



## PRESS RELEASE



# A CELEBRATION OF GOATS, CHAPLIN AND UKULELES: ISLAND OF IRELAND KICKS OFF A SEASON OF ECCENTRIC EVENTS

Europe's largest singles  
matchmaking festival and  
world's first LGBT music and  
matchmaking festival taking  
place at Lisdoonvarna

Other festivals dedicated to  
Chaplin, lobsters, clowns and  
ukuleles

The island of Ireland is hosting some of the most exciting and unusual events in the coming months, offering a diverse selection of ways to experience Ireland and Northern Ireland's local culture, friendly people and beautiful surroundings.

Tourism Ireland has picked the top 10 quirky, unmissable festivals to check out. From Beatlemania in Dublin, to crowning a goat in Killorglin, the opportunities for exciting, alternative festivals are endless.

### **Puck Fair, Killorglin, 10<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> August**

The Puck Fair is one of Ireland's most unusual street festivals; where a wild mountain goat is crowned King of the town for three days and nights - it's a 'see it to believe it' moment! At 400 years old, Puck Fair is one of Ireland's oldest festivals; staging unique parades and ceremonies, providing free concerts, dance workshops, storytelling, fireworks, pet shows and puppet theatres - all part of the 36 hours of free entertainment. *For more information visit:* <http://puckfair.ie>

### **The Big Grill, Herbert Park, Ballsbridge, 13<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> August**

The Big Grill is not your average food festival. Dedicated solely to the art of cooking with fire and smoke, Ireland's first international BBQ festival returns to Herbert Park for the second year running on 13<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> August. The Big Grill was sold out on its debut year, and they have added more to the 2015 programme including some of the world's best BBQ stars and pitmasters. Get involved in the first ever USA style 'Low 'N' Slow' BBQ competition or pull up your sleeves and compete in the chilli challenge - if you dare! *For more information visit* <http://www.biggrillfestival.com>



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### **Charlie Chaplin Comedy Film Festival, Waterville, 20<sup>th</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> August**

Not just for Chaplin enthusiasts, this four-day festival is packed with activities for all ages throughout the days and evenings; from Laurel and Hardy exhibitions, vintage cars, animation and comedy workshops to discos and judged film competitions. There will even be an attempt to break the world record for the largest gathering of people dressed as Charlie Chaplin – bowler hat and moustache compulsory! *For more information visit* <http://chaplinfilmfestival.com>

### **Ukulele Hooley 2015, Dun Laoghaire, 22<sup>nd</sup> - 23<sup>rd</sup> August**

The world-renowned Ukulele Hooley in the seaside town of Dun Laoghaire is in its sixth year, and is one of Europe's most popular ukulele festivals. Taking place on the 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> August 2015, talented ukulele players from around the world gather to stage musical performances – with workshops on offer for those keen to improve their ukulele prowess! *For more information visit* <http://www.ukulelehooley.com>

### **Lisdoonvarna Matchmaking Festival, Lisdoonvarna 28<sup>th</sup> August - 4<sup>th</sup> October (includes The Outing; the world's first LGBT matchmaking and music festival on 2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup> October)**

Steeped in history, the Matchmaking festival in Lisdoonvarna has been a tradition since 1887 when people flocked to the area during holiday seasons, and bachelor farmers would go in search of a wife. Over a century later, the annual festival has evolved into Europe's largest singles event. Even for those not looking for their other half, thousands of people come for a good time, dancing from noon until the early hours of the morning. With the world's first LGBT matchmaking festival, The Outing, also taking place at Lisdoonvarna, there are opportunities for all singletons to find the love of their life with no hard work or internet dating required! *For more information visit* <http://matchmakerireland.com> / <http://www.theouting.ie>

### **Dalkey Lobster Fest, Dalkey, 28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> August**

Dalkey's annual lobster festival tickles taste buds with delectable local lobster, and soothes ears with silky smooth jazz music. The festival, coming to Dalkey from 28<sup>th</sup> - 30<sup>th</sup> August, will kick off with renowned songwriter Phil Coulter taking to the stage while the crowd indulge in delicious seafood. *For more information visit* <https://www.facebook.com/DalkeyLobsterFest/>

### **Bushmills Salmon and Whiskey Festival, Bushmills, 18<sup>th</sup> - 20<sup>th</sup> September**

The fourth annual Bushmills Salmon and Whiskey Festival takes place this year, celebrating local culture, heritage and produce. Artisan stalls, street performers, and of course whiskey and salmon tastings take place at various sites in the area. *For more information visit* <http://www.visitcausewaycoastandglens.com>

### **International Clown Festival, Downpatrick, 24<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup>**

## **September**

Ireland's first ever International Clown Festival rolls up in Downpatrick from 24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> September. Entertainment for all ages is included in the line up, with acrobats, stilt walkers, pantomimes, and clown shows all putting on performances over the four-day festival. All activities are free with street shows taking place all over town. *For more information visit*

<http://www.discovernorthernireland.com/International-Clown-Festival-Downpatrick-P51883>

## **Dublin Beatles Festival, Dublin, 6<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> November**

The three-day Dublin Beatles Festival celebrates the achievements of one of the biggest boy bands in history. For the third year running, Beatles fanatics can immerse themselves in all things Fab Four related; from reliving the best Beatles tunes to fun quizzes, art and memorabilia. Previous years' festivals have attracted Beatles fans from all over the world and its popularity is guaranteed to continue growing! *For more information visit:*

<http://dublinbeatlesfestival.com>

## **The Bard of Armagh, Armagh - 20<sup>th</sup> November**

The Festival of Humorous verse will bring non-stop laughter to Armagh for the 21<sup>st</sup> year running. Applicants can take part with a poem up to 650 words, before finalists are selected to compete with their creative, entertaining and engaging performances. All previous finals have been a sell-out, with 2015 promising to be an evening filled with talent and hilarity. *For more information visit* [www.bardofarmagh.com](http://www.bardofarmagh.com)