



Titanic Slipways

## Belfast

### A port for everyone

# Belfast Harbour

Belfast is a city with a unique character and history that sets it apart from other cruise destinations. Since the first cruise ship arrival in 1996, Belfast has seen unprecedented growth in both cruise calls and visitor numbers. We combine our heritage with a legendary welcome and a sense of humour, which ensures cruise visitors enjoy their stay with us.

An award-winning cruise destination, Belfast is now widely regarded as one of the UK and Ireland's most vibrant and exciting city destinations, full of unique visitor attractions and friendly faces. There is so much for visitors to explore in the incredible city whose innovation, passion and pride gave birth to RMS Titanic and many other great ships. From castles towering high above the lough to tranquil canal towpaths by beautiful parks, Belfast has a myriad of wonderful experiences to enthrall visitors.

From just two cruise calls in 1996 to 148 calls in 2019 with 285,000 cruise visitors, Belfast is now the third most popular destination in the UK and Ireland for one-day cruise ship calls after Dublin and Orkney. It's against this backdrop that Belfast Harbour opened the island's first dedicated cruise terminal in May 2019

Belfast Harbour has invested more than £500,000 to upgrade the quayside, which now includes a Visitor Information Centre managed by our partners, Visit Belfast. Staffed by Visit Belfast's travel advisors the new terminal utilises the latest digital and audio-visual technology to showcase Belfast and Northern

Ireland's visitor attractions.

The newly developed site also includes ample space to service the shore side activities associated with cruise ships – coaches, shuttle buses and taxis – and a berth which has been dredged to accommodate the next generation of larger cruise ships. The terminal allows passengers to quickly connect to Belfast city centre or join one of the many organised excursions to visitor attractions such as the Giant's Causeway, Hillsborough Castle, Mount Stewart and Titanic Belfast.

## Top Five Facts about Belfast

1. Belfast Harbour is made up of Belfast Port and the 2,000 acre Harbour Estate which is home to more than 760 businesses with 27,000 people who come to either work or study every day, we welcome 5 million visitors annually.
2. Included in our strategic vision to 2035 is our ambition to become the world's best regional port.
3. In 1998 the Good Friday agreement was signed which marked the end of the Troubles. Since then, Belfast has completely changed. It went from being a hurt city to becoming an awesome technology hub. Nowadays Belfast is a vibrant and welcoming city.
4. HBO's Game of Throne studios are in Belfast and a lot of the filming locations for the hit TV show are dotted around Northern Ireland, including the North Wall & the Dark Hedges.
5. The Titanic was built in Belfast – "She was fine when she left here"

## Experience Belfast

### Titanic Belfast

The world's largest Titanic visitor experience and a must-see on any visit to Belfast and Northern Ireland. Titanic Belfast, named the World's Leading Tourist Attraction at the prestigious World Travel Awards in 2016, is located beside the Titanic Slipways, the Harland and Wolff Drawing Offices and Hamilton Graving Dock, the very place where Titanic was designed, built and launched in 1912. It tells the story of the Titanic, from her conception in Belfast in the early 1900s, through her construction and launch, to its maiden voyage and subsequent place in history. The self-guided Titanic Experience extends over nine interpretive and interactive galleries, which explore the sights, sounds, smells and stories of RMS Titanic, as well as the city and people who made her.

**Link:** <https://titanicbelfast.com/>

### The Giant's Causeway

A UNESCO World Heritage site, the Giant's Causeway is a magnificent, mysterious geological formation on the North East coast of County Antrim. It's steeped in myths and legend. The setting is a spectacular, dynamic coastal landscape of Atlantic waves, rugged cliffs, fascinating geographical antiquity, secluded bays and magnificent views. It forms a jagged headland of neatly packed columns which point towards Scotland. Visitors can walk or take a small bus along the basalt columns which are at the edge of the sea, just over 1km from the entrance to the site.

