Enchanting Ireland  A Tour of the Emerald Isle

13 days from $5,692 total price from Boston, New York
($5,295 air & land inclusive plus $397 airline taxes and fees)

It’s a beautiful, magical land, where the gentle green landscape dazzles and the people delight; where warmth and hospitality are national traits and poets are national heroes. From Dublin to Galway, Killarney to Kilkenny, this full yet well-paced tour showcases Ireland’s many charms – both old and new – to our small band of travelers.

Day 1: Depart U.S. for Dublin, Ireland

Day 2: Arrive Dublin  We arrive in the intimate, and beautiful, Irish capital today and check in at our hotel located right on St. Stephen’s Green. Tonight we enjoy a welcome dinner at a local restaurant.  D

Day 3: Dublin  This morning’s city tour includes a visit to Trinity College, home of the stunning 8th-century Book of Kells illuminated manuscript; and to St. Patrick’s, the national cathedral of the Church of Ireland. This afternoon we embark on an informal walking tour (led by our tour director), passing some of the haunts and hiding places of Ireland’s beloved literary sons. Dinner tonight is on our own in this enchanting city.  B

Day 4: Dublin/Galway  We leave Dublin this morning for Galway in the West, the region some consider to be the “most Irish part of Ireland.” En route we stop for tea and coffee at Tyrrellspass Castle then continue on to 6th-century Clonmacnoise, Ireland’s most important early monastic site. After lunch on our own we resume our journey, reaching Galway City this afternoon. We dine at our hotel located in the village of Béar na just outside the city.  B,D

Day 5: Galway/Connemara  A day of scenic highlights is in store as we travel through western County Galway in the legendary region known as Connemara, a rugged, silent landscape of mountains, glacial lakes, endless roads, and uninhabited bog lands. Our first stop is at beautiful Kylemore Abbey, built as a private home in 1861 and one of Ireland’s most photographed castles. We continue on through this singular landscape, stopping for lunch en route. Tonight we enjoy dinner with traditional Irish entertainment at Pádraicín overlooking Galway Bay.  B,D

Day 6: Galway/Aran Islands  Today we embark on an excursion to Inishmore, the largest of the fabled Aran Islands, whose unique culture and history have been an inspiration to artists, writers, and filmmakers. Sitting across Galway Bay in the midst of the Atlantic, the islands feature primitive stone forests, early Christian churches, and medieval castles – as well as shops, galleries, and restaurants. An islander guides our tour here, imparting local lore along the way. We stop at Dun Aengus Fortress, the three prehistoric stone walls crowning the tallest cliffs of Inishmore; have lunch in a local pub; and enjoy some free time before returning to the mainland and our hotel late this afternoon. Dinner tonight is at a local restaurant in the village of Béar na.  B,L,D

Your Small Group Tour Highlights

Dublin touring, including Trinity College and St. Patrick’s Cathedral • Magnificent natural scenery of counties Galway and Kerry: Cliffs of Moher, the Burren, Connemara • Irish sheepdog demonstration • Beautiful Kylemore Abbey • Dramatic Aran Islands • Ring of Kerry scenic drive • Historic Muckross House • Visit to Blarney Castle • Rock of Cashel • Kilkenny Castle • Outstanding small group accommodations that enhance the Irish experience

Day Itinerary Hotel Rating
1  Depart U.S. for Dublin
2-3 Dublin  The Shelbourne Deluxe
4-6 Galway  The Twelve Hotel Sup. First Class
7-9 Killarney  Killarney Royal Hotel Sup. First Class
10-11 Kilkenny  Pembroke Hotel Sup. First Class
12 Dublin  Barberstown Castle Hotel Sup. First Class
13 Depart Dublin for U.S.

Ratings are based on the Hotel & Travel Index, the travel industry standard reference.
Day 7: Galway/County Clare/Killarney  Another day of breathtaking scenery as we leave Galway for Killarney, traveling south along the fabled coastline of County Clare. We pass through the Burren, the 116-square-mile “rocky place” of craggy gray karst (limestone) formations that stretch endlessly in all directions. Then we visit the Cliffs of Moher, the majestic flat-topped “mountains” that rise vertically from the sea for five miles from north to south. After lunch on our own here, we cross by ferry into County Kerry, reaching Killarney in beautiful Killarney National Park late this afternoon. This evening we enjoy dinners in local family-run B&Bs.  

