



13 Day Explore Ireland Superior Package

Day 1: Depart for Ireland

We begin our adventure to the Emerald Isle with an overnight flight to Dublin, Ireland. Sit back, rest and enjoy the in-flight service.

Day 2: Welcome to Ireland

Arrive at Dublin Airport. Transfer to your Dublin hotel under own arrangements. You are free to explore the city at your leisure this afternoon. Your hotel will be within walking distance of the city center. Overnight: Dublin (Dinner)

Day 3: Ireland's Midlands, Blarney Castle & Kerry

Today meet with your coach & English speaking driver/guide & 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 & you'll never again be lost for words. Enjoy some time for shopping at Blarney Woollen Mills. The presence of the 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 & his family transformed the mill into what is perhaps the largest quality craft shop in Ireland. Overnight: Kerry (Breakfast)



Day 4: 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 colored houses. The road continues through the mountains to Molls Gap & Ladies View with superb views of the famous Lakes of Killarney. Next today 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 Jarvey [driver] takes you through the magnificent scenery of the National Park. Today enjoy dinner on your own in one of the many restaurants or pubs in Killarney town. Overnight: Kerry (Breakfast)

Day 5: Burren & Cliffs

Travel northwards to Tarbert & 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 & extend for over 7km. On a clear day, you can admire the Aran Islands & 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 center built into the natural landscape in the cliffs. Enjoy a tour of the Burren Region. The Burren is a strange & 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.

This evening you may want to enjoy an Optional Medieval Banquet at Bunratty Castle for \$75 per person. Bunratty Castle was built in the 15th century by the Earl of Thomond & stands on the banks of the Raite River in County Clare. The Earl was known for his generosity and his lavish entertainment & banquets. The entertainment today is provided by the superb Bunratty Singers & is a fitting compliment to the lively mead reception, a four-course meal & of course good wine. Guests are invited to enjoy an unforgettable evening in the splendor of this magnificent castle & take a true step back in time to Medieval Ireland. Overnight: Limerick (Breakfast)



Day 6: Galway City & Lough Corrib Cruise

This morning travel to Galway city. Visit Galway Cathedral, one of the largest & most impressive buildings in the city. The exterior design may not be to everybody's taste, while the interior, with its high curved arches & central dome, has a simple but solid elegance. Enjoy a cruise along the Corrib River to Lough Corrib including scones & 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 & natural amenities that make this one of the most spectacular waterways in Ireland. The cruise sails from Woodquay in the heart of Galway City & lasts approximately 90 minutes. Enjoy the rest of the afternoon at leisure. Overnight: Galway (Breakfast and Dinner)

Day 7: Connemara

Today travel through the beautiful Connemara Region, a land of lakes & rivers, bogs & mountains, & small villages where Gaelic is still the spoken language. It is without doubt the wildest & most romantic part of Ireland. Enjoy some time at leisure in Connemara National Park. The park encompasses 2,957 hectares of rugged quartzite & schist terrain of north Connemara from sea level at Letterfrack to some of the peaks of the Twelve Bens 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. Overnight: Galway (Breakfast)

Day 8: Sligo, Carrowmore to 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 Carrowmore Cemetery which has over 60 stone circles & passage tombs, making it one of the largest Stone Age cemeteries in Europe & is the oldest megalithic cemetery in Ireland. Each tomb is numbered so as to facilitate visitors. The central tomb has been restored to enable visitors to explore the interior of a court tomb & see how it was when it was built over 5,000 years ago. It is a must see for those interested in Archaeology. Continue towards Sligo via Belleek. Here you will 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 molds, being fired & decorated by the Belleek artists. Overnight: Donegal/Letterkenny (Breakfast and Dinner)

Day 9: Donegal to Belfast via Derry

This morning depart Donegal for Derry. 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, organized 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 Done-

gal. This afternoon 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 assumed the baby's father would be much bigger. This scared him & he went running home, destroying the causeway behind him. Continue to Belfast and check into your hotel. Overnight: Belfast (Breakfast)

Day 10: Belfast & the Titanic Experience

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. Overnight: Belfast (Breakfast)

Day 11: Strangford Lough & Castletown House

This morning enjoy a tour of the Ards Peninsula. Located in County Down, it separates Strangford Lough from the North Channel on Ireland's northeast coast. Next take the ferry from Portaferry to Strangford continue to Kildare and visit Castletown House, Ireland's largest and earliest Palladian style house, and was built between 1722 and 1729 for William Conolly, speaker of the Irish House of Commons and the wealthiest commoner in Ireland. The façade was almost certainly designed by the Italian architect, Alessandro Galilei, while the Irish architect Sir Edward Lovett Pearce added the wings. Continue on to Dublin.

This evening you may want to enjoy an optional evening of dinner



and entertainment at Taylors Three Rock for \$72 per person. Visit this lively pub in Rathfarnham 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 later be sent into the night with fond memories of a memorable night in a Dublin Pub. Overnight: Dublin (Breakfast)

Day 12: Dublin's Fair City

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 colorful 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 & the Medieval District. Visit Trinity College, Ireland's oldest University, founded in 1592 by Elisabeth 1st. Visit the ancient library, containing over 20,000 manuscripts & is home to the 9th century Book of Kells. Last stop today will be a visit to Christchurch Cathedral. King Sitric Silkenbeard, the 1st Christian Viking King of Dublin, built the city's first church on this site in 1038. The current building was built in 1172 by the Anglo-Norman Richard de Clare (Strongbow). Similar to St Patrick's Cathedral, it is adorned with funeral monuments, including the reputed tomb of Strongbow. Unlike St. Patrick's however, Christchurch possesses a crypt which stretches nearly its entire length & much of the Cathedral's memorabilia is displayed here. Attached to the Cathedral is Dublinia an excellent exhibition of medieval Dublin. Enjoy the rest of the afternoon at your leisure.

This afternoon you may want to enjoy an optional session of Gaelic Games with Experience Gaelic Games for \$50 per person. In Ireland, Gaelic Games, music, dance and our language lie at the heart of who we are and what it is to be Irish. Our games, music & dance are truly unique. They are exciting & engaging, & they will not simply interest visitors but will wow them. At Experience Gaelic Games visitors are offered the opportunity to engage with the truly fantastic side of Irish Culture & everyday life. The two main Gaelic games are Gaelic Football & Hurling and are both organized by the G.A.A (Gaelic Athletic Association). They are two of the most popular sports in Ireland today, with boys & girls across all age groups from Under 8 to 18, as well as men & women of all ages, enjoying & playing these games. At Experience Gaelic Games you have the chance to learn more about, & then play, the unique Irish games of Hurling, Gaelic Football & Handball. Overnight: Dublin (Breakfast)

Day 13: Farewell

After a final Irish breakfast, transfer to Dublin Airport under your own arrangements for your departure flight home.

INCLUDED IN TOUR PRICE

3-4 star lodging, full Irish breakfast daily, 3 dinners, entrance admissions, transportation, and driver/guide.

NOT INCLUDED IN TOUR PRICE

Flight departures (low cost fares available nationwide), all lunches, optional Bunnratty Castle banquet (\$75 per person), optional traditional Irish night and dinner (\$72 per person), optional Gaelic Games Experience (\$50 per person), 8 dinners, gratuities.

PRICE PER PERSON:
BASED ON DOUBLE OCCUPANCY

From \$1,643

Many departures throughout the year.

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