

Belfast Telegraph

Autumn Breaks



Cover image courtesy of Failte Ireland

***Goodbye summer,
hello autumn... and your
next getaway***

***Halloween high-jinks
at The Spirits of
Meath Festival***

***Plus: Special deals
for over 50s, families
and more***

Wake up to history: Autumn breaks by Trim Castle



Time to plan your next autumn break to County Meath! There's no better time to explore the historic town of Trim and experience the rich history and beauty of Trim Castle and its surroundings. It's the perfect base for a weekend getaway or a mid-term break with the family.

Check into the Trim Castle Hotel, a modern hotel right in the heart of the action, with spectacular views of the magnificent Trim Castle from your window. You'll be staying directly opposite one of Ireland's most iconic landmarks, perfectly positioned to explore the town and surrounding area.

After a day of exploring, the hotel offers a cosy retreat. Enjoy a delicious meal at one of their on-site restaurants, or relax with a drink while soaking up your historic surroundings.

Built on the banks of the Boyne, Trim Castle is Ireland's largest Anglo-Norman castle. Climb the Great Keep and imagine the stories that unfolded within its walls. Don't forget to get that perfect photo of the castle against the backdrop of autumn colours.

From the castle, follow the Trim Castle River Walk, a peaceful stroll that takes you past

other medieval ruins like the Yellow Steeple and Sheep Gate. It's a fantastic way to enjoy the crisp autumn air and see the town from a different perspective.

After a day of exploring, savour hearty food and a warm welcome in a town that feels worlds away from Dublin - perfect for a relaxing and memorable escape right on your doorstep.

See page 5 for details of Halloween's *Púca Festival* in Trim.

For further information on staying in Trim, visit www.trimcastlehotel.com



Spooktacular stays in the Boyne Valley



Looking for a break with a little magic this Halloween? The Boyne Valley has you covered! Trim Castle Hotel is serving up family feasts and tickets to Emerald Park, while The Johnstown Estate mixes luxury with fun thanks to its Halloween Kids Club, fairy trail, and a relaxing spa for the grown-ups. In Kells, Headfort Arms Hotel turns history into adventure with a Mystery Trail full of Celtic crosses and ancient secrets. Over at Knightsbrook Hotel, families can dive into the Púca Festival, Emerald Park thrills, and even a spooky day at Causey Farm.

Castle Arch Hotel is right in the middle of Trim's Púca celebrations, while Loughcrew Estate has room for up to 17 guests and a



Birthplace of Ireland's Ancient East

Halloween garden event to match. If you prefer the seaside, then the Cottages are offering 15pc off coastal stays. For something cosy, both the Ardboyne Hotel and Newgrange Hotel make autumn getaways extra snug with their seasonal packages.

And if that's not enough, the region is packed with options, from boutique B&Bs like Caravogue House to elegant escapes like Bellinter House, Tankardstown, and Rock Farm Slane. Whether you want thrills, chills, or just a cosy autumn getaway, the Boyne Valley has it all.

For all the details, and plenty more to see and do, visit discoverboynevalley.ie

TRIM CASTLE HOTEL

Autumn Retreat

OVERNIGHT STAY | BREAKFAST | DINNER

BOOK NOW
trimcastlehotel.com | (046) 948 3000

ROGANSTOWN Hotel & Country Club

AUTUMN SALE OFFER

COMPLIMENTARY DRINK ON ARRIVAL
NO 6L. SALON AND SPA
GREAT POOL
DISCOUNTED GREEN FEES

15 minutes to DUBLIN CITY

from **€139** for 2

+353 1 843 3118 WWW.ROGANSTOWN.COM

+ JUST 90 MINUTES FROM BELFAST CITY CENTRE +



The Spirits of Meath Festival is back for 2025



■ The Spirits of Meath Festival is back for 2025.