Day 8: Killarney  Our exploration of this attractive town, founded as a resort in the 18th century, begins with a jaunting cart ride from the center of town to 15th-century Ross Castle, the last stronghold to fall to Oliver Cromwell’s forces in 1652. Then we travel by boat to Muckross House, a 19th-century Elizabethan-style manor housing the Kerry Folklife Centre, which showcases the art and craft of book-binding, pottery, and weaving. We tour the elegantly furnished rooms, as well as the informal garden. Lunch is on our own here before we return to Killarney mid-afternoon. Dinner tonight is on our own in this charming town.  

Day 9: Killarney/Ring of Kerry  Today we experience one of Ireland’s most popular attractions, the stunning mountain and coastal scenery of the Ring of Kerry, a 110-mile route connecting Dingle, Iveragh, and Beara peninsulas. This is the Ireland of postcards and pictures, with tiny villages dotting the breathtaking landscape; we stop in one of them for an Irish sheepdog demonstration and in another for lunch. We return to Killarney late this afternoon then dine tonight at our hotel.  

Day 10: Blarney/Cashel/Kilkenny  On our way to Kilkenny this morning we stop in the small town of Blarney to visit the ruins of the 15th-century castle, with its celebrated Blarney Stone believed to bestowed the “gift of gab” on those who kiss it. We also visit the Blarney Woolen Mills, housing an excellent selection of Irish crafts as well as knits and woollens of all kinds. After lunch on our own in Blarney, we continue on to the Rock of Cashel, the celebrated – and beloved – archaeological complex (c. 432 CE) of medieval ruins atop a limestone outcropping that presides over the surrounding plain. Late this afternoon we return to Kilkenny and our hotel, where we dine tonight.  

Day 11: Kilkenny  Today is devoted to Kilkenny, a well-preserved medieval city known as Ireland’s cultural capital – and the country’s smallest city. We tour 12th-century Kilkenny Castle, considered one of the country’s most beautiful, then embark on an informal walking tour of Kilkenny itself, noting the many buildings of “black” or Kilkenny marble, quarried locally. After lunch together at a local pub, the remainder of the day is at leisure.  

Day 12: Kilkenny/Dublin (Barberstown)  We leave Kilkenny this morning for a final visit to Dublin, where we tour fascinating EPIC, The Irish Emigration Museum depicting 1,500 years of Irish history in an interactive environment. Mid-afternoon we reach our hotel outside Dublin; tonight we celebrate our adventure over a farewell dinner.  

Day 13: Depart for U.S.  We leave this morning for the Dublin airport and our return flights to the United States.  

Post-Tour Extension

June 24-27, 2022  
Northern Ireland  
4 days/3 nights for $1,295 total price  
Single Supplement: $295  
Savor the dramatic beauty of the Antrim Coast, one of the most scenic in all of Ireland and the British Isles, and encounter the lively capital city of Belfast.  

Your Tour Price Includes

- Round-trip private motorcoach or van transportation Dublin/Belfast
- 3 nights’ accommodations: 2 nights in Belfast at Fitzwilliam Hotel (Deluxe); 1 night in Dublin at Carlton Hotel Dublin Airport (Superior First Class)
- 7 meals: 3 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 3 dinners
- Extensive sightseeing including Belfast, Antrim Coast (Giant’s Causeway UNESCO site, Bushmills Distillery, Carrick-a-rede Bridge), new Titanic Museum in Belfast
- Services of an Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director
- GRATUITIES FOR DINING ROOM SERVERS, AIRPORT AND HOTEL PORTERS
- Services of an Odysseys Unlimited Tour Director
- Private motorcoach transportation throughout your trip
- Luggage handling for one bag per person
- GRATUITIES FOR LOCAL GUIDES, DINING ROOM SERVERS, AIRPORT AND HOTEL PORTERS
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