

Head to Mayo North for a staycation that offers something for everyone... By Rachel Beresford

MOY KIND OF BREAK:
The River Moy in Ballina and (below, l-r) Downpatrick Head and Belleek Woods

THE WAY TO Mayo!

Mayo North is a year-round destination, rich in culture, heritage and natural landscape and with countless exciting, interesting and enriching experiences — not just a place to visit, but a place to feel alive.

Blessed with a stunning snippet of the breathtakingly rugged Wild Atlantic Way, gorgeous landscapes, vibrant towns and 6,000 years of history, Mayo North is full of variety to experience.

Spend some time in Twin Trees Hotel & Leisure Club, Ballina — a cosy family-run hotel right between the Brosna and Moy rivers and just 10 minutes' walk from the town centre of the pretty town of Ballina.

With delicious homecooked, locally-sourced food in the Brosna Restaurant & Twin Trees Bar, relax in the manicured flower gardens and enjoy access to the indoor swimming pool and kids pool as well as some of the most spectacular unspoilt scenery, right on your doorstep.

An ideal base for exploring all the wonders that Co Mayo has to offer, including Keem Bay on Achill Island and Downpatrick Head, two of the main signature points along the Wild Atlantic Way, a three-night

family stay at the Twin Trees includes bed & breakfast for two adults and two children, house signature Italian pizza for all the family, a complimentary bottle of house wine and complimentary room service from the homemade Italian pizza menu during your stay.

Make one night of your stay movie night, and choose a family film to enjoy with your pizza after your day full of adventures along the Wild Atlantic Way.

From Sunday to Thursday, a three-night summer stay at the Twin Trees Hotel & Leisure Club in Ballina for two adults and two children with family pizza night and a bottle of house wine is available for €349.

See www.mayonorth.ie for more.



5 THINGS TO DO IN NORTH MAYO

1 The Bangor Trail
The Bangor Trail is a 39km walking trail starting in Newport and finishing in Bangor Erris.

Sometimes described as “the loneliest place in Ireland”, due to the isolated nature of the route, this challenging 39km trail takes you through all types of terrain — country roads, bog tracks, open countryside and across rivers. You won't see a house along the route, and you may not even meet another soul!

2 Belleek Woods Fairy Trail
Always wanted to look for fairies? Well now's your chance. Deep in beautiful Belleek Woods — one of the largest urban woods in Europe — a tiny new community has taken up residence among the trees.

As you follow the Belleek Woods Fairy Trail, you'll see their tiny little fairy houses, high in the trees and hidden in tree roots.

Colourful and miniature, each house reflects the character of its tiny resident.

The fairies love children and if you treat them well they may grant your wish.



3 Blanemore Forest Archaeological Park

Blanemore Forest, Moygownagh is the beautiful setting of the Blanemore Forest Archaeological Walk.

Only recently discovered, Blanemore is a treasure chest packed

with historical secrets.

Thanks to the efforts of the local community in Moygownagh, Blanemore Forest Archaeological Walk is open to the public.

Take a deep breath, inhale the history and see the sites of where your ancestors once walked.

4 Killala Bike Hire

Looking for a bike hire? Situated along the Wild Atlantic Way, Killala Bike Hire is located at the heart of some of the most magnificent sites North Mayo has to offer. Providing bike hire in Mayo North and accessory rental for all ages, you can experience the Wild Atlantic Way at your own pace, with daily and weekly bike hires available.

5 Tom Ruane Park Ballina

Based on the main Sligo Road, Tom Ruane Park Ballina is an award-winning and very impressive family-friendly amenity.

The park and playground in Ballina, which overlooks the beautiful River Moy, is always very well kept.

A huge hit with families, its play equipment was recently upgraded to ensure accessibility for children of all ages and abilities, making it one of the most inclusive outdoor play facilities in Ireland.

The park also boasts tennis courts, basketball courts and an all-weather football pitch, which makes it an ideal location for children of all ages. Pack a picnic and a football and enjoy a great day out for all the family. ■

KINSALE AWAY WITH ME, HONEY...

IT'S NOT surprising that the south of the country is proving very popular for staycationers this year.

Beautiful scenery, charming villages and a top-notch restaurant scene all make destinations like Cork and Kinsale hard to beat.

And if you're after peaceful, luxurious accommodation that's still close to all of the action, Kinsale Hotel and Spa is a great choice for your base.

Set in 90 acres of mature wooded parkland and offering panoramic views over Oysterhaven Bay, the hotel is back in business after lockdown and has taken all necessary precautions to keep guests feeling safe and comfortable.

Just 25 minutes from Cork



Airport and a five minute drive from Kinsale, it's a tranquil haven to stay in while exploring the south coast.

But if you're more focused on the relaxation end of things, the hotel boasts everything you

need to stay close to home.

From the Rockpool Bar & Restaurant (serving fare such as Seafood Linguine and Braised Bandon Beef Featherblade) to the luxury Elemis spa and scenic onsite walking trails, there's plenty to keep you occupied.



DELICIOUS:
Afternoon tea at (left) Kinsale Hotel and Spa



Another treat is the hotel's Afternoon Tea menu. A fresh take on the tradition, the Chic team have sampled it so can personally testify to how good it is, especially paired with a glass of bubbly.

Accommodation special offers include two nights B&B and dinner one evening — plus a picnic lunch on a day of your choice — starting from €280 with three nights from €380.

Or how about the Ultimate Girl's Getaway deal?

Including accommodation in a self-catering Garden Lodge, a three-course meal in the hotel restaurant with champagne as well as a 30-minute spa treatment for each guest — it'll set you back just €120 per person sharing.

Go to www.kinsalehotelandspa.ie to check availability for your next trip that certainly won't disappoint!