in Carnlough serves good traditional food in a traditional setting. www.glensofantrim.com

There are 2 other places to eat in Carnlough, The Harbour Lights Tel +44 (0)28 2888 5950 and The Glenloy Inn Tel +44 (0)28 2888 5226.

Day 1: Glenarm to Linford 6 miles (9.5 km)

Starting in Glenarm the Antrim Hills Way climbs steeply out of the village to Black Hill at 381m and then leads south across a series of summits between 300m and 400m high. All these hills rise gently to the west but fall away steeply to the east, a conspicuous geological landform that is a legacy of the last ice age. The most striking formation is Sallagh Braes; a semi-circular basalt escarpment with wonderful views out to sea. Walkers are able to view the spectacular Sallagh Braes when arriving in Linford, at the end of this day's walking.

Did you know?

Sallagh Braes is a vast natural amphitheatre of cliffs. In spring a carpet of bluebells covers the fields in the townland of Sallagh. The horseshoe of cliffs protects the flowers from the prevailing weather much as a forest would afford such protection.

Where to Stay?

There are no transport links or accommodation in Linford. However, some accommodation providers in the area do pick ups from Linford car park if arranged in advance and are identified below. A full list of accommodation in the North Coast & Glens can be found at www.causewaycoastandglens.com and www.discovernorthernireland.com

Name	Nearest Town or Village	Phone	Website	Accommodation Type
Lynden Heights	Near Ballygally	+44 (0)28 2858 3560		B&B with 2 rooms. 7.5 miles (12km) from Linford. Nice up market restaurant. Will do pick ups.
Derrin Guesthouse	Larne	+44 (0)28 2827 3269	www.derrinhouse.co.uk	Homely B&B guesthouse with 7 rooms. Will do pick ups.
Halfway House Hotel	Ballygally	+44 (0)28 2858 3265		Hotel with 16 rooms. Doesn't do pick ups
Ballygally Castle Hostel	Ballygally	+44 (0)28 2858 1066	www.hastingshotel.com	Luxury option in a stunning hotel with 44 rooms. Doesn't do pick ups.

Where to Eat?

There are a number of places to eat in the Ballygally / Larne area:

The Halfway House has very good bar food by chef Dave Boy McCauley, a well-known boxer in Northern Ireland Tel: +44 (0)28 2858 3265

Ballygally Castle Hotel has fine dining Tel: +44 (0)28 2858 1066

The Kiln Restaurant in Larne has a great culinary reputation Tel: +44 (0)28 2826 0924

Billy Andys pub & restaurant outside Larne is a traditional pub with traditional music and contemporary fine food. Tel: +44 (0)28 2827 0648 www.billyandys.com

Day 2: Linford to Slemish

16 miles (26 km)

The southern part of this route passes the Sallagh Braes and climbs the slopes of Agnew's Hill (474m), crossing more high and exposed ground which can be boggy in damp conditions. The pinnacle of this day's walking is reaching the distinctive Slemish Mountain at a height of 437m. Slemish, which is also the end point for this walk, is the highest point in the region and dominates the landscape for miles around. This route provides wonderful panoramic views for walkers over the Antrim Hills with coastal views stretching out as far as Scotland.

Did you know?

Slemish has a strong association with St. Patrick and has long been a place of pilgrimage on St Patrick's Day (17th March). The mountain was the site of the saint's slavery, where he spent 6 years herding livestock for Mulchi, the local chieftain. After 6 years he escaped but later returned to devote the remainder of his life to bringing Christianity to the Irish.

Where to Stay?

There are no transport links or accommodation at Slemish itself, however, below are some accommodation providers in the Broughshane area who will do pick ups from Slemish Interpretive Centre (the end point of the route) if arranged in advance. A full list of accommodation in the North Coast & Glens can be found at www.causewaycoastandglens.com and www.discovernorthernireland.com

Name	Nearest Town or Village	Phone	Website	Accommodation Type
Lough Connolly Farmhouse	Broughshane	+44 (0)28 2568 4380	www.loughconnollybandb.co.uk	Attractive farmhouse with excellent views of Slemish Mountain. 3 rooms. Will do pick ups from Slemish.
Quarrytown Lodge	Broughshane	+44 (0)28 2586 2027	www.quarrytownlodgeuk.com	A few minutes drive from Broughshane, this B&B caters for 6. Will do pick ups
Limecourt B&B	Broughshane	+44 (0)28 2563 1755	www.limecourtbandb.co.uk	A few minutes drive from Broughshane, Caters for up to 10. Will do pick ups.

Where to Eat?

