



# HEAD FOR HEIGHTS

**Yvonne Gordon** navigates five amazing cliff walks along Ireland's coastline.

## SLIEVE LEAGUE, CO DONEGAL

For a cliff walk with some thrills, Slieve League (also known as Sliabh Liag) in southwest Co Donegal not only takes in some of Europe's highest sea cliffs with a 601-metre sheer drop into the Atlantic Ocean, but has a section called One Man's Pass, a narrow ridge just wide enough for one

person at a time. The less daring can still take in the magnificent vistas from the viewing point – look down to spot the two “giant's table and chair” rock formations. [sliabhliag.com](http://sliabhliag.com)

## GOBBINS CLIFF PATH, CO ANTRIM

This gorgeous walk takes you along the lower part of the cliffs – the narrow path was created in 1902 by a visionary railway engineer

with a series of bridges, tunnels and staircases allowing visitors to have the full cliff experience, sometimes complete with a good dose of sea spray. You'll see everything from seabirds and marine life to sea caves and unusual rock formations along the two-and-a-half-hour guided walk (book ahead) – with stories of smugglers and colourful local characters to

complete the experience. [thegobbinscliffpath.com](http://thegobbinscliffpath.com)

## SHEEP'S HEAD LIGHTHOUSE LOOP, CORK

Jutting out into the Atlantic Ocean on one of Ireland's most south-westerly peninsulas, the Lighthouse Loop walk at the end of the Sheep's Head Peninsula takes around two hours from the car park and passes the photogenic Sheep's Head Lighthouse. The trek is wild and rugged in parts, but views to Mizen Head on one side and over to the neighbouring Beara Peninsula and Bantry Bay on the other make up for any rough ground. [thesheepsheadway.ie](http://thesheepsheadway.ie)

## ARDMORE CLIFF WALK, CO WATERFORD

Take this looped, one-hour walk around the Co Waterford headland to enjoy views of Ardmore Bay and see local heritage sights, all with the backdrop of wildflowers along the way. Ardmore is one of Ireland's oldest Christian settlements – St Declan

was said to live here between 350-450AD – and you'll pass St Declan's Well, long popular with locals for its curative properties. You'll also pass a church ruin, the old coastguard station, a lookout tower and a shipwreck, before looping inland to the 30-metre round tower. [ardmorewaterford.com](http://ardmorewaterford.com)

## DOOLIN TO CLIFFS OF MOHER, CO CLARE

The walk to the Cliffs of Moher Visitor Centre from Doolin village takes around two hours and, as well as the views of the cliffs, Galway Bay and the Aran Islands, one of the highlights of the walk is taking in the habitats of the thousands of seabirds, especially in spring and early summer – from puffins and cormorants to gannets and razorbills. The other side of the walk is lined with farmland and, if you time it right, you might catch a spectacular sunset. [doolin.ie](http://doolin.ie)

