adventure
northern
ireland

do something
exhilarating

outdoorni.com
northern ireland
your adventure playground...

accessible
Fly from Great Britain to Northern Ireland in less than one hour.
Drive from Dublin in less than two hours.

compact
Go from the Fermanagh Lakes in the west to the beautiful
Mourne Mountains in the south east in less than two hours.

stunning
Stunning inland and coastal scenery in one small package.

undiscovered
Northern Ireland has been Europe’s best kept secret.
Adventure seekers will often find themselves in beautiful,
unspoilt scenery in complete tranquility.

we are here

FRONT COVER: NEWCASTLE BEACH, COUNTY DOWN.
BACK COVER: COASTEERING IN THE MOURNE MOUNTAINS, COUNTY DOWN.
northern ireland
everything you ever wanted for an adventure...

your choice...
Beginners can have a go whilst adrenaline junkies can challenge themselves and indulge their passions. Multi-activity centres can even treat you to three or four activities in one day!

water...
Northern Ireland has fabulous access to rivers and lakes for paddlers, not to mention stunning coastal waters just waiting to be surfed, kayaked and dived.

mountain...
The Mournes, the Sperrins and our sea cliffs really are an adventure playground for climbers, walkers and mountainboarders.

air...
Where better to see the rolling fields and coastal splendour of Northern Ireland...than from the sky.

eco - friendly...
We preserve our beautiful land whilst having fun outdoors; look out for members of eco-friendly and sustainable tourism schemes in the directory.
Welcome to your adventure this is your Northern Ireland…

This is your adventure playground! Northern Ireland is fortunate to have so many Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty just waiting to be discovered.

To give you a flavour of the spectacular areas in which your adventure will take place, we have provided a short description of what you can do in each area. We think you’ll agree that you won’t find better. So now you have the picture, get stuck in – Your Adventure has started!

1. **Binevenagh: The sky’s the limit!**
   - Take a day out and book yourself a seat in a glider that will take you over Binevenagh’s soaring cliff tops. You can take in the sites from the glider or, if you want, have a go at flying yourself.
   - Finbarr Cochrane, a gliding enthusiast, says, “it's the ultimate flying experience”, see p32. Binevenagh is also cherished by sky divers (p32).

2. **The Sperrins: Lose yourself!**
   - The area around Northern Ireland’s second highest mountain range is waiting to be discovered by you. You’ll find fast-flowing rivers, dense forests, shady glens and beautiful lakes as well as quiet roads, lanes and trails.
   - Kayakers will love the white water paddling here. Cyclists, both on and off-road, can choose from a number of fantastic trails, and it also hosts some excellent orienteering courses as Colin Henderson tells us on p16.

3. **Fermanagh: Float your boat!**
   - Welcome to Northern Ireland’s most magical area. Home to spectacular waterways, castles and forest parks, County Fermanagh is your ultimate adventure site. Discover the mysterious world that lies beneath by caving in the Cuilcagh Mountains (p7). Get on your bike (p9) and explore or learn to wakeboard on Lough Erne (p29). The lake is also one of the best places to try canoeing. The Lough Erne Canoe Trail (see p25) is the first of its kind in Northern Ireland and offers over 50km of flat water paddling.

4. **Ring of Gullion: Bike it!**
   - Slieve Gullion and its surrounding foothills are easily the most scenic parts of Armagh. The best way to see the mix of woodland and heath bog is on foot or by bike.
   - Try hill walking or fell running here or just pedal your way through the beautiful countryside.
   - You won’t be disappointed! See cycling on p9 for more information.

5. **The Mournes: Get rocking!**
   - Northern Ireland’s crowning glory is an adventurer’s paradise. The Mourne Mountains are simply spectacular. Rising dramatically from the sea, 12 summits of this range are all above 600 metres and include Slieve Donard, Northern Ireland’s highest mountain.
   - Walk among them, try horse riding in their shadow (p11), blast down them on a mountain board (p8) or give coasteering a go (p31). The Mournes is also home to a number of quality rock climbing sites, see p14 for more information.

6. **Strangford Lough & Lecale: Dive in!**
   - Strangford Lough is the largest sea inlet in the British Isles. Its calm waters, abundance of small islands and rocky outcrops mean it’s one of the best places you can find for diving and sailing.
   - As Dave Vincent, an instructor, tells us on p22, there are 15 diveable wrecks in the Lough and some stunning wildlife including dead man’s fingers and big sponges.

7. **Lough Neagh: Lap the Lough!**
   - The Lough Neagh region is perfect for those seeking adventure and breath-taking exhilaration. The best way to explore the area which has more roads and fewer cars is from the saddle of a bicycle. Spectacular views, scenery and attractions that will take your breath away!
   - The region also boasts an abundance of activities including paintballing (p15) and of course watersports; canoeing (p25) and sailing (p30).

8. **Causeway Coast & Glens: Surf’s up!**
   - The best way to see the magnificent coastline in one of Europe’s most scenic areas is from the water. Paddling in sea kayaks (p25) will give you the best view of the rugged cliffs and bring you into contact with beautiful marine life. Diving is big here too and some of the sites are outstanding (p27).
   - It’s also Northern Ireland’s surfing hotspot and you can learn the sport at the same places where Andy Hill, veteran surfer, has caught “the best waves” of his life (p23).

Tell me more
Armagh and Down Tourism www.armaghanddown.com
Belfast and County Down Bureau www.gotobelfast.com
Causeway Coast and Glens Tourism www.causewaycoastandglens.com
Derry Visitor and Convention Bureau www.derryvisitor.com
Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism www.fermanaghlake.com
Northern Ireland Tourist Information www.outdoorni.com

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caving

caving is the best way to discover northern ireland's inner beauty

Give it a go and you’ll find your way through hidden passages to a remote world of chambers adorned with natural features that, according to Pam Fogg, will "take your breath away". Pam and her husband Tim are Fermanagh cavers.

"The caves here are simply spectacular. It’s like entering a different world. You find beautiful examples of stalactites, stalagmites and underground rivers and streams, things you don’t see everyday, in a setting that is simply beautiful" Pam says.

There are well over 50 kilometres of cave passages in Northern Ireland and the longest cave in Fermanagh is nearly 7 kilometres long! Tim says there are some risks involved, so beginners need to use an expert when giving it a go.

"Caving can be quite physical. It’s a real sport, but it’s also much more than this because you learn about the science of water and rocks while spending time in an amazing parallel world." Marius adds.

take the next step

Just pick up the phone to organise a guided trip. Your caving centre will provide all the necessary equipment; wetsuit, oversuit, helmet, light and wellies. All you need are some warm clothes.

more info

www.caving.ie

so what's so good about caving?

