



SHORT and SWEET

Irish retreats this October...



1 THE OLD GROUND

A charming hotel in the heart of Ennis, Co Clare, the Old Ground is a good starting point for anyone hoping to explore the west. Just 20 minutes from Shannon airport, it is Irish owned and run, and is within reach of the Cliffs of Moher, Bunratty Castle and the Ailwee Caves. Ennis

itself has been dubbed 'the boutique capital of Ireland' thanks to its winding streets, with off-the-beaten-track cafés, restaurants and independent shops. This October, the Old Ground Experience package includes three nights' accommodation at the four-star hotel, breakfast each morning, one evening meal, chocolates on arrival and a mini facial or back massage at nearby Madeline's Day Spa, all from just €169 per person sharing.

Old Ground Hotel, Ennis, Co Clare; Tel: 065 682 8127; flynnhotels.com



2 THE SHELBOURNE

If you've found yourself somewhat a World Cup Widow over the last few weeks, fear not: the end is in sight. But until the rugby finishes, you could do worse than to take advantage of the Shelbourne's latest offer and plump for a weekend in the capital. The five-star renaissance property, overlooking St Stephen's Green and a stone's throw from

Grafton Street, is the ideal setting for those who are looking for shopping, beautifying and the best in nightlife in the Big Smoke. The Rugby Widow package includes two cocktails in the stylish No 27 Bar and Lounge, one night's accommodation in a deluxe room and a full Irish breakfast in the Saddle Room Restaurant for just €250 per night.

The Shelbourne Hotel, 27 St Stephen's Green, Dublin 2; Tel: 01 663 4500; marriott.co.uk



3 RENVYLE HOUSE

Head to this Connemara bolthole for some wild beauty and 200 acres of serene countryside. Within the grounds, there is a private lake, a nine-hole golf course, a beach, wooded walks and plenty of country pursuits to keep visitors occupied. This October Bank holiday weekend, Renvyle is offering a package that includes a Halloween fancy dress party, three nights' bed and breakfast and two evening meals for €375 per person, while mid-term break deals start at €149 per person for two night's bed and breakfast and one evening meal (including Kids' Club and evening entertainment for the kids; under fours stay free). For something more artistic, painter and teacher John Hoar is in residence from Sunday 2 October for a four-day long watercolour painting course. From €499 per person, including five nights B&B, four dinners, all tuition and a field trip.

Renvyle House Hotel, Connemara, Co Galway; Tel: 095 43511; renvyle.com



4 THE CLIFF HOUSE

Add a gourmet touch to your weekend break by heading south to the beautiful Ardmore Bay, Co Waterford. With its Michelin-star House restaurant and award-winning spa, we're also impressed with The

Cliff House's newly installed outdoor seaweed baths for those seeking a wonderfully natural rejuvenation. This month, you can bag a two-night weekend break in a Deluxe Sea View room, breakfast each morning and dinner for two in House restaurant for €558 (based on two adults sharing). For one night, including a three course dinner in the Bar restaurant and breakfast the next morning, expect to pay just €292.

The Cliff House Hotel, Ardmore, Co Waterford; Tel: 024 87 800; thecliffhousehotel.com



5 THE ICE HOUSE

This boutique hotel in Ballina, Co Mayo came Highly Commended in the *Irish Tatler* Spa Awards, thanks to the outstanding service of its therapists – so needless to say, it is the Chill Spa that makes this property worth a visit. This autumn sees a host of new spa packages available at The Ice House, running until 31 October. Take a two-night midweek break in a riverside room with breakfast, bed, a newspaper each morning and a late checkout for €145 per person sharing. Or go for the Autumn Madness package, which includes one evening meal in The Pier restaurant, unlimited time in the Thermal Area at Chill Spa and get a third night's accommodation for free (from €199 per person sharing).

The Ice House Hotel, Ballina, Co Mayo; Tel: 096 23500; theicehousehotel.ie



6 CASTLECOURT HOTEL

The busy tourist town of Westport makes for a great escape, with some nightlife thrown in. The town itself is home to the famous Matt Molloy's, while Westport Quay has lots for families to do, including Westport House & Pirate Adventure Park, which re-opens for the October mid-term break. If family entertaining is a must, the **Castlecourt**

Hotel has a Halloween package that caters for a family of two adults and two children under 12 for three nights bed and breakfast plus two evening meals and full access to the kids Buzz Club for just €409 in total. It also shares the adjoining Spa Sula with its sister hotel, the Westport Plaza, and the week begins on October 31 with a family-fun, fancy-dress night and karaoke.

Castlecourt Hotel, Westport, Co Mayo; Tel: 098 55088; castlecourthotel.ie



7 LOUGH ERNE RESORT

This five-star resort just outside Enniskillen in Fermanagh, Lough Erne is a breathtaking place of beauty, complete with two championship golf courses and the Thai Spa. Set on its very own 600-acre peninsula, it is the gateway to Ireland's north-west, and mixes old world heritage charm with

every modern day luxury. Having just welcomed spa line Ytsara to its range of offerings, the Thai Spa Retreat includes two nights in a lakeview room, breakfast each morning, one evening meal in The Catalina restaurant, one-hour Ytsara spa treatment per person, and use of the thermal suite and infinity pool starting at just £103 (approx. €117.50) per person per night.

Lough Erne Resort, Belleek Road, Enniskillen, Co Fermanagh; Tel: 0044 (0)28 6632 3230; loughernereresort.com ■