

Ireland in all her beauty



10 wonderful days, 9 exciting nights departing Tuesday May 2 2017

Welcome to Ireland, a small country, but there's an enormous amount to see and do. As we travel around and meet the locals they certainly live up to their reputation as being one of the friendliest people in the world. Ireland has an embarrassment of riches and beauty – blue beaches, nature resurrections, amusing golf courses, history loaded settings and warm hospitable smiles from its people.

Truly, an Irish experience is something that will be hard to beat. Sure, the beauty of nature abides everywhere, but when you get right down to Ireland, what better compliment could a destination have? Ireland holds a great number of wonders worth a visit. The most inviting factor that Ireland is proud of is the warmth of its welcome and the hospitality its people extends to its guests.

Itinerary

This tour is totally informal, relaxed and not reliant on anyone's schedule except our own. To assist passengers to budget accordingly, we have included a full Irish breakfast each day and 6 delightful suppers on our tour. Lunches will be on your own and convenient lunch stops will be made where you can choose either a light meal or a full lunch menu. As this is a private tour with our own charter vehicle and driver, we can deviate wherever we need to in order to get the very best out of our visit to this amazing destination. All tours and entrance fees are included to the attractions mentioned in the itinerary but we would ask you to remember a gratuity for our personal driver who will be with us throughout. Just a fine Irish character!



Day 1 – Rapid City to Ireland

This morning we depart Rapid City Regional Airport and head out on our overnight journey to the beautiful Emerald Isle. Your ABS Travel Escort(s) will be with you throughout.

Overnight Trans-Atlantic flight – Meals aboard aircraft

Day 2 – Arrive Ireland from Amsterdam Terminal 1. Waterford

We arrive at Dublin Airport this morning, pass through immigration and then pass through customs with our baggage. On exiting the Arrival Hall we are met by our Irish driver/guide. He will offer us a Failte or a Cead Mile Failte, (1000 Welcomes). We board our private motor coach and then we're off on our Irish Adventure! Our journey this morning will take us south to Kilkenny City. Kilkenny known as the Marble City this was once the capital of ancient Ireland, here we should lunch in the former home of Dame Alice Kettler, the witch, now a famous pub. A short walk around the, first ever, Norman Castle in Ireland and through the flower gardens after lunch will relax us before making our way to Waterford City, Waterford, one of the Viking Cities of Ireland is full of history, we will have time to explore the city before supper and a well-earned night's sleep in a real bed!

Supper tonight is included at the hotel and is at 7.00pm.

Overnight – Fitzwilton Hotel, Waterford – Breakfast & Supper included sleep in a real bed!

Day 3 – Waterford Crystal, Whiskey & Cobh

This morning breakfast is at 7.00am and we depart the hotel at 8.30am our first visit is to the Waterford Crystal factory exhibition. The tour will show how the glass is blown, shaped and cut into the famous crystal glass we know today. We travel east, for a short stop in the town Youghal once home to Sir Walter Raleigh. Just outside this historic town the original b/w film Moby Dick was shot. Midleton Distillery is our next stop! Our Jameson Experience commences with an informative audio-visual presentation.

Guests, accompanied by a tour guide we follow the Old Distillery Trail through the various historic and architecturally unique distillery buildings such as - Mills, Malting Houses, Corn Stores, Stillhouses, Old Offices and atmospheric Warehouses. We encounter superbly restored machinery and dramatic recreations of many of the steps in Irish Whiskey production, going back in time to when farmers would have delivered sacks of locally grown Irish barley by horse and cart to the finished product that is now the world renowned Jameson Irish Whiskey. Next we get to the serious part, the 'tasting' we sometimes have a little trouble finding volunteers for this! We next travel to Cobh which is located on Great Island in Cork Harbor, one of the largest natural harbors in the world. Cobh has a very long and interesting history. Being a major transatlantic port, Cobh was the departure point for many Irish emigrants to North America, and was the final port of call for the RMS Titanic.