Halloween isn't just a night, it's a season – an awakening of ancient spirits and timeless tales. Here, the air grows heavy with mystery, the landscapes shift into something more, and the line between the living and the other world dissolves. The Boyne Valley is the global birthplace of Halloween, where the traditions of Samhain echo through the centuries. Bonfires once lit on the Ancient Hill of Tlachtga (Hill of Ward, Athboy) to guide spirits now illuminate vibrant festivals including Lú The Festival of Light, Púca, Spirits of Meath and Samhain Festival of Food & Culture Ancient grounds become stages for storytelling, and every shadowed corner holds a secret waiting to be discovered. Start planning your journey here where there will be more **fun by day and frights by night!**
All date, times and cost available www.spiritsofmeath.ie

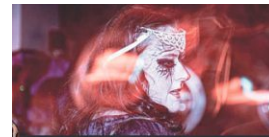


■ Tlachtga Abhaile Walking Tour of Athboy by Tlachtga Abhaile

Delve deep inside the history and the folklore of the origins of Halloween and its links to Tlachtga.

All dates time and costs are available on the website:

<https://www.discoverireland.ie/meath/living-history-walking-tour-of-athboy>



■ Samhain Festival of Food & Culture 2025

Celebrate Ireland's rich culinary and cultural heritage at Samhain Festival of Food & Culture, running from 6th to 9th November 2025 in Kells, County Meath. This unmissable festival brings together the best of Irish food and drink, featuring a packed programme of events, including the renowned Sheridans Irish Food Fair.

Follow @samhainfestivalkells - tickets will be available to book online soon at **www.foodcultureireland.ie**.

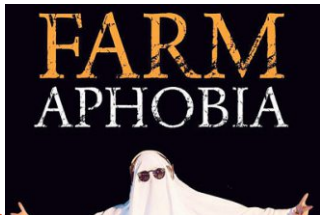


■ Farmaphobia at Causey Farm IRELAND'S BIGGEST HALLOWEEN EVENT

Our tormented and twisted minds have been working overtime to ensure that Farmaphobia will return from the 3rd October with various dates to 1st November.

Now with 6 Terrifying Haunts spread over 100 Acres of Fear, Farmaphobia is **strictly 13+ and all 13-16-year old's must be accompanied on site by an adult.**

Tickets must be booked in advance on the Causey farm website **www.farmaphobia.com** - Farmaphobia (Causey) open 3rd, 4th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th, 22nd of Oct- 1st of November



■ Pumpkin and Fun at Navan Adventure Centre

Get Ready for Spooky Fun and Lasting Memories Navan Adventure Centre where magic, adventure, and delightful scares await. Secure your tickets soon for October 2025! Designed especially for families, our festival promises to create unforgettable spooky memories for children ages 3 to 12yrs Tickets on sale NOW! Open 18th 19th 25th -27th Oct Sensory Session: Available October 18th 10:30 and 11.30 **<https://navanadventure.ie/halloween-fun/>**



■ Halloween at Funtasia a Theme Park!

Pumpkin Patch Festival -for Children and families of all ages. As the leaves turn and the air grows crisp, Halloween is just around the corner! Funtasia Theme Park in Drogheda, Co. Louth, is ready to make this spooky season unforgettable with two fantastic events for the whole family: The Pumpkin Patch Festival and an exciting Halloween Waterpark Party. Open 12th 13th, 19th 20th , 26th to 30th Oct **<https://www.funtasia.ie/halloween-family-fun-at-funtasia>**



■ Pooka Spooka at Causey Farm 2025



Enjoy traditional games and crafts, scarecrow corn maze, mirror maze, magician lots more in

Causey Farm's popular Halloween family event. Suitable for families with children aged 2-12. Open October 11th 12th 18th 19th & 25th – 30th

www.causey.ie - Pooka Spooka. Tickets Now

■ Ghost of the Manor at Causey Farm

A Haunting Halloween Experience for older children (9+ years)

