

DONEGAL, North West Ireland

Area

Donegal is a traditional Irish area with overwhelming nature, rugged rock formations, everlasting tidal currents, endless beaches and more water than a fisherman could wish for. That is the Donegal region in short. Killybegs, Ballyshanon, Sligo, Bundoran are a few names of villages in this region and can serve as a base location. These villages still breathe the atmosphere of the early days with the old-fashioned shops and pubs where little or nothing has changed in the last 20 years.

The villages themselves are picturesque and there is no hurry. Honest and hospitable people and beautiful surroundings make up for an unforgettable journey. If you go into a local pub in the evening you will feel right at home and will be welcomed by the people. This is still the true Irish life.

The coast is erratic but the climate is very moderate as temperatures usually don't go below 5°C. In summer the average is around 22 to 25° C. The only thing that has to be taken into account on occasion is the southwest wind. The Irish themselves call it "weather permitting".



There are several possibilities to stay in this region and therefore also to fish. This makes it difficult to choose and to arrange this trip. You can make it as long and as short as you like and the number of participants is not limited to 2 or 4. For example, you can choose to go salmon fishing for 3 days, sea fishing for 1 day in Bundoran, sea fishing for 2 days in Killybegs and maybe another day on the pristine Silver Beach. Choose what you'd like to do and we'll tailor the trip to suit you.



Fishing

There are plenty of opportunities to go fishing in this region:

Beach fishing

Beach fishing can really be done here on every beach(street) corner. There is sea everywhere and you can fish here on all these spots. Silver Strand is worth special mentioning. This unique spot is located about 45 minutes from Killybegs and is only accessible via a staircase with 167 steps down. Down is not such a problem. Up, however, is a point of attention.... but what a fishery. Between two cliffs the deserted beach is enclosed.

You will not find anything or anyone here. OK, a couple of sheep on the rocks, a solitary seal in the bay and... lots of fish. The best example is that on arrival our guide prepared the beach rod with three hooks on the paternoster and just put it 5 meters (!) from the beach in the shallow water. It took two minutes and the first three (!) turbot were a fact. Unbelievable and that went on and on. No one ever comes here to fish and the nature is overwhelming. This spot is an absolute secret tip.

Next to Silver Strand there are several beaches where you can go:

- Muckross Beach, Kilcar
- Port a' Chabhlaigh, Carrick/Kilcar
- Glen Bay Beach, Glencolmcille
- Port Beach, Glencolmcille



Boat fishing

The best known form of fishing in Ireland with the most variety. Red gurnard, grey gurnard, pollack, ling, cod, sea bream, snappers, blue shark, catfish, spurdog, dogfish, ray, mackerel, tope, whiting, plaice, dab, sole, sea bass, skate and so on. Our local man on the spot told us that there is an Englishman who has made it a sport to catch as many species of fish as possible in Irish marine waters. He is currently at 99 and is waiting for the 100th. Just to indicate the diversity of fish species.

In general, the season runs from the beginning of April to the end of October. Tope can be found from April to the end of July while the blue shark is usually around in the warmer period from July to October along the Irish coastal waters. The cat and dogfish are actually less dependent on water temperatures.

There are several ways to fish from the boat. Reef fishing is mainly done with the larger underwater structures that provide extra current. This extra current provides a lot of natural food and therefore also the associated predators. You can use a variety of lures here, from feather paternosters for the pollack to pilkers, crankbaits and of course pieces of mackerel that are generally used in Ireland when fishing with natural bait.

Bottom fishing, for example, is very attractive for the skate. This ray species prefer sandy bottom with a few stones here and there. Conger, on the other hand, is generally found more on hard and rocky ground. Mackerel and pollack are also usually found above stony grounds but then often halfway again.



Rock fishing

This fishing is a separate form and must be carried out by at least two people at all times. The reason for this is that if you slip on the cliffs you can always get help. Especially with the strong tidal currents in this region, this is a very simple safety measure to protect yourself or others.

Rock fishing is possible with spinners, pilks, spoons, bucktails etc. But don't forget to offer a simple float with a shrimp, crab or piece of mackerel. You will be amazed by the results and the drills that await you from the snappers but also the pollack and sea bass.

