



Enchanting Ireland

A Tour of the Emerald Isle

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.

Itinerary

Created on Apr 1, 2025

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Day-by-Day Itinerary

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.

Meals: Dinner

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.

Meals: Breakfast

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. Located on the East Side of the River Shannon, the monastery occupied a central position in Ireland. For that reason, it was the chosen burial place of the Kings of Connaught as well as those of Tara, including Rory O'Connor, the last High King of Ireland. At one time, it was also the most illustrious school in Europe, predating many universities. After lunch on our own we resume our journey, reaching Galway City this afternoon. We dine at our hotel located in the village of Bearna just outside the city.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

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 today one of Ireland's most photographed castles. We then continue our tour of this rugged region that offers spectacular views of the Twelve Ben Mountains on one side and the pounding sea on the other, returning to our Galway hotel late this afternoon. Tonight, we enjoy dinner together, with traditional Irish entertainment.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

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 Aenghus 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 Bearna.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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 with local families.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

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, which showcases the art and craft of bookbinding, pottery, and weaving. We tour the elegantly furnished rooms, as well as the informal garden, with its lush rhododendrons, and the rock garden, with its collection of rolling dwarf conifers. Lunch is on our own here before we return to Killarney mid-afternoon. Dinner tonight is on our own in this charming town.

Meals: Breakfast

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 also drive through the village of Waterville, home to the famed golf links, before heading back to Killarney. We dine together tonight at our hotel.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

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 bestow 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 woolens 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.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

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. The city offers the Kilkenny Crafts Trail to guide visitors to the best of the jewelers, potters, glassblowers, ceramicists, and wood and ironworkers who live and work here – in the center of Ireland’s artisan and handcraft industries. Kilkenny also boasts other important historic and architectural sites, including ancient monuments, monastic settlements, old country homes, and burial sites.

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

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.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 13: Depart for U.S.

We leave this morning for the Dublin airport and our return flights to the United States.

Meals: Breakfast

This tour itinerary was generated for Enchanting Ireland on Apr 1, 2025. Please visit the Enchanting Ireland page at <https://www.odysseys-unlimited.com/tours/europe/enchanting-ireland/> for the latest and most accurate information.