

Hotel upgrades all around

Everyone loves a getaway especially to a hotel. Why? Maybe it's because a recent survey of Cork hoteliers has shown that more than €11.5m was spent on renovations and improvements to hotels in the region in 2018 and who doesn't love luxury surroundings?

Individual hotel upgrades ranged from €50,000 to €2.5 million, the survey conducted by the Cork branch of the Irish Hotels Federation (IHF) has shown.

Local hoteliers spent a further €7.5m promoting Cork as a destination nationally and internationally, which was an increase of €2.5m from 2017.

On average, visitor spend was also up across all segments, in particular with domestic visitors, which increased by €10 per day in the first quarter of the year.

Room rates on average increased by 15 per cent, although the rate range remains broad across the region. The average room rate charged now ranges from €40 to €215 per night for a B&B in low season to five-star city hotel in peak season. The average rate of hotels surveyed across the region was €109.

Neil Grant, chair of the IHF Cork branch, said its members are making huge efforts to now grow their businesses after years of recession, which in turn contributes to the local economy. "Our hotel members worked extremely hard to overcome the challenges of the last recession and it is fantastic to now see our collective efforts as a sector helping to attract additional tourism business to Cork.

"The substantially increased marketing spend hoteliers are making to promote Cork as a tourism destination is just one aspect of this.

"Identifying the reasons why visitors choose Cork as a destination, hoteliers said the main selling points are corporate business travel, the Wild Atlantic Way and Ireland's Ancient East tourism routes; food culture, destination hotels, accessibility, scenery, choice of accommodation, attractions like Blarney Castle, Fota Wildlife Park, hidden gems, the people, our vibrant city and the fact that Cork is a gateway to the south," he said.

July to September was the busiest time of year for 96 per cent of properties, and 35 per cent of hoteliers said they believe there is an opportunity to grow business during the first six months of the year.

Growth opportunities identified through the survey for 2019 and 2020 include increased frequency and capacity at Cork Airport, promotion of Ireland's Ancient East and the Wild Atlantic Way routes, expansion of hotel bedrooms, the corporate market, free entertainment in hotels and the region, and improved facilities.

The survey also revealed that more than 350 jobs are currently available in the hotel sector in Cork. Of these, 170 are full time and 193 are part time positions.

However, 94 per cent of hoteliers surveyed said they find recruitment a challenge and are struggling to find suitable staff.

Take the family to Kinsale Hotel & Spa

There's lots of things to do in Kinsale from shopping to eating to sightseeing and exploring, but if you **find yourself staying for a few days with your family**, there's only one place to be.

Why not plan your family break at Kinsale Hotel & Spa? Located in the heart of Cork in Kinsale, the hotel is the perfect base to explore Cork and its many local attractions.

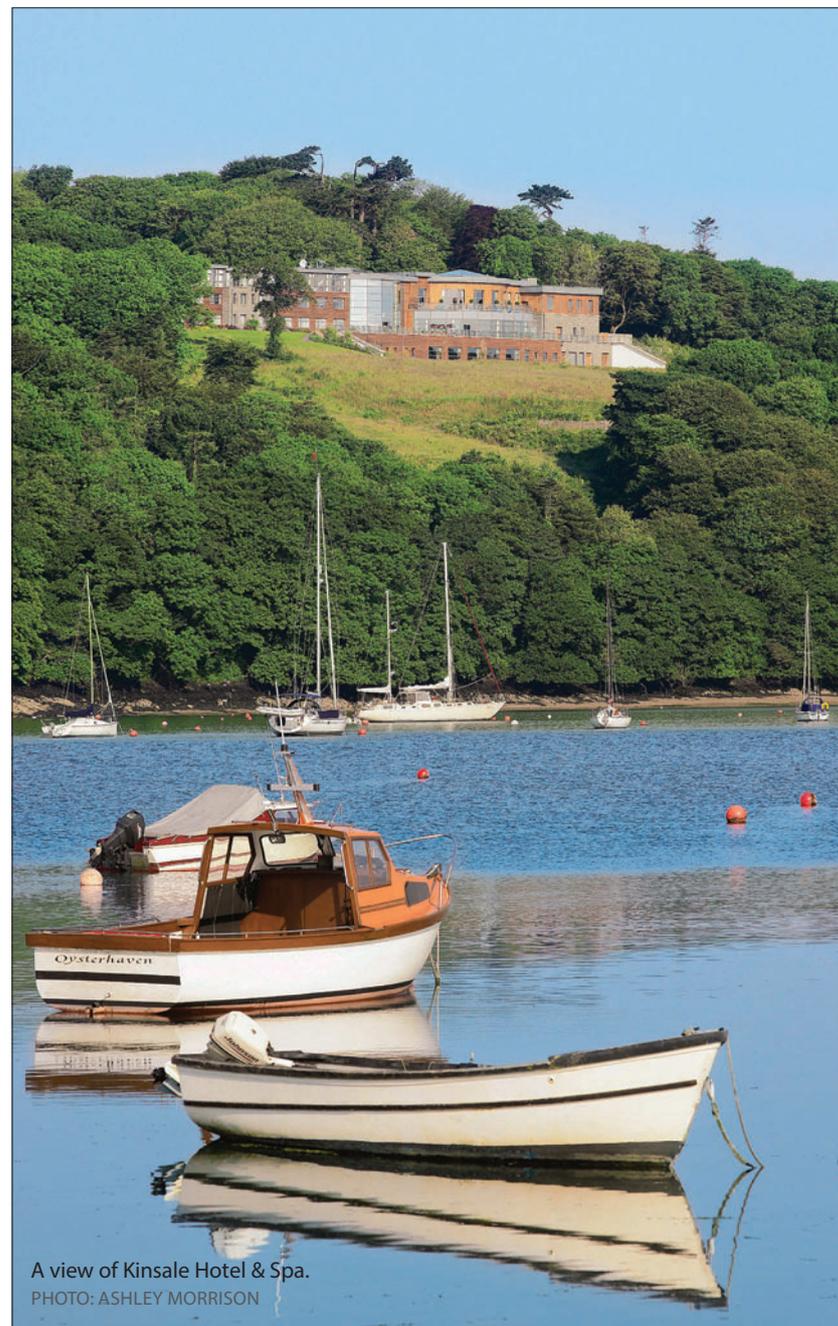
The children will be impressed with a surprise chocolate gift on arrival and little touches like milk and cookies at bedtime. They will also enjoy access to the indoor heated swimming pool at the Leisure Club in addition to a playground and 90 acres of parkland to explore.

The fun isn't only for the kids, though, as babysitters can be arranged so you can enjoy time at the Elemis Spa or indulge with a sunset dinner in the Rockpool Bar & Restaurant.

Kinsale Hotel & Spa offers everything you need for a short family break away. Family Packages from €150 per night include three nights of accommodation for up to two adults and two children with full Irish breakfast each morning.

Separate interconnecting rooms for children are also available at a supplement.

For more information about room reservations call 021-4706000 or email reservations@hotelkinsale.



A view of Kinsale Hotel & Spa.
PHOTO: ASHLEY MORRISON



One of the family rooms available at Kinsale Hotel & Spa. PHOTO: DAVID CANTWELL PHOTOGRAPHY



The swimming pool at Kinsale Hotel & Spa.
PHOTO: TONY DUNN PHOTOGRAPHY