"It’s completely different to anything most people will have tried before. You are exploring parts of the world you didn’t know existed, and the effort you put in is rewarded by the extraordinary things you get to see." Pam Fogg, Caver

top sites

The Belmore/Tullybrack area north of Lough MacNean and in the regions surrounding the Cuilcagh Mountains in County Fermanagh.

activity provider

Corralea Activity Centre Ltd
+44 (0) 28 6638 6123
www.activityireland.com

mountain boarding

this is one to get your pulses racing!

Mountain boarding or dirtboarding is a super cool activity. Snowboarders invented it to ensure they could still get their kicks when the white stuff was in short supply, but it was so much of a laugh, it became a sport in its own right.

Northern Ireland has its very own mountain boarding centre in the spectacular surroundings of the Mourne Mountains in County Down and it caters for everyone from novices to hardcore enthusiasts.

"Mountain boarding combines the best aspects of snowboarding, skateboarding and surfing. It’s a real blast and anyone can give it a go. Beginners start off taking it easy and learning the basics, but after an hour or two they can head to the main track and then go faster and faster as their confidence builds", says Gary Parr, Surfin’ Dirt’s owner.

More advanced riders get to take advantage of the long carving runs, jumps and features on the main hill. While experts such as 15 year old John McGuckin can race others and pull tricks in freestyle competitions. "I go to the centre at least once a week. I love getting out there and just trying to go as fast as I can or working out newer and better tricks and jumps. I can’t recommend it enough. I guarantee anyone who tries it, kids or adults, will love it as much as I do", he says.

take the next step

Just make a booking and show up ready to give it all you have got. The centre has boards and safety gear for hire and qualified instructors are on hand to show you how dirt should be surfed. Overnight accommodation is available too.

The centre is open from April to December each year and hosts the Irish Open, around August, where you catch international stars in action.

more info

www.mbseurope.com
There are loads for cyclists to choose from. We have short and long distance routes, both on and off-road. We have great family mountain bike trails through woods and along lake shores. There are also traffic-free canal towpaths and a range of on-road touring routes to try says Clare Wright who works in cycle trail development.

For holidaymakers or locals, cycle touring is a great option. There are over 800 miles of signed routes that are part of the National Cycle Network (NCN). Most of these follow quiet country lanes or roads with some sections on paths along disused railway lines or canals.

For dedicated bike lovers, longer NCN routes such as the 236 miles Atlantic Challenge from County Donegal to County Antrim along the coast are a must. Or what about the Kingfisher Trail, a 230 mile, figure of eight from Enniskillen in County Fermanagh to Carrick-on-Shannon in County Leitrim. For those in search of a great day out, shorter routes include the Lagan and Lough Cycle Way, a 21-mile, level and traffic-free cycle ride connecting Belfast with the city of Lisburn. This can be cycled in part or in its entirety with lots of places to stop off and visit along the way.

For a more rural experience, you could try following the signed routes which meander through the spectacular scenery of the Sperrin and Mourne mountains. The mountain biking scene in Northern Ireland is booming despite a lack of purpose built trails. Short family-friendly routes have been developed in three forests and another at Craigavon Lakes in County Armagh, a city park.

Mountain bikers in search of more technical challenges can link up with local riders through the websites listed here. Alternatively, activity centres and guides can take out groups and individuals on various routes throughout Northern Ireland. They will also hire bikes and offer local advice.

Check out the websites listed below for all the information you will need. If you don't have a bike, don't worry, you can easily rent one. There are many rental outlets and you can find these listed on www.cycleni.com. For those new to mountain biking, there is a number of excellent centres and guides in Northern Ireland, so check out the directory and给他们 a call. All equipment including bikes and helmets will be supplied.

www.cycleni.com
www.mtbider.com
www.irishdh.com

so what's so good about cycling?

“The freedom and the exercise. Being outdoors on a bike is as good as it gets!”

Andy Beavis
Cyclist from Lisburn
People from the ages of 6 to 80 come horse riding and everyone loves it. Some are nervous at first, but once our guides help them settle into it, they really enjoy themselves. By the time they get back, they want to book to go out again!" says Mary King, an equestrian centre owner.

She says horse riding is physical - "you use muscles you don't use in any other sport" - good for improving fitness and, more importantly relaxing. "It's great for clearing the head and getting away from it all. You are out in the fresh air and you can take in the beautiful scenery," she says.

Mary's centre is typical of some of the trekking centres you will find in Northern Ireland. It's situated right beside 2000 acres of breathtaking forest in Castlewellan, County Down.

All the riding is on trails and there are no cars to deal with. Beginners can ride for an hour or longer if they wish and help is provided to ensure all goes well.

"Our horses are very easy for beginners to manage. They are gentle and do what they are told," Mary adds.

David de Mello, 47 and from Castlewellan can vouch for this. "Once you learn the basics, you become confident with the horses and can really enjoy a day out on them. I love the fresh air, the exercise and the countryside. It's unbeatable," he says.

If you want to try horse riding there is an abundance of quality equestrian centres to contact. A number of these are able to offer long distance treks while some only provide facilities where you can learn horse riding skills. For horse owners there are also a number of trails and beaches where riding can take place.

take the next step
Get in contact with an equestrian centre and it will talk you through your options. You should ensure any centre is approved by the British Horse Society, which is a guarantee of high standards. For information on access to trails and beaches check out the websites listed below.

so what's so good about horse riding?
"It gets me out of bed on Saturday mornings and if it does that, it must be good!"

David de Mello  
Horse Riding Beginner

activity providers
Mount Pleasant
+44 (0) 28 4377 8651
www.mountpleasantcentre.com

Peak Discovery Group
+44 (0) 28 4372 1933
www.pd-group.eu

The Forest Stables
+44(0)28 8952 1991

top sites
East and West Strand in Portrush, County Antrim;  
Portstewart Strand, a 3.5km beach, County Londonderry;  
Florence Court Forest Park, County Fermanagh;  
Greyabbey Estate BHS Toll Ride, a privately owned 6.5 km trail accessed through Gransha Riding School, County Down;  
Murlough Nature Reserve and Newcastle Beach, County Down.

more info
www.bhsireland.com

saddle up, hit the trail and kiss your worries goodbye!

horse riding is easily one of the most enjoyable activities to try in Northern Ireland
Because it’s that good”, Trevor says.

Ricky Bell, 23 and from Belfast, has been climbing in Northern Ireland since he scaled his way up a route called “Crooked Chimney” on the Bernagh Slabs in the Mournes when he was just 10 years old.

“Getting out on the crags for the day is what climbing is all about. It’s a cool sport and there is always another climb waiting for you”, he says. Ricky is currently working on completing a route called “Divided Years” in the Mournes and reckons he’ll “get it soon”.

Take it from Trevor Fisher, one of the many qualified instructors you will find in Northern Ireland. “Rock climbing is an extremely rewarding activity. You get a great sense of achievement when you manage to complete a climb and you never forget how good it felt to be out there giving it a go”, he says.