This ancient mansion was home to many souls who have long since passed on ... but as Halloween approaches, their peaceful rest is disturbed... wandering through the house. . **www.causey.ie** - Ghosts of The Manor (Rockfield) open 24th – 30th Oct



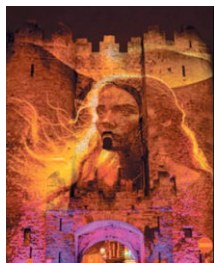
■ Púca Festival 30th October to 2nd November

Featuring a variety of events, including music, comedy, storytelling, and spectacle, with performances by artists such as The 2 Johnnies, Blindboy, Kila, and Groove Armada, and many more. There will also be immersive experiences like Beyond The Veil: The Puca Trail the Samhain Circus, and heritage tours of Tlachtga (Hill of Ward) The festival will take place across County Meath with festival hubs of Athboy and Trim Tickets for all the events are now available on their website **Home - Puca (pucafestival.com)**



■ Lú Festival of Light

The much-anticipated Lú Festival of Light returns for its fourth spectacular year, lighting up Drogheda from 24th to 27th October. A vibrant celebration of ancient mythology, this year's festival promises an unforgettable experience for all ages. Lú Festival of Light 2025 is set to be the premier urban animation and lighting event in Ireland this year and will deliver dazzling displays, rich storytelling, extraordinary street performance and immersive atmosphere within the town.



■ Emerald Park! Another fang-tastic season

Tricky Trail at Emerald Park Our well-loved family friendly treasure hunt, Tricky Trail, is back for 2025. Enjoy a frightfully fun family day out and get ready to experience some spooky storytelling, eccentric experiments, magical performances and more. There may even be a few frights in store...open 11th 12th 18th 19th 25th-31th October



■ Trick or Treat Trails on the Loughcrew Estate

Get ready for a Spooktacular Halloween at the Loughcrew Trick or Treat Trail! Join us for a hair-raising adventure through the enchanted grounds of Loughcrew Estate, where spooky surprises, wicked fun, and plenty of treats await all ghouls and goblins! October 26th to 30th at 12 pm - 6 pm Loughcrew Estate and Gardens, Oldcastle, Co. Meath



■ The Johnstown Estate

This Halloween, treat your family to a luxury getaway at The Johnstown Estate. Enjoy a two-night stay in our spacious family rooms or self-catering lodges, Little guests will be spellbound by the Halloween Kids Club, with spooky storytelling and creative arts and crafts, while the fairy trail brings extra magic for all ages. Parents can relax in our award-winning Elemis Spa or explore the leisure centre with swimming pools, Jacuzzi, and hot tub. Book now: **<https://thejohnstownestate.com/experience/halloween/>**



■ Headfort Arms Hotel

Enjoy an overnight with Mystery Trails in Kells and a delicious full Boyne Valley Breakfast! Highlights include a face-to-face with the real knight of the round tower. Solving this murder should take approximately 1.5 hours and cover four kilometres distance. It is suitable for all ages and is appropriate for detectives in wheelchairs and pushchairs. **https://secure.headfortarms.ie/bookings/grouped_specials**



■ Knightsbrook Hotel, Golf & Spa Resort

The Home of Halloween - At Knightsbrook Hotel, Spa & Golf Resort we've got everything for the perfect family getaway this Halloween. Two Nights Bed & Breakfast 2 Course Evening Meal for all on One Evening Trick or Treat Goodie Bag for each Child Free Cancellation up to 48 hours **Link: Packages - Knightsbrook Hotel**



■ Loughcrew Estate

Lovely family stay available at Loughcrew Estate for up to 17 guests, from 25th–29th October, including complimentary access to our spooktacular Halloween event in Loughcrew Gardens. **Link - Stay – Loughcrew**



Dates, times and costs available at **www.spiritsofmeath.ie**

A castle stay with city perks

Set against the colourful backdrop of Killiney Hill and overlooking the sweeping waters of Dublin Bay, Fitzpatrick Castle Hotel offers a perfect blend of seasonal charm, timeless hospitality, and historic elegance. Just minutes from the quaint streets of Dalkey Village and the vibrant coastal town of Dún Laoghaire, it's the ideal escape for an autumn break close to the city yet surrounded by nature.