Salmonidae fishing

Salmon fishing in Ireland has continuously improved over the past 10 years. Partly due to strict regulation and restrictions on the taking of fish, the numbers of salmon have steadily increased. A lot of time and energy is put into accessing the entrances to the rivers. For example, they have succeeded in banning fishing nets near river mouths. As a fisherman you are also allowed to bring a maximum of 10 salmon for your own use on 1 license per year. The fish have to be tagged immediately after the catch. You will get these tags with your license. Not using the tags can result in high fines. In addition to salmon, sea trout must also be tagged. For fishing these two species you need to have a permit at all times.



Sea trout fishing, for example, is very good along the coast near Ballyshanon. Simply stroll down the beach or the rocks and fish off the coast with a small spoon or spinner. But also a float in combination with a fresh worm or a piece of mackerel works fine. Of course this is also possible from a boat but for this fishery a permit is always required and is only possible from March 1st till September 30th.

At the upper parts of the Drowes river lies Lake Melvin where you can also fish fantastically for no less than 4 different species of trout. By the way, this is the only place in Ireland where it is possible to catch four different species of trout.

Generally speaking, you require a license for salmon and sea trout fishing and not for any other fishing. Also keep an eye on any periods that may be different for different rivers and fish species.

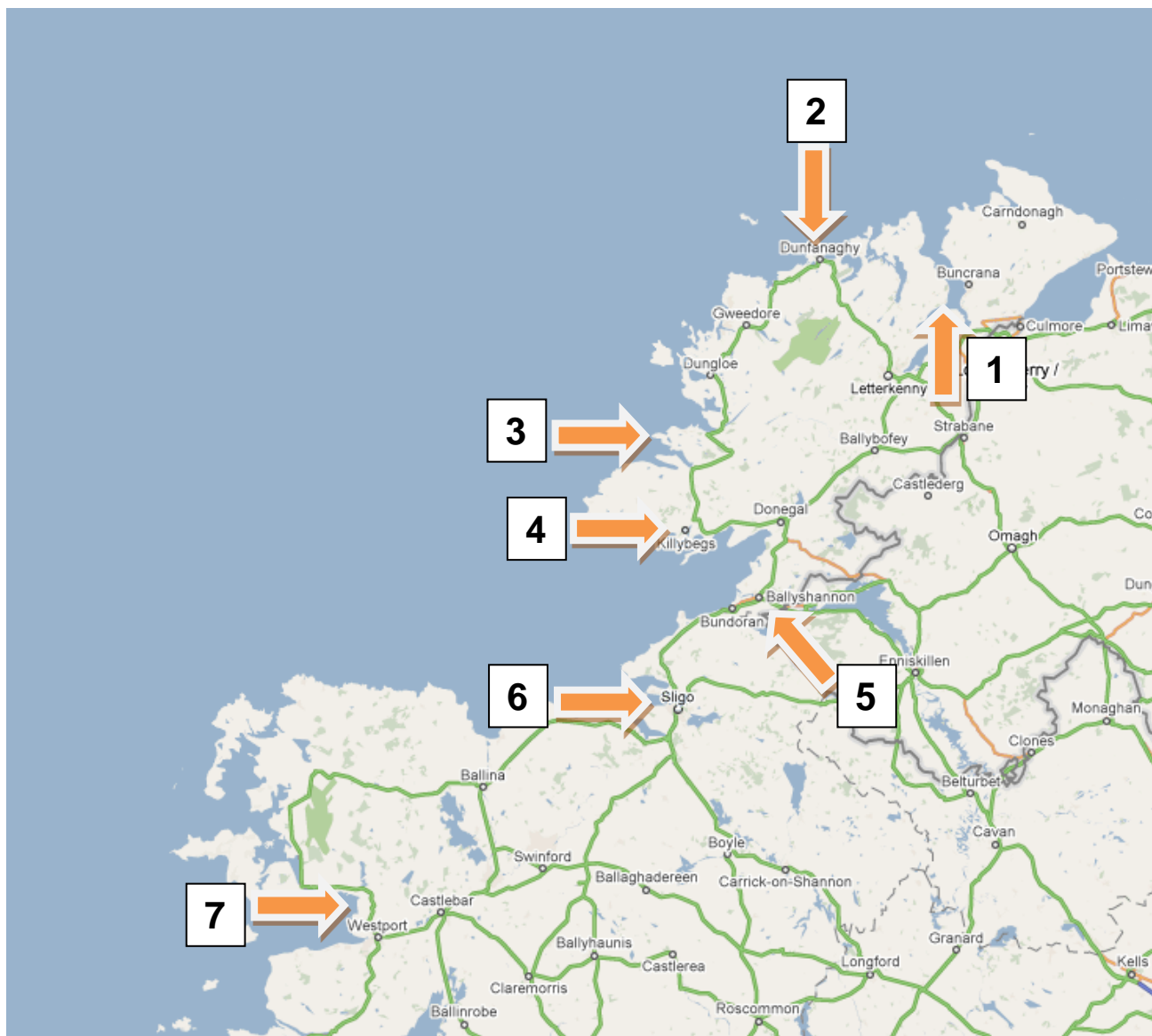


Gillaroo trout



Salmon on the fly

Locations:



