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You can become a Stark

In Northern Ireland, Winterfell Tours is like camp for die-hard *Game of Thrones* fans

AS SOON AS I'M WRAPPED IN a heavy black cloak accented with a white fur collar, I am transported to Westeros. It helps that I'm standing in the middle of Castle Ward, the 900-acre National Trust site in County Down whose stone-lined farmyard doubles as Winterfell, the mighty fortress of *Game of Thrones*' Stark family.

The smelly regalia I've been outfitted with for my visit was worn by actual extras of the smash-hit HBO series, currently airing its seventh season. "This isn't just something I made on the sewing machine one weekend when I was bored," grunts William van der Kells, who operates Winterfell Tours and serves guests a mean Ned Stark impersonation.



William van der Kells guides visitors to more than 15 different *Game of Thrones* filming locations

Van der Kells hands me a primitive bow and leads me in an archery lesson in the same spot where young Bran Stark failed miserably and sister Arya Stark first displayed her warrior prowess. Thankfully, I'm more Arya than Bran. My first arrow barely hits the target, but after some coaching, my second and third attempts pierce the bull's-eye. "Very good," exclaims van der Kells. "You listen well."

Besides archery, Winterfell Tours offers bicycle and boat excursions to filming locations, as well as the chance to camp on-site

and take a selfie with the Northern Inuit pooches who portray the show's direwolves.

Van der Kells says *Game of Thrones* tourism has resulted in more than 30,000 extra visitors looking for a piece of the action. After my archery lesson, I ask if I can keep my dingy cape as a prize. Van der Kells matter-of-factly tells me I can't. "We only dry-clean them every couple of years." Well, that makes it more authentic.

—DERRICK J. LANG
gameofthrones-winterfelltours.com

Winterfell is the home of Jon Snow, everyone's favorite Night's Watch member



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This Swiss hideaway is the tops

Hollywood's favorite mountain resort is open (again)

In its heyday, the Bürgenstock Resort hosted guests such as Charlie Chaplin and Sophia Loren. This month, the iconic property emerges from a hefty renovation, boasting four hotels and the biggest spa in central Switzerland.

When guests arrive, they're whisked 2,800 feet up via funicular from the Lucerne lakefront to the Bürgenstock lobby. The \$574.8 million makeover has preserved the property's 144-year history, while modernizing it for 21st-century guests. The car-free property is CO₂ neutral and utilizes a new lake-powered energy system. buergenstock.ch



Audrey Hepburn married Mel Ferrer at the Bürgenstock Resort in 1954

