Welcome to Galway, the capital of the West of Ireland. You find yourself in a city steeped in the culture and heritage of Ireland, which is also the fastest growing city in Europe. With easy access and its own modern airport, it is an ideal base from which to explore the various surrounding beauty spots, but the city itself has much to offer as well. Whatever your recreational needs, you have made the right choice in coming here, for Galway has something for everyone. Cead Mile Failte.

Eyre Square
A very attractive town square, where a plaque stands to the memory of John F. Kennedy, who was made a Freeman of the City shortly before his death in 1963.

St. Nicholas' Collegiate Church
Built by the Anglo-Norman in 1320, and often since expanded, this church contains many excellent carvings and relics of the Middle Ages. Its main claim to fame is that according to local tradition, Christopher Columbus heard mass here before setting off on his voyage of discovery.

The Claddagh
Located on the West Bank of the Corrib Estuary was a famous village, the Claddagh, which existed until 1934 when the traditional thatched cottages were replaced by a new housing scheme. It was native Irish in language and dress, and its unique customs included the election of a King, who was commodore of the fleet. His 'hooker' bore a white sail, while those of his subjects were brown. The women, who all wore shawls, customarily wore the Claddagh ring of distinctive design.

Galway Cathedral
Officially dedicated by Cardinal Cushing of Boston in 1965, this impressive building is Galway's most dominating feature. Located beside the Salmon Weir Bridge, it consists of cut limestone with Connemara marble flooring and it combines classical and traditional designs.

Lynch's Castle
Unquestionably the finest surviving town castle in Ireland, dating from the early 15th or 16th century. It has decorative features found only in Southern Spain. Renovated in the 19th century, it is now a branch of the Allied Irish Bank.

Lynch's Window
Situated in Market Street, this marks the spot where according to popular but dubious legend, the Mayor of Galway in the early 16th century, James FitzStephen, hanged his own son, who had confessed to murdering a visiting Spaniard.

Spanish Arch
Built in 1594 to protect the quays, this is a reminder of times when trade with Spain was the lifeblood of the city. Excavations has also revealed substantial remains of the old city walls. It is also the site of the Galway City Museum.
Nora Barnacle House
Located in Bowling Green adjacent to St. Nicholas’ Church is the home of Nora Barnacle, the wife of the world famous Irish literary figure, James Joyce. Now open to the public, Joyce stayed in the house many times while visiting his in-laws.

Galway Irish Crystal Heritage Centre
Guided tours of the centre run every 30 minutes and commence with a short audiovisual presentation on Galway’s rich and vibrant culture. The tour then continues with a visit to the workshop where you experience the mystery and magic of the craft of crystal cutting. The Claddagh village exhibit brings to life the City’s famous old quarter, renowned for its sea-fishing and romance - and the birthplace and inspiration of the world famous Claddagh Ring.

Old Merchant’s Houses
Mutated examples of old merchant houses remain in the city centre, with some fine examples of old windows and doorways. These are mainly to be found around Shop Street, Middle Street, Abbegate Street and St. Augustine Street.

Druid Theatre
This highly individual little theatre located in Chapel Lane presents works by famous Irish playwrights. Although still a relatively very young company, the Druid has already built up an international reputation for outstanding performances.

Riverside Walk
This is a development which runs along the River Corrib from O’Brien’s Bridge to the Salmon Weir. Here you can see shoals of salmon lie in season before making their way upstream to spawn in Lough Corrib.
Things to do around Galway

Angling
Whether for game, sea or coarse angling, nowhere in Europe can compete with the West of Ireland. The clearest waters in Europe, combined with breathtaking scenery, both inland and coastal, not to mention the excellent fishing, produce an atmosphere unique to anglers the world over.

Golfing
There are some superb golf courses located in the county and they are all very accessible to visitors.

Sea Angling
The warm waters of the Atlantic and some dramatic coastline provide Europe’s best sea angling waters, particularly in Galway Bay, Clifden and Rosscarbery.

Game Angling
There is first class salmon, brown trout and sea trout angling throughout the county. An extensive network of fisheries supply all the required gear locally.

Greyhound Racing
Enjoy a great night out at Galway’s most exciting entertainment venue every Thursday, Friday and Saturday night. Suck up the atmosphere in the Stadium's 3 bars and 2 restaurants and stay on for live music after racing.

