

## EXPLORE IRELAND

12 DAYS / 11 NIGHTS



**Dublin - Blarney Castle - Ring of Kerry - Killimer - Burren & Cliffs of Moher - Limerick - Galway - Corrib River - Connemara – Donegal – Belfast – Kildare – Dublin**

Find your “emerald isle” as you uncover hidden gems during this 12 day magical discovery tour of the island of Ireland. Max of 29 people per coach.

### ITINERARY

#### **DAY 1 DUBLIN**

Arrive at the hotel by your own. You are free to explore the city at your leisure this afternoon. Your hotel will be within walking distance of the city centre. (D)

**Accommodation: Dublin for 1 night**

#### **DAY 2 DUBLIN - BLARNEY - COUNTY KERRY**

Today meet your English speaking driver/guide and depart Ireland’s capital traveling to County Kerry. En route, stop in the town of Blarney to visit Blarney Castle. Here you will find the legendary Stone of Eloquence. Kiss it and you’ll never again be lost for words. Enjoy some time for shopping at Blarney Woollen Mills. The presence of the

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Woollen Mills during the famine shielded Blarney from the worst effects of the famine, due to its employment of local workers. In 1976 Chris Kelleher, himself a mill worker, bought the old mill property. Within a short period of time Chris and his family transformed the mill into what is perhaps the largest quality craft shop in Ireland. (B)

**Accommodation: Kerry for 2 nights**

**DAY 3 RING OF KERRY**

Today you can enjoy a superb tour of the Iveragh Peninsula, which will give you the opportunity to discover the Ring of Kerry. Taking in spectacular scenery such as mountains, peat, bogs, lakes and magnificent views of the Atlantic Ocean. Leaving Killarney pass through Killorglin, famous for its Puck Fair, then to Glenbeigh where the cliff road affords panoramic views of the Dingle Peninsula & Dingle Bay. Passing through the peat bogs one arrives at the sea town of Waterville. Continue to Sneem Village, famous for its brightly coloured houses, before arriving back in Killarney. Along the Ring of Kerry stop at a local farm for a sheepdog demonstration. Your visit starts with an overview of the different breeds of sheep, followed by an introduction to the farmer's most important tools, his border collies. Next you will see a superb demonstration of sheep herding as the farmer with his dogs demonstrate how, by working together, he can take a flock of sheep from the mountain top to the sheep pen close to the farmyard. (B)

***Optional:** Jaunting Car Ride in Killarney National Park – Supplement of € 11.50 p.p. Enjoy transportation of a different kind! A pony and trap (also known as a Jaunting Car) helps you discover areas of Killarney National Park that you might not otherwise visit. Relax aboard a jaunting car as your driver takes you through the magnificent scenery of the National Park.*

**DAY 4 KERRY - KILLIMER - BURREN - LIMERICK**



Travel northwards to Tarbert and take a short boat ride across the mouth of the River Shannon to land on Clare's shore at Killimer. Travel along the coast to the Cliffs of Moher, the most majestic cliffs in Ireland which rise from the Atlantic Ocean and extend for over 7km. On a clear day, you can admire the Aran Islands and Connemara Mountains. The cliffs reach their highest point just north of O'Brien's Tower, built by the descendants of Brian Boru to entertain his lady friends. A visit to the tower is also possible. Atlantic Edge is the exciting new interpretive centre built into the natural landscape in the cliffs. Enjoy a tour of the Burren Region. The Burren is a strange and unique region in Europe. It is a high plateau of porous limestone

situated in Northern Clare. The limestone is bare with no trees growing here or land covering the stone. But the Burren is not as deserted as we believe: the cracks allow different types of flowers to grow all year round. The rocks hide many caves like Ailwee as well as "Turloughs", an interesting phenomenon which transforms lakes into fields during the summer. Continue to Limerick. (B)

**Accommodation: Limerick for 1 night**

***Optional:** Medieval Banquet at Bunratty Castle or similar - Supplement of € 55.00 per person. Bunratty Castle was built in the 15th century by the Earl of Thomond and stands on the banks of the Raite River in County Clare. The Earl was known for his generosity and his lavish entertainment and banquets. The entertainment today is provided by the superb Bunratty Singers and is a fitting compliment to the lively mead reception, a four-course meal and of course, good wine. Guests are invited to enjoy an unforgettable evening in the splendour of this magnificent castle and take a true step back in time to Medieval Ireland.*

