

Celebrating Over 10 Years  
*Rebecca Recommends*  
Hotels and Services with Personality

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## THE EMERALD ISLE - IRELAND

with Castle Leslie Estate and Original Travel UK

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I am delighted to start 2016 with some wonderful ideas and information on Ireland, essential for anyone planning to visit the Emerald Isle this year.

Ireland's Ancient East is a wonderful new opportunity to experience 5000 years of European history in a compact area on the East Coast of Ireland. Get off the beaten track to see, hear, touch and feel the imprints of the millennia of settlers in this land.

[Castle Leslie Estate](#) is a luxury hotel located in County Monaghan that is as charming as it is eccentric, and which boasts an amazing history.

[Original Travel UK](#) can open doors other companies don't even know exist, with exclusive and behind the scenes access to many of the UK and Ireland's most sought after experiences.

As always I would love to hear from you, If you would like to find out more about Castle Leslie Estate or Original Travel UK or if there is anything I can help you with, please contact me on [vip@recommends.com](mailto:vip@recommends.com).

Very best wishes

Rebecca



## Ireland's Ancient East

When you explore Ireland's Ancient East, you wander through 5,000 years of history.

Peel back the layers of history and discover a story that unfolds in the vast green landscapes that seduced a millennia of settlers from Ancient Man to Early-Christians and Medieval Lords to Colonial Settlers. On your journey immerse yourself in history as you are greeted by prehistoric wonders, monastic marvels, magnificent castles and grand estates at every turn.

This is 5,000 years of history. This is [Ireland's Ancient East](#).

Encompassing 17 counties, Ireland's Ancient East features three unique areas.

1. In the Land of 5,000 Dawns, you'll find the whimsical woodland trails of Belvedere House and the exceptional passage tomb of Newgrange, built way back in 3200 BC.
2. The Historic Heartlands is much more than cozy National Heritage Towns and sleepy mirrored lakes. This is where saints converted kings at the Rock of Cashel, Kilkenny Castle changed hands for a song and Iron Age victims were surrendered to Lough Boora Bog.
3. Tales continue on the Celtic Coast, where Vikings looted holy treasures from the monastic city of Glendalough and the light of Europe's oldest lighthouse sweeps across Ireland's story-strewn maritime history.

[Click here to discover the Ireland's Ancient East: 4-day Land of 5,000 Dawns itinerary](#)

This itinerary includes many stunning destinations, including Castle Leslie Estate, an exceptional luxury hotel which I am delighted to be able to highly recommend to all travelers.



## Castle Leslie Estate

Home of the Leslie family - descendants of Attila the Hun - since 1665, Castle Leslie is one of Ireland's last great estates to remain in the hands of its founding family. Its outstanding equestrian centre and extensive grounds make it the perfect option for an activity break and its location makes it the ideal place to stay when exploring Ireland's Ancient East.

Castle Leslie is steeped in history, with ties to Ancient Ireland, Early Christian Ireland, Medieval Ireland and Anglo Ireland. See some examples below of these connections:

### **Ancient Ireland**

A mere 20km from Castle Leslie Estate lies the Navan Fort in Co. Armagh. It is steeped in Irish mythology and was one of the great royal sites of pre-Christian Gaelic Ireland and the capital of the Ulaidh, the people who gave their name to the province of Ulster.

### **Medieval Ireland**

Castle Leslie Estate was established towards the very end of the Medieval period - Glaslough was however the site for the Battle of Drumbanagher in 1689, often hailed as the first battle of the Williamite war, fought between James II and William III of England. The Leslie's however didn't take part, owing to the fact that Rev. Charles Leslie (the head of the Leslie family at the time) had been a critic and opponent of King Williams and had just narrowly escaped arrest for high treason by fleeing to France at this time. Drumbanagher is also believed to have been the centre of a Viking settlement from the 10th century.

### **Anglo Ireland**

2015 marks the celebration of 350 years of the Leslie family at Glaslough (1665-2015). From the initial purchase of the Glaslough demesne by the 'Fighting Bishop' John Leslie in 1665, up to the present day where Castle Leslie Estate continues to be 'one of the last great Irish estates still in the hands of its founding family'.

[Click here for a list of Castle Leslie's Ireland's Ancient East Offers.](#)



### A Bird's Eye View

Castle Leslie and its surroundings are simply stunning. This aerial video of the castle shows just how gorgeous it is.

[Please click here to take a look](#)



### Enchanting Histories

The history of Castle Leslie and the Leslie family themselves makes brilliant and often amusing reading. Please click here to read - and prepare to be enchanted!

[Click here to download a copy of the Leslie Family History brochure.](#)

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## Ireland: What's Hot in 2016

*I highly recommend checking with the team at OTUK if you plan to visit the UK and Ireland, they know exactly what's hot and what's what! Here Ireland expert Annie provides expert insight on some of the best that this beautiful country has to offer.*



Most clichés are only clichés because they're true, and Ireland is a case in point. What images spring to mind when you think of Ireland? The Emerald Isle? A pint of the black stuff? Wild and windswept beaches? A good craic? All clichés, all true, all fabulous and all only a direct flight from the US! Ireland is set to be the HOT place to visit in 2016, as mentioned by [Conde Nast's 'Destinations to watch in 2016'](#), and here are Original Travel UK's favourite Irish places to visit this year...

### City & Country Cool Combo:

One of our favourite destinations is the revived City of Belfast. This thriving city is perfectly placed to enjoy fascinating history, music-filled pubs and a buzzing culinary scene. We loved visiting the Titanic Museum and having a socio-political tour of the city with one of our expert guides. Visit the remarkable Giant's Causeway and taste a whisky or two in the Bushmills Distillery for a brilliant day trip. We recommend spending three days in the bustling city centre before heading to the nearby Castle Leslie for rest and relaxation in the stunning countryside!



#### **The Foodie West Coast**

A new Michelin star at Loam, in Galway, is cementing the West Coast of Ireland's foodie scene. Enjoy visiting the superlative sights of the Cliffs of Moher before heading into the Burren with one of our experts for guided walk and foraging trail in the limestone National Park. We know all the best places to stop and enjoy a bite to eat on your journey, whether that's a country house for afternoon tea, a lobster bar or even a visit to a local chocolatier to round off your gastronomic day.



#### **The Centenary of the Irish Republic**

Dublin at Easter will be a conglomeration of experiences and exhibitions all celebrating the centenary of the Irish Republic - expect parades, flags and an atmosphere like no other as you become part of commemorations of the Easter Rising. Visit the National Museum of Ireland to understand the impact of proclaiming a Republic and make sure you also squeeze in a visit to the University to see the Book of Kells, take in St Patrick's Cathedral and head to a local pub for traditional music and a pint of the black stuff.

[Please click here for a suggested nine-day itinerary from OTUK.](#)

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