

Travel

The Sunday Telegraph

Travel Online For all the latest travel news go to telegraph.co.uk/travel

WIN A TRIP TO THE MALDIVES

There's still time to tell us about your summer holiday and win a trip to the Maldives.

Your Holiday Reports – the best of which will be published in this section and on our website – should include the following:

- Brief details of your holiday, including your destination, how long you went for, and the type of accommodation.
- Did you travel as a family/couple/with friends/solo?
- How much did you spend?
- Holiday highlight (100 words maximum, please)
- Holiday low point (100 words maximum)
- Tips and recommendations (such as your favourite restaurant/activity).

Send your Holiday Report by September 19 to:

Sunday Telegraph Travel, 111 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 0DT, or by email to holidayreports@telegraph.co.uk. If you do not wish us to share your data with selected third parties, please indicate this on your report.

KUONI

THE PRIZE The prize is courtesy of Kuoni (01 306 747022; www.kuoni.co.uk), one of Britain's leading holiday companies, with more than 100 years' travel expertise. The winner of the first holiday report chosen at random after September 18 will win seven night's accommodation for two with breakfast in a Deluxe Bungalow at Kurumba, one of the most modern and well-established resorts in the Maldives. Also included are two economy-class return tickets from Heathrow to the Maldives with SriLankan Airlines, the only non-stop scheduled airline to the Maldives, plus transfers to and from the resort.

For terms and conditions, including blackout dates, visit telegraph.co.uk/travel or send an aae to the above address.

WHERE TO STAY SHANNON IRELAND

STATELY HOME

ADARE MANOR

LOCATION In County Limerick in the tiny, thatched-cottage-filled village of Adare, a 30-minute drive from Shannon airport and close to Limerick.

CHARACTER Set in 840 acres of parkland, with a trout- and salmon-filled river and a superb 18-hole golf course with plenty of water challenges. The Irish Open has been played here. The manor was built by Lord Dunraven on the site of his old Georgian home, in a neo-Gothic style, between 1830 and 1860. It was converted in 1982, but retains the original's stately home feel. Communal areas are cosy and warm, with huge fireplaces in every room and deep armchairs.

ROOMS In the Manor House there are 62 rooms and no two are the same. Whether you stay in Lord Dunraven's original bedroom or one of the standard rooms, the interiors all feature antique furniture, chintzy fabrics and original fireplaces. There are also modern, self-catering three- and four-bedroom villas and town houses set apart from the manor in their own little village.

FOOD You could eat all day here. Breakfast and dinner are served in the Oak Room, a lovely space, with sensational views over the 16th hole and the River Maigue. Lunch or snacks at the bistro-style Carriage House are more informal. A traditional high tea is served in the drawing room. Dinner is romantic, with the room lit by candlelight.

WE LIKE The Tack Room bar. It's dark and atmospheric, and stays open until the last guest leaves – which often means dawn.

NOT SO KEEN The gym and swimming pool have seen much better days and need updating – though there is so much to do outside there is not much reason to stay inside.

ESSENTIALS 00353 61 396566; www.adaremanor.com. Double b&b from £170 (£146).



Sitting pretty: Adare Manor was begun in 1830 as the home of local aristocrats, and retains antiques, fireplaces and other original features

WHY SHANNON?

Shannon is accessible – there is an airport – historically rich, culturally diverse and very beautiful. It's hard to travel far before coming across a medieval town, a castle or a ruined church. It is also known for its golf courses, not least those at the three hotels reviewed here. The region is especially renowned for its wild Atlantic coastline (the cliffs of Moher and Bannard and the Burren) and the River Shannon, which runs through rolling green hills and farmland. For the sports enthusiast there is a lot to do: horse racing at Limerick, Gaelic football, scuba diving, trout fishing in lakes or rivers – and, of course, the lure of some excellent golf courses.

GETTING THERE

Aer Lingus (0871 718 5000; www.aerlingus.com) and Ryanair (0871 246 0002; www.ryanair.com) serve Shannon from London, Bristol, Manchester, Dublin and Glasgow.

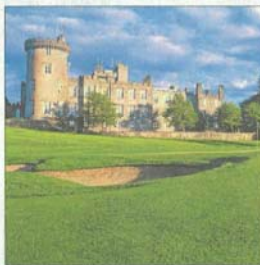
BARONIAL SPLENDOUR

DROMOLAND CASTLE

LOCATION Seven miles from Shannon airport; set in 410 acres of landscaped grounds, including an 18-hole golf course.

CHARACTER The ancestral home of the O'Brien family until 1961. Neo-Gothic in style, with communal areas full of suits of armour and tapestries. The house is on a grand scale, with high ceilings and traditional rich furnishings. Original portraits of the O'Briens line every wall. Plenty of cosy, quiet spots to enjoy a drink by an open fire. Trout fishing, stalking and pheasant shooting are available, along with archery and clay pigeon shooting.