The recommended place to eat in Broughshane is **The Thatch Inn** in the centre of the village. This is a restaurant & traditional pub serving good food. Tel +44 (0)28 2586 1366

Other Walking Options

The above itineraries are by no means an exhaustive list of all quality walking areas and routes in the North Coast and Glens of Antrim. This region is an extensive, varied destination allowing walkers to spend many trips exploring all the hidden nooks and crannies of the area. Here are 3 other exceptional routes / places that we believe are well worth a visit.

Glenariff

Meaning 'Queen of the Glens', is widely regarded as the most beautiful and striking of the 9 Glens of Antrim and offers the best and most extensive walking. 19th Century English novelist William Thackeray called it "a Switzerland in Miniature", no doubt inspired by its waterfalls, rich woodland and steep, glacial escarpments. The main focus is Glenariff Forest Park (Tel: +44 (0)28 2955 6000) with its excellent network of signed trails and paths. A great way to start is to follow the [Waterfalls Walk](#) through Glenariff Glen Nature Reserve. This steep-sided gorge is punctuated by a series of dramatic waterfalls including the impressive double-drop of Ess-na-Larach. The dense woodland and abundant moisture have created a verdant carpet of moss and ferns on the rock walls.

The Moyle Way

You can experience the best of the northern Glens of Antrim by following the 22 mile (35km) linear waymarked Moyle Way from Ballycastle south to Glenariff. Along the way the route, which is also part of the Ulster Way, winds past ancient monuments, across rivers and high mountain tops. In the final section the route walkers descend through the heart of Glenariff Forest Park and its many woodland waterfalls to finish on the Irish Sea coast in the village of Glenariff. For more information on the Moyle Way [click here](#).

Mussenden Temple

Situated in Downhill Desmense, Mussenden Temple is located near Castlerock in County Londonderry. It perches dramatically on a 120ft cliff top, high above the Atlantic Ocean on the north-western coast of Northern Ireland, offering spectacular views westwards towards County Donegal and to the east towards Fair Head. This is truly an enchanting place. It is open to the public (Tel. +44 (0)28 2073 1582) and there is a 2 mile (3.5km) walk on offer. For more details [click here](#).

Specialist Walking Providers

Using a walking guide will give you unparalleled access to local knowledge, history and insight as to how and why the North Coast and Glens of Antrim has inspired so many over the years. Below is a list of some recommended walking guides, a full list of walking providers can be found on www.walkni.com

Name	Contact	Email	Website
Celtic Trekking	+44 (0)28 7082 9698	davewsouthall@hotmail.com	
Rathlin Walking Tours	+44 (0)28 7032 7960	paul.quinn33@hotmail.co.uk	www.rathlinwalkingtours.com
Walk Antrim Hills	+44 (0)28 2858 3483	cowper@walkantrilhills.com	www.walkantrilhills.com
North Coast Walks	+44 (0)28 7084 9500	info@northcoastwalks.co.uk	www.northcoastwalks.com

Short Breaks

For walkers planning on coming to the North Coast and Glens of Antrim for a few days we have listed some recommended companies offering short break packages. A full list of short breaks for walking in the North Coast and Glens is available on <http://www.walkni.com/Cluster.aspx?id=1>

Walking Holiday on Causeway Coast

4 nights B&B & 3 days self-guided walking. Maps & luggage transfer included.
From €329/£292 pp Minimum group of 2 www.southwestwalksireland.com Tel: +353 (0)6 6712 8733

Self-guided trip of Glens of Antrim and Moyle Way

3 nights B&B & self-guided walking. Pick ups & luggage transfer included.
From €248/£219pp Based on 2 sharing www.letsgowalking.com Tel: +44 (0)18 3788 0075

Euro prices are calculated at £1 = €1.13 but may vary according to currency fluctuations. All breaks are subject to availability.

Festivals



Walk the Glens Walking Festival

Now in it's 15th year, the Walk the Glens festival usually takes place during the first week in June. This festival is reasonably low key however the organisers have agreed access with landowners across countryside which is otherwise inaccessible. This provides a unique opportunity for walkers to explore virtually untouched countryside. For more information on this walking festival visit www.walktheglens.co.uk/festival.html

Auld Lammas Fair

Ireland's oldest traditional market fair takes place in Ballycastle at the end of August every year. You can expect horse trading, street entertainment and market stalls. Sample the local specialities including 'dulse' a dried edible seaweed, and the deliciously sweet chewy toffee 'yellow man'. Visit www.causewaycoastandglens.com

Tullamore Dew Causeway Coast Golf Tournament

This is the largest amateur golf tournament in Europe, held every summer on some of the North Coast's finest courses. The event regularly attracts up to 1100 golfers from as far a field as South Africa, Canada, Australia, the USA as well as Europe. Visit www.tullamoredewgolf.com

International Air Show

A free 2 day airshow in the beautiful setting of West Bay, Portrush featuring the Red Arrows. As well as many air displays each day, the shoreline is covered in arena acts, children's entertainment, exhibitions and a trade village. The event usually takes place in early September. Visit www.causewaycoastandglens.com

What else is there to do in the North Coast & Glens of Antrim?