1. Rathmullan
2. Downings
3. Portnoo / Rosbeg
4. Killybegs
5. Ballyshannon / Bundoran
6. Sligo
7. Newport



1. Rathmullan:

Lough Swilly is fished in this region. With strong currents, there is an abundance of flora and fauna here. Both above and below water. Lough Swilly is a 20 mile long bay with many underwater structures. Together with the currents it is an ideal breeding ground for a variety of species and especially for large fish. They specialize in reef fishing, wreck fishing and tope fishing.



The Enterprise 1 is with 38 feet specially built for fishing and has a large aft deck. Together with the 225 hp engine and the experienced captain Neil Doherty you have a perfect combination where you can always go fishing and ... catch.

The accommodation options are :

Fort Royal Hotel: This is a very luxurious option to stay in this region. But at the same time it is of unprecedented beauty. Directly at the sea is the 15 room, 4 star Fort Royal Hotel. Provided with all the luxury you will not lack anything here.



Fort Royal Hotel



Kinnegar View

There are also several B & B's such as Kinnegar View and the Knoll where you will receive a warm welcome and you can enjoy your holiday to the fullest. Typical for Ireland are the B & B's in people's homes and wherever you go you will always be warmly received. Often the decor and style is a bit old-fashioned but always neat. The B&B's are within walking distance of the harbor.



2. Downings:



The Rosguill is a modern 43-foot Aqua Star equipped with all necessities. The boat has two 310 HP Caterpillar diesel engines and has a cruising speed of 19 knots. The northern part of Ireland is a true mecca for fishing. Whatever the season, you will always catch (big) fish here. Because of the sheltered location near Sheephaven it is even possible to fish with a storm. By the way, the Rosguill can only be booked as a complete boat. Therefore this location is practically only interesting to book as a group.

You will stay at Fishermans Fishing Lodge. Located on the Atlantic Drive you have from this location an amazing spectacular view over the ocean. With five double rooms and two triple rooms there is almost always a room available in this unforgettable B&B. The rooms are neat and tidy and are connected to the central living room where after a day of fishing it's great to relax. Together with a local whiskey the stories and the fish are getting longer and longer.



3. Portnoo / Rosbeg:

Tor Mor

This boat is custom built for fishing and 31 feet in length. With a spacious cabin at the front there is a large aft deck which is very comfortable for fishing. This together with the 500 HP Iveco engine and the necessary fishfinder, GPS, safety equipment and a very experienced captain can not fail to succeed. Skipper Donal is specialized in reef, bottom and shark fishing. As far as we are concerned, this is definitely a boat you should have fished for when you are in the area.



There are several possibilities to stay here:

The Nesbitt Arms Hotel or the Highlands Hotel offer comfort and luxury as well as several B&B's. Some examples are Bayview Country House, Brae House and Gort na Mona. If you want to stay in this region for a longer period of time, there are also beautiful holiday homes available at favorable rates.



4. Killybegs

Killybegs is the largest port in the region where most professional fishermen also have their home. So there is always something to do here. From this location several charters sail

Smithy's "Maire Do": Aquastar 25 feet for up to 6 people and with the 220 HP turbo diesel has more than enough power to reach a top of 20 knots. This boat is a bit smaller in size so if you're with a small group you immediately have your own boat. The skipper Smith Campbell has been sailing around this part of the Irish coastal waters for over 20 years so if anyone knows where to find the fish he is.





The Meridian is a 40 foot Lochin with a 420 hp engine. Captain Brian has been sailing these waters for over 30 years and is chairman of the Killybegs Sea Angling Club. And you don't just become one! All equipment is available on board if desired and he's spicy with tips to make sure you'll catch as many fish as possible.

Duanai Mara:

This boat is sailed by Brian MacGilloway and also departs from Killybegs. The 33-foot Aqua Star with 305 hp engine amply meets the needs of sea anglers. From Killybegs there is always a possibility to arrange a boat to chase the more than 40 species of local fish.



