



This May 2016 photo shows the ancient stone Dunberg Fort, which sits on a promontory overlooking the Dingle Peninsula in Ireland. Excavations have dated early activity at the site to 500 B.C. T. Duncan Abernathy via AP

## A pub crawl on Ireland's southwest coast

By DOROTHY ABERNATHY  
Associated Press

DINGLE, Ireland — On a trip to Europe, we went looking for some real Irish charm. We found it, in Dingle, a town of 1,200 people on Ireland's southwest coast.

The town is known for its pubs. Dick Mack's has a walk of fame outside that lists the celebrities who've visited, among them Dolly Parton. Foxy John's, a beloved spot, houses an old-fashioned hardware store and a bike rental business on the premises along with the classic pub.

Some Dingle pubs offer live music, from traditional Irish ballads to pop songs with an Irish flair. We started our pub tour at O'Flaherty's, where performers played a variety of instruments,

including guitar, banjo and accordion, along with a whistle and a handheld drum called a bodhran. Later we wandered into O'Sullivan's Courthouse Pub, where we heard a guitarist and a flutist/vocalist.

Some of the pubs were so packed with people that we didn't stay long. But we found seats another night at The Dingle Pub, where a singer accompanied himself on a guitar. He alternated ballads with songs by the likes of the Beatles and Neil Diamond. The spectators were encouraged to sing along, and many did.

During the daytime, Dingle streets bustle with tourists enjoying shops and restaurants. We wandered through stores selling handmade Irish woolens, jewelry, candles, souvenirs and other gift items. We enjoyed some



This May 2016 photo shows boats in the harbor against a backdrop of lush, rolling hills in Dingle, Ireland. The town on Ireland's southwest coast has a lively pub scene. T. Duncan Abernathy via AP



This May 2016 photo shows musicians performing at O'Flaherty's, a pub in Dingle, Ireland. One of the musicians is holding a bodhran, an Irish handheld drum. T. Duncan Abernathy via AP

fine lunches and dinners at restaurants such as the Chart House (our favorite dinner place overall). Out of the Blue Seafood and the Half Door.

On our visit in late spring, the streets seemed to grow quiet as evening neared and the pubs began to fill. In summer — high season for tourists — the town gets very crowded.

Each December, Dingle hosts an annual concert called "Other Voices" that features dozens of Irish and international performers. It's recorded for TV over three days in a tiny Protestant church. The performances are edited and used on a weekly show that airs on Irish state television network RTE. The next concert takes place Dec. 2-4.

The town is compact, so everything is within walking distance. We stayed in a rented house on a hill outside of Dingle overlooking a sheep meadow (there seemed to be sheep everywhere), the town and the waterfront.

Outside Dingle, visitors can take advantage of a sunny day with a driving tour of Dingle Peninsula, where you

can see the ancient Dunberg Fort (earliest features on the site date to 500 B.C.), the Blasket Islands and some lovely views of the rocky coast.

Some scenes from the next "Star Wars" movie were shot last spring on a cliff on the Dingle Peninsula. The wrap party for the cast and crew was held, where else, at Foxy John's.

## Using a slow cooker to make Barbacoa beef tacos

By KATIE WORKMAN  
Associated Press

Barbacoa beef, or pork or lamb or goat, is by definition slowly cooked meat. The word is Mexican, and originally referred to a cooking method by which parts of an animal were wrapped in leaves, and steamed and smoked simultaneously over fire.

The dish came to America from Mexico by way of Texas, and is very much a part of Mexican immigrant and Tex Mex culture, as well as the cuisine of Mexico.

So the notion of making it in a slow cooker is simultaneously radical and obvious. And the resulting meat is flavorful and tender, begging to be stuffed in a soft taco with toppings.

Leftovers might be used in chili, stews, enchiladas, burritos or quesadillas; a couple of cups of shredded, cooked beef in the fridge are a springboard for any number of dinners later in the week. This type of one-two-punch cooking is very rewarding.

So throw that big chunk of beef into the slow cooker with a nice battalion of seasonings, shred up the soft meat, heat some tortillas in the microwave, oven or a skillet, and have yourself a delicious little winter taco feast.

Katie Workman has written two cookbooks focused on easy, family-friendly cooking, "Dinner Solved!" and "The Mom 100 Cookbook." She blogs at <http://www.themom100.com/about-katie-workman/>



Barbacoa beef tacos. Mia via AP

### SLOW COOKER BARBACOA BEEF TACOS

Serves 8

**Start to finish:** 10 hours, 20 minutes (10 hours of which are hands off)

- 2 ½ pound eye of round beef
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon chipotle in adobo puree
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- ½ teaspoon ground cloves
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- Juice of 2 limes
- ¼ cup cider vinegar
- 3 cups beef or chicken broth
- 3 bay leaves
- Warmed corn or flour tortillas to serve

#### Optional toppings:

- Salsa (tomato or tomatillo)
- Sour cream
- Shredded cheddar, or crumbled queso fresco, goat cheese, or feta
- Diced avocado
- Slivered red onion

In a large, heavy skillet over high heat, heat the oil. Sear the beef on all sides until browned.

Meanwhile, combine the chipotle puree, onion, garlic, chili powder, cloves, salt, lime juice and vinegar in a slow cooker. Add the broth and the bay leaves.

Cook on low for 10 hours, until the meat is falling-apart tender. Remove the meat from the slow cooker and let it sit for about 20 to 30 minutes, then pull it apart using two forks. Meanwhile, pour the cooking liquid into a tall container and put it in the fridge. When you have pulled apart the meat, take out the liquid and skim off any fat that has risen to the top. Rewarm the sauce if needed and drizzle the shredded meat with some of the cooking liquid until nicely moistened but not dripping.

Serve with warmed tortillas and whatever toppings you like.

Note: Reserve the rest of the cooking liquid; you can use it in soups, stews or chili.

*Nutrition information per serving:* 323 calories; 76 calories from fat; 9 g fat (2 g saturated; 0 g trans fats); 82 mg cholesterol; 896 mg sodium; 25 g carbohydrate; 4 g fiber; 3 g sugar; 36 g protein.