



Spring Into Summer – Bumper Holiday Edition

[Share on facebook](#) [Share on twitter](#) [Share on email](#) [Share on pinterest](#) [share](#) [More Sharing Services](#) **4**

Total Camping Ireland is a one-stop-shop for anyone planning a camping holiday in Ireland, **writes Catherine Halloran.**

Here, founder David Lonergan outlines what it is all about.

“Total Camping Ireland was set up after my first year of camping in Ireland in my new campervan. I quickly realized it was very difficult to find one source of information about camping in Ireland that included camping parks locations, opening dates, facilities etc. This is when I had the idea to set up Total Camping Ireland, which is an independent camping information site for all things camping related in Ireland.

The website allows you to search using a map of Ireland to quickly find a camping park in the area you are planning to travel to.

We have also listed camping parks according to what you are looking for in a camping trip, including glamping (camping but with a bit more comfort), activity based, tent only & winter camping.

Another popular feature of the website is our legal stopovers map.

This map allows people with campervans to locate stopover locations where they can safely pull over and camp for the night.

These spots include public houses which have installed camping facilities & also European style Aire De Service.

The Aire De Service facilities are being installed by forward thinking Local Authorities but again online information is scarce so our website puts this information on an easy to read map.

We periodically add camping blogs both from our own adventures and from users of the site.

These blogs give details on camping parks, activities to enjoy in the area as well as local pubs and restaurants.

Camping parks owners are encouraged to update their details with us, and for the month of April we are giving 20% off the usual camping park registration fee."

FACTBOX:

If you are new to camping, it is worth getting hold of the bare essentials you will need for a stress-free break.

Each type of camping involves different kit and every camper is different in what they consider to be a necessity.

There are a few things worth remembering before you take your first trip away in a new tent. Check your gear in advance to ensure that it will be useable when you get to your destination. Have a dry run at pitching your tent so you can minimise stress and frustration when you arrive at your destination.

Cooking outdoors is one of the most fun aspects of camping. Whether you choose to live off the BBQ, cook up a feast on a double burner camping stove or keep it simple with a tiny backpacking stove, there are plenty of options for what to cook and how to cook it while out camping.

It is always worth noting that you are using your cooking equipment correctly and safely. Knowledge such as the right kind of gas, and where you can and cannot cook, could save your life.

So what should you pack for your camping adventure? Here's is a basic checklist to follow:

tent – always choose a larger berth than the number of people camping.

tent accessories – these can include tent porch, tent carpet and tent footprint.

spare tent pegs – there is nothing worse than bent tent pegs.

mallet – for knocking tent pegs into the ground.



Walking the Camino

When it comes to epic walks, nothing quite beats the Camino de Santiago.

The Camino is a series of pilgrimage trails running throughout Europe, all of which lead to Santiago de Compostela and the burial place of St James.

Over 240,000 pilgrims trekked at least 100km of the Camino de Santiago last year alone, with thousands more walking the different Camino routes and sections across France, Portugal and Spain each year.

The majority of pilgrims choose the French Way, the most famous Camino route, featuring in film such as 'The Way' starring Martin Sheen, and many books.

Starting in St Jean Pied de Port, at the foot of the Pyrenees, you will journey 800 kms across beautiful Northern Spain and discover bustling cities, charming medieval towns and lush vineyards.

The entire route takes a month to complete or two weeks if you are cycling.

If you don't have a whole month, don't worry as many pilgrims start in other towns along the way, the most popular being Sarria, Leon and Ponferrada.

The second most popular route with pilgrims is the Portuguese Way begins in Lisbon and takes pilgrims through colourful towns such as Coimbra and Porto.

This route is perfect if you are a nature lover as you will walk past miles of lush forests and vineyards.

The most popular starting points for walkers are Porto in Portugal and Tui on the Galician-Portuguese border.

Take two weeks to walk this route from Porto and experience the best of both Portuguese and Galician culture.