The beauty of rock climbing is that you can make sure the climbs match your ability. As you improve, you can increase the level of challenge in the sport.

The selection of sites in Northern Ireland is second to none. The Mourne Mountains in County Down, for example, offer unparalleled climbing of all grades. Just think of a choice of 20 crags and cliffs and over 500 different routes to climb! And if that doesn’t grab you, there are always the sea cliffs of Fairhead in County Antrim!

“Fairhead is recognised by experienced climbers as one of the top climbing areas in the UK. People come from all over to climb there, and Northern Ireland is the place to give it a go”.

Regardless of whether you are a beginner or expert, there are plenty of sites, some still undiscovered, waiting for you and your rope. For the unfamiliar it can seem a daunting activity, so a good starting point can be artificial climbing walls which are mostly found at activity centres. Climbing is actually easy to try and everyone should. Take it from Trevor Fisher, one of the many qualified instructors you will find in Northern Ireland. “Rock climbing is an extremely rewarding activity. You get a great sense of achievement when you manage to complete a climb and you never forget how good it felt to do it”.}

The Mourne Mountains in County Down: Well renowned for a wide range of climbs with varying degrees of difficulty such as the “fun crags” of Hares Castle or the steeper faces of Cove Mountains. The cliffs at Fairhead, County Antrim, are a top destination for more experienced climbers.

Top sites
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Activity providers

- Action Outdoors
  +44 (0) 7789 754 565
  www.actionoutdoors.info

- Activities Ireland
  +44 (0) 7971 087 480
  www.activitiesireland.co.uk

- Ardclinis Outdoor Adventure
  +44 (0) 28 2177 0010
  www.ardclinis.com

- Bluestone Adventure Centre
  +44 (0) 28 4377 0714
  www.mountainandwater.com

- Corralee Activity Centre Ltd
  +44 (0) 28 6635 6133
  www.activityireland.com

- Craigavon Watersports Centre
  +44 (0) 28 6844 2469
  www.craigavonactivity.com

- East Coast Adventure
  +44 (0) 28 4773 9923
  www.eastcoastadventure.com

- Peak Discovery Group
  +44 (0) 28 4372 3933
  www.pd-group.eu

- Share Holiday Village
  +44 (0) 28 6772 2122
  www.sharevillage.org

- The Outdoor Fox
  +44 (0) 7779 295 299
  www.theoutdoorfox.com

- Tollymore Mountain Centre
  +44 (0) 28 4372 2158
  www.tollymore.com

- Xplore Outdoors
  +44 (0) 7734 365 321
  www.xploreoutdoors.co.uk

More info
www.climbing.ie
www.mountaineering.ie

So what’s so good about climbing?

“Everyday off the ground is a good day”

Ricky Bell, Rock Climber
paintball and combat games

combat games, such as paintball, airsoft and laser skirmishing are among the world’s fastest growing activities

What part of being out and about, stalking your friends or family and then using your wit and energy to eliminate them, doesn’t sound like fun?

You can try all three activities, which are broadly similar, at various locations in Northern Ireland. “Paintball is great group activity,” says Niamh O’Reilly, an instructor. “People come to us and spend a day playing numerous game scenarios in a spectacular forest setting. The games are really challenging and exciting. Using the cover of bunkers and trenches, you need to be quick thinking and resourceful in order to outwit your opponents,” she explains.

At centres, like Niamh’s, full training is offered and games are played safely, so enjoyment is guaranteed. “The kit offered and games are played safely, so people of all ages and kids just love it,” says Rory Martin, whose holiday village offers it.

For those who want to try paintball, but using more realistic weapons, airsoft is perfect. “It’s very similar, but our guns, everything from pistols to sniper rifles, are replicas of real ones,” says David Stephens, an instructor whose 80-acre family farm is now home to military scenarios.

Centres such as David’s can cater for big groups and the age limit is usually 13 upwards. “It don’t know anyone who didn’t love it when they tried it,” he adds. All you need are some warm clothes, an instructor whose 80-acre family farm is now home to military scenarios.

so what’s so good about combat games?

“This is your chance to be Rambo for a day. What more could you ask for?”

Niamh O’Reilly, Paintball Instructor

activity providers

Escarmouch Paintball +44(0)28 9032 7008 www.escarmouch.com
FRV Airsoft +44(0)7733 586 926 www.frvairsoft.com
Mobile Team Adventure +44 (0) 28 9180 0809 www.mobilteamadventure.co.uk
Oakfire Paintball +44(0)7733 17 1177 www.oakfirepaintball.com
Peak Discovery Group +44 (0) 28 4372 5913 www.pd-group.eu
Predator Combat Games +44 (0) 7825 169 631 www.predatorcombat.com
Share Holiday Village +44 (0) 28 6772 2122 www.sharevillage.org
The Jungle Paintball +44 (0) 28 8872 8815 www.thejunglepaintball.com
Toddsleap.com +44(0) 28 8356 7170 www.toddsleap.com

orienteering

orienteering is about maps, it’s about forest and it’s about adventure.

Try it and you’ll have the chance to get out into the natural environment and explore some of Northern Ireland’s most beautiful countryside - to boldly go where you wouldn’t normally be sent!!

The challenge of orienteering is to find a series of control sites in as short a time as possible using a map, a compass and your wits. You can run, jog or walk, it’s up to you. “Orienteering is an adventure sport with a small ‘a’. It can be technical and fast, but it doesn’t have to be for it to be enjoyable. People of all ages can give it a go and it is an inexpensive activity for families to try”, says Colin Henderson of NI Orienteering.

“Orienteering is an adventure sport with a small ‘a’. It can be technical and fast, but it doesn’t have to be for it to be enjoyable. People of all ages can give it a go and it is an inexpensive activity for families to try”, says Colin Henderson of NI Orienteering.

There are normally a range of specially planned courses from short and simple navigation to long and very technical, allowing competitors to participate at levels that suit them. The age range is 8 to 80+ making it a sport for life. Other than a compass, no expensive equipment or clothing is needed to start. “Just give orienteering a go and you’ll have great fun. Reading the map and interacting with the environment is exciting and energising”, he adds.

so what’s so good about Orienteering?

“Time flies when you are orienteering. You focus on what you are doing so much that you just forget everything else.”

