

# My ace guide to the best bank holiday deals

Summertime is upon us, and the livin' should be easy, says **Lucinda O'Sullivan**, so get yourself ready for the June bank holiday



**T**O me, the June and August bank holiday weekends are the 'real' holiday weekends. As a kid, I went with my family to Skerries for the month of June; I also got married on a June bank holiday Saturday, so I see it as a time of fulsome roses and the start of happy summer times! Hotels around the country will be busy, but here is the ultimate whistle-stop snappy guide to what you really want to know — where and how much!

Please note '2+2' family packages generally apply to children under 12.

Kicking off with some glamorous retro fun, on bank holiday Monday, June 1, Bellinter House in Navan, Co Meath is holding a 'Downton Afternoon Tea Party' with music and prosecco. Tickets are €25pp, or you can enjoy 1BB and 'Downton Afternoon Tea Party' at €95pps, see [bellinterhouse.com](http://bellinterhouse.com). Not far away, Trim Castle Hotel has various one/two-night (2+2) family breaks, perfect for visiting Tayto Park, Funtasia Waterpark or exploring the Boyne Valley. Family packages from €90 per night. See [trimcastlehotel.com](http://trimcastlehotel.com).

In Co Kildare, the splendid Carton House in Maynooth

has a bank holiday Sunday or Monday 1BB offer at €99pps, which includes a €10pp credit voucher towards a spa treatment or a round of golf. See [cartonhouse.com](http://cartonhouse.com).

In Co Wexford, at the Ashdown Park Hotel in Gorey, they have a 2+2 family package from €385, which includes 2BB for all the family, a two-hour pass to Gravity Extreme Adventure in Courtown and an hour's pony trek for the kids (terms and conditions apply as to age limits and height restrictions for these activities). See [ashdownparkhotel.com](http://ashdownparkhotel.com). Kelly's Resort Hotel in Rosslare, has 'June Room for Two' midweek/weekend rates with 1BB being €264/€330 respectively, including complimentary afternoon tea for two. See [kellys.ie](http://kellys.ie).

For a real adventure, why not rent a castle and have your own *Game of Thrones*? Bansha Castle in Co Tipperary has seven bedrooms and the minimum rental is three nights at €1,800. See [banshacastle.com](http://banshacastle.com). In nearby Thurles, at Inch House, you can also enjoy the country pursuits with their five-kilometre looped walk and freshwater lake with hatching swans, ducks and herons. 1BB for

two from €90pps. See [inchhouse.ie](http://inchhouse.ie). The eponymous Horse & Jockey Hotel also has a 1BB rate from €75pps. Check out their Elemis Spa. See [horseandjockeyhotel.com](http://horseandjockeyhotel.com).

The luxurious Castlemartyr Resort in East Cork has a 2BB1D 'June Weekend' break based on two people sharing at €250 per night, see [castlemartyrresort.ie](http://castlemartyrresort.ie). In Cork city, the five-star Hayfield Manor Hotel, has a 'Gourmet Experience' from €298pps to include 2BB and one dinner. See [hayfieldmanor.ie](http://hayfieldmanor.ie).

Down in Kinsale, Ireland's gourmet capital, the Blue Haven Hotel, a hive of activity and fun in the heart of the town, has one/two-night BB breaks from €85/€150pps to include one evening meal. Nightly music. See [bluehavenkinsale.com](http://bluehavenkinsale.com).

Another great place to stay in Kinsale is Maureen Tierney's Friar's Lodge, where double rooms are from €110 and family rooms (sleeping up to 5 people) are from €140, including breakfast. They also have an arrangement with the excellent Jim Edwards Restaurant & Bar of a two/three-course dinner at €20/€25. See [friars-lodge.com](http://friars-lodge.com).

Kinsale is a busy place, so

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also worth checking out is Maeve Coakley's Blindgate House, which has delightful double rooms and breakfast from €99 per night. See [blindgatehouse.com](http://blindgatehouse.com).

Moving west to the Kingdom, Brook Lane Hotel in Kenmare has a 2BB1D deal from €210pps, with dinner, in their atmospheric Casey's Restaurant. See [brooklanehotel.com](http://brooklanehotel.com).

In Killarney, the fabulous five-star Dunloe Castle, which has refurbished its bedrooms, offers 1BB from €100pps, or 1BBD from €150pps. Dunloe is great for families and have a 1BB family rate at €290 per night for two adults and up to three children sharing in a family room; or €325 per night for two adults and up to four children in interconnecting rooms. See [killarneyhotels.ie](http://killarneyhotels.ie).

