

Walking through the peninsulas of south-west Ireland

In the southwest of Ireland, five large peninsulas migrate miles into the Atlantic Ocean. With elongated mountain ranges and crashing waves on the rocky shores, these peninsulas form challenging hiking areas. We therefore keep beautiful memories of our hiking tours on these peninsulas.



All of them

You feel like you're at the end of the world. The mainland with its hectic pace of life is far away. Peering over the ocean, the next stage is the lighthouse of Cape Spear, Canada. Or, as the old Irishman at Kilcatherine Point warned us: "*You're on your own now!*" But what a landscape and a tranquility!

Hiking on the peninsulas

The peninsulas are located in counties Cork and Kerry. These counties together form the province of Munster. In recent years we have hiked on the peninsulas [of Beara](#), [Iveragh \(Kerry\)](#) and [Dingle](#). We still have credit for the hiking trails on Sheep's Head and Mizen. There is no shortage of hiking trails in this region. Buy a good map, plan a day trip of about 20 km (possibly supplemented with the advice of the mostly willing B&B owner) and your walking day can no longer be broken!



Overlooking Kenmare Bay

Rugged, but lovely

The Caha Mountains and the Slieve Miskish Mountains form the backbone of Beara. The highest mountain of Beara is Hungry Hill (685 m). In addition, the Macgillicuddy's Reeks, with (three) peaks up to more than 1,000 m, are iconic for the Iveragh peninsula. On Dingle, this honor goes to the Brandon Group, with the Brandon as the highest mountain: 952 m. This nature on these mountains and the already mentioned rocky coasts (and sometimes beautiful sandy beaches) is not only rugged and wild, but can also be described as lovely and picturesque. It is not without reason that the Irish landscape has been a source of inspiration for countless singers and poets for thousands of years.



Slieve Mish Mountains

Along or around it?

You can climb the mountain peaks, but if you prefer to take it easy, you can also walk around them. The most famous and most walked hiking trails are named after the names of the peninsulas. These hiking trails often avoid the higher peaks of the mountains, making them easy to do for most hikers. Classics include the Dingle Way, a 179-kilometre signposted circular walk. There is also the Kerry Way, a 214-kilometre route that starts and ends in Killarney. And the Beara Way, a 206-kilometer National Irish Trail, should not be missed in this list. But, as mentioned, if you feel like a nice climb, that is at least easy to realize at breakfast in the B&B.



Mount Brandon, Dingle

Culture

The peninsulas have long remained cut off from the influences "of the outside world" (read: the busy cities such as Dublin). In many places people still speak the Irish language and the folk music is *present live* in the many pubs. The peninsulas have a high density of archaeological excavations and monuments. The cultural heritage goes back literally thousands of years and has a wide variety of folklore and mythologies. While walking you will pass archaeological remains such as ringforts, dolmens, dolmens and Celtic crosses. Or the *clochans*, beehive huts of centuries old. And of course the monasteries and castles.



Folk music in a pub

It is recommended to read up on the special world of Irish mythology at home. But some foreknowledge of more recent history, including the relationship between Ireland and England, can't hurt either. Especially in the pub, when the alcohol is going to contribute to the conversation with a proud Irishman.

General route tips

- The peninsulas are located on the west coast of Ireland. Most travellers arrive via Dublin Airport on the east coast, but Cork airport in the south is a great alternative. From here you can reach your destination in a few hours with the frequently driving bus.
- We used the bus between Dublin and Killarney once. An hours-long trip with a break stop in a beautiful pub. Still a special experience!
- Excellent hiking maps are those from the Ordnance Survey Ireland discovery series.
- The B&B system also works perfectly on the peninsulas. If necessary, have your reservation for the next night arranged at breakfast.
- The routes are on cart tracks, *fuchsia-fringed boreens* (country roads with fuchsias), through meadows, on rocky paths, through sometimes damp and springy peatlands and beautiful stretches on sandy beaches. Good walking shoes are therefore a *must!*
- Because the ocean is always close, the views are phenomenal. So stop regularly along the way to let this image affect you!
- And for the climbers among us: *If weather conditions are poor and visibility is bad then serious consideration should be given to finding an alternative method of transport to get around the mountain.* We have experience with it. Rarely have we seen the fog rise as quickly as on Mount Brandon.
- Bird lovers/watchers can indulge themselves on Bere Island (just off the Beara Way).



Black valley Kerry



Dolmen



Dingle



Beara



Eyeries (Beara)



On your own