Allan Bogle, Orienteer

top sites

Castlereagh, County Down;
Loughgall Country Park, County Armagh;
Lecale Country Park, County Down;
Roe Valley Country Park, County Londonderry;

activity providers

Activities Ireland +44 (0) 7977 167 480 www.activitiesireland.co.uk
Bluelough Adventure Centre +44 (0) 28 4377 0714 www.mountainadventures.com
Carrick Activity Centre Ltd +44 (0) 28 6636 6123 www.activityireland.com
Craigavon Watersports Centre +44(0) 28 8881 9669 www.craigavonwater.co.uk
Mobile Team Adventure +44 (0) 28 9180 0809 www.mobilteamadventure.co.uk
Peak Discovery Group +44 (0) 28 4372 3933 www.pd-group.eu
Xplore Outdoors +44 (0) 7734 365 321 www.xploreoutdoors.co.uk

take the next step

Just check out www.nioretteering.org.uk and you’ll find all the information you need to get going. There are details of Northern Ireland’s 3 clubs, open events and a full list of the permanent courses.

more info

www.nioretteering.org.uk
www.britishorienteering.org.uk
www.ecotrailsni.com

www.niorienteering.org.uk
www.orienteering.org.uk
more info

Almost all events are open and total novices will be very welcome. We will help them learn the basics and make sure they have a great time”, Colin says.

www.escarmouch.com
www.sharevillage.org
www.mobileteamadventure.co.uk
www.oakfirepaintball.com
www.pd-group.eu
www.thejunglepaintball.com
www.toddsleap.com
Mattie is Robin Hood. Or at least the 12 year old thinks he is, as he readies his bow!

One of the best ways to get out and about in Northern Ireland is to spend time at one of the area’s many excellent multi-activity centres. Suitable for all ages and groups of up to 100, you will find any number of great ways to enjoy yourself. Jump on a water trampoline, scale a climbing wall, drive a quad bike or try to hang on to a banana boat. Give canoeing a go, get into orienteering, try raft building or shoot clay pigeons. The choice is yours. You can go for a day or longer as many of the centres offer accommodation or can organise it nearby.

All will gladly arrange activities to suit you and your family or group. Special deals are often available. To give you an idea of the fun you can have we sent the Grey family and friends along to check out what is on offer.

**take the next step**

To enjoy a day out at an activity centre, all you need to do is contact one. There are loads of activities to try and plenty of expertise on hand to ensure you have just as much fun.

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**multi-activity centres**

- **Ardclinis Outdoor Adventure**
  +44 (0) 28 2177 1340
  www.ardclinis.com

- **Bluedough Adventure Centre**
  +44 (0) 28 4177 0714
  www.mountainandwater.com

- **Corralea Activity Centre Ltd**
  +44 (0) 28 6638 6123
  www.activityireland.com

- **Craigavon Watersports Centre**
  +44 (0) 28 3834 2669
  www.craigavonactivity.com

- **East Coast Adventure**
  +44 (0) 28 4173 9923
  www.eastcoastadventure.com

- **Foymore Lodge Country Pursuits**
  +44 (0) 28 3833 8755
  www.foymorelodge.com

- **Lurgaboy Adventure**
  +44 (0) 28 3755 2425
  www.lurgaboylodge.com

- **Peak Discovery Group**
  +44 (0) 28 4172 3933
  www.pd-group.eu

- **Share Holiday Village**
  +44 (0) 28 3832 2122
  www.sharevillage.org

- **Toddsleap.com**
  +44 (0) 28 8556 7170
  www.toddsleap.com

- **Tollymore Mountain Centre**
  +44 (0) 28 4372 2158
  www.tollymore.com

- **Ultimate Water Sports**
  +44 (0) 7808 736 818
  www.ultimatewatersports.co.uk

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**multi-activity sessions**

- **Action Outdoors**
  +44 (0) 7789 754 565
  www.actionoutdoors.info

- **Activities Ireland**
  +44 (0) 7371 163 188
  www.activitiesireland.co.uk

- **Mobile Team Adventure**
  +44 (0) 28 9180 0809
  www.mobileteamadventure.co.uk

- **The Outdoor Fox**
  +44 (0) 7779 225 299
  www.thoutdoorfox.com

- **Xplore Outdoors**
  +44 (0) 7334 155 321
  www.xploreoutdoors.co.uk

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AIMING FOR GOLD IN CASTLEWELLAN FOREST PARK, COUNTY DOWN.

outdoorni.com | 18 | outdoorni.com
Matthew is Robin Hood. Or at least the 12 year old thinks he is as he readies his bow. A second later and he’s an ecstatic, pint-sized outlaw. His first arrow hits the target’s centre. “Mattie Dawson, look at you”, says Susie Grey, his pal Johnny’s mother.

Mattie, Susie and Johnny are here with John, Susie’s husband, and Kris, another pal. They are joined by Conor and his girlfriend Ruth, both students, Michael, who is handy when it comes to archery and yours truly. Orienteering is next and then raft building, but it’s competition time first.

“Game On”, Susie shouts, but her team struggle. “Drastic action needed”, she cries, but it’s too late. John’s team: 210. Susie’s: 60. “Game over”, John jokes. Martin, an instructor, explains how orienteering involves finding control points, 7 of which are located in the centre’s forest park. This time, John and Susie are a team. Conor and Ruth another and Michael and I are in charge of the young ‘uns. Kris works out the best route. We find numbers 1 and 3 near the road as Johnny works out the way to numbers 4, 2 and 6.

Half an hour later and all we need are 7 and 5. 7 is behind a hedge. The clue for 5 is “bend in ruined wall” and while the rest of us search in the wrong area, Michael finds it. Donal, another instructor, is impressed. “You got 5, 5 is a killer”, he says. We win, and the kids are chuffed.

“Three’s a charm”, Susie jokingly reminds him when she and John return.

During lunch, Martin explains raft-building is one of his centre’s most popular activities. Again two teams are needed. Each has to construct its own raft and then race. “Can’t wait”, I say as it turns out I have to paddle the raft; Mattie thinks he should design. 5 minutes later and he’s tangled in ropes. “I’m the designer. You do the building bit”, he says. John, Michael, Conor and Ruth finish their raft and it’s a decent looking effort. We eventually agree on how our barrels should be tied.

Within minutes, we are all in wetsuits. Martin joins our team and Mattie, Johnny, Kris and I sit on the raft and hope it holds. It sort of does and we paddle out to join the others. Donal shouts that first back to the shore wins. We work out how to turn our raft around. Mattie starts counting ‘one, two, one, two’ and everyone paddles. We catch and then ease ahead of the others. Donal is impressed a second time and Mattie runs for a hot shower.

“You have to carry your raft back”, Martin reminds him. “I designed it, you carry it”, he shouts.

Mattie and his pals had a blast. Conor and Ruth would come again, Michael really enjoyed it and John and Susie would recommend it.

The raft building was everyone’s favourite, but Mattie liked the archery. “I hit the bull’s-eye”, he reminds us. After a brief stint in raft design, Robin Hood is back.
Teeming with marine life, dotted with amazing ship wrecks and boasting spectacular landscapes, you won’t find a more captivating environment to explore. “People make the mistake of thinking that the waters here are cold and dark, but the very opposite is true. It’s actually warm and clear and there is loads to see” says Richard Lafferty, a diving centre owner.