Meridian



Duanai mara

One of the best stays here is the Seawinds B & B which has several rooms and has been familiar with the specific wishes of anglers for years. Just practical and no unnecessary fuss. Also here there is a drying room to store your materials or to rinse them off after use at sea. In addition to the various rooms, Seawinds also has its own apartment for up to 4 people. Simple yet neatly furnished, this is directly at the port of Killybegs a perfect place to start your fishing adventures. And because it is situated at the harbor, the pubs are never far away.



Seawinds



Slieve League

Alternatives in the form of other B & B's are more than enough. Conkay House, Ocean View and Banagh House. So there is no shortage of accommodation options. Another alternative is the "Slieve League" in Carrick. It is about 20 minutes from Killybegs but right next to the "Slieve League". These highest cliffs of Europe with over 600 meters altitude are a true spectacle and you must have seen it. The accommodation has 13 rooms in different sizes. You can cook in the communal kitchen or just order a meal in the pub right next door.

From here you can experience beautiful fishing adventures by just taking the car and strolling along the beaches and rocks that are abundant in this region.

5. Ballyshanon / Bundoran

The Bundoran Star is the only charter boat leaving from Bundoran. This 33-foot Lochin with 385 hp diesel engine manages to find all the fish in just 15 minutes. Captain Patrick (like all other captains) has been sailing these waters for years. In the bay near Bundoran dolphins and whales are regularly present during the warm periods, a sign that the underwater flora and fauna are also in good condition and therefore guarantee beautiful fishing and beautiful nature. Ireland in optima forma.



B&B Dun Na Si:



This beautiful B&B can accommodate up to 12 guests with 6 rooms. It is luxurious and comfortably furnished and is located on the road from Ballyshanon to Bunduran. There is a drying room where angling equipment can be stored safely and dry. From this location it is possible to spend a day boat

fishing from Bunduran, sea trout or beach fishing on the coast. The owner John will be happy to help you with anything you might need.

Creevy Lodges:

Magnificent holiday homes restored in old style with a view over the sea.

They are very comfortably equipped and have that real old-fashioned Irish style. With a glass of whiskey and a burning fireplace it is a good place to stay. The kitchen is fully equipped and the houses are suitable for 4 to 8 persons. All bed linen and towels are included during the stay. This is a particularly beautiful and very suitable location to stay a week and experience all types of fishing. No day will be the same. Highly recommended by us for longer stays in the region.



Lareen Estate: Drowes Salmon Fishery

Scattered over this estate are ten holiday homes right next to the river Drowes. The houses are neat and fully equipped for fishermen. The houses are suitable for 2 to 8 persons. The rental of the house also includes a boat including an outboard engine. The necessary permits are also provided so that you can fish for a full week to your heart's content on one of the most beautiful and productive salmon rivers in Ireland. Practically the entire river bed has been made accessible with the help of wooden scaffolding boards.



This river has been in the top 3 salmon rivers in Ireland for years. It is not strange that this river has been producing Ireland's first salmon 22 times in the past 25 years on 1 January. In addition to the Drowes River, you can also fish on the higher Lake Melvin where, in addition to salmon, no less than 4 (!) different species of trout are caught. This is the only lake in Ireland that contains 4 species of trout. The species are browntrout, Gilaroo, Sonaghan and Ferox.



On the estate is a small but very specialized fishing store that can provide you with information and material to a large extent. Spinners, wobblers, etc. But be sure to drop by every day to discuss the latest state of affairs regarding tips, water levels, altitudes, expected rainfall and fishing possibilities.

Great Northern Hotel:

the Great Northern is a majestic hotel on top of Bundoran's cliffs overlooking the sea. Right next to it there is an 18-hole golf course where the enthusiast can of course also go. Definitely a must.

It has also been discussed with the hotel that there is a separate room available for anglers to store any materials so that they do not have to be kept in the hotel room.



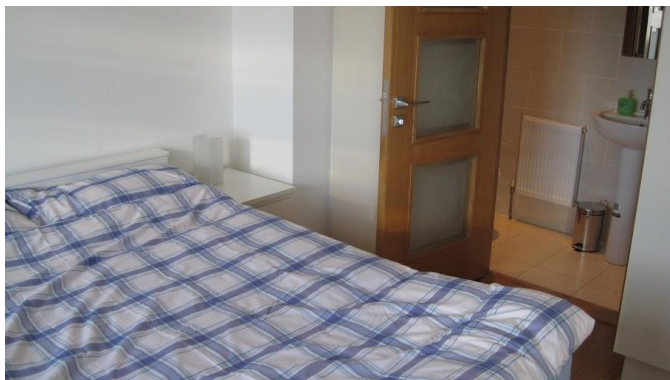
The Great Northern has a luxurious atmosphere and the staff are very friendly and caring. Also the prices of this hotel are very acceptable and the quality is very good. For lovers, the Great Northern has a traditional Irish bar in the hotel itself where the stories become stronger while enjoying one (or more) Irish whiskies as well as the fish.

