**The Dingle Story**

At the very edge of Europe, as far west as you can go in Ireland, is the breathtaking Dingle Peninsula, once described by National Geographic as “the most beautiful place on

earth”. It’s a place of spectacular seascapes and landscapes shaped

by the elements, with a wild and rugged coastline of steep cliffs and wide sandy beaches. A place where the mountains roll into the ocean. And you can drive up into the clouds over

Ireland’s highest mountain pass, the Connor Pass. There’s something wonderful about the shifting light as the weather blows in and through, and a silver slither of sun

shines on the sea, or a double rainbow appears above the Bay. The Dingle Peninsula is a place the Irish love to visit, but it’s still largely undiscovered by people from elsewhere. Apart,

that is, from the artists, musicians and writers who come from across the world to live, eat and breathe authentic culture: real food, real talk, real stories, and real ceol agus craic at music

sessions and festivals across Dingle’s tiny settlements. Or the global surfing and windsurfing communities, who find world-class sport here in the huge Atlantic swells and southerly winds.

This is a land rich with ancient history, with pre-historic sites and early Christian heritage - Celtic crosses, monastic ‘beehive’ huts and Ireland’s oldest stone-roofed church.

It’s a long way to come. But it’s here that you’ll find the real Ireland: in the Peninsula’s thriving & unbroken traditions of language and music, folklore and storytelling, arts, crafts and

artisan food. The little fishing port of Dingle – with its brightly coloured houses, its traditional pubs and its cosmopolitan, creative community –

serves up some of the world’s best food. And off *Slea Head* - the most westerly tip of the Peninsula – lies a deserted village with a poignant past, on an archipelago that

gave birth to Ireland’s greatest born-storytellers: the mystical *Blasket Islands.*

The Dingle Peninsula has one of the largest Gaeltacht (gaelic-speaking) communities in Ireland. So you’ll find many of the locals are bi-lingual – speaking Irish as their mother

tongue, a lovely lyrical English to their visitors, and often a mix of the two.

They’ll tell you *“fáilte romhat isteach – you’re most welcome here”* in both languages – with a warmth andcadence of greeting that’s unmistakable and unforgettable.Maybe it’s that living culture, deep-rooted and handed downthrough generations, that gives this place such a

strong creative spirit. Maybe it’s the simple, natural vibe that lets you slow down and go-with-the-flow. Whatever it is, the Dingle Peninsula inspires, it connects,it **“**catches the heart off-guard**”,** and it stays with you.