Dave Vincent, another diving instructor says beginners shouldn’t hesitate to try the sport. “There is a certain level of training required but there are introductory courses too. If you sign on for this option, you can be in the water within an hour” he adds.

Joanne Robinson, mother of three, was the first in her family to learn to dive. Now, her three teenagers love the sport as much as she does. “I’ve dived in countries throughout the world and the sites in Northern Ireland are the best I have come across” she says. And here’s why. For wreck enthusiasts, the good news is four hundred examples lie off the Northern Ireland coast. Wildlife lovers will find luxurious growths of dead men’s fingers and big sponges. Seals are a common sight as well as conger eels, dog fish, cuttlefish, lobsters, gunnels and gobies!

Each wreck also comes with its own fascinating story: The HMS Drake, a torpedoed cruiser lies in Church Bay off Rathlin Island; the Alastor, a large motor yacht which sank in 1946, can be found in Strangford Lough, and the Sumatra, the largest sailing vessel wrecked on the Antrim Coast rests off Islandmagee. Other sites have mysterious names such as Portstewart’s Blue Pool, home to overhangs, reefs and boulders. All you need to do is take the plunge!

so what's so good about diving?
“Diving is all about spending time in a peaceful environment. I love the feeling of weightlessness, the freedom and the interaction with marine life.”

Richard Lafferty
Diving Centre Owner

top sites
Belfast Lough: Up to 20 wrecks can be dived here!
Islandmagee Coast, County Antrim: Enjoy the most varied and concentrated wreck diving in Ireland with excellent underwater visibility.
Strangford Lough, County Down: Home to 15 double wrecks.
Portstewart, County Londonderry: Known for spectacular drop offs, wrecks and reefs, both deep and shallow for all levels. From here you can access the Inishowen Peninsula in Donegal, the Skerries area in Portrush, the Giant’s Causeway and the famous dives off Rathlin Island.

activity providers
Aquaholics
+44 (0) 28 7083 2584
www.aquaholics.org

DV Diving
+44 (0) 28 9146 4671
www.dvdiving.co.uk

North Irish Diver Ltd
+44 (0) 28 9338 2246
www.northirishdive.com

Peak Discovery Group
+44 (0) 20 8147 3933
www.pd-group.eu

Strangford Yacht Charter
+44 (0) 7836 327 227
www.strangfordyachtcharter.com

more info
www.padi.county.uk
www.bsac.com
northern ireland is a surfer's paradise

Just ask Andy Hill. The 38 year old has surfed his way around the world’s most exotic locations, but says he has caught his best waves off the north coast of Londonderry and Antrim.

“Surfing is really popular in Northern Ireland and the area is known among surfers everywhere. We have fantastic waves and we get people visiting from places like Hawaii, Australia and New Zealand. That’s how good it is”, he says.

The surf shop owner and six-times Irish champion thinks everyone should try the sport at least once. “Surfing is an incredible activity. Most people who try it are hooked instantly” he says.

Bernard O’Neil, a 21 year old rookie surfer, is living proof. He tried surfing in Portrush in Antrim for the first time recently and is now the proud owner of his own board and wetsuit.

“I always wanted to try surfing. Now I can’t get enough of it”, he says.

Bryan McAuley, an 8-times Irish bodyboarding champion, was Bernard’s instructor. “Learning to surf is great fun. We teach the necessary techniques on land at first and then people go out on the water and put them into practice”, he says.

People of all ages can pick up the sport given a bit of time. Jacob McLoughlin is 10 and has been catching waves for 2 years. “It took me two months to stand, but I got there. Surfing is great craic and I want to go on to compete when I’m older”, he says.

You don’t need to worry about getting cold either. Bryan says that modern wetsuits mean surfing is now an all-year round sport in Northern Ireland.

“The best thing about surfing in Northern Ireland is that there are waves to suit every surfer from the beginners to the more advanced. You never get the same conditions when you go out, so you never get bored. What other sport offers you that?” he asks.

The answer, of course, is none and you’ll agree if you try the sport at some of Northern Ireland’s best beaches. The most popular surfing in County Antrim is at East Strand and West Strand in Portrush. East Strand has a wave called Arcadia which is very powerful and is famed around Ireland. The West offers a variety of left and right peaks and is hugely popular. White Rocks at Portrush, County Antrim is an excellent surfing site and conditions here are usually good, while Portballintre, Andy Hill says, is a “north coast swell magnet”.

During the summer this spot is the swell magnet of all magnets. When swells are smaller and everywhere is flat, here it can be 4ft or more. You get some of the best tubes around when it’s firing”, he says. We could tell you what a tube is, but wouldn’t you rather find out for yourself?

take the next step

All you need to do to find yourself on the waves is contact a surf school. There are a number in Northern Ireland and they will provide you with beginner boards and all the gear you will need to stay warm.

If you are an experienced surfer and want to find out about weather, best spots and the like, then check out the website below.

more info
www.surfingireland.com
whether you are looking for a gentle trip or a mad day catching the surf, northern ireland is the place to try canoeing or kayaking.
“This is easier than I thought”, Zoe says. She is 21 and from Canada, the country which invented the Canadian canoe in which she is going to spend the next 3 days. Zoe and Tim are outdoor enthusiasts who intend to paddle as much of the length of the Lough Erne Trail as they can. Colin is their guide and in 3 days he thinks they should make it to Enniskillen which means they will have paddled all of the Upper Lough section.

“We heard about the trail and really wanted to give it a go. We love camping and thought it would be a great idea to go from one site to another on such a peaceful stretch of water”, says Tim, 24 and from Londonderry. The Lough Erne Trail is the first of its kind in Northern Ireland and offers over 50km of paddling, with camping facilities at overnight stops and interpretation panels on the shore. Experienced paddlers will love the Lower Lough where the trail passes by the breathtaking Cuilcagh Mountains.

The Upper Lough boasts a maze of islands and narrow channels of slow flowing water.

“We are going to be taking it easy, so we will have plenty of time to stop and take in the sights. I am looking forward to the view and enjoying being out in the fresh air. The paddling bit, for me, is optional”, Zoe says smiling.

Tim is hoping she is joking. “If she doesn’t paddle, we might leave her behind at one of the stops”, he warns.

All three look relaxed and at ease as the boats drift away. You can hear Colin passing on his local knowledge as they disappear into the distance and start their adventure.

“We caught up again as they make it to Enniskillen...”

“It was brilliant. I loved every minute of it. The trail is easy to follow and really beautiful. It was a perfect way to get away from it all” Zoe says.

Tim is also positive, “I thought it was great. We had no problem finding camping sites and I would love to have stayed out there longer.”