In 1915 The RMS Lusitania was sunk by a German U-boat off the old head of Kinsale and the survivors and victims were brought to Cobh, with over one hundred deceased interred in the old church cemetery. Cobh was also a major port for many who were deported to penal colonies such as Australia. The town has had very strong nautical ties over the years and facing Cobh on Haulbowline Island is the home of the Irish Naval Service. In 1849 the town's name was changed from Cove to Queenstown to honor Queen Victoria's visit to Ireland that year. The final name-change to Cobh took place in 1922. After leaving Cobh, we take the short drive back to our hotel for overnight. Supper tonight is included at the hotel and is at 7.00pm.

Overnight Cork – Rochestown Park Hotel– Breakfast & Supper included

Day 4 – Blarney Castle & Killarney

This morning breakfast is at 8am and we depart the hotel at 9am – please have your main checked bags outside your room doors at 8am when you go to breakfast. The drive to Blarney is through Cork City, Ireland's second city. Kissing the Blarney Stone is recognized to give you the Gift of the Gab, eloquence! Here also are the famous woolen mills a shopping Mecca. Macroom will be our next short stop before Killarney. The castle here was home of the Penn Family, they founded Penn State and were accredited with building the town here. Over the hills we go next to County Kerry and to Killarney, the capital of tourism in Ireland.

We will take a jaunting car trip to Ross Castle and the famous lakes, the cart drivers are called Jarveys and their 'stories' could be taken with a pinch of salt ! Tonight we have an Irish night at Kate Kearney's Pub, at the Gap of Dunloe where the local musicians explain the working of some of their strange instruments i.e. the complicated and strange Uilleann Pipes.

Overnight, Randles Court Hotel, Killarney – Full Irish Breakfast & Dinner Show included



Day 5 – The Ring of Kerry Tour

This morning breakfast is at 8am and we depart the hotel at 9am. Today is the famous "Ring of Kerry" tour, 110 miles of spectacular scenery as we circle the Iveragh peninsula, enjoying the high cliff-side views of the Atlantic Ocean. It's a great day to relax, take our time, and enjoy the amazing scenery. We will have many stops today including the Bog Village (where you can get an Irish Coffee) and the Sheepdog Trials where Brendan Ferris will show us how the Shepherd works his dogs on the rough mountain terrain. A special stop is made at Waterville where Charlie Chaplin had his holiday home. A lunch break is taken at the Scariff Inn overlooking the Atlantic Ocean near the westernmost point of the Ring.

We continue the breathtaking ride along the cliffs to Sneem village for a rest break and then it's over the mountains to Ladies View, made famous by Queen Victoria and her entourage. We continue through the National Park to Killarney and our hotel arriving at around 4.30pm. Supper tonight is on your own, maybe eat at the hotel or take a 10 minute stroll downtown to enjoy a typical 'Pub Style' meal, the choice is yours, pub music usually starts at 9.30 pm..

Overnight, Randles Court Hotel, Killarney – Full Irish Breakfast included (Supper on own)

Day 6 – Adare, Limerick & Bunratty

This morning breakfast is at 8am and we depart the hotel at 9am – please have your main checked bags outside your room doors at 8am when you go to breakfast. We travel on to the pretty village of Adare, to visit the Trinitarian church built by the Crusader Monks, the village gardens and the curious thatched houses. This is an excellent coffee and comfort stop before. Limerick is the gateway to the Shannon region with King John's Castle protecting this ancient river crossing. Here we stop to see the Treaty Stone and King John's Castle on the Shannon River. Crossing the river Shannon we pass by Thomond Park home to Munster Rugby on route to Bunratty Village. Here we visit 'Durty Nellies' for lunch, apart from the name, it's recognized as one of the oldest pubs in Ireland. After lunch we visit the Folk Park and Castle visit here. Your Castle guide will walk you around this most famous building. We check in to the hotel and after a freshen up we return to the Folk Park for an 'Irish Night' in the Barn.

