

TRAVEL-NEWS



■ Clockwise from main: the revamped spa at the Johnstown Estate; the Line of Duty Experience offers a tour of filming locations around Belfast; the Cairde Festival hits Sligo in July – stay at the Sligo Park Hotel with B&B from €189 per room. Below: get acquainted with history at the Hook Lighthouse

GEMMA TIPTON

To the lighthouse

Hook Lighthouse, a mere stripling at 800 years old, is a brilliant adventure for visitors of all ages. Lockdown restrictions led to the addition of an outdoor guided walking tour, available daily through the summer. The tour includes all sorts of interesting stuff on history, save our seas eco-education, maritime heritage and more. It lasts 30 minutes. Admission is €2/€5 at hookheritage.ie. Stay at fancy Faithlegg House with rooms from €249 B&B per room.

All friends

The Cairde Festival hits Sligo July 3rd-11th. Including cool music and fun from Landless to Maija Sofia and more, plus Junk Ensemble and the fabulous-looking Cycle Circus popping up across the county, it's well worth the trip, cairdefestival.com. Stay at the Sligo Park Hotel with B&B from €189 per room. sligoparkhotel.com

Getting all ancient

Valerie Pakenham's new book, *Exploring Ireland's Middle Kingdom* (Somerville Press, €10, somervillepress.com) takes you from the dividing of the king-

dom through passage graves and castles, via feckless fox hunters and gold-clad high crosses. Who knew there was such a wealth? Meath dwellers, obviously. Join them for a night or two while diving into your own enriched explorations, at the Johnstown Estate, winners of the Trip Advisor Travellers' Choice Award for 2021. Summer family staycation package includes three nights B&B, a summer barbecue, picnic and kids' club, from €275 per room. Don't forget to check out their revamped spa too. thejohnstownestate.com

Under canvas

Cork city is definitely taking to the whole outdoors summer idea, with the pedestrianisation of 17 streets, and al fresco spots

popping up everywhere. The cafe at the Crawford Gallery is a current favourite, with its pretty marquee all painted with flowers. It is run by Ballymaloe-trained Sinéad Doran, and is open daytime, Tuesday to Saturday, though there are whispers of plans for evening openings in the future. The exhibitions are pretty damn good, too. crawfordartgallery.ie

Stay at The Dean and enjoy rooftop views and that oh-so-cool vibe they're known for. The Missed Moments package includes dinner, a glass of bubbly, bottle of wine and a small gift, from €150pps. thedean.ie/cork

Making beautiful music

Earlier this year Dublin's Hard Rock was listed as one of the quarantine spots, but

seemingly it wasn't called into service. Instead you can elect to stay with its Dublin Calling deal: dinner, B&B and a second room for your pals to come along too – absolutely free. Sleep alongside memorabilia from rock gods from David Bowie to Hozier, the Rolling Stones to Kurt Cobain, and enjoy Peruvian-inspired dinner at in-house restaurant Zampas. You can also pick a playlist to soundtrack your trip, from €250 – for absolutely everything. hardrockhotels.com/dublin

Up the Lagan in a bubble

It took me six series to spot that Line of Duty was filmed in Belfast, but while Supt Hastings won't be floating up the Lagan in a bubble, sucking diesel or roaring "bent coppers" for the foreseeable, you can soothe your AC12 withdrawal symptoms with the Line of Duty Experience from Hastings Hotels (who else?) and McComb's Coach Travel.

Starting at Belfast's Grand Central Hotel, you'll see such glitzy hotspots as the Kingsgate Printing Services, the Lorry Park where Kate shoots Ryan Pilkington, and even the gritty underpass where secret chats usually end in someone stalking off in a huff. Day tours on selected dates from July to September cost £49pp at mccombscoaches.com. Stay at the Grand Central from €147, room only. hastingshotels.com

