Just 13 miles east of Belfast you can explore the Ards and North Down area. Make time to step back in time and explore historic sites, the rolling hills of Lagan Valley Regional Park, learn about the history of the Irish linen industry in Lisburn and visit the Royal residence of Hillsborough Castle. The Lisburn and Castlereagh area lies just 6 miles south of Belfast. Explore historic sites, charming towns and a beautiful coastal path. Visit the Royal residence of Hillsborough Castle and its 98 acres of beautiful gardens or discover the history of the Irish linen industry in Lisburn. You can explore ancient archaeological sites, the rolling hills of Lagan Valley Regional Park, learn the art of brewing at Hilden Brewery or enjoy a day at the races at Down Royal. With a wide range of fascinating heritage sites, outdoor and indoor activities for all ages, superb shopping and a fantastic food scene, come and relax and unwind in Lisburn and Castlereagh.

Step off the beaten track

Reasons to visit don’t end at our city limits. One of the great things about Belfast is that within a short drive from the city centre, you can discover a completely different world filled with lush valleys, a stunning coastline, country parks, magnificent estates, wonderful wildlife and historic attractions. Take a breathe and discover some of the other fantastic things to see and do, all just a few minutes’ drive outside the capital.

Top 5 Must See and Do!

1. Hillsborough Castle and Gardens
   The Square, Hillsborough BT28 6AG
   This late Georgian mansion built in the 1770s is the official residence of the Royal Family when in Northern Ireland, and home to the Secretary of State. Take a tour to experience the Castle’s fascinating history and explore the 98 acres of beautiful gardens in the surrounding grounds. 028 9268 1500
   hrp.org.uk/Hillsborough

2. Lagan Valley Regional Park
   The Park Office, 1 Luck Keeper’s Lane, Belfast BT8 7AT
   The 420 acres park stretches 11 miles between Belfast and Lisburn. A blend of countryside, urban parks, heritage sites, nature reserves and trails, ideal for ramblers, joggers and off road cyclists. Download the audio trail from the website. 028 9049 1922
   lagansvalley.co.uk

3. Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum
   Market Square, Lisburn BT28 1AG
   This award-winning museum is based in Lisburn’s oldest building, a former 17th Century Market House. It brings to life the history of the Irish linen industry and its importance to Lisburn. Enjoy daily demonstrations of hand spinning and loom weaving and browse the damask linen collections. 028 9268 5377
   lisburnmuseum.com

4. Hilden Brewing Company
   Grand Street, Lisburn BT27 4YH
   A working brewery with licensed restaurant in the beautiful and historic setting of Hilden House. Learn about this ancient craft from historic setting of Hilden House. It brings to life the history of the Irish linen industry and its importance to Lisburn. Enjoy daily demonstrations of hand spinning and loom weaving and browse the damask linen collections. 028 9268 5377
   lisburnmuseum.com

5. Dundonald International Ice Bowl
   1345 Scrabo Road, Newtownards BT23 4XJ
   This award-winning museum is based in Lisburn’s oldest building, a former 17th Century Market House. It brings to life the history of the Irish linen industry and its importance to Lisburn. Enjoy daily demonstrations of hand spinning and loom weaving and browse the damask linen collections. 028 9268 5377
   lisburnmuseum.com

Top 5 Must See and Do!

1. Ards Peninsula
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2. Castlereagh
   Take a tour to experience the Castle’s fascinating history and explore the 98 acres of beautiful gardens in the surrounding grounds. 028 9268 1500
   hrp.org.uk/Hillsborough

3. Lough
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EXTRA MORE!
travel tips
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why not drop in to one of our visitor information centres...

