

A TALE OF 2 CITIES – BELFAST AND DERRY

BELFAST - from Irish: *Béal Feirste*, meaning "rivermouth of the sandbanks", is the capital and largest city of Northern Ireland. It is also one of Europe's most exciting cities, from its Michelin-starred restaurants and legendary nightlife to a phenomenal Titanic history. Recently voted number one region to visit in 2018 by Lonely Planet and awarded National Geographic Reader Award for Rising Star, there's a palpable buzz and a fantastic line up of things to see and do.... And here are just some options

First stop is Stormont Buildings - Parliament Buildings home to the Northern Ireland Assembly, the legislative body for Northern Ireland established under the Belfast Agreement 1998 (Good Friday Agreement). Built in 1921 at a cost of nearly £1.7 million, it was designed to house the newly formed Government of Northern Ireland and was officially opened on 16th November 1932 by the then Prince of Wales, on behalf of King George V



Stormont Buildings

Visit to Titanic Belfast – The Titanic experience takes you through nine galleries, telling the story of RMS Titanic, from her conception in Belfast in the early 1900s, through her construction and launch, to her famous maiden voyage and tragic end. The galleries are innovative and interactive with many features including diving to the depth of the ocean to explore where RMS Titanic now rests. The Titanic story is told at Titanic Belfast in a fresh and insightful way. Winner of the World's Leading Visitor Attraction 2016 at the World Travel Awards.



Titanic Belfast

A short walk to the Titanic Hotel for light refreshments perhaps!

All Aboard the 'Wee Tram' for a tour of the Titanic Quarter – In 1912, Titanic builders were transported to and from the shipyard by frequent, pollution-free, electrically powered trams. And now, in the emerging and inspiring surroundings of Titanic Quarter, the tram is back. Wee Tram passengers travel in carriages purpose-built to echo those 1912 tram cars and just like the originals electricity provides the motive power. Passengers can even echo the past themselves by wearing their very own Edwardian 'duncher'.

Visit to the Belfast City Hall - designed by Alfred Brumwell Thomas and built in Portland stone. Today, the grounds of City Hall are a favourite of city centre workers, students and tourists for taking a break from the bustling city

And in the evening there's always the opportunity to do a **Belfast Traditional Music Tour** – this Music Trail is a unique way to experience Irish Music.

Belfast is full of fun and atmospheric restaurants; a buzzy night life awaits!

Leaving Belfast and Heading to Derry/Londonderry with some interesting stops along the way.....

DERRY~LONDONDERRY – *renowned as one of the finest Walled Cities in Europe, offering rich heritage and a vibrant cultural scene. Idyllically located linking the Causeway Coastal Route with the Wild Atlantic Way, and named as a 'Top 10 City in the World' by Lonely Planet.*

The Seamus Heaney Homeplace – Step into Seamus Heaney HomePlace and begin your journey through the life and literature of the poet and Nobel Laureate. Standing at the heart of the place and a people which so inspired him, HomePlace includes a stunning exhibition which interprets Seamus Heaney's work. The entire space over two floors is filled with personal stories and artefacts, dozens of family photographs, video recordings from friends, neighbours and cultural figures, and the voice of the poet himself reading his own words.



Seamus Heaney Homeplace

(Photo Courtesy of Mid-Ulster District Council)

Visit to Ballyscullion Park – Ballyscullion Park is situated on the shores of Lough Beg, through which the River Bann flows. It is a Ramsa site and Site of Special Scientific Interest owing to the richness and diversity of flora and birdlife. At the southern end of the strand, surrounded by the Lough on one side and wetlands on the other, is the ancient historic monument, Church Island. Seamus Heaney, the late much-lamented poet, grew up nearby and his father grazed his cattle on the strand. Lough Beg has provided inspiration for many of his poems.

Arrive Derry Londonderry and a must do and see is a guide walk of those infamous city walls Ireland's only completed walled city (allow 1 hour)

Tour of the Guildhall - fashioned in neo-gothic style, the Guildhall is one of the most striking buildings in the North West and was originally built in 1887 by The Honourable Irish Society. The red sandstone building is of neo-gothic architecture, with Tudor overtones. The Guildhall contains stunning examples of stained glass windows and visitors will be intrigued by its unique history and appeal.

Take a stroll walk over the Peace Bridge or indeed a cycle and foot bridge crossing the River Foyle. The Bridge opened on 25 June 2011, connecting Ebrington Square with the rest of the city centre.



Peace Bridge, Derry~Londonderry

Dinner – lots of options to choose from no matter what your taste or preference.