The Northern Way or Camino del Norte is the third Camino route in terms of pilgrims.

Begin your trip in San Sebastian and walk up to coast through picturesque villages such as Santander, Ribadesella, Luarca and Ribadeo.

And then there is the Finisterre Way from Santiago to Cape Fisterra.

Traditionally pilgrims burned their clothes and swam in the sea on completion of the Way!

A great one-stop-shop to go to if you are planning a trip along the Camino is CaminoWays.com which organises guided and self-guided tours on the many routes of the Camino de Santiago all year round.

And if you don't think you are fit enough for it, they even organise practice walks around Ireland!

Standard packages include half-board accommodation in guesthouses and selected hotels, luggage transfer from hotel to hotel and a holiday pack with pilgrim passport and practical information.

Prices average in around the €500 mark (depending on which leg of the Camino you choose to take on).

The price does not include flights, transport or insurance. However, airport transfers and hotel upgrades in towns and cities are also available.

For more information about the different Camino de Santiago routes in France, Portugal and Spain or to book your Camino trip, contact www.caminoways.com on (01) 5252886.

One thing Ireland has no shortage of are great walking trails.

Whatever part of the country you are in, you are only a stone's throw away from stunning scenery and winding roads.



The Kerry Way

The Kerry Way is one of the most popular walking trails in Ireland.

At over 200 kms, the Kerry Way is one of Ireland's longest signposted walking trails.

The trail starts and finishes in the busy town of Killarney. Looping around the Iveragh Peninsula, the Kerry Way goes anti-clockwise, passing through some of the most isolated and dramatic countryside in the country.

The Beara Way runs through Cork and Kerry. It is a 206 km circular trail that starts and ends in Glengarriff in Co Cork.

If you think that 206km is a bit long, there are plenty of shorter trails that form part of the Beara Way.

Staying in Kerry, the Dingle Way is another treasure, stretching over 162 kms. The trail starts and finishes in Tralee and takes in all of the stunning Dingle peninsula. The Connemara Way in Co Galway is a shorter trek – just 66 kms. It starts at Oughterard and stretches as far as Westport in Co Mayo.

The area stretches from Galway Way up to Killary Harbour and is bound in on the east by Lough Corrib and Lough Mask.

The Sheep's Head Way in West Cork is a 200 km walking route located on the narrow Sheep's head peninsula in West Cork between Bantry Bay and Dunmanus Bay. The route also extends eastwards from Bantry to Drimoleague and Gougane Barra.

The Wicklow Way starts off in the picturesque Marlay Park in Rathfarnham and runs all the way to Clonegal in Co Carlow 127 kms later.

The central section of the trail is covered by the Wicklow Mountains National Park. About 20 per cent of the trail is on tarred roads.

And these are just a tiny selection of the hundreds on offer throughout the country. Regardless whether you are an experienced walker or just a leisurely stroller, you will find a track or a trail to suit you anywhere in Ireland.

Lowcostholidays have reported that the most popular time for family bookings is when the kids head back to school after Easter for that last term before the long-awaited summer holidays begin.



Ireland's award winning online travel company's sales and visitor traffic to its website are up over 40 per cent on last year.

"Traditionally, this is a busy time for family bookings as parents get focussed on summer plans with the long-awaited school holidays on the horizon," said lowcostholidays Managing Director Clem Walshe.

"We've increased our range of great value family properties to popular destinations like the Algarve, Majorca and the Costa Blanca with a particular emphasis on adding more 'all inclusive' options which are proving more and more popular."

Price is still a big consideration for many families followed by short haul flights and suitable facilities for children.

The main appeal of the 'all inclusive' family package is it makes overseas spend easier to manage and eliminates many of those expensive little extras in resort that can prove a drain on hard earned family holiday budgets.

Signature Evening experiences forego the usual tourist picks for activities at night. Be amazed by a performance of dramatic Spanish flamenco in Seville or celebrate Turkish tradition at a folklore show in Cappadocia.

