

## Weekend in Belfast



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#### Belfast at a Glance

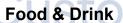
- Capital of Northern Ireland and its largest city, with around **340,000 people** in the city proper and over **670,000** in the wider urban area.
- Location: Nestled at the head of Belfast Lough (a sea inlet) and surrounded by low hills, which makes it both scenic and compact.
- Name: "Belfast" comes from the Irish Béal Feirste, meaning mouth of the sandbank ford.

## **History & Identity**

- **Shipbuilding Heritage** Belfast is world-famous as the birthplace of the RMS **Titanic** and many other great ships, built at the Harland & Wolff shipyards.
- **Industrial Powerhouse** In the 19th and early 20th centuries it was known for linen production, rope-making, and engineering, earning the nickname "Linenopolis."
- The Troubles (late 1960s–1998) The city was deeply affected by conflict between unionist/loyalist and nationalist/republican communities. Today, peace walls, murals, and tours offer insight into that period.
- **Modern Renaissance** Since the Good Friday Agreement (1998), Belfast has transformed into a vibrant, safe, and welcoming city with a buzzing arts, music, and food scene.

#### What It's Known For

- Titanic Belfast The world-class visitor attraction telling the story of the Titanic.
- Murals & Peace Walls Powerful street art reflecting Belfast's political and cultural history.
- Music & Arts From traditional Irish sessions in pubs to venues like the Ulster Hall and MAC (Metropolitan Arts Centre).
- Green Spaces Botanic Gardens, Cave Hill Country Park (with sweeping views), and Ormeau Park.
- Friendly Locals Belfast is often praised for its warmth, wit, and hospitality.



- **Ulster Fry** The ultimate cooked breakfast.
- **St George's Marke**t A foodie hotspot with fresh produce, local crafts, and live music.
- Pubs with Character Verify Sellars (dating back to 1720) and
   The Crown Liquor Saloo (ornate Victorian gin palace).
- **Modern Dining** Belfast now has Michelin-starred restaurants, but also plenty of cozy, affordable cafés and pubs.

#### **Practical Vibes**

Walkable City: The centre is compact—you can stroll between most sights.





- Transport: Glider buses, <u>Belfast Visitor Pass | Translink</u>, Must be purchased 5 days in advance and Belfast Bikes make getting around easy. Must be purchased 5 days in advance
- Weather: Expect changeable skies—bring a light rain jacket even in summer!

## Day 1 (Saturday)

#### Morning

- St George's Market Start your day at this beautifully preserved Victorian covered market.
   Open Fridays to Sundays, it's full of crafts, music, and hearty food stalls (like an Ulster fry bap for around £8!)
- Belfast City Hall

   Just a stroll away. Admire its grand architecture and take part in a free guided tour, then visit the adjacent
   The Titanic Memorial Garden

#### Lunch

Grab something cozy and affordable at one of the market's food vendors or nearby cafés like
 Established Coffee

#### Afternoon

- Ulster Museum & Potanic Gardens Both are free to enter. Wander the lush gardens
  and step inside the museum to explore natural science, art, and history exhibits
- Optional: Take a stroll through Queen's University Belfastarea and enjoy the Botanic Gardens in a relaxed vibe—locals love this spot

# Evening tom journeys, made easy.

Cathedral Quarter & Pelfast Entries – Explore this vibrant district, full of street art, quirky cafés, and historic alleyways like Pottinger's Entry and Winecellar Entry. Have a drink or light bite in a local pub—resulting in charming atmosphere without high prices

## Day 2 (Sunday)

#### Morning

## Titanic Belfast Ticket price £24.95

• A Self-Guided Journey
Titanic Belfast offers a self-paced tour through ten interactive galleries,



inviting visitors to engage with the sights, sounds, and stories behind the Titanic—from its conception and construction right here in Belfast, to its tragic maiden voyage and enduring legacy

### Highlights Include:

- **The Shipyard Ride**—a dynamic, mini-carousel-style journey through a scale model of the ship's rudder and slipways
- Galleries such as Boomtown Belfast, The Launch, Myths & Legends, Titanic Beneath, and more—each offering historical depth, interactive storytelling, and sensory immersion
- Special Bonus: SS Nomadic
  - Your Titanic Belfast ticket includes entry to the SS Nomadic—the only surviving White Star Line tender—where you can step aboard and explore its maritime history
- Booking Tip: It's best to book tickets online to save a few pounds and secure your preferred time slot.
- **Duration & Timing:** Allocate around 1.5–2.5 hours for the full experience, with last admission typically 1 hour 40 minutes before closing

#### Lunch

- Head to CS Lewis Square to enjoy the Narnia-themed sculptures and soak in the literary vibe—free and fun
- Or explore the Maritime Mile a scenic riverside area rich in Titanic-era history and free to walk

#### **Afternoon**

• Crumlin Road Gaol Visitor Attraction and Conference Center • HMS Caroline at Titanic Quarter—both offer value for money with rich historical insight

#### Late Afternoon

 Ormeau Park – Relax and stretch your legs in Belfast's oldest public park, full of scenic paths and open space—perfect for a picnic or leisure stroll

#### **Evening**

Treat yourselves to a memorable meal at room2 Belfast homete's lounge or café—stylish, affordable, and includes two welcome drinks if you're staying there (still, consider just visiting for dinner if lodging elsewhere).

Or enjoy a local pub in the **Cathedral Quarter**—like **Kelly's Cellars** or **Sunflower Public House**—for that authentic Belfast pub experience with soul but light on the wallet

## **Budget Tips & Highlights**

- Free Attractions: Botanic Gardens, Ulster Museum, City Hall tours, CS Lewis Square, Maritime Mile, public parks, and walking tours
- Transportation: Belfast is compact and highly walkable (most central spots are within 20 minutes). For longer trips,
   Belfast Bikes (30-min free daily access) or purchase a Belfast Visitor Pass | Translink which gives you unlimited travel for 1, 2, or 3 consecutive days on Translink's Metro, Glider, NI Railways, and Ulsterbus services within the designated Belfast zone—plus discounts at top attractions and eateries.

## **Budget-Friendly Cafés in Belfast**

Here are some lovely cafés that won't strain your budget:

- Neighbourhood Cafe
  - A welcoming local favorite, ideal for warm brunches or a sweet treat and specialty coffee in a relaxed atmosphere.
- Causeway Cafe
  - Open daily for breakfast, brunch, and lunch. Famous for a hearty Ulster fry, plus they offer free Wi-Fi—great for a cozy, satisfying stop.
- - A stylish café offering top-notch barista-level brews and tasty snacks. Handy location, and a local go-to.

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