Swimming
Lawn at the Strand, Salthill. Telephone: (091) 521455 - Indoor Pool, Kingfisher Club, Renvyle Avenue, Galway. Telephone: (091) 733444 - Indoor Pool.

Things to do for the Young & Young at Heart
Family Fun at the Athenry Heritage Centre. Have a go at traditional archery - for all ages. Adventure maze for the young and the young at heart.

Irish Music and Dance
DANCE OF DESIRE, Black Box Theatre Galway (May - October, Monday - Saturday 6.30pm). 8.00pm. Complete with entirely original music and choreography this critically acclaimed "Truly outstanding" (The Stage) production has been described as "Terrific" (Irish Times) and "Stunning" (Irish Independent) and is also the only stage show of its kind in term of size and style performing over such a prolonged period in a theatre in Ireland. DANCE OF DESIRE has a cast of 25 performers and comprises 20 world & Irish champion dancers. DANCE OF DESIRE is a "World Class" (The Sun) family show and has already played to sell out audiences from Dublin to Dubai, Beijing to Chicago, the Czech Republic and Kuala Lumpur to Paris and returns to Galway by popular demand.

Beaches
County Galway has a wealth of top-class beaches, both clean and safe, spread along hundreds of miles of coastline. There are several blue flag beaches in the area designated by the European Community.

Karting
PALLAS KARTING, Europe's Largest Karting Centre - R.I.C.C Approved Tynagh, Loughrea, Co. Galway, Ireland. Phone/Fax: +353(0)90 9745147 Email: info@PallasKarting.com

The Harpin Bend, the thrill of sliding sideways in full control, and overtaking at breathtaking speed, before accelerating into the straights and heading for the chicane. "... Dream on. Take a spin at Pallas Karting. Here you can be in the driving seat, getting to pole position in one of the fastest and most exhilarating sports in Ireland today."

As Pallas Karting you can experience the thrill of real motor racing first hand at our new kart circuit. Regardless of weather, Pallas Karting has the green light for an action packed non-stop race programme for everyone.

Galway Atlantacuaria
Galway Atlantacuaria is Ireland’s National Aquarium and is home to 170 species of fresh water and marine life. Situated on the famous Salthill Promenade, it has evolved to become undoubtedly one of the finest visitor attractions in Ireland. Built over two floors, Ireland’s largest aquarium is home to five species of native Irish shark, as well as ‘Valentine’, the world’s only captive White Skate. Among the other displays are Seahorses, Octopuses and a real 60ft white-skate. Visitors can take part in the feeding, explore the marine laboratory, and even hold Starfish and giant Spider Crabs. Not to be missed! Open daily from 9am. Telephone 091 385 100.

Athenry
Athenry, 15 miles east and 20 minutes from Galway City, proudly claims to be the finest surviving medieval town in Ireland. Founded about 1235, it became "islandised" and as a result, Athenry still retains more and better medieval monuments than anywhere else in the country.

Not only is Athenry's street plan unchanged since medieval times, but its town walls, with wide surrounding moat, five out of six tall towers and one fine arched gateway surviving, are without doubt the most impressive and best of their period. Well worth a visit is the medieval St. Mary's Collegiate Church which now houses the Athenry Arts, Heritage & Activity Centre, the fully restored medieval castle and the ruins of the 13th century Dominican Priory.

The Aran Islands
The three Aran Islands of Inis Mór, Inis Meáin and Inis Oírr, are located off the West Coast of Galway. The Irish (Gaeltacht) speaking Aran Islands are famous for their unique way of life, stunning scenery, and peaceful atmosphere. The islands are also rich in history, as evidenced by the many ancient monuments such as churches, forts and monasteries on the islands. Travelling to the islands is easy - ferries operate from Rossaveal harbour and you can also travel by plane from nearby Connemara Airport in Tarsib. The islanders speak their native language but will have no problem communicating in English. Inis Mór, is the largest of the islands. Activities on the island include guided tours by luxury rein coach, tours of the island on a traditional "pony & trap", and visits of sites including the dramatic Dun Aonghasa on Inis Mór, a stone fort standing defiantly on a cliff 300 metres above sea level. Inis Meáin is the middle island, where one should visit to see what remains of the old, traditional life style. With its thatched roofs on stone cottages, and only using electricity for the past 30 years, you'd think you stepped back in time. Inis Oírr is mostly rock, but has the wildest and most exotic flowers and plants you could see.

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