6. Sligo:

From Rosses Point, a 10-minute drive from Sligo, the Sea Star departs. It is a 31 foot Mittchel with a 120 hp 6 cylinder Ford engine. Skipper Daryl Ewing is an enthusiastic captain who is happy to serve his guests. You can go reef fishing, bottom deep sea fishing and shark fishing. The region is characterized by less pronounced underwater structures which makes the bottom fishing here very good. But of course Daryl knows the water like the back of his hand and brings you quickly to the desired fish.



Staying in the Sligo region is possible at Rosses Point Guesthouse. This is a budget accommodation that is completely new and offers more than enough quality for athletes, surfers and anglers. There are different types of rooms available at attractive prices.



Rosses Point Guesthouse

Local B & B's will of course remain attractive and charming options where you will be welcomed by the owners and there are several of these in the Sligo area. For example the Philmar House, the Benbulbinfarmhouse. With the latter it is also possible to book a 4 star holiday home for a longer period of time.



Philmar House



Benbulbinfarmhouse

7. Newport

The Shamrock 1 is a 33-foot Aquastar where Mary Gavin Hughes is the captain. Mary is proud of her title as "Legendary woman of the sea" and the only female European charter captain. Mary has consistently had high catches of fish for her guests for years and it is not for nothing that she can be found in the top 3 of the national championships almost every year. That is an exceptionally good achievement. Mary is without a doubt a very good captain who will do anything to get you to the fish.





For real anglers, a day fishing with Mary is a must if you are in this region. Sailing from Newport she is specialized in bottom fishing and skate is here specialty. Clew Bay contains no less than 365 islands and is absolutely a top location for fishing. In combination with this boat and this captain you will are set for succes.

Also the stay is well arranged in the middle of the picturesque town of Newport. The Black Oak Inn or the Anchor house are good options. The Black Oak Inn in the heart of the village with its own bar and close to the other

local pubs. Anchor House, on the other hand, is more secluded, quieter and has more luxury and is situated directly on the Black Oak River and overlooking the harbour.



Black Oak Inn



Anchor House

Irish hospitality and helpfulness is very much present at all locations. They are happy to be of service and helpful where possible. Tips about going out, sightseeing. Packed lunches, supplies... You name it. All local people will be happy to help you make your fishingholiday a success.

All charter boats comply with all Irish legislation and safety requirements so all necessary permits are in order. Furthermore, practically all boats can take on single fishermen and fishing rod and reel can be hired and any additional equipment such as lead, leaders, lures, etc. is available on board from the skippers.

In addition to all the locations and possibilities we have worked out, there are 101 other possibilities and you will come across fantastic places to fish on your trip. Feel free to plan a day without fixed appointments. There are plenty of possibilities to find your own spots and the true fishing heart will skip a beat if you find a spot that catches beautiful fish in the setting sun.

Material

For all types of fishing it is possible to rent equipment if you do not want to bring it yourself. Boat fishing in particular provides all the necessities. But for every fisherman, it is still best to fish with your own equipment. In addition, the materials that are rented out are never top quality. To get through a week with all the different types of fishing we suggest the following to take with you.

For beach fishing 2 beach rods and a support are indispensable. Since you don't have to throw hundreds of meters when fishing on the beach, it is not strictly necessary that it is only beach rods. With a longer medium spin- / carp rod of 3 to 3.6 meters and a weight class of 100 to 200 grams, you can also do fine here. This last rod can also be used for rock fishing. Good to be able to cast further and heavy enough to be able to lift a larger fish out of the water if you can not reach it.



In addition, a medium spinning rod of 80 to 150 grams up to 3 meters that can be used for salmon fishing as well as on the boat for lighter fishing with a single hook on pollack. This rod can of course also be used for rock fishing. Depending on your preference, the rod can of course also be lighter. For trout fishing a 10-20 gram spinning rod is always handy to have with you or maybe you will come across a nice pike water on the way....