The popularity of Insight's Christmas Market holidays inspired the new 2015/2016 programme, which now includes seven tailored Christmas Markets itineraries, visiting some of the most historic and picturesque markets including Zurich, Berline, Leipzig, Dresden, Rothenberg, Nuremburg and Munich.

The three new Christmas Markets itineraries visit some of the lesser known Christmas Markets in Poland and Italy.

Insight Vacations guests can enjoy further savings when taking advantage of the Early Payment Discount of up to 7.5 per cent off selected 2015/2016 Winter Europe tours when they book and pay in full by August 31, 2015.

For more information, visit www.insightvacations.com or call (01) 7753838.

Thinking of planning a cruise this year? It can be the holiday of a lifetime and you will want to talk to specialists before you book.



You can discover fun-filled, action packed holidays for the whole family on board luxury ships bursting with amenities such as rock climbing walls, ice skating rinks, on board surf parks, Broadway entertainment, great night life, shopping and gourmet cuisine.

Imagine the spectacular glaciers and silent fjords of Alaska, paradise on the Caribbean coasts, the cultural splendour of European cities on a Mediterranean Cruise, the beautiful Hawaiian Islands with dramatic lava flows and tropical rainforests or broaden your horizons even further to destinations such as Dubai, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand with exiting itineraries departing from the Middle East and Far East.

e-travel are offering great deals and unique show offers on the day with free presentations from all of the cruise lines and Q&A sessions for all those nautical but nice cruise queries!

Established over 17 years, e-travel is now one of Ireland's leading independent travel agents.

e-travel is bonded with ITAA and the Commission for Aviation Regulation and is are the only 100 per cent Irish owned and managed online agency in Ireland.

Its system is totally secure with a choice of payment options – credit or debit card, cash or bank transfer and its experienced and expert staff are on-hand to assist with any changes to your booking.

e-Travel can be contacted on www.e-travel.ie or call (01) 4081999.

Glamping – a fusion of glamour and camping – is a relatively new phenomenon that has had a massive impact on the Irish tourism industry.

When you are glamping, there is no tent to pitch, no sleeping bag to unroll, no fire to build.



Whether it is tent, yurt, airstream, hut, villa or even a treehouse, gamping is a great way to experience the great outdoors without sacrificing luxury.

Glamping comes in many forms – basically, if you can fit in it, you can sleep in it.

And throughout Ireland, numerous glamping sites and offerings have sprung up and have been the target for many young people enjoying weekends away with friends.

Take the luxury tents at Dromquinna Manor in Kenmare, Co Kerry.

These custom made tents were designed specifically for Dromquinna by safari tent experts in India and they are the last word in luxury.

There are no centre poles, no low head room, no lumpy floors and no stuffy air. These are truly luxury tents.

Each tent has its own veranda and deck area and is fully furnished like a luxury hotel bedroom.

At Kinsale Glamping, you can relax in a full-size Mongolian yurt. The yurt has a wood-burning stove, which gives you all the warm water you need to shower and all the heat to keep you warm and lights powered by solar energy.

Or what about a break away in a beautiful gypsy caravan?

If you are looking for an alternative sleepover experience for your children, a 'back to basics' weekend or simply a retreat away from the daily grind, then the Tepee Valley Campsite is just for you.

Located outside the small town of Markethill in Co Armagh, Tepee Valley has exceptional views over farming countryside, down to the Cusher River and across to Slieve Gullion in the distance.

The 'Rosie Lee' gypsy caravan is for those little girls who dream of playing house.

Inside you will find a seating area that turns into a double bed and a double bunk bed up above. There is a hand crafted kitchen area with sink, fridge and gas cooker and a dresser unit displaying vintage china.

Outside there is a small seating area with tables and chairs and a chiminea to provide warmth late into the evenings.

A charcoal BBQ is provided and some logs for the chiminea to get you started.