Our Autumn Getaway package invites you to unwind with one or two nights of luxurious accommodation, complete with a freshly prepared breakfast each morning and a mouth-watering three-course dinner on one evening in the award-winning Mapas Restaurant.

Each spacious guest room combines comfort and style, giving you the perfect place to relax after a day of exploring or indulging. Guests also enjoy complimentary access to our leisure centre and swimming pool, making it easy to balance relaxation with activity during your stay.

Beyond the hotel, the



surrounding area offers something for every mood—whether it's a leisurely seaside stroll along the Dun Laoghaire pier, a brisk hike through the leafy trails of Killiney Hill with its panoramic views, or simply soaking in the colours of the season right on the hotel grounds.

Back inside, afternoons can be savoured with tea and pastries in elegant surroundings, while evenings lend themselves to cocktails and conversation in the cosy Library Bar. For those seeking something a little more energetic, our newly introduced padel courts can be easily booked via the Playtomic app, adding a unique twist to your getaway.

With warm service, breathtaking scenery, and a host of seasonal experiences waiting to be enjoyed, Fitzpatrick Castle Hotel is the perfect destination for your autumn escape.

Book now at www.fitzpatrickcastle.com



Happy Campers: Family and pet-friendly urban adventures

This Halloween and mid-term break, Aloft Dublin City invites families, couples, and even four-legged friends to experience a one-of-a-kind urban getaway with its Family Camp rooms, transforming every stay into a playful mini adventure.

Each Family Camp room features a roll-out bed with its own teepee, complete with games and activities to keep children entertained. Parents can relax while the little ones enjoy their indoor adventure – Aloft-style: no rain, just fun, all within steps of Tinters Gastropub and the panoramic city views from the WXYZ Bar.

For families needing extra space, the Urban Studio Double Double Rooms offer two double beds, ample room to spread out, and optional crib facilities, creating the perfect basecamp for exploring Dublin together.

Couples can enjoy a stylish city escape in the King Rooms, with chic design, skyline views, and a vibrant atmosphere that makes for a memorable getaway. And because no adventure should leave anyone behind, Aloft Dublin City is pet-friendly, welcoming furry companions to join in the fun.



Situated in the heart of Dublin 8, guests are just minutes from St. Patrick's Cathedral, Teeling Whiskey Distillery, and the Guinness Storehouse, while enjoying modern design, comfortable spaces, and a lively Aloft vibe.

"At Aloft Dublin City, we're redefining city breaks for families, couples, and even pets. Our Family Camp rooms are designed for fun, comfort, and making lasting memories," said Louise Brown, sales and marketing director.

Guests are invited to discover the unique Family Camp rooms, Urban Studio Double Double Rooms, and more for an unforgettable Halloween or mid-term break in Dublin at www.aloftdublincity.com, T: 00353 1963 1800.

Autumn Getaway

Unwind in coastal Killiney this autumn with a luxury stay full of seasonal charm at Fitzpatrick Castle. Take in the stunning scenery around Killiney Hill or simply relax in our leisure centre and pool. Book your autumn getaway today!



Our Autumn Package includes:

One or Two Nights in Elegant 4-Star Accommodation
Full Irish Breakfast Each Morning
3-Course Dinner in Mapas Restaurant
Complimentary Access to Leisure Centre & Pool

FROM €115 per person per night
for two people sharing

Fitzpatrick Castle, Killiney, Co. Dublin

Book Your Stay
FITZPATRICKCASTLE.COM
Tel: +353 1 230 5400

FITZPATRICK
CASTLE

FITZPATRICK
COLLECTION

Goodbye summer, hello autumn... and your next getaway

As the warmest summer on record draws to a close, autumn makes its misty advance, bringing with it the sound of school children and the promise of new beginnings. Whether you are ready to embrace the new term or wish to cling on to the last of the sunshine, now is the time to nail down plans for an autumn getaway. Deals are available for all, from families looking for a Halloween with a difference to over-50s retreats, and from rejuvenating spa breaks to action-packed adventures.

