

Stay in the Most Lavish Castle in Ireland

Tom Sykes July 17, 2015

By Tom Sykes



Ashford Castle (Photo: Ashford Castle)

[The Wild Atlantic Way](#) is the evocative name given by locals to the far western edge of Ireland. While this accurately conjures up the windswept beauty of the ragged coastline, don't let it fool you into thinking your accommodation will necessarily involve hunkering down in turf-walled houses with dentally-challenged crones gnawing on a crust of soda bread.

There are, of course, many comfortable hotels in the West of Ireland, but there is perhaps none so extraordinary or lavish as [Ashford Castle](#), an imposing fantasy of crenellations once owned by the Guinness family (think Ireland's Rockefellers), which has reopened after a \$50 million refurbishment.

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A room at Ashford Castle (Photo: Ashford Castle)

The extraordinary monument to Victorian excess — the traces of the original medieval castle are almost impossible to discern beneath the 1850s extensions — sits in an unrivaled position on the edge of Lough Corrib, Ireland's largest inland lake. There are breathtaking views of the lake from each of the stunningly refurbished bedrooms, which feature magnificent four-poster beds the size of garage doors.

The local village of Cong is famous for having been used as the principal location in John Ford's movie *The Quiet Man*, and there are countless homages to the film throughout the town; barely a wall is free of some inscription or other testifying to its importance in the 1952 John Wayne picture. Ashford Castle itself features in the movie as the 'Big House,' and one channel on the in-room entertainment system is dedicated to the classic production (although modern audiences might find the wife-beating-played-for-laughs element of the film somewhat less than charming).

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