Down in Ballyvolane House in Co Cork, you can rest your head in a luxurious bell tent as well as a 'Father Ted' style caravan.

Ballyvolane Glamping is a fully-catered, fully-serviced glamping experience and all meals, drinks, afternoon tea are provided in the main house so glamping guests can fully engage with the Ballyvolane House experience.

You could travel to Portumna in Co Galway and spend a weekend in a Pod!

These Pods are built from wood, so there is no canvas, no poles, no tent pegs, no damp or draughts. Just all the fun of camping without the hardship.

The Pods come in three sizes – standard, family and mega – and cost between €70 and €100 a night to rent out.

There are plenty of hotels and campsites offering the glamping experience across Ireland.

So if you want to enjoy a bit of glamorous camping – go glamping!!

Spain is famous for its Camino but Ireland has the fantastic Wild Atlantic Way that has been attracting tourists by their tens of thousands over the past two years.

One company that is specialising in holidays along the Wild Atlantic Way is IrelandWays.com.



The company offers walking routes so that you can experience all that the stunning region has to offer.

Take a dip in the Atlantic Ocean, sample some of the finest seafood and relax in beautiful coastal towns.

Whatever route you choose, an unforgettable getaway is guaranteed.

For example, there is the Kerry Camino and the Dingle Peninsula. Prices start at €278 per person sharing for a three night short break walking the Kerry Camino section of the Dingle Way.

A four-night break on the Burren Way and the Cliffs of Moher start at €384 per person sharing from Lahinch to Ballyvaughan.

Or you can enjoy a three night break on the Beara Way from Glengarriff to Castletownbere from €284 per person sharing.

Prices include accommodation on a half-board basis, luggage transfers and holiday pack with practical notes and information.

There is five per cent discount when you book your break two months in advance.

To find out more, log on to www.irelandways.com or call (01) 5252886.

One of the favourite family holidays of all time is a trip to Florida to check out not only the natural beauty of the Sunshine State but also to experience the thrills and spills of the best theme parks in the world.

It's not too late to book a fantastic getaway to the States this summer. American Holidays have some incredible offers to Florida.

Take advantage of American Holidays' fantastic last-minute deals and enjoy huge savings.



Florida is famous for being the Sunshine State, and for good reason.

Warm temperatures all year round make it a firm favourite with holiday-makers of all ages. Whether you're after a relaxing or adventurous getaway, Orlando has something to offer everyone.

Seek thrills at Walt Disney World Resort, lounge on gorgeous golden beaches, have picnics in the city's beautiful parks and enjoy some exciting water sports.

Head to St. Petersburg/Clearwater Beach if you're after total relaxation.

This idyllic destination is located on the Gulf Coast of Florida and boasts delicious restaurants, maritime activities and fascinating museums.

For those who want to travel in May or June, American Holidays has an Orlando deal where you can spend seven nights at the International Palm Resort from only €639 per person.

This price includes return flights, accommodation and is based on two adults and two children sharing.

In June, you can avail of seven nights at the Barefoot Beach Resort on Maderia Beach in St Petersburg from only €689 per person.

This price includes flights, accommodation and seven days car hire and is based on two adults and two children sharing.

Or you could rent your own villa!

Travelling in either May or June, you can spend ten nights in a 3-bed executive villa in Orlando from only €795 per person.

The price includes flights, accommodation, ten days car hire and a food welcome pack. The price is based on three adults and three children sharing.

Or maybe you want a bit of excitement and relaxation"

Travelling in September, you can spend three nights at the Rosen Inn at Pointe Orlando and seven nights on board the Royal Caribbean Freedom of the Seas from only €1,299 per person.

The price includes flights, accommodation and full board on the cruise. It is based on two adults sharing.

For more information on any of the Florida deals, contact American Holidays on www.americanholidays.com.