Autumn escape options:

- Family mid-term breaks are the perfect way to give the children something to look forward to as the nights draw in. Do your homework to find the best places to go for a Halloween adventure, depending on whether you love or loathe the spooky goings-on.
- A luxury break offers respite from life's responsibilities. The only decisions you need to make are which spa treatment to book, which outfit to wear today, and how many courses to order for dinner. You'll leave feeling restored, refreshed, and revived.
- City breaks offer an exciting change from the humdrum of term-time life. Lose yourself in the sights, feast on a fantastic array of food, and immerse yourself in city culture. Explore the local heritage with a guided tour or museum stop to elevate the experience.
- Countryside retreats are perfect for immersing yourself in the season's beauty. Relax outdoors with a round of golf, a hike, or a leisurely cycle. Autumn is one of the best seasons for being among trees, so go conquer



Make the most of the season's beauty by being outdoors. Photo by Gabby Orcutt on Unsplash

collecting, apple-picking, leaf-kicking and enjoy the wellbeing that comes with forest-bathing.

- Coastal walks are exhilarating at this time of year, with brisk winds whipping up the surf. Wrap up warm and take a kite or frisbee for the children, feeling your stress ebb away with every step across the strand. A long

beach walk is best followed by a hot drink by a roaring fire, and the chance to catch up with friends or family.

Offers are available for all tastes, from last-minute deals to full-on autumn escapes, and from family weekends away to midweek bargains for couples or groups of friends.



Go hillwalking in Donegal (above) or take a city break in Dublin. Images courtesy Fáilte Ireland



aloft
DUBLIN CITY

Family Stay, Play, and Dream Together

Escape the everyday with our Camp Aloft Family Package — where city excitement meets indoor adventure! Kids can enjoy their very own teepee, cozy air mattress, and treats, while grown-ups relax with breakfast included and skyline views from our rooftop bar. Board games and family fun await in the heart of Dublin. It's the ultimate family-friendly city break — full of play, comfort, and unforgettable memories.

Aloft Dublin City
1 Mill Street, The Liberties
Dublin, D08 XK58

Special Donegal breaks with 50+ retreats

Discover the perfect autumn escape with Gallen Hospitality, where comfort, relaxation and adventure await in the heart of Donegal. With three exceptional 4-star hotels – Jackson's Hotel, Villa Rose Hotel & Spa, and An Chúirt Hotel – Gallen Hospitality has crafted special packages designed with the over-50s in mind. Whether you long for leisurely strolls, a round of golf, afternoons of shopping, soothing spa treatments, or the thrill of exploring the Wild Atlantic Way, each hotel provides the perfect setting for a refreshing break.

For those aged 55 and over, Jackson's Hotel and An Chúirt Hotel are proud to host exclusive retreats this September and October – three-night getaways that include dinner each evening alongside a carefully curated itinerary of activities. These breaks provide a wonderful opportunity to relax, socialise, and experience the very best of Donegal in the company of like-minded guests.

Jackson's Hotel, Ballybofey

Overlooking the peaceful River Finn and framed by Drumboe Woods, Jackson's Hotel is a family-run haven offering spacious bedrooms and superb leisure facilities. Guests can enjoy the 22-metre heated indoor pool, fully equipped gym, and dining in Fara's Bar or The Thirsty Trout. Its central location makes Jackson's the perfect base for exploring Donegal's rich landscapes.

This September, Jackson's will host the Autumn Senior Social, a special three-night break for over-55s running from Monday to Wednesday, September 20-22. Guests will enjoy evening meals, daily activities, and the chance to connect and unwind in a friendly, welcoming atmosphere.