According to Jan the kids loved the trip. “We worried they might get bored, but they never did. We just broke the days up as much as possible and checked out the interpretation points along the way. Niamh and Harry were delighted to get to see wildlife like herons and kingfishers from the water,” she says. Matt says he would highly recommend family canoeing trips, but would advise inexperienced paddlers to use a guide.

“We just got out there and having fun. If you don’t have any experience, it’s easy to do a guided trip. Other would-be canoeists, Matt adds, should note that you don’t have to do the whole trail or take on Lough Neagh, like his gang did, to have a good time. “You can just come out for a day and enjoy a gentle paddle along the river from any point to another. Regardless of where you choose, you will have a brilliant time” he says. Matt also thinks he will be back on the Blackwater soon. “Niamh keeps asking if we can go out again,” he says.
Before getting them out on the water using beginners a quick 5 minute lesson on dry land period of time. “At our school we give water-skiing or wake boarding in a very short Beginners can easily master the basics and sense of achievement”. get pulled along. They also get a great buzz once they are able to stand comfortably and get the hang of it after a while though and I love the rush I get from it” he says. Rory Martin, who works at a sailing centre in County Fermanagh runs ‘taster days’ where families, groups or individuals can head out on Lough Erne, relax, take in the views and pick-up some sailing skills. “The lake is always tranquil and very beautiful. People enjoy sailing there and it’s a great way to unwind”, he says. Rory uses keelboats that can take 6 to 8 people, and everyone can have a go at the controls. During the summer his centre runs courses for children and they learn in small dinghies.

Carla Nixon, 16 and from Enniskillen tried this recently. “I always thought I would like sailing and I wasn’t disappointed. It was excellent and I loved it. I picked up the basics really quickly and want to go back to learn more advanced skills now,” she says. Carla learnt about how to position a boat’s sail to maximise speed and to tie four knots used by sailors. “It’s great that you learn new skills as well as having a really good time,” she says. Other recognised courses are available at specialised sailing centres. Dinghies and keelboats are used here too, but you can also learn to crew bigger yachts or take a spin in a catamaran or trimaran. These are fast boats that are thrilling to speed along in. Regardless of what craft you choose, sailing provides a spectacular way to see Northern Ireland’s real beauty.

There are a number of activity centres, listed in the directory, that run taster sessions as well as “learn to sail” courses. For information on specialised sailing centres check out the clubs section on the Royal Yachting Association for Northern Ireland website www.ryani.org.uk.

so what’s so good about sailing?

“I always thought I would like sailing and I wasn’t disappointed. It was excellent and I loved it.”

Carla Nixon, Sailing beginner

top sites

Strangford Lough, County Down; Belfast Lough, between County Antrim and County Down; Lough Erne, County Fermanagh; Causeway Coast, County Antrim; Lough Neagh

activity providers

Craigavon Watersports Centre
+44 (0) 28 3834 2669
www.craigavonactivity.com

East Coast Adventure
+44 (0) 28 4173 9523
www.eastcoastadventure.com

Kinnego Marina
+44 (0) 28 3832 7573
www.craigavon.gov.uk

Peak Discovery Group
+44 (0) 28 4172 7272
www.sharevillage.org

Ultimate Water Sports
+44 (0) 28 887 756 718
www.ultimaterwssports.co.uk

more info

www.ryani.org.uk

outdoorni.com | 30

more Info

www.ryani.org.uk

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coasteering is all about having a howl of a time along a stretch of coastline.

Give it a whirl and you’ll laugh yourself silly while body-surfing waves, scrambling up cliffs and jumping into deep water from heights of up to 20ft!

The coastline in Northern Ireland is beautiful and rugged. There are amazing caves, gullies, cliffs, rocks and marine wildlife. Coasteering is simply the most action-packed way to see it all, says Stephen Brown, a guide and big-time enthusiast.

Getting people to try cliff jumps is Stephen’s favourite bit, but he also gets his kicks from heights of up to 20ft! “All you need for waves and walk or swim in what he says is a wild environment and find out when to take the plunge and when to hold back. Curious-types can explore rock pools or caves. Colm McNally from Newry, tried coasteering recently with two of his adult kids and they all loved it. “It just sounded like something out of the ordinary. We all love the water so we were mad to give it a go. It was really exciting. The power of the waves was awesome. We are going to go again, but this time we want to try bigger jumps” he says.

so what’s so good about coasteering?

“Think of it as a way to travel through land, water and air in one journey so what’s so good about skydiving? I’ve always been an adrenaline seeker, but now I have found the ultimate rush” says Darren Smyth from Lisburn who recently tried skydiving recently and loved it so much he went back for more. “I just thought it was the best thing ever. The freefall was brilliant”, he says.

so what’s so good about skydiving?

“Think of it as a way to travel through land, water and air in one journey without changing your clothes. One that comes with adrenaline rushes as standard”, says Darren Smyth, Activity Centre Guide.

Taking the next step

Coasteering can be high-risk and beginners need an experienced instructor. You can

give it a go at any time of year as quality equipment. All you need to bring with you is a swimsuit and towel.

top sites

The coastline near Bloody Bridge in the Mourne Mountains, County Down, The coast between Ardglass and Ballyhousan, Various locations near “White Rocks” east of Portrush, County Antrim.

activity providers

Action Outdoor +44 (0) 7781 734 565 www.actionoutdoors.info
Activities Ireland +44 (0) 7971 759 480 www.activitiesireland.co.uk
Bluelough Adventure Centre +44 (0) 28 4377 0714 www.mountainandwater.com
Mobile Team Adventure +44 (0) 28 9180 0809 www.mobileteamadventure.co.uk
Peak Discovery Group +44 (0) 28 4372 3138 www.pd-group.eu
The Outdoor Fox +44 (0) 7779 295 299 www.thetooldoor.com
Tollymore Mountain Centre +44 (0) 28 4372 2158 www.tollymore.com
Xplore Outdoors +44 (0) 7734 365 321 www.xploreatadventures.co.uk

so what’s so good about skydiving?

“I’ve always been an adrenaline seeker, but now I have found the ultimate rush” says Darren Smyth, Activity Centre Guide.

activity providers

Gliding Ulster Gliding Centre Ltd +44 (0) 28 7775 0101 www.ulsterglidingclub.org
Microlight Flying Fly NI Airways +44(0)845 094 0189 www.flyni.co.uk
Skydive & Parachuting Wild Geese Parachute Centre +44 (0) 28 2955 8609 www.skydivewildgeese.com

and she should know. The 53 year old has over 3,000 parachute jumps to her name and runs a centre on the north coast of Londonderry where you can give it a go. “There is nothing to compare with this experience. You will always remember your first jump”, she says. The most popular jump for beginners is a tandem skydive where you are attached to an instructor. “You only need a short briefing for this one and the freefall lasts for about a minute”, assures Maggie.

