

Ireland Itinerary

August 30 - September 10, 2012

August 30: Depart US

August 31: Arrive in Dublin.

Check into your hotel. At 3pm, meet your Tour Director and traveling companions for an afternoon orientation drive through statue-lined O'Connell St, elegant Georgian squares, and past St. Patrick's Cathedral and Oscar Wilde's Trinity College. Head out with the entire group for dinner with wine and Irish coffee for a traditional Irish cabaret evening including dance, song and laughter.

September 1: Transportation provided to the Navy vs Notre Dame game. Tonight, enjoy dinner at your hotel.

September 2: DUBLIN - GLENDALOUGH - AVOCA - WATERFORD

See the engaging audiovisual Ireland of the Monasteries, let our local guide show us the remains of the ecclesiastical settlement. Also, visit Enniscorthy, site of the final battle of the Great Rebellion of 1798 and visit Ireland's oldest HANDWEAVING MILL at Avoca. Arrive in Waterford.

September 3: WATERFORD - BLARNEY - KILLARNEY

Enjoy a visit to the world-famous WATERFORD CRYSTAL factory showrooms. Proceed via Dungarvan, Youghal and Cork into County Cork for a visit to Blarney, renowned for its castle and magical Kissing Stone. Take time for lunch and to walk up to the castle, and to shop for traditional Irish handicrafts. Across the Kerry Mountains to the popular resort of Killarney, your destination for the next 2 nights.

September 4: KILLARNEY - RING OF KERRY

Join the famed Ring of Kerry for a 100 mile panoramic drive around the island's southwestern tip. Enjoy views of the seascapes, mountains dotted with brightly colored farmhouses, winding lanes bordered with subtropical vegetation, and the breathtaking panorama of the Lakes of Killarney from Ladies View. Back in Killarney, a special treat: a fun filled horse-drawn JAUNTING CAR RIDE through the National Park with glorious vistas of the Lakes of Killarney and ancient Ross Castle. Tonight, an entertaining optional evening, in Tralee with dinner followed by tickets for Siamsa Tire National Folk Theatre.

September 5: KILLARNEY - ADARE - LIMERICK

Depart north via quaint Adare with its thatched cottages to Limerick for a city tour. View the Treaty Stone and St. Mary's Cathedral, and visit KING JOHN'S CASTLE in the medieval heritage precinct. Enjoy the company of local singers, dancers and musicians and experience the homeliness, friendship and warmth of a true TRADITIONAL IRISH NIGHT with the entire group. Dine on home cooked food with wine while enjoying lively entertainment.

September 6: LIMERICK - CLIFFS OF MOHER - KILFENORA - GALWAY

At the Cliffs of Moher, rising 668ft above the Atlantic Ocean, savor the breathtaking panorama of the Clare coast. Take in THE BURREN CENTRE and learn about the time when this area lay beneath a warm tropical sea at Kilfenora. In the nearby churchyard of the ancient cathedral, see the greatest concentration of high crosses in Ireland. Take the scenic route across the desolate limestone. A real Irish farm experience at RATHBAUN FARM this morning. Try your hand at scone making and learn from the farmer about sheep shearing and dog whistling. Afterwards, enjoy coffee and your scones fresh from the oven.

September 7: GALWAY - Excursion to the Aran Islands

At Rossaveal, board a comfortable, modern FERRY for the 45 minute crossing to Kilronan on Inishmore, the largest of the Aran Islands and where Gaelic is the first language of the islanders.

September 8: GALWAY - KNOCK - SLIGO

Head for the unspoiled region of Connemara, an area known for its hardy breed of ponies. At Moycullen, visit the Joyce family at their MARBLE workshop. Visit KYLEMORE ABBEY, a massive yet graceful castle acquired by Benedictine nuns as a precious heirloom for Ireland.

September 9: SLIGO - BOYLE - KILDARE - DUBLIN

Departing Sligo, stop at Boyle for photos of the Cistercian Abbey ruins. Then, south to Longford for a visit to STROKESTWON HOUSE for a guided tour of the restored 1740's mansion and at the FAMINE MUSEUM, an insight into the circumstances of the Great Irish Famine of the 1840's. Drive across the Curragh to the IRISH NATIONAL STUD at Kildare for Horse racing. Back into Dublin tonight with a visit to the Famous GUINNESS Storehouse with supper.

September 10: Depart Dublin for your flight home.

Hotels:

Dublin: Clarion Dublin Liffey Valley

Waterford: Granville/Tower

Killarney: Scotts

Limerick: Strand/Clarion

Galway: Radisson Blu

Sligo: Radisson Blu

Meals:

10 breakfasts

7 dinners