

Mayo

Jutting proudly into the Atlantic Ocean, Mayo boasts a stunningly beautiful unspoilt environment with a magical attraction for visitors.

Cosmopolitan towns burst with charm and personality, as welcoming as the Mayo people themselves. The standard and availability of accommodation is excellent and the range of visitor attractions and activities expands each year. Unique highlights include climbing **Croagh Patrick**, Ireland's holy mountain with the starkly beautiful **National Famine Memorial** at its foot and spectacular views of **Clew Bay** and its many islands from the summit.

History comes alive at the world famous **Céide Fields** in North Mayo where man's imprint on the land dates back 5,000 years. **Foxford Woollen Mills** offers a glimpse of the county's industrial past while **The National Museum of Ireland – Country Life** just outside **Castlebar**, houses the national folk life collection depicting everyday life in Ireland from the 1850s to the 1950's.

Westport is one of Ireland's most popular towns, a planned town and one of Ireland's tidiest towns as evidenced by its consistent positioning in the National Tidy Towns competition. **Westport House & Country Park** is a magnet for families while **Achill Island**, beloved of artists, has **Slievemore Deserted Village**, a poignant reminder of a darker past. **Knock Shrine** in the east of the county was the scene of a miraculous apparition in 1879 while charming **Cong** will forever be associated with Hollywood and '**The Quiet Man**' film.

Festivals are a part of life here, particularly in the summer months – will it be adventure sports, beach racing, arts, music or a children's festival?

Quite simply, Mayo is amazing!





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RIDGEPOOL, BALLINA, CO. MAYO

Mayo towns and villages

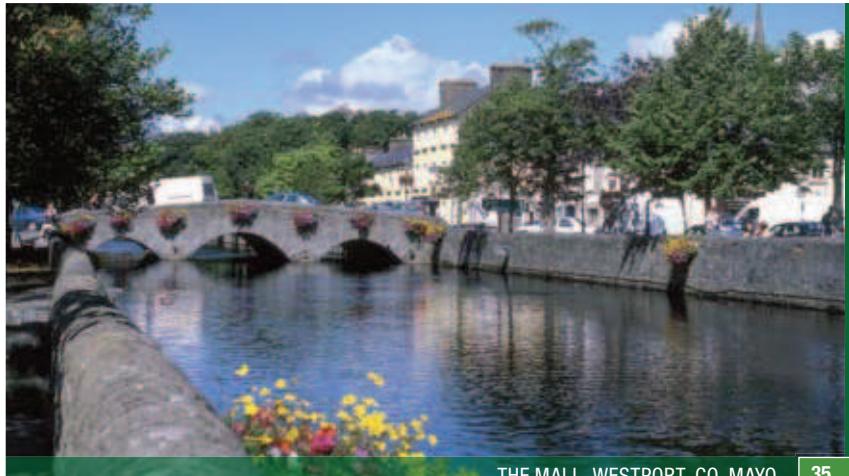
Achill Island B2 is Ireland's largest offshore island and connected to the mainland by a bridge over the causeway – Achill Sound. The island has glorious cliff scenery, spectacular drives and walks, beautiful beaches and good sea and shore angling. Early Christian, Famine and related artefacts make a visit to the island a must for the discerning tourist. Achill in recent years has become a hub for all kinds of water based activities - surfing, kayaking, canoeing and kite surfing. The island is also a part of the Irish speaking Gaeltacht area.

Ballina D2 is a busy industrial and commercial town on the estuary of the River Moy and is the cathedral town of the Catholic diocese of Killala. The town, the River Moy and the local area are world renowned in angling circles with tremendous lake, river and sea fishing all on offer. Anglers the world over dream of landing a salmon at the Ridge Pool located in the centre of the town. Ballina is also the birthplace of Mary Robinson who became the President of Ireland in December 1990, the first woman in Ireland to hold the office.

Ballinrobe D4 on the River Robe is at the centre of south Mayo's Lake District, with the angling waters of Loughs Mask, Carra and Corrib all close by. The stained glass windows by the renowned stained glass artist Harry Clarke, in St. Mary's Catholic Church are worthy of perusal while a genealogical service is provided by the South Mayo Family Research Centre based in the town. Ballinrobe has good sports facilities, including an excellent golf course and a fine racecourse.

Belmullet B1 in the centre of the Barony of Erris and lying between the two bays of Broadhaven to the north, and Blacksod to the south, is the ideal place for a sea angling holiday. Nearby to the west is the renowned championship links golf Course at Carne. The Mullet Peninsula is an area of natural beauty and charisma and is also famous for the exceptional quality of birdlife found there.

Castlebar D3 located in the centre of the county, is the county town and administrative capital. Until the collapse of the 1798 Rising, Castlebar was the capital of the 'Provisional Republic of Connacht' - a memorial now stands at the entrance to the Mall in honour of the French soldiers who died on Irish soil that year. The pleasant tree-lined Mall, once a cricket pitch of Lord Lucan, is now a town park.



THE MALL, WESTPORT, CO. MAYO

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Cong D4 is a picturesque village nestled between the two lakes of Corrib and Mask. Whether you are an angler, a walker, a historian, or simply a lover of nature, a visit to this village is something you will always treasure. Cong Abbey, built in the 12th Century, was commissioned at the same time as the Cross of Cong, a masterpiece of religious art, which is now on display in the National Museum of Ireland - Country Life in Castlebar. The classic film 'The Quiet Man' was shot on location in the Cong area in 1951. Even today one can retrace John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara's footsteps, by taking a guided tour of the 'Quiet Man' locations.

Foxford E1 is a pleasant town on the River Moy and an angler's paradise. Foxford owes much to the Sisters of Charity who established the famous Foxford Woollen Mills in 1892. Admiral William Brown the founder of the Argentine Navy was born in Foxford. The 86km long Foxford Way, it is one of Mayo's finest long distance waymarked walks.

Knock Village E3 is best known for its religious associations. On 21st August 1879 Our Lady, St. Joseph and St. John the Evangelist reportedly appeared at the gable of Knock Parish Church. From this miraculous occurrence Knock has grown to the status of an internationally recognised Marian Shrine. The village also boasts a fine Basilica and Knock Folk Museum which documents the story of the apparition and places it in the context of life at that time.

Louisburgh C3 at the mouth of the Bunowen River is the focal point of a region of innate beauty and is endowed with a large number of fine Blue Flag beaches. The area is notable for angling, surfing, swimming and nature trails and is the starting point of the famous Doolough Drive going from Louisburgh along by Doolough Lake, passing by Aasleagh Falls and ending up in Leenane, County Galway. This drive is both enchanting and thought provoking.

Westport C3 is a popular tourist destination and has won the Irish Tidy Towns Competition three times in recent years. Planned and designed by Richard Cassells and nestling in inner Clew Bay, this delightfully laid out town boasts elegant Georgian streetscapes and effortlessly friendly character making it an authentic but lively holiday base. The Westport area offers a wide range of sporting and outdoor activities including golf, sailing, angling, walking, cycling and horse riding. In nearby Murrisk Croagh Patrick provides an arresting backdrop to the town and has its pilgrim climb on the last Sunday of July each year.

For more information on Mayo's towns and villages, visit our website
www.discoverireland.ie/west