Darren Smyth from Lisburn tried skydiving recently and loved it so much he went back for more. “I just thought it was the best thing ever. The freefall was brilliant”, he says.

Other ways of taking to the air are also popular in Northern Ireland. Finbarr Cochrane is with the Ulster Gliding Centre. You don’t need any previous experience to give gliding a go. It’s a brilliant way to see the world from a different viewpoint or learning flying skills”, he says. Victor Carmichael flies microlights from a base near Portadown and urges people to give this experience a go. “Microlights are small, light but very safe aircraft. We have pilots who can take people up for an introductory flight or they can get lessons. It’s an amazing way to take to the clouds,” he says. Northern Ireland is also a hit with paragliders and hang gliders who will introduce you to their sport if you get in contact.

Taking the next step

When it comes to skydiving the most difficult decision to take is deciding to jump. If you manage this bit, then just get in contact with a centre where instruction is on offer. It’s advisable to find one that operates under the regulations of the British Parachute Association. Some centres have restrictions for safety reasons. At Maggie’s Wild Geese centre, for example, you need to be 16 years old to jump. If you are interested in hang gliding, paragliding, microlights or gliders, check out the website links below for more information.

more info www.bhpa.co.uk www.uhpc.f9.co.uk

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Clinical and Technical Writing Services

www.outdoorni.com
### Activity Providers

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<th>Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Action Outdoors</td>
<td>53A Magherelaw Road, Ballymoney</td>
<td>D3</td>
<td>+44 (0)7793 754 650</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activites Ireland</td>
<td>157 Lower Newry Road, Newry</td>
<td>D5</td>
<td>+44 (0)7711 187 900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventure TourTours</td>
<td>5 Usherview Road, Armagh</td>
<td>B3</td>
<td>+44 (0)7761 639 532</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A &amp; R School</td>
<td>101 Maghera Road, Ballymoney</td>
<td>C1</td>
<td>+44 (0)7404 800 050</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Airline Celtic</td>
<td>Treggan, Strabane</td>
<td>B3</td>
<td>+44 (0)7860 111 013</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aquamatics</td>
<td>14 Mill Row Parkhill, Co. Down</td>
<td>D3</td>
<td>+44 (0)7869 258 244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ards</td>
<td>High Street, Castlereagh</td>
<td>D1</td>
<td>+44 (0)7477 187 470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bluestone Estate</td>
<td>Castledawen Forest Park</td>
<td>D4</td>
<td>+44 (0)7867 071 071</td>
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<tr>
<td>Danslea Activity</td>
<td>Belton, Co. Fermanagh</td>
<td>A4</td>
<td>+44 (0)7868 635 620</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greengates</td>
<td>1 Lecrow Road, Greenvale</td>
<td>D3</td>
<td>+44 (0)7868 354 030</td>
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<tr>
<td>Watersports Centre</td>
<td>Co. Armagh BT4 1TL</td>
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<tr>
<td>GV Activity</td>
<td>180 High Street, Castlereagh</td>
<td>C3</td>
<td>+44 (0)7869 258 244</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>East Coast Adventure</td>
<td>Lower Knockbarragh Road, Dungarven</td>
<td>+44 (0)7868 354 030</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mourne Cycle Tours</td>
<td>79 Tullyree Road, Bryansford</td>
<td>D4</td>
<td>+44 (0)7867 434 888</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Pleasant</td>
<td>15 Bannanstown Road, Dungarven</td>
<td>D4</td>
<td>+44 (0)7868 354 030</td>
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<tr>
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<td>+44 (0)7868 635 620</td>
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### How to Book Direct with Activity Operators

All bookings are made by contacting the activity operator directly. The activity operator can make bespoke arrangements from a 2-hour test session to an adventure break. Ask the activity operator for any packages that include accommodation as many of them offer this facility and it is often an easy and economical way to arrange your adventure breaks. Telephone now and make your adventure break in Northern Ireland a reality.

On the Internet [www.outdoorni.com](http://www.outdoorni.com) provides you with everything you ever wanted to know about adventure activities in Northern Ireland but in addition provides more detailed information on top adventure locations and activity operators. Check out the special offers section too.

[www.discovernorthernireland.com](http://www.discovernorthernireland.com) will provide you with all the information you need to take a holiday in Northern Ireland by selecting an activity and accommodation booking service. Check out the short breaks section too for adventure breaks including accommodation.

### Eco Tourism

Northern Ireland seeks to promote eco-friendly and sustainable tourism. A number of outdoor activity providers are involved in a variety of such schemes:

- **Mountsfield Green Accreditation**
  - Scheme member: [www.mountsfieldgreen-accreditation.org](http://www.mountsfieldgreen-accreditation.org)
  - PAUL project: AWARE: active member [www.projectaware.org](http://www.projectaware.org)

### Safety

While activity providers generally operate according to that which is accepted as current best practice, it is the responsibility of the participant to ensure that the number of participants is correct and that all appropriate safety standards are adhered to. The Countryside Access and Activities Network and the Northern Ireland Tourist Board neither have, nor assume, any responsibility or liability for the accuracy of completeness of the information supplied or the service and level of care afforded by the activity provider listed in this publication.
getting to northern ireland

Northern Ireland is easy to get to, easy to get around. Excellent fast trains from London and Scotland to Belfast and Larne, three airports with frequent flights to the UK and beyond, plus good roads, buses and trains to take you where you want to go.

Belfast International Airport
T: +44 (0)28 9033 9093
www.belfastairport.com
Bus 600 from the bus stop opposite the terminal building. Bus service: phone for details.
T: +44 (0)28 9024 6649
Taxi fare to city is approximately £22.

You can fly directly from:
- Amsterdam / Brussels / Dublin / London / Manchester / Paris / Edinburgh / Ireland / Glasgow / Edinburgh / Leeds / Liverpool / London / Manchester / Newcastle / Newcastle / New York / Nice / Nottingham East Midlands / Palma / Paris CDG / Prague / Stansted / Rome / Rennes / Southampton / Tenerife / Trondheim / Venice / Verona / Wizz Air.

Birmingham
T: 0871 240 2224
AirEurop
T: 0871 246 2464
Jet2.com
T: 0871 227 1377
TatExpress
T: 0871 227 1377
FlyBe
T: 0871 522 6120
Eurotrans
T: 0870 797 7879
manx2
T: 0871 200 0491
Fly Who?
T: 0871 227 2627
CityAir
T: 0870 796 8963
Ryanair
T: 0870 977 2477

City of Derry Airport
T: +44 (0)28 7191 0784
www.cityofderryairport.com
Bus 143 or the 234 to the city centre, Limavady and Coleraine. Fare £4.70. Taxi to city is approximately £10. Train runs from Derry to Coleraine and Belfast.