The Absolute Hotel in Limerick has a 'Summer Flash Sale'. For just €63pps, you can bag 1BB and a three-course evening meal in their Absolute Bar & Grill. This is valid for periods during June, July and August, but you must book by May 29 – next Friday. See [absolutehotel.com](http://absolutehotel.com).

Out in Ennis, Co Clare, at the lovely Old Ground Hotel, their 'Wild Atlantic Way' offer gives you 2BB1D for just €139pps. Here you can avail of a coach trip to see the West Clare Coast at €35pp. See [flynnhotels.com](http://flynnhotels.com).

Where better to bring your little princes and princesses than to Ashford Castle in Cong, Co Mayo? Their 'Family Falconry' package from €1,690 includes 2BB for two adults and two children, a family falconry lesson and dinner for all four in Cullen's at the Cottage on one evening. There is also a '2 Night George V' package from €1,075, including 2BB and a table d'hôte evening meal in the George V dining room. The new head chef here is Philippe Farineau, who was formerly at the super Mount Falcon Estate in Ballina. See [ashfordcastle.com](http://ashfordcastle.com).

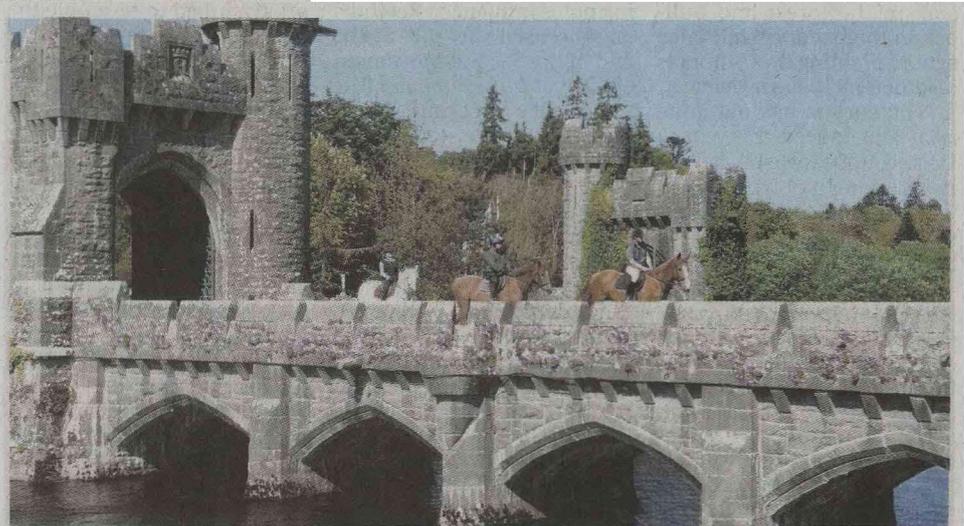
Also in that neck of the woods, The Ice House in Ballina has a 2BB1D break, including a cocktail at sundown and unlimited use of the thermal suite in their Chill Spa, from

€328 per room. See [icehouse-hotel.ie](http://icehouse-hotel.ie).

Further along the Atlantic Way, the Westport Hotel Group, who have the Westport Plaza, the Castlecourt and the Westport Coast Hotels, have 2BB1D breaks from €199pps in the first two hotels, and from €185pps in the latter. See [westporthotelgroup.ie](http://westporthotelgroup.ie). Also in Westport, the very central Mill Times Hotel offer 2BB1D from €99pps midweek. See [milltimeshotel.ie](http://milltimeshotel.ie).

At the brilliant **Castle Leslie** Estate in Co Monaghan, they have great luxury home rental packages in their two-bedroom Old Stable Mews and their four- and five-bedroom Village Cottages from Sunday May 31 for two- or three-night stays, with prices from €650. Luxury home rentals include breakfast, one evening meal and home treats, such as a welcome family basket, beer and wine, sweets, popcorn and snacks. Cool. See [castleleslie.com](http://castleleslie.com).

Back in Co Dublin, the Fitzpatrick Castle Hotel in Killiney has a 'Stay & Sail' package in conjunction with Dublin Bay Cruises. From €169pps you get 2BB1D and a morning cruise along Dublin's coastline – how brilliant! You might even catch a glimpse of Bono's Killiney mansion. See [fitzpatrickcastle.com](http://fitzpatrickcastle.com).



**DREAM DESTINATION:** Ashford Castle in Cong, Co Mayo has special packages for the upcoming bank holiday weekend