Outdoor Activities

There are a whole host of other outdoor activities available in this area. We have listed some highlights below. Visit http://www.outdoorni.com/r6_North_Coast.aspx for more information and a full list of outdoor activity providers in this area.

Coasteering

Get up close and personal with the rugged beauty of the North Coast. Coasteering provides an action packed way to take in amazing caves, gullies, cliffs, rocks and marine wildlife. [The Adventure Team](#) tel +44(0) 28 8164 8390, [Xplore Outdoors](#) tel: +44 (0) 7773 359 773 and [Ardclinis Outdoor Adventure](#) tel: +44 (0) 28 2177 1340 are the local experts.

Surfing in Portrush

The North Coast offers some of the best surfing breaks in Ireland. The Portrush West Strand is where most of the surf schools offer their beginner surf lessons. If you would like to have a go, contact Alive on 079 3595 253 or visit www.alivesurfschool.com. You can also rent boards from Troggs Surf Shop in Portrush +44 (0)28 7082 5476 or visit www.troggs.com

Canoeing

The North Coast caters for all levels of canoeists. Beginners can go for a morning canoe session on the Lower Bann Canoe Trail with Xplore Outdoors www.xploreoutdoors.co.uk or Robin Rudduck will take you on a sea kayak expedition along the North Coast. www.robin-ruddock.com. Contact Robin on +44 (0) 7858 404 801

Cycling

Cycling part of the legendary Ballyshannon to Larne Cycle Route is a wonderful way to view the attractions and sights along the north coast. Visit <http://www.cycleni.com/106/ballyshannon-to-larne> for more information. For other cycle routes in the North Coast and Glens of Antrim click here <http://www.cycleni.com/antrim/>

Hovercrafting

Experience the thrill of gliding over land and water on a cushion of air at speeds of up to 30mph. Check out www.foylehov.com or phone +44 (0)28 7772 2235 for information on how to go hovercrafting in the Limavady area.

Relaxation

The Galgorm Resort and Spa, near Ballymena, is a fabulous place for a little luxury and to revitalise your body at the spa after a hard days walk. Set in 163 acres of lush parkland, the Galgorm is the perfect place to rest tired legs. Contact the resort on +44 (0)28 2588 1001 or visit www.galgorm.com for more information on relaxation packages.

Attractions

Many of the North Coast & Glens' famous attractions and landmarks you will actually encounter on the walking itineraries outlined above such as The Giant's Causeway, Dunluce Castle, Mussenden Temple and Carrick-a-rede Rope Bridge. However, there are a number of other attractions that are definitely worth making time to see including Bushmills Distillery, Ireland's oldest working distillery.

For your full guide to all attractions, visit www.causewaycoastandglens.com

Transport around the North Coast & Glens of Antrim

Translink, who operate Northern Ireland's bus and rail services, run 3 special bus services around the North Coast each of which may be of interest to walkers to get to the start point of their walk.

- **Causeway Rambler Service 402 (summer service – beginning of June to middle of September)**

A fully accessible bus which travels from Coleraine and Portrush to Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge. This bus takes in all of the main attractions:

- Bushmills
- Giants Causeway
- Dunseverick Castle
- Whitepark Bay
- Ballintoy
- Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge

- **Antrim Coaster Service 252 (Spring & summer service – March to October)**

This is a day return service from Belfast to Coleraine for sightseers but it can be a useful service for walkers as it stops at all the main tourist destinations and points of interest.

- **North Coast Open Topper Service 17 (Summer service - July and August)**

The 'North Coast Open Topper' Service 177 (weather permitting) is an open top double-decker bus from Coleraine to the Giant's Causeway.

For more information and detailed timetables visit www.translink.co.uk/ramblerservices or contact +44 (0)28 9066 6630



Further Information on Walking in the North Coast and Glens of Antrim

Access and Protection

Many of the walking routes in the North Coast and Glens of Antrim are not formally designated public rights of way. Access depends on the goodwill and tolerance of local landowners. Walkers are advised to respect that they may be walking on private land and are encouraged to make themselves aware of and adhere to the principles of '**Leave No Trace**'. Below is some information on the organisation who strive to sustain the beauty of this unique landscape.

The Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust

The Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust is a partnership body established in May 2002 in order to promote and enhance the unique qualities of the Causeway Coast and Glens area. The trust aims to promote environmental management, in turn, protecting the unique heritage of the Causeway Coast and Glens area.

The Trust arose from the work of the Causeway Initiative which brought together a range of different organisations interested in the promotion of sustainable tourism in the Causeway Coast and Glens area. As part of this work, the initiative commissioned a 'visitor and environmental management strategy' which recommended the formation of a permanent Trust in order to promote visitor and environmental management and sustainable tourism in the area.

The Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust has set up a management group for each of the three Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty (the Causeway Coast, Antrim Coast and Glens and Binevenagh) with representatives from central government, local authorities and environmental, economic and community sectors. For each of the Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty a management plan has been produced and is being implemented. For more information on the Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust visit www.ccght.org

Leave No Trace

Leave No Trace is an Outdoor Ethics Programme designed to promote and inspire responsible outdoor recreation through education, research, and partnerships. As increasing numbers of people seek the beauty and exhilaration of outdoor recreation, our collective mark on the environment and its natural processes, increases. Litter, disturbance to vegetation, water pollution, wildlife, livestock and other people are all indicators of the need to develop a national ethic that protects both natural and cultural heritage. Techniques designed to minimise the social and environmental impacts to these areas are incorporated into the Leave No Trace Outdoor Ethics Education Programme as seven principles.

The Seven Principles of Leave No Trace

- 1.....Plan Ahead and Prepare
- 2.....Be Considerate of Others
- 3.....Respect Farm Animals and Wildlife
- 4.....Travel and Camp on Durable Ground
- 5.....Leave What You Find
- 6.....Dispose of Waste Properly
- 7.....Minimise the Effects of Fire

Practising a Leave No Trace ethic is very simple: Make it hard for others to see or hear you and LEAVE NO TRACE of your visit. For more information on Leave No Trace, please visit www.leavenotraceireland.org.

Outdoor Shops

Lindsays Protective Clothing, 26 Ballyrashane Road, Coleraine stocks a lot of good quality outdoor gear.

Porstewart Clothing Company, located along the Promenade is a popular outdoor clothing store stocking mainly regatta clothing. Tends to be cheaper than other alternatives.

Maps of the North Coast and Glens of Antrim

The best map for walking in the Glens of Antrim is the OSNI Glens of Antrim Activity Map 1:25 000 available from Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland (OSNI) website www.osni.gov.uk/mapstore. Also available for walking in the North Coast are the OSNI Sheets 4 & 5 1:50 000. You can also purchase these maps in most of the Tourist Information Centres in the area. The North Coast Activity Map will be available in late 2010.

Further walk descriptions, images and downloadable detailed maps are available free of charge from www.walkni.com

Tourist Information

For further information contact the tourism organisation for the region on +44 (0)28 4372 4059 or visit www.mournelive.com. You can download a comprehensive visitor guide on their website. Below is a list of all the tourist information centres in the area and respective contact details.

Tourist Information Centre	Contact
Ballymoney Tourist Information Office.	+44 (0)28 2766 0230
Giant's Causeway Tourist Information Office.	+44 (0)28 2073 1855
Ballymena Tourist Information Office.	+44 (0)28 2565 7161
Limavady Tourist Information Office.	+44 (0)28 7776 0307
Coleraine Tourist Information Office.	+44 (0)28 7034 4723
Larne Tourist Information Office.	+44 (0)28 2826 0088
Ballycastle Tourist Information Office.	+44 (0)28 2076 2024

Getting to the North Coast and Glens of Antrim

With airports expanding and increased investment in road infrastructure in Ireland the North Coast and Glens of Antrim have never been more accessible.

- Ballynure, located at the southern point of the Glens of Antrim, is around 12.5 miles (20km) from Belfast International Airport and 15.5 miles (25km) from George Best Belfast City Airport.
- Visitors can expect a flight from Cork to Belfast to take around 70 minutes (Aer Arann).
- Glasgow to Belfast is around 50 minutes on a number of airlines.
- A flight from Galway to Belfast should take around 40 minutes (Manx2)
- A drive up from Dublin to the North Coast should take around 3 hours by car.

Below is some further information on travelling to the North Coast and Glens of Antrim from both the Republic of Ireland and Great Britain.