**Link:** <https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/giants-causeway>

### Hillsborough Castle & Gardens

The official Northern Ireland residence of HM The Queen. In the 1940s, the then Princess Elizabeth enjoyed family holidays here with her sister Princess Margaret, and she continues to visit and attend official engagements here today. From grand family home to charming royal residence, Hillsborough Castle has welcomed the world and witnessed pivotal chapters in politics. This splendid late Georgian house, surrounded by 100 acres of glorious gardens, was built in the 1770s by Wills Hill, later 1st Marquess of Downshire. The Castle is set in 100 acres of breath-taking gardens and offers significant contrasts of

woodland, waterways, gardens with trimmed lawns and meadows as well as specimen trees and rare plants.

**Link:** <https://www.hrp.org.uk/hillsborough-castle/#gs.1ks72e>

### Game of Thrones Tours and Experiences

Northern Ireland is the Home of Thrones. The mesmerising fantasy lands of Westeros have been created using Northern Ireland's rugged coastlines, historic castles and breath-taking countryside and forests. The dramatic scenery of the Causeway Coast and Glens, and Counties Down, Fermanagh and Armagh form the backdrop of much of the show's action and fans can easily access many of the locations from Belfast including Castle Ward and Tollymore Forest Park (Winterfell), Downhill Beach (Dragonstone) and Murlough Bay (Stormlands).

**Link:** <https://gameofthronestours.com/>

### Crumlin Road Gaol

Take a tour to experience all aspects of the 19th-century Gaol from the tunnel linking the courthouse on the other side of the Crumlin Road to the hanging cell, Governor's office, hospital and graveyard. Crumlin Road Gaol first opened its gates to prisoners in 1846 and for 150 years was a fully operational prison. The Gaol has housed murderers, suffragettes and loyalist and republican prisoners. It has witnessed births, deaths and marriages and has been the home to executions, escapes, hunger-strikes and riots.

**Link:** <https://www.crumlinroadgaol.com/>

### SS Nomadic

SS Nomadic - RMS Titanic's tender ship and the last remaining White Star Line vessel has been restored to her original glory. Walk the decks, explore the ship, and take a journey through over 100 years of authentic maritime and social history. SS Nomadic is most famous for the part she played in the Titanic story when she ferried passengers to Titanic from Cherbourg, but this was only the beginning of her extraordinary 100-year journey. Restored to her original 1911 glory and back home in Belfast, a visit to SS Nomadic and Hamilton Dock combines the authentic heritage and atmosphere of this historic ship.

**Link:** <https://www.nomadicbelfast.com/>

### Botanical Gardens & Tropical Ravine

An important part of Belfast's Victorian heritage which was established in 1828. Originally known as the Belfast Botanic Garden, the site contained exotic tree species and impressive plant collections from the southern hemisphere, many of which can still be seen in the park. The Tropical Ravine, home to many tropical plants, is one of the listed buildings in Belfast's Botanic Gardens and has recently been restored with many of its original Victorian features reinstated and preserved.

**Link:** <https://visitbelfast.com/partners/belfast-city-hall/>

### Belfast City Hall

One of Belfast's most iconic buildings, Belfast City Hall first opened its doors in August 1906 and is Belfast's civic building. Public tours of Belfast City Hall are available. Led by an experienced guide, they last around one hour and uncover the history of Belfast City Hall, while exploring some of its finest features.

**Link:** <https://visitbelfast.com/partners/belfast-city-hall/>

### Ulster Folk Museum

Step back in time and experience what life was like in Ulster over 100 years ago. Wander through a beautiful rolling countryside and a bustling town filled with authentic, period buildings, where you will encounter costumed locals demonstrating traditional crafts in cottages, farm dwellings, schools and shops. Every day a wide variety of folk activities and demonstrations take place, from basket weaving and

blacksmithing to crocheting and needlework. Take a stroll around the whitewashed farmhouses and meet the pigs, cows, sheep and hens that kept rural life turning, and have a taste of some homemade soda bread cooking over the fire.

**Link:** <https://discovernorthernireland.com/things-to-do/ulster-folk-museum-p675241>

### Old Bushmills Distillery

Bushmills Irish Whiskey is made at Ireland's oldest working distillery in County Antrim, Northern Ireland. Come and watch whiskey making take place and enjoy a wee taster too. Experience a guided tour of Ireland's only 'grain to glass' distillery and discover some of the trade secrets learned over 400 years of distilling.

**Link:** <https://bushmills.com/distillery/>