For the heavier fishing from the boat on e.g. conger, ray, sharks, etc. a boat rod of 20 lbs and about 2 meters is the appropriate material. This rod together with a reel is sufficient for boat fishing. Make sure you have enough braided line with a breaking strength of about 12 to 13 kilos and with the right leader you can tackle every saltwater giant.

Bait:

For salmon fishing blue and green silver Toby spoons of 12 to 24 grams are the appropriate material. But also the "condoms" that are for sale in the local tackle shop of the Lareen Estate are doing well. A leader of at least 1 meter of fluo carbon is required as well. The strength of this must be around 6 to 8 kilos in order to be able to drill the larger species well. For trout fishing a few small spinners and a few hooks are sufficient.



"Condoms"



For sea fishing, pilk, shads, crankbaits, some single hooks in different sizes and different strengths in leaders are important. Don't forget your mackerel paternoster because otherwise you won't catch any bait to fish with and you are by definition depending on lures and jigs.

There is practically no fishing with ragworms or worms in Ireland. As a result, they are hard to get and reasonably expensive. We did use them for rock and beach fishing through our local man and the results were good. But also shrimp, crab and pieces of mackerel produced good numbers of fish.

But let's not forget the fly fishermen. For them there is also more than enough place here to pick up their fisherman's heart. From the light fishing to the heavier salmon fishing, but also at the coast there is enough to fetch for them. So also here different fly patterns, line types, flies and streamers need to be packed for this trip.

Season

The season in Ireland runs from April to October. In general, the weather in this part of Ireland is not always stable. With sayings like: "four seasons in one day" and "weather permitting", less good weather is certainly a possibility. Advantage is that it does not get cold. With average temperatures between 5 and 25 ° C, having good rainwear is important, but thick winter coats are practically unnecessary.



Due to the relatively high temperatures, the water cools off only slightly. Together with the warm Gulf Stream, these are perfect conditions for the underwater flora and fauna. The Irish coast is therefore known for its diversity of fish species.

If you want to go fishing the differences in the seasons are small. But the best chance of having the best weather is simply in the period from May to August.



Travel & price

You best fly to Dublin and there the rental car will be waiting for you on the spot. No matter which trip you make. The rental car is a must. It is not only for transportation to Donegal but also to drive around the beautiful region and enjoy the beautiful views.

The drive to the Donegal region takes about 3 hours from Dublin and takes you right through the heart of Ireland. You will pass (on the left side of the road) beautiful views and beautiful Irish nature.

With our tailormade offer there are many possible combinations possible. Think in advance about what you would like to do and contact us to compose your desired trip. This can be for 2, 4, 8 guys or for the entire angling club.

Another option is to plan Ireland with the family for one or two weeks. In addition, a few days of fishing can be filled in and there are many attractions in the region that are of interest to the family. Killybegs is home to some of Europe's highest accessible cliffs. The Slieve League. But also beautiful flora and fauna make a day trip unforgettable. Walks in nature, museums about the local history and archaeological finds, super beautiful beaches which is an experience for children. All in all, more than enough ideas to experience the true Irish atmosphere.



These trips are tailor made and therefore it is difficult to give an average price. However, we have worked out a few example trips. For all trips flight ticket is not calculated yet. The rental car is included in the price with unlimited mileage and basic insurances (ask for exact conditions) but excluding fuel. The exact prices mentioned depend on the available flight tickets, time of booking and the season. In high season flight tickets may cost 2 to 3 times more than in low season periods and the shorter the period to departure the higher the cost of flights. The motto is therefore to plan and book your fishing trip outside the high season and well in advance (3 months or more).

Example 1: a week's stay at Lareen Estate with 4 persons based on own care. Three days of salmon fishing on the river, a day of trout fishing from two boats including motor excluding fuel, a day of boat fishing from Bundoran and a day off to make a nice trip or to go pioneering or beach fishing yourself. Permits, flight and rental car included.

This trip is available for a price from € 750,-- per person based on 4 persons.



Example 2: one week stay in one of the Creevy Lodges with 6 people on a self-catering basis, 2 days boat fishing in Bundoran, 1 day beach fishing, 1 day salmon fishing and 2 days free to spend. Permits, flight and rental car included.

This trip is available for a price from € 600,-- per person based on 6 persons.

Any other composition of fishing is of course possible and entirely dependent on your own wishes. Longer and shorter stays than a week are of course also possible.

Would you like a free and personal offer for this location, please contact us:

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