From the Republic of Ireland

By Car

If you are travelling to the North Coast and Glens of Antrim from Dublin by car you can expect to reach Ballynure in around 2 hours 20 minutes. If you are planning on basing yourself in Bushmills, follow the M2 out of Belfast signposted Ballymena. Continue along the A26 to Ballymoney before turning off on the B62 Balybogy Road, signposted Bushmills, Portrush. After around 6 miles (10km) turn right, again signposted Bushmills. This B17 Priestland Road will take you into Bushmills Village. For those who wish a scenic drive you can take the Causeway Coastal Route ([see website](#)) which passes through Larne, Glenarm, Cushendall, Cushendun and Ballycastle, a drive which is regarded by many as one of the World's great road journeys. Note, this route will take considerably longer.

By Bus

Aircoach provides a 24hour coach service between Dublin Airport, Dublin City, Drogheda and Dundalk to Belfast. Please follow the link for journey times and prices www.aircoach.ie or call +353 (0)1 8447118

Bus Eireann provides bus services to Belfast, Enniskillen and Derry. Call +353 (0)1 8366111 or visit www.buseireann.ie

By Train

Translink and Irish Rail offer a joint Enterprise service from Dublin to Belfast. Translink offer a further train service on up to Portrush on the North Antrim Coast. For more information on the Enterprise and Portrush service visit www.translink.co.uk or call +44 (0)28 9066 6630.

By Plane

Air Aaran operates flights from Dublin to Derry and Cork to Belfast. Please follow the link for more information. www.aerarann.com. Manx2 operate a new flight from Galway to Belfast 20 times a week. Find out more at www.manx2.com

By Ferry

From Magilligan in County Derry to Greencastle in County Donegal, a shuttle ferry service operates during peak periods with a crossing time of approximately 10 minutes cutting 49 miles (79km) off the journey by road. Visit www.loughfoyleferry.com or call +353 749381901 for times and prices.

From Great Britain**By Ferry**

Northern Ireland has first-class ferry connections with Scotland, England and the Isle of Man. New, high-speed vessels, enhanced on-board amenities, entertainment and shopping, together with lower prices, make the car ferry a very attractive, affordable travel option. For up to date crossing times contact Belfast Harbour on +44 (0) 28 9055 4422 or visit www.belfast-harbour.co.uk. Contact Larne Harbour on +44 (0) 28 2887 2100 or visit www.portoflarne.co.uk.

Here's some contact information for various ferry companies who run crossings to and from Northern Ireland.

Stenaline

www.stenaline.com T: 0870 520 4204 Sailings: Stranraer to Belfast, Fleetwood to Larne

Seacat

www.steam-packet.com T: 0871 222 133 Sailings: Isle of Man (Douglas) to Belfast

Norfolkline Irish Sea Ferries

www.norfolkline.com T: 0844 499 0007 Sailings: Liverpool (Birkenhead) to Belfast

P&O

www.poirishsea.com T: 0870 242 4777 Sailings: Cairnryan & Troon to Larne

By Plane

Scheduled air services operate to both the George Best Belfast City and Belfast International Airports from nearly all other major UK airports. The George Best Belfast City Airport is around 5 miles (8km) from the heart of Belfast, 15.5 miles (25km) from Ballynure at the southern tip of the Glens of Antrim. The Belfast International Airport is located around 18.5 miles (30km) north west of the city, 15.5 miles (25km) from Ballynure. Check with the airlines directly for the most up to date scheduled flights.

Belfast International Airport (BIA)T: +44 (0) 28 9448 4848www.belfastairport.com

George Best Belfast City AirportT: +44 (0) 28 9093 9093www.belfastcityairport.com

Aer LingusT: 0870 876 5000www.aerlingus.com

Flybe.....T: 0871 700 2000.....www.flybe.com

bmibaby..... T: 0871 224 0224.....www.bmibaby.comContinental

Continental.....T: 0845 607 6760www.continental.com/uk

easyjetT: 0871 244 2366.....www.easyjet.com

jet2.com..... T: 0871 226 1737.....www.jet2.com

Manx2.com T: 0870 242 2226www.manx2.com

RyanairT: +353 (0) 1249 7791www.ryanair.com

Fly BmiT: 0870 607 0555.....www.flybmi.com

Belfast Airport Guide.....www.belfast-airport-guide.co.uk

The Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN) has provided this information and images. Every care has been taken to ensure accuracy of the information. CAAN, however, cannot accept responsibility for errors or omissions but where such are brought to our attention, the information for future publications will be amended accordingly.

If you have any comments or queries regarding this Walker's Guide or require the Guide in an alternative format please contact:

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WalkNI.com
Your definitive guide to walking in Northern Ireland