The home of the most powerful residence in the free world, more museums than you can shake a stick at and a city that is steeped in history – Dublin is now directly connected with Washington DC thanks to the new Aer Lingus route.

Aer Lingus will operate four flights per week from Dublin to Washington as part of its transatlantic growth plan in 2015.

This is the airline's ninth transatlantic route.



Flights to Washington are available for sale on aerlingus.com with fares starting from €299 each way, including taxes and charges.

Services available to customers on transatlantic flights include Pre-clearance U.S. immigration and customs at Dublin and Shannon airports, connections to onward destinations in the U.S. with airline partners, hi-speed internet access, an extensive in-flight entertainment selection, gourmet meals including premium economy options and award winning cabin service. When you arrive in Washington DC, you will be spoiled for choice.

You can start with the Smithsonian Institution Building where you can pick up map and information on all of the museums.

The 19 museums cover a wide range of subjects from art to space exploration. Plan to explore the exhibits that you are most interested in.

The national monuments in DC are truly spectacular. Among the most popular are the Washington Monument, the Lincoln Memorial, the Jefferson Memorial, the Vietnam Memorial and the World War II Memorial.

They are spread out throughout the city and can be difficult to see on foot. The best way to see them is to take a guided tour. Tours range from hop-on-off trolley tours to bike tours to moonlight tours.

You cannot visit Washington DC without a visit to see the White House.

However the bad news for Irish visitors is that you are unlikely to actually get inside the White House – unless you know a member of Congress and arrange a tour through them.

But fear not – you can still visit the White House Visitor Center, located at the southeast corner of 15th and E Streets.

The new direct route from Aer Lingus will make Washington DC and its surrounding areas a new holiday spot for many Irish people.

Aer Lingus is upping its game in terms of transatlantic services.

For summer 2015, flights to San Francisco go from five times weekly to daily. There will be a third daily flight from Dublin to New York from June to August that leaves at 7.50am and has you in the Big Apple for lunch!

The Dublin to Orlando route will go from three flights a week to four flights a week and customers can choose from over 100 onward connections across the USA and Canada with partner airlines.

This is the perfect time to visit Malta, and a stay at the 5-star Fortina Spa Resort is the perfect option. Surrounded by azure sea, Malta is the precious jewel in the Mediterranean's crown, and at this time of year the countryside is vibrant with wildlife, and the weather pleasant. You'll be able to enjoy plenty of outdoor daytime activities, with evening walks along the promenade and dining *al fresco* by night.



Fortina Spa Resort in Malta

Malta's luxurious Fortina Spa Resort offers something for everyone and is ideally situated for a relaxing and fascinating break. Located 300 metres from central Sliema, the Fortina Spa Resort is a beautifully designed 17 storey hotel, with stunning views over the harbour to the capital, Valletta.

Voted Capital of Culture 2018, this fortified capital thrives with café and retail culture, and really comes to life in the evenings, with many popular spots for socialising and dining. Valletta is a fascinating blend of medieval and contemporary architecture; the most recent addition, City Gate, is designed by the world-renowned architect Renzo Piano of Shard fame.

Malta boasts more UNESCO heritage and archaeological sites per square mile than anywhere else in Europe. The Ħaġar Qim and Mnajdra temples claim to be older than the pyramids, and provide fascinating insight into daily life dating back thousands of years.

The 'silent city' of Mdina, thirty minutes away from the Resort, is perfect for a magical stroll and some delightful afternoon refreshments at one of the tearooms located there.

For breathtaking natural beauty and tranquillity, a visit to Malta's sister island, Gozo, will calm even the busiest mind. The island's dramatic coastlines and cliff-side walks are made for exploring, and the beaches here enjoy warm sands and turquoise waters. Boat trips and diving lessons can be booked through the Resort's concierge service, whilst for those who prefer to stay closer to the premises there's relaxing harbour walks and shopping at The Point retail centre.