Visit Belfast Welcome Centre
9 Donegall Square North
Belfast BT1 5GB
+44 (0)28 9024 6609

Ards Visitor Information Centre
31 Argent Street
Newtowards BT23 4AD
+44 (0)28 9182 6846

Bangor Visitor Information Centre
Tower House, 36 Quay Street
Bangor BT20 5ED
+44 (0)28 9127 0069

Hillsborough Visitor Information Centre
The Old Courthouse, The Square
Hillsborough BT26 6AG
+44 (0)28 9268 1300

Lisburn Visitor Information Centre
15 Lisburn Square
Lisburn BT27 4TY
+44 (0)28 9244 7640

Travel time by car
Belfast - Lisburn 9 miles 15 mins
Belfast - Hillsborough 15 miles 20 mins
Belfast - Bangor 11 miles 16 mins
Belfast - Portaferry 20 miles 30 mins
Belfast - Portaferry 30 miles 1 hour
Belfast - Dundonald 6 miles 20 mins
Belfast - Newtownards 14 miles 30 mins

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   028 9264 1500
   hhp.org.uk/Hillsborough

2. Lagan Valley Regional Park
   The Park Office, 3 Lock Keeper’s Lane, Belfast BT8 7AT
   The 4,200 acres park stretches 11 miles between Belfast and Lisburn. A blend of countryside, urban parks, heritage sites, nature reserves and trails, ideal for ramblers, joggers and off road cyclists. Download the audio trail from the website.
   028 9042 8428
   laganside.ni.gov.uk

3. Irish Linen Centre and Lisburn Museum
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   028 9264 5377
   lisburnmuseum.com

4. Hilden Brewing Company
   Grand Street, Lisburn BT27 4YX
   A working brewery with licensed restaurant in the beautiful and historic setting of Hilden House. Learn about this ancient craft from a Master Brewer and sample award winning beers on a brewery tour.
   028 9264 0800
   hildenbrewing.com

5. Dundonald International Ice Bowl
   31 Bangladesh Road, Newtownards BT22 2AD
   A working brewery with licensed restaurant in the beautiful and historic setting of Hilden House. Learn about this ancient craft from a Master Brewer and sample award winning beers on a brewery tour.
   028 9264 0800
   hildenbrewing.com

Ards and North Down

Top 5 Must See and Do!

1. Crawfordsburn Country Park
   Bridge Road, Ivan’s Bay BT20 7JL
   Featuring two excellent beaches, spectacular scenery and views across Belfast Lough, Crawfordsburn Country Park provides a relaxing natural retreat. Enjoy tranquil walks through peaceful woodlands and walled gardens and view a stunning waterfall.
   028 9185 5623
   visitardsandnorthdown.com

2. Pickle Funpark
   Marine Gardens, Bangor BT20 1AG
   One of Northern Ireland’s most popular visitor attractions, the park provides a fun day out, featuring 18-hole mini-golf course, giant pedal swans, Pickle Puffer train, children’s play area, children’s electric car track and splash pads.
   028 9144 0746
   picklefunpark.com

3. Scrabo Tower and Country Park
   20A Scraibo Road
   Newtownards BT23 4JL
   Standing tall Scrabo Tower boasts memorable views over Strangford Lough and the surrounding countryside. There are walking trails taking in the fine beach woodlands and the disused quarries allowing visitors many opportunities to enjoy the surrounding countryside.
   028 9082 3207
   visitardsandnorthdown.com

4. Mount Stewart House & Gardens
   Portaferry Road
   Newtownards BT22 2AD
   One of the most inspiring and unusual gardens in the National Trust’s ownership, the garden and recently refurbished house is well worth a visit. Explore at your leisure and uncover the wonderful stories of the family that still reside there.
   028 4278 8377
   nationaltrust.org.uk/mount-stewart

5. Ulster Folk & Transport Museum
   153 Banger Road
   Holywood BT18 0EU
   Step back 100 years to discover cottages, farms, schools and shops as you wander through the beautiful parkland of the Folk Museum. Explore magnetic steam locomotives or experience the sensation of flight in the Transport Museum, bustling with all vehicles imaginable.
   028 9042 8428
   welcometulkeel.com