Shannon Estuary... The Story

The Shannon Estuary is a spectacular and unspoilt estuary located just off the Wild Atlantic Way. This area of remarkable natural beauty is where Ireland’s longest river – the mighty Shannon flows into the azure water of the Atlantic Ocean.

Limerick city has a variety of activities to keep visitors entertained. From history & heritage, sports & activity to arts & culture, there is always plenty to do day and night in the city.

To supplement this picture postcard Estuary drive, depart Limerick along the N59 road. You will experience the many villages and townlands in West County Limerick including Mungret, Clarke, Pallaskenry, Askatean, Tarbert, Glan Mungret village is only a short distance from Limerick city. The importance of the monastic site here is said to be comparable to that of Clonmacnoise; and the site has been identified as one of the most important Early Christian monasteries in North Munster.

Blacks Lough is a 55 acre spring lake along the route, here anglers can access the lake via a shore or by boat. Located just outside Pallaskenry village it offers anglers some of the very best fishing in the country. The ancient town of Askatean is a popular spot for history lovers and boasts one of the most complete ruins of a medieval abbey in the country. Next stop is Foynes village and port, home to the Flying Boat Museum, Foynes Yacht Club, a 17th mediaeval abbey in the country. Next stop is Foynes village and port, home to the Flying Boat Museum, Foynes Yacht Club, a 17th mediaeval abbey in the country.

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In the late 1930s, transatlantic air traffic was dominated by airships, but you may be surprised to know that the coastal waters off Clare and Kerry in the Shannon Estuary are home to some wonderful attractions such as the Irish Friary. The Friary was built in the early 13th century and is still used by local communities today. The Friary is home to a collection of rare birds and wildlife, including dolphins. From Killimer to Ennis, make sure to stop off at all along the way and chat to the locals in villages tabhshasda, Killadysert, Pallaskenry, and Clarecastle. You’ll find some of the best story tellers in the county regaling stories of monks arriving from Europe, early river transport systems, Hollywood stars, local traditions and the area’s most famous story of them all, the ‘Colleen Bawn’.

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While crossing, keep an eye out for the bottlenose dolphins that live in the waters of the estuary, especially during the summer months when you might be lucky enough to spot some of the calves (baby dolphins), from Killimer to Ennis, make sure to stop off at all along the way and chat to the locals in villages tabhshasda, Killadysert, Pallaskenry, and Clarecastle. You’ll find some of the best story tellers in the county regaling stories of monks arriving from Europe, early river transport systems, Hollywood stars, local traditions and the area’s most famous story of them all, the ‘Colleen Bawn’.

The Picturesque village of Clarecastle, the historical village and port of Clare makes a perfect stopover stop off for a breath-taking view of the River Fergus Estuary before beginning the next leg of your journey. Turning south consider taking a detour to the village of Quin and stop back in time to explore Quin Abbey and Irish life during the bronze age at Craggaunowen. The drive will take you past Shannon International Airport which has been connecting the west of Ireland with the world for over 70 years.

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Next stop is Bunratty Castle and Folk Village one of Ireland’s favourite tourist destinations. Here you can immerse yourself in rural and urban life dating back to 12th century Victorian Ireland while 15th century Bunratty Castle reveals the power struggles of the McNamara and O’Brien clans. A day at all times of year. Walking tours are also plentiful in Limerick can now enjoy a trip on a kayak – tours are arranged throughout the year and stories that shaped its history and are brought to life by local walking tours departing from the tourist office. Ennis is home to some wonderful attractions such as the Irish Friary.

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Family Friendly Playgrounds...

All family friendly playgrounds are FREE to use

1. Adare
2. Abbeyfeale
3. Askeaton
4. Ballymacally
5. Clarecastle
6. Clarke
7. Cratloe
8. Foynes
9. Glan
10. Kildysart
11. Labasheeda
12. Lisnacyse
13. Newmarket on Fergus
14. Pallaskeeny
15. Quin
16. Shannon
17. Tarbert

Viewing Points

1. Ringmoylan Pier
2. Ballysteen Pier
3. Boland’s Meadow
4. Kilteery Pier
5. Glin Pier
6. Knock Pier Viewpoint
7. Labasheeda Quay
8. Killadysert Pier
9. Corraghan Pier
10. Clarecastle Pier
11. Tulligglass Point (Shannon Estuary)