

MalinWaters^o



Cruising Route:

Portrush and north Antrim to west Donegal and Sligo

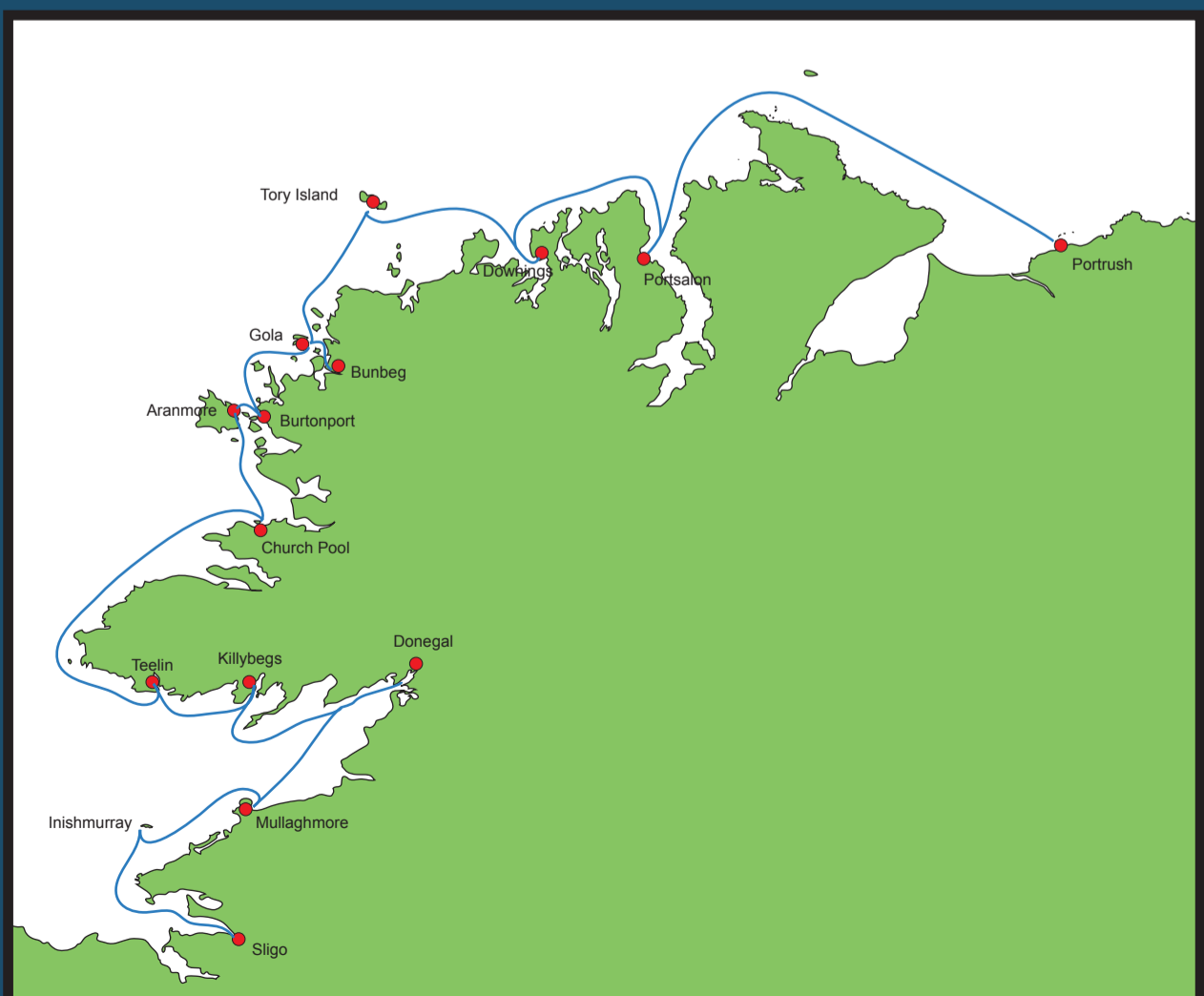
This cruise needs three weeks for detailed exploration but will fit into a fortnight. There are visitors' moorings at Culdaff, but most yachts make the 42-mile trip from Portrush or Coleraine to Lough Swilly in a single voyage. Careful attention to tide and weather are needed when planning the trip round Malin Head. Garvan Sound, closest to the mainland, is the shortest route, but Inishtrahull Sound or the passage outside the island are simpler. Inishtrahull itself offers an interesting stopover for the more adventurous sailor.

The first port of call in Lough Swilly is Portsalon, where there are visitors' moorings. The Lough is the principal sailing area on the west coast and offers day-sailing in sheltered water. There is a marina at Fahan and pontoon accommodation at Rathmullan.

The coast west of Lough Swilly is rugged and beautiful, with many offshore rocks and reefs demanding care in pilotage. Access to Mulroy Bay has been simplified by new navigational aids, and there are visitors' moorings at Downings in Sheephaven Bay. Tory, Ireland's most remote island, is seven miles offshore. Its little harbour offers a safe berth for a yacht.

South of Bloody Foreland lie the Rosses, a granite coast aptly described recently as the "wild west of Ireland" and a wonderful cruising ground. The islands from Inishsirrer to Aranmore shelter the coast from the ever-present swell, and golden beaches and snug anchorages beckon. Bunbeg is one of Ireland's most sheltered harbours, and Gola, long deserted, has been the focus of outstanding restoration work on its old houses. The harbour at Burtonport offers an alongside berth and piped water and diesel, and there are visitors' moorings at Aranmore. Here and further south, the cliff scenery is awesome. The moorings at Church Pool (Portnoo) are in a secure anchorage and are a good departure point for rounding Glen Head. To the south are the 597-metre cliffs of Slieve League, the second highest in Ireland. Teelin harbour, with its deep-water pier and visitors' moorings, lies just to the east, and further east again is Killybegs, Ireland's principal fishing port, with an excellent range of technical services.

Donegal harbour has been newly surveyed and marked, and makes a most attractive port of call. To the south, the holiday village of Mullaghmore has visitors' moorings and a short-stay pontoon. If the weather is calm, visit Inishmurray to see its astonishing and well-preserved sixth-century monastic remains. Sligo has secure pontoon accommodation in the river, with all the amenities of a large town and regional centre handy.



Portrush and north Antrim to west Donegal and Sligo