#### **DAY 5 LIMERICK - GALWAY CITY - CORRIB RIVER**

This morning travel to Galway city. Visit Galway Cathedral, one of the largest and most impressive buildings in the city. The exterior design may not be to everybody's taste, while the interior, with its high curved arches and central dome, has a simple but solid elegance. Enjoy a cruise along the Corrib River to Lough Corrib including scones and an Irish coffee (including demonstration). This journey on the Corrib Princess takes passengers along the majestic Lough Corrib and onto the lake. Visitors will see unsurpassed views of the historic monuments and natural amenities that make this one of the most spectacular waterways in Ireland. The cruise sails from Woodquay in the heart of Galway City and lasts approximately 90 minutes. Enjoy the rest of the afternoon at leisure. (B/D)

**Accommodation: Galway for 2 nights**

#### **DAY 6 GALWAY - CONNEMARA**

Today travel through the beautiful Connemara Region filled with lakes, rivers, bogs & mountains. Visit Kylemore Abbey, built in 1868 by Mitchell Henry, and see its most famous feature the miniature Cathedral. It has been home to the Irish order of Benedictine nuns since 1920. Next you will visit a bodhrán maker (traditional Irish drum). Roundstone Music and Crafts is located in a former Franciscan monastery in Roundstone, in the heart of Connemara. It is here that you will find the workshop of Malachy Kearns, better known as Malachy Bodhrán, who is famous for the manufacture of bodhráns, the oldest instruments that accompany traditional Irish music. Malachy makes bodhráns for the world famous Riverdance troupe and he is currently the only fulltime bodhrán maker in Ireland. (B)

#### **DAY 7 CONNEMARA - COUNTY SLIGO - DONEGAL**

Today travel to Donegal via County Sligo. See the beautiful scenery which was an inspiration for W.B. Yeats, who is buried at Drumcliffe Churchyard, under loaf-shaped Benbulbin Mountain. Visit the Belleek Pottery Factory & see first-hand how this world renowned pottery is created. The factory tour allows visitors to see the pottery being removed from its moulds, being fired & decorated by the Belleek artists. Continue on to Derry City. Upon arrival meet with your English speaking guide & enjoy a walking tour of the Walled City of Derry. Founded in the 6th century by St. Columba, Derry is the 2nd largest city & port of Northern Ireland. In 1613 the city was selected as a major plantation project, organised by the London livery companies. It was in this year that the walls of Derry were built to protect the town from the Gaelic chieftains in Donegal. (B/D)

**Accommodation: Donegal for 1 night**



#### **DAY 8 DONEGAL - DERRY - BELFAST**

This morning depart Donegal and travel along the Antrim coast to Belfast, visiting the Giants Causeway en route. The Causeway was formed more than 60 million years ago when red-hot lava erupted onto the surface of the earth & was cooled by the sea to form the columns which make up the Giants Causeway. Legend tells a different story however that Finn Mac Cumhaill built the causeway over the sea to Scotland in order to fight his arch enemy, Fingal, who had started his own path. The two had never met before & when Finn heard the heavy footsteps of Fingal he turned back. Helped by his wife, Finn dressed up as a baby & when Fingal arrived & saw Finn, Fingal



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assumed the baby's father would be much bigger. This scared him & he went running home, destroying the causeway behind him. Next stop at the Dark Hedges. This beautiful avenue of beech trees was planted by the Stuart family in the eighteenth century. It was intended as a compelling landscape feature to impress visitors as they approached the entrance to their Georgian mansion, Gracehill House. Two centuries later, the trees remain a magnificent sight and have become one of the most photographed natural phenomena in Northern Ireland. In fact, the iconic trees have been used as a filming location in HBO's epic series Game of Thrones®, representing the Kingsroad. Continue to Belfast and check into your hotel. (B)

**Accommodation: Belfast for 2 nights**

### DAY 9 BELFAST

This morning enjoy a guided tour of Belfast City. This is an excellent way to discover Belfast City & will take in the leaning Albert Memorial Clock Tower (Ireland's answer to the leaning Tower of Pisa) & the Opera House, as well as passing City Hall, the Crown Bar (dating from 1885), Queens University & the Botanic Gardens. You will also visit the Harland & Wolfe Shipyard, where the Titanic was built & launched in 1912. A visit to the Shankill & Falls road will be of interest as it will give the visitor an indication of how life was in Belfast during the troubles. Visit the Titanic Experience Belfast. Located in the heart of Belfast, the Titanic Belfast recreates the story of the world's



most famous ship in a new iconic, six floor building right beside the historic site of the original ship's construction. Opened to coincide with the centenary, the self-guided tour begins upon entering the buildings giant atrium where visitors are surrounded by the four "ship's hull" shaped wings which house the Titanic Experience. You will uncover the true story of the Titanic from her conception in Belfast in the early 1900's through her construction & launch, to her famous maiden voyage & subsequent place in history through nine large galleries full of interactive exhibitions. Highlights include views of the slipways where the Titanic was launched & the voyage to the bottom

of the sea in the unique Ocean Exploration Centre. Enjoy the afternoon at your leisure in Belfast City. (B)