Villa Rose Hotel & Spa, Ballybofey

Just across the road, the Villa Rose Hotel &



Jackson's Hotel, Ballybofey, the perfect base for exploring Donegal



The Villa Rose is a welcoming escape for those seeking rest and restoration

Spa provides a boutique-style retreat with contemporary bedrooms and two signature suites. Guests can indulge at the award-winning V Spa, where expert treatments promise ultimate relaxation. With casual and

à la carte dining options, plus the warmth of genuine family hospitality, the Villa Rose is a welcoming escape for those seeking rest, rejuvenation, and a touch of luxury. For over-50s, Villa Rose also offers tailored



An Chúirt offers a truly authentic Donegal experience

packages with dinner, bed and breakfast, and access to the spa, making it a stylish choice for a short break in Donegal.

An Chúirt Hotel, Gweedore

Set at the foot of Errigal Mountain, An Chúirt offers a truly authentic Donegal experience. Guests are surrounded by dramatic coastlines, shimmering lakes, and pristine beaches. The hotel features Fara Óg's Bar & Restaurant, private dining in The Duck Restaurant, and full leisure facilities at the Earagail Health Club – including sauna, Jacuzzi, hydro pool, and swimming pool.

An Chúirt will host its Over-55s Retreat from Sunday to Wednesday, September 21-24. This three-night programme combines delicious dinners, daily activities, and plenty of time to relax and explore the stunning Gweedore area.

Plan your stay

For more information or to book your autumn break, contact:

Jackson's Hotel, Ballybofey – 00353 74913

1021, www.jacksonshotel.ie

Villa Rose Hotel & Spa, Ballybofey – 00353 74913 2266, www.villarose.net

An Chúirt Hotel, Gweedore – 00353 74953 2900, www.anchuirt.com.



MOUNT WOLSELEY
HOTEL, SPA & GOLF RESORT

Active Retired Midweek Gold

- 2 Nights BB + Dinner on both evenings •
- €5.00 per person Afternoon Tea Discount • €5.00 per person discount off a round of Golf
- 10% Discount Card for Rathwood Garden & Lifestyle Centre • Enjoy Blissful Gardens & Woodland Walking Trail

Serene & Beautiful • Book Your Escape to the Country



From Only €186pps

Tel: 00 353 59 91 80100

www.mountwolseley.ie

Co Carlow, only 1 hour from Dublin



AUTUMN SENIOR SOCIAL

20TH - 22ND OF OCTOBER | JACKSON'S HOTEL, DONEGAL

Escape to the heart of Donegal and enjoy a memorable 3-night retreat featuring:

- Delicious 2-course dinners and hearty breakfasts
- Evenings of live traditional music & Storytelling
- Aqua Aerobics & Leisure Centre Access
- Leisure time & discounts to local attractions including Glenveagh National Park & Donegal Castle



€620 for two people sharing | €460 for single occupancy

Call us at +353 74 913 1021 | info.rh@gallengroup.com | T&C's Apply



OVER 55'S RETREAT

21ST - 24TH OF SEPTEMBER | AN CHÚIRT HOTEL, DONEGAL

Escape to the heart of Donegal's Gaeltacht and enjoy a memorable retreat featuring:

- Delicious 3-course dinners and hearty breakfasts
- Evenings of live music
- Storytelling with John Joe McGinley
- A creative craft class with Donegal Copper Crafts
- A self-guided visit to Glenveagh National Park



€599 for two people sharing | €379 for single occupancy



Call us at +353 (0) 74 953 2900 | reservations.ac@gallengroup.com | T&C's Apply



Reconnect with nature on a forest holiday. Escape everyday life with a break at CABÜ.

Move into your luxury lakeside log cabin and spend the time with someone special.

Experience the well-being magic of being in the forest.

It's the simple things.



www.cabu.ie

