

IRELAND -

# Carrick-on-Shannon & Belturbet



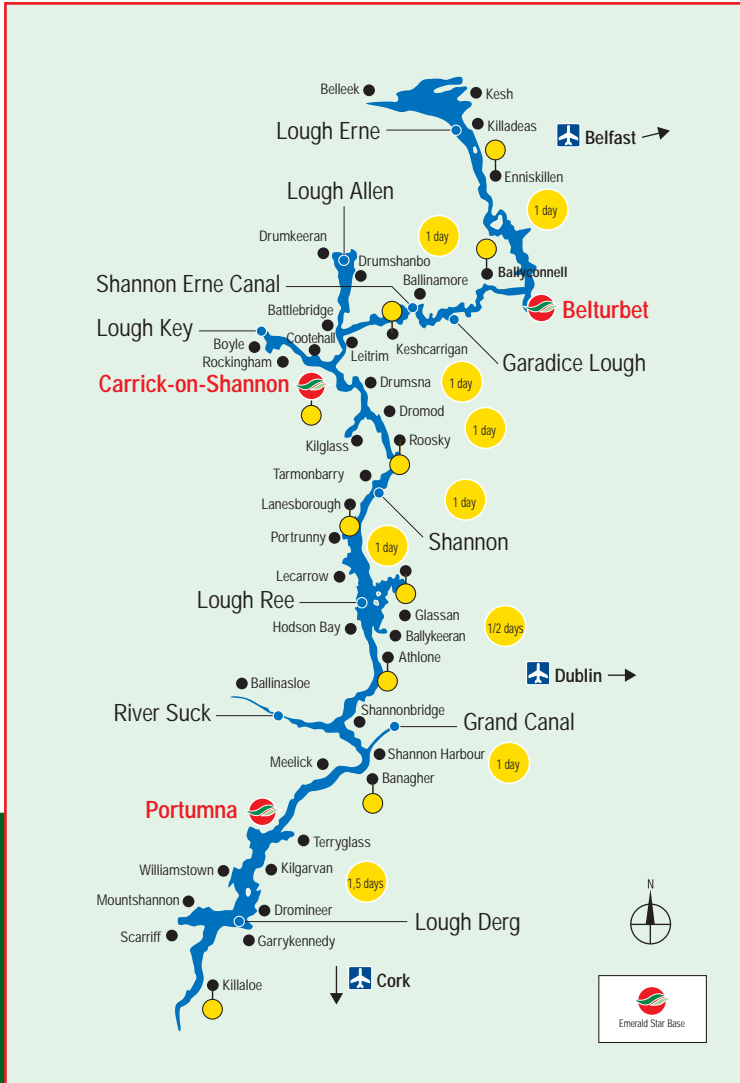
Become mesmerised by Ireland's beautiful waterways and beguiling countryside – it will bring you back time and time again. Ireland provides not only the finest but also the longest inland cruising ground in Europe.

This glorious region offers clear waters and unspoilt countryside. The natural forest areas are ideal for leisurely picnics and gentle walking excursions, or moor up and explore the heart of the Irish countryside by bike.

From Belturbet, cruise the spectacular labyrinth of waters that make up the Upper Lough Erne. The lake is studded with reed-covered islands covering a fifth of its surface, each one a natural beauty and worth exploring. Alternatively you can navigate the Lower Lough Erne, stretching from Belleek to Enniskillen – a superb expanse of water fringed by spectacular cliffs and mountains.

The old-fashioned narrow streets of Carrick are full of shops satisfying the most discerning customers, and at night lively pub ballad sessions and traditional Irish folk music are sure to cater for all. The town is also acknowledged nationally as an angler's paradise. Live bait, specialised fishing maps and a vast fund of local fishing knowledge and expertise are available throughout the town.

As the Shannon flows further south you will discover the mysterious reed beds and channels in Carnadoe, Kilglass and Grange. Lough Ree, a wilder, larger lake that boasts inspiring scenery and diverse wildlife, will take you to Lecarrow or Hodson bay to the west, or perhaps cruise east along the river Inny and the sheltered lakes of Coosan and Kilenure.



## Flavours of the region

Staple Irish dishes include the famous Irish stew and 'boxty', which resembles a filled pancake.

The potato is Ireland's most popular vegetable and a favourite way to serve it is as 'champ' - mashed with a little milk and sometimes spring onions.

When it's time to have your first real drink on Irish soil, it has to be a Guinness, the famous black stout so inextricably associated with Ireland. Mix it with champagne and you have the popular cocktail Black Velvet.

Whiskey (spelled with an e, unlike Scottish whisky) is a popular short and there are many Irish brands, the best known being Powers, Jameson's, Paddy's and Bushmills.



### One week cruises

#### Upper Shannon cruise

Return trip – Belturbet to Carrick-on-Shannon  
150km/16 locks

#### Lough Erne Upper cruise

Return trip – Belturbet to Belleek  
130km/no locks

#### Carrick on Shannon cruise

One way trip – Belturbet to Carrick-on-Shannon  
75km/8 locks

#### Southern Shannon cruise

Return trip – Carrick-on-Shannon to  
Shannonbridge  
240km/4 locks/2 lift bridges

#### Northern Shannon cruise

Return trip – Carrick-on-Shannon to Ballyconnell  
96km/14 locks

### One-way cruises

#### Belturbet cruise

One way trip – Carrick-on-Shannon to Belturbet  
75km/8 locks

#### Portumna cruise

One way trip – Carrick-on-Shannon to Portumna  
160km/5 locks/2 lift bridges

### Not to be missed...

Cruise through the traditional Irish villages of **Ballyconnell**, **Ballinamore** and **Keshcarrigan**. Cruise to the western end of the Lough Erne Lower, perhaps stopping to dine in the famous thatched cottage restaurant at **Bellanaleck**.

Cruise at your leisure to **Enniskillen**, the gateway to Lower Lough Erne, and one of Ireland's most charming county towns. Enniskillen Castle, now a museum, commands the Erne River linking the Loughs. Further on just north of Enniskillen, explore the heritage of **Devinish Island**. At the Lower Lough you will delight at the spectacular coastlines and islands. Places of interest include the **Belleek** Pottery centre, which includes a museum and an extensive selection of the world-renowned glazed porcelain for sale.

From Carrick, make your way to **Athlone**, a town with a long history and a choice of extremely good golf courses. Discover the picturesque village of **Keshcarrigan**, which has some of the best music pubs in Ireland. **Leitrim** village is home to the lock that controls access to the new Shannon-Erne waterway.