### DAY 10 BELFAST – SLANE DISTILLERY - DUBLIN

This morning depart Belfast and travel to Dublin. En route visit Slane Distillery. There could be no finer setting in which to discover the nature of whiskey than Ireland's mythical Boyne Valley. Housed within the 250-year-old stables of the iconic Slane Castle Estate, the guided distillery tour uncovers a history like no other. The new state of the art working distillery pays homage to the resilient nature of Ireland's heritage and the surrounding lands. Take a trip back in time as storytellers guide visitors through the fabric of the Conyngham family tapestry, chapter by chapter and immerse guests into the wonderful world of whiskey. Discover the ancient art of Irish whiskey making. Explore the whiskey distillery where three different types of Irish whiskey are made: Malt, Grain and Pot Still. Learn about the process behind the triple casked blend, the craftsmanship that goes into each of the three casks, flavours and aromas that each cask contributes to the whiskey's smooth yet full bodied character. Complete the interactive, immersive tour with a tutored whiskey tasting that allows one to assess this character for yourself by enjoying a sample of the signature triple casked blend, Slane Irish Whiskey. Continue on to Dublin. (B)

**Accommodation: Dublin for 2 nights**

**Optional:** Evening entertainment at Taylor's Three Rock or similar - Supplement of € 55.00 p.p. Visit this lively pub in Rathfarnham, 30 minutes from the city centre for an excellent night of music and dance. A ballad group will regale visitors with ballads both happy and sad and will (after a few pints) have visitors singing along with them. The music is interrupted for a short while to enjoy the best of Irish dancing, guaranteed to get feet tapping. Visitors will leave with fond memories of a memorable night in a Dublin Pub.

#### **DAY 11 DUBLIN**

After breakfast, enjoy an orientation tour of the city with your English speaking guide. The North side of the river offers striking monuments such as the GPO (General Post Office) on the city's main thoroughfare O'Connell Street or the Custom House along the quays, as well as Europe's largest public park, the Phoenix Park. The south side appears more sophisticated with its vast Georgian Squares, such as Merrion Square, where Oscar Wilde's House can still be found, its colourful doors along with Grafton Street and its quality shops. This part of the city is also home to the house of Bram Stoker, Trinity College and the Medieval District. Visit EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum. This is a state-of-the-art interactive



experience located in the beautiful vaults of the 1820 Custom House Quarter building in Dublin's Docklands, the original departure point for so many of Ireland's emigrants. It will inspire and guide you on a journey to discover the stories of Irish emigration around the world, from early times to the modern day. Enjoy the rest of the afternoon at your leisure or choose from one of the below three options. (B)

**Optional:** (payable to the guide on site)

Visit the Guinness Storehouse – Supplement of € 16.00 p.p.

Visit Trinity College & Book of Kells – Supplement of € 12.00 p.p.

Visit Christ Church Cathedral – Supplement of € 6.00 p.p.

#### **DAY 12 DUBLIN**

After an Irish breakfast, transfer to Dublin Airport for your departure flight home under own arrangements. (B)

## INCLUSIONS

- 11 night accommodation at 3\* and 4\* hotels
- 14 meals: 11 breakfasts, 3 dinners
- Visits as per itinerary
- Sheepdog Demonstration
- Ferry ride across the River Shannon
- Lough Corrib cruise with scones and Irish coffee
- Modern motor-coach with driver/guide included as per itinerary
- English Speaking Guide for Derry City Tour (day 8) and Dublin City Tour (day 11)
- Porterage : 1 piece of luggage per person in/out of hotels
- Service charges and taxes at existing rates

**Not included** · Flights · beverages · tips · travel insurance · optional excursions · anything not mentioned in the inclusions

Hotel Options or similar		
City	3*	4*
<b>Dublin</b>	Academy Plaza Hotel	Riu Plaza Gresham Hotel
<b>Kerry</b>		Randl Hoteles or Dromhall Hotel
<b>Limerick</b>	Treacys West County	George Hotel
<b>Galway</b>		Clayton Hotel
<b>Donegal</b>		Clanree Hotel
<b>Belfast</b>		Clayton Hotel

### Guaranteed dates for 2020

Price in CAD\$, per person starting from, double occupancy	Land package
May 11, 25, July 7, 20, August 10, 31	\$2999
September 28	\$2769
Single room supplement	On request

Prices in this document are for information only; they were issued at press time for the current year. Please note that due to exchange rates and temporary promotions, they can increase or decrease anytime. Contact your travel agent for the price and promotion of the moment.