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www.belfastairport.com
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T: +44 (0)28 9024 6649
Taxi fare to city is approximately £22.

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Birmingham
T: 0871 240 2224
AirEurop
T: 0871 246 2464
Jet2.com
T: 0871 227 1377
TatExpress
T: 0871 227 1377
FlyBe
T: 0871 522 6120
Eurotrans
T: 0870 797 7879
manx2
T: 0871 200 0491
Fly Who?
T: 0871 227 2627
CityAir
T: 0870 796 8963
Ryanair
T: 0870 977 2477

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www.cityofderryairport.com
Bus 143 or the 234 to the city centre, Limavady and Coleraine. Fare £4.70. Taxi to city is approximately £10. Train runs from Derry to Coleraine and Belfast.
Fermanagh Lakelands

With a rich abundance of natural resources teamed with the very best facilities in our activity centres, Fermanagh is the perfect location for an adventure holiday.

Whether you’re an activity enthusiast with an urge to find that new adrenalin rush, a company looking for a team-building break or someone who prefers to take a more relaxed pace in the company of some of our highly trained instructors we have something to suit everyone’s needs.

Lough Erne is unquestionably the jewel in Fermanagh’s Crown. Its three hundred square miles of fresh water dotted with 160 green wooded islands make it one of Europe’s best-kept secrets. This vast expanse of water stretching from Belleek to Cregagh Glen enfolds Lough Erne National Nature Reserve, Strangford Lough. The variety of natural landscapes and water sports; from sailing to canoeing and waterskiing to cruising…. if you prefer land based activities then why not try clay pigeon shooting, archery, laser clay pigeon shooting, skiing, absailing, canyoneering…. the list is endless!

So why not give Armagh & Down a go?

Lough Neagh

Lough Neagh is the largest lake in the British Isles and is Northern Ireland’s best kept secret. Whether it is a relaxed chilled-out break or something to awaken your sense of adventure, activity holidays on Lough Neagh really can be an exhilarating experience!

Lough Neagh is renowned for its water sports, from sailing to canoeing and waterskiing to cruising…. if you prefer land based activities then why not try clay pigeon shooting, archery, off road 4x4 adventures, orienteering or paint-balling…. the range of activities on offer in this region is simply inexhaustible!

For a more relaxing break, Lough Neagh and its tributaries are especially attractive to the game angler with the Dollaghan (unique to Lough Neagh) being the prize catch. Lough Neagh eliminates visitors with its tranquil atmosphere and un-spoilt scenery, making it an excellent region to explore on foot. With routes suitable for ramblers as well as those seeking a leisurely stroll.

Did you know that The National Trust in Northern Ireland looks after over 120 miles of coastline and 40 square miles of scenically historic countryside?

This includes The Giant’s Causeway and 8 National Nature Reserves – one being the UK’s largest Marine Nature Reserve, Strangford Lough. The national trust offers superb opportunities to try out a host of outdoor activities.

National Trust outdoor properties are a haven for walkers at all levels. For the leisurely walker the ancient woodlands at Crom, The Argyll or Derrynane provide a peaceful retreat. For breathtaking coastal views it is hard to beat the Mourne Coastal Path, the sand dunes of Mulhugh National Nature Reserve or Ballymacormick Point. On the North coast the trails looking out over the Atlantic along the Giant’s Causeway, Carrick-a-Rede, Downhill and White Park Bay are always spectacular and further east are Portmuck and Skirmington Point.

The more adventurous walker or fell runner can choose to take on the challenge of Slieve Donard in the Mournes, Northern Ireland’s highest peak or take the uphill climb to the summit of Divis Mountain and Black Hill near Armagh. The Ards Peninsula and Colman Ginn in Belfast also offer steep climbs to rewarding views over the city.

Beyond walking, The National Trust properties in Northern Ireland support over 20 other recreational activities. Explore the wonderful estate of Castle Ward by bike or try a gentle off-road cycle along the Dundrum Coastal Path. For avid canoeists Strangford Lough and The Argyll have access points which feed part of the Strangford Lough and Blackwater Canoe Trails. Other activities include fishing, horse riding, orienteering and water sports.

For more information
Fishing  •  Canoeing  •  Cycling  •  Walking  •  Fell Running  •  Horse riding  •  Climbing
www.discoverloughneagh.com  +44 (0) 28 9751 2345

For more information
The National Trust
Cycling  •  Walking  •  Sailing  •  Fishing  •  Canoeing
www.nationaltrust.org.uk  +44 (0) 28 9182 2881

If you want to take some time out, come to Armagh & Down where the beauty of the natural scenery is matched only by the multitude of ways to enjoy it. And it would be hard to match the quality and range of outdoor activities that you’ll find here!

You can visit friendly family-run equestrian centres, catering for all ages and abilities throughout the region, offering exhilarating horse riding over beaches and mountain slopes and through forest parks.

Those same mountains, from the sublime journey around the summit of mighty Slieve Gullion in South Armagh to the majestic slopes of the charming Mountains of Mourne as well as tranquil canal towpaths and quiet country roads offer unforgettable cycling holidays.

A series of Waymarked Ways through forests, mountains and unique nature reserves as well as a number of internationally acclaimed walking festivals make this an ideal destination for hiking.

The waters of Armagh & Down are also host to a range of wonderful waterports. Divers can enjoy the fascinating marine underwater world of loughs and bays whilst those in search of thrills will discover the best of jet-skiing, powerboating, kayaking, rafting and more!

And if you’re not an adventure pro, why not visit one of our many adventure activity centres where you can try something new? Some of the many activities on offer in these fantastic centres include archery, laser clay pigeon shooting, skiing, absailing, canyoneering…. the list is endless!

So why not give Armagh & Down a go?

Fermanagh Lakelands

With a rich abundance of natural resources teamed with the very best facilities in our activity centres, Fermanagh is the perfect location for an adventure holiday.

Whether you’re an activity enthusiast with an urge to find that new adrenalin rush, a company looking for a team-building break or someone who prefers to take a more relaxed pace in the company of some of our highly trained instructors we have something to suit everyone’s needs.

Lough Erne is unquestionably the jewel in Fermanagh’s Crown. Its three hundred square miles of fresh water dotted with 160 green wooded islands make it one of Europe’s best-kept secrets. This vast expanse of water stretching from Belleek to Cregagh Glen enfolds Lough Erne National Nature Reserve, Strangford Lough. The variety of natural landscapes and water sports; from sailing to canoeing and waterskiing to cruising…. if you prefer land based activities then why not visit one of our many adventure activity centres where you can try out something new? Some of the many activities on offer in these fantastic centres include archery, laser clay pigeon shooting, skiing, absailing, canyoneering…. the list is endless!

So why not give Armagh & Down a go?