If all that activity has been exhausting, then guests at The Fortina Spa Resort can enjoy the state-of-the-art 50sqm Therapeutic Spa Bedrooms that boast energising mattresses and bedding. Luxuriate in the various facilities provided in these exclusive rooms, such as a Therapeutic Bath, Steam Showers, a Dermalife Machine and private Spa.

Featuring saunas, steam rooms, reflexology basins, Roman Laconiums and much more, the Spa Santé is the perfect place to while away an afternoon relaxing with friends. For a more powerful treatment, the Fortina's Spa Mediterranee offers Thalasso treatments, operated by highly qualified physiotherapists, as well as a deeply soothing hydrotherapy pool. For pampering at the highest level, book a treatment at the Belle Epoque beauty spa. You can experience the Japanese Room or the Turkish mud bath, enjoy Chinese or Thai massage, or take a soak in the Cleopatra bath. For all-round healing, visit the Hypogeum for Ayurveda, ancient Chinese and other complementary therapies.

When the sun sets, it's time to enjoy one of the Fortina Spa Resort's seven award-winning restaurants. From an authentic taste of India at 'Sa Re Ga Ma' to sushi fusion at 'Moroboshi', let your taste buds be tantalised by these delicious dining options.

Those more interested in trying Malta's local fare, can indulge in some fine wines and sophisticated dining in any number of beautiful locations offering both traditional and cutting edge cuisine, and cocktails can be enjoyed in the areas of Portomaso and the Valletta Waterfront.

It's just a short trip from the Resort to nearby St Julian's, where you can dance the night away and mingle with Malta's beautiful people at the many local bars and dance clubs; be sure to find your way to the chic cocktail bar located 22 storeys high, for a breathtaking, memorable view of the island shimmering at night.

Irish Ferries has unveiled a number of cost-saving offers to Britain and France ahead of what the company expects will be a 'busy Summer'.

A new 'Family-Friendly' offer that sees kids go free on all of its routes to Britain means Mum and Dad are the only ones who pay when families travel by car on Irish Ferries cruise ferry services from Dublin to Holyhead and Rosslare to Pembroke.



Not limited by numbers, and valid on new motorist bookings made before May 19th next, all children up to the age of 15 travel free-of-charge up until December 17th next, inclusive of weekend sailings, peak July & August holidays and school mid-terms.

On Sailings to France, Irish Ferries has unveiled a Spring sale price offer that sees two adults and car travel from Rosslare to Cherbourg and Roscoff for €99 each way. Valid for travel seven days in advance up to May 28th and between Aug 24th – Dec 16th, the offer applies to bookings made by May 19th next.

Speaking to the Irish Daily Star, Irish Ferries head of passenger sales, Dermot Merrigan reminds customers: "we are continuing with our offer of a free cruise ferry trip to Britain for a car plus two passengers for motorists making a return booking to France during June, July and August." Other deals on French sailings include an extra low EUR100 booking deposit offer with the added bonus being that the balance of the fare need not be paid until six weeks before departure.

Arrival times into France are early morning, designed to allow motorists to reach their destination on the same day and eliminate costly overnight stops en route.

New for 2015 is the introduction of an onboard family meal deal for two adults and two children for a total cost of just €29.95 – an affordable meal offering that returns a saving of up to €25 on the normal cost a family lunch or dinner.

Coupled with free WiFi onboard, the cruise ferry Oscar Wilde is equipped with a choice of 2, 3, 4 and 5-star cabins, a selection of restaurants and lounges, two cinemas, a Piano Bar and Café, promenade decks and entertainment that includes a children's play area, gaming zone and facilities such as a hair and beauty saloon and mall style shopping.

Voted 'Ireland's Best Ferry Company' by Irish travel agents for the eighth year in a row, Irish Ferries now offers more sailings from Ireland to France than any other ferry operator – which now includes a new, once-weekly return sailing from Dublin to Cherbourg.

For further information or to make a booking visit irishferries.com or call 0818 300 400.