ROOMS The 98 bedrooms are elegantly decorated in a French romantic style, with ornate cream furniture,



comfortable sofas and pastel furnishings. Most have huge bathrooms with large baths.

FOOD Breakfast and dinner are served in the grand Earl of Thomond Dining Room, which overlooks the lake.

Traditional Irish touches to the breakfast include home-made soda bread, Boxty potato cake and Limerick ham. More casual lunch or dinner are available at the Fig Tree Restaurant, particularly appealing on a sunny day, where you can eat in the adjacent rose garden.

WE LIKE The Dromoland Spa is a godsend for the golf widow.

NOT SO KEEN Most of the bedrooms were redecorated 18 months ago but some of the cheaper rooms have yet to be updated and are a bit tired and dark. The lack of a minibar was surprising.

ESSENTIALS 00353 61 366144; www.dromoland.ie. Double b&b from €250 (£215).

COUNTRY HOUSE

DOONBEG

LOCATION Set on one and a half miles of rugged, crescent-shaped coastline and overlooks a wide sandy beach. The golf course, designed by Greg Norman, is one of Ireland's newest links courses. Doonbeg village is famous for its traditional and other music.

CHARACTER The Lodge opened in 2006 but has been cleverly designed to feel like an old manor house, with the use of reclaimed oak floorboards, antique flagstones and old-fashioned light switches. Communal areas aren't huge, but have fine views over the 18th and the Atlantic beyond, and are cosy and comfortably furnished, with huge stone fireplaces.

ROOMS Each of the suites is privately owned and rented out to visitors and thus are more like apartments than normal hotel bedrooms. Most have two or four bedrooms, small kitchens and spacious sitting rooms, all furnished with

antiques and deep sofas upholstered in Irish tweeds and tartans. Everything is in a soft, muted palette of greys, browns and creams. There are also four-bedroom cottages apart from the main house which are ideal for families or groups.

FOOD Huge Irish breakfasts are served with a few American-friendly touches such as bagels and pancakes. Homemade soups and club sandwiches are available and lunch and dinner are modern European in style, but with lots of local touches, from Dublin Bay

prawns to Burren spring lamb. **WE LIKE** Darby's pub, a short walk from the main house, with a lovely view over the first hole; it's a great place to have an informal meal or a pint. The White Horses Spa is well equipped and the caviar facial is sublime.

NOT SO KEEN The ugly, white, static marquee-style function room (present from April to October) sitting incongruously adjacent to the golf course really spoils the view.

ESSENTIALS 00353 65 905 5600; www.doonbeggolfclub.com. Doubles from €120 (£103).

URSULA LAKE



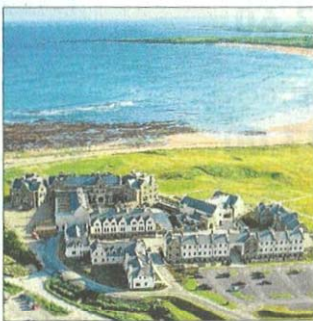
COUNTRY HOUSE

DOONBEG

LOCATION Set on one and a half miles of rugged, crescent-shaped coastline and overlooks a wide sandy beach. The golf course, designed by Greg Norman, is one of Ireland's newest links courses. Doonbeg village is famous for its traditional and other music.

CHARACTER The Lodge opened in 2006 but has been cleverly designed to feel like an old manor house, with the use of reclaimed oak floorboards, antique flagstones and old-fashioned light switches. Communal areas aren't huge, but have fine views over the 18th and the Atlantic beyond, and are cosy and comfortably furnished, with huge stone fireplaces.

ROOMS Each of the suites is privately owned and rented out to visitors and thus are more like apartments than normal hotel bedrooms. Most have two or four bedrooms, small kitchens and spacious sitting rooms, all furnished with



antiques and deep sofas upholstered in Irish tweeds and tartans. Everything is in a soft, muted palette of greys, browns and creams. There are also four-bedroom cottages apart from the main house which are ideal for families or groups.

FOOD Huge Irish breakfasts are served with a few American-friendly touches such as bagels and pancakes. Homemade soups and club sandwiches are available and lunch and dinner are modern European in style, but with lots of local touches, from Dublin Bay

prawns to Burren spring lamb. **WE LIKE** Darby's pub, a short walk from the main house, with a lovely view over the first hole; it's a great place to have an informal meal or a pint. The White Horses Spa is well equipped and the caviar facial is sublime.

NOT SO KEEN The ugly, white, static marquee-style function room (present from April to October) sitting incongruously adjacent to the golf course really spoils the view.

ESSENTIALS 00353 65 905 5600; www.doonbeggolfclub.com. Doubles from €120 (£103).

URSULA LAKE