Overnight Bunratty Castle Hotel – Breakfast & Traditional Irish Supper & Show

Day 7 - Cliffs of Mohar & Galway

This morning we travel through Ennis, along the west coast of County Clare to the Cliffs of Mohar for a visit. The indoor exhibits are interesting and the 'cliffs' themselves are spectacular at over 600 feet down to the ocean. Next we travel around Black Head to the fishing village of Kinvara for a short stop and perhaps lunch. Galway City is where we arrive mid-afternoon and check into our hotel overlooking the Atlantic Ocean – home for the next two nights. Galway is an ancient city in Ireland, a walled city of Viking and Spanish origin, and it retains much of its medieval character together with the graceful buildings from its 18th century expansion. We take a short walking tour around the old City to see where 'Lynching' originated and where Christopher Columbus prayed, and then some more.

Overnight Galway Bay Hotel, Salthill, Galway –Supper included

Day 8 – The Figure of 8 tour of Connemara

The Figure of Eight Tour today will take us around the wild and very scenic 'Gaeltacht of Connemara. This landscape is unique and even difficult to see how the natives existed here among the rocks and stony fields. The Gaeltacht are areas where the Irish language is spoken as the first language.

Today we have lots of photo stops, coffee breaks and for sure an occasional pub stop. We see the mountains of the 12 Bens, afternoon we visit Kylemore Abbey the spectacular home of the Benedictine nuns and an exclusive girl's high school, here we have lunch. The village of Leenane is on Killary Harbour, Ireland's only fjord. Leenane is a tiny village where we visit a traditional pub for 'refreshments'. After our visit, we return to the hotel.

Overnight Galway Bay Hotel – Breakfast included Supper on your own tonight

Day 9 – Kildare, Dublin & Guinness

This morning breakfast is at 8am and we depart the hotel at 9am – please have your main checked bags outside your room doors at 8am when you go to breakfast. Leaving Galway city we travel east to another medieval city, Dublin. We stop for short stop and a coffee break. We travel on through the midlands, flat country to Kildare. We stop for a break in Kildare Town; here we visit the National Stud & Gardens. The Irish National Stud belongs to the people of Ireland but prides itself on being enjoyed and appreciated by visitors from all parts of the globe. Nowhere better symbolizes all that is great about County Kildare, the beating heart of Ireland's Thoroughbred Industry, than the stud, a unique attraction of outstanding natural beauty that is home to some of the most magnificent horses and sumptuous gardens to be found anywhere in the world. We continue our journey to Dublin where we explore this fair city on a short city tour which takes in a visit to the amazing St Patrick's Cathedral and maybe the Guinness Storehouse? On departing St Patrick's a short drive takes us to our hotel and our last night in Ireland to be spent in Dublin's premier hotel, The Gresham, on O'Connell Street, we will have our Gala Dinner tonight and perhaps after a stroll to Temple Bar, the bohemian part of Dublin City.

Overnight The Grand Malahide - Breakfast & Dinner included

Day 10 – Return Home

After breakfast we make the short drive to Dublin International Airport for our return to the USA. We allow at least 2 hours for check in and airport procedures. US Customs are at Dublin airport making it much easier when we arrive back in the USA. We have time at the Duty Free for last minute gifts and to cash in any Tax Free vouchers... you may be able to re-claim Irish sales tax on any qualifying purchases you have made. Your Irish Driver/guide will wish you a 'Slan Abhile', Translated this means "Safe Home".

Breakfast included plus meals on aircraft

Entrance Fee Visits Included at:p

- Waterford Crystal Factory
- Jameson Distillery
- Cobh
- Blarney Castle
- Bog Village
- Sheepdog Trials
- Bunratty Village
- Cliffs of Mohar
- Kylemore Abbey
- Irish National Stud
- St Patricks Cathedral



THE TOWER
WAS BUILT
BY THE
KING OF
MUNSTER
IN THE
13TH CENTURY
AND WAS
USED AS A
PRISON FOR
ENGLISH
KNIGHTS
WHO HAD
REBELLION
AGAINST
THE
KING OF
ENGLAND

Itinerary at a glance

Price: \$3,995 pp based on double occupancy

Single Supplement: add \$995 – we do not recommend triple occupancy as rooms tend to be smaller in Europe

Starts: Tuesday May 2 2017

Ends: Thursday May 11 2017

What's included?

- Round trip air from Rapid City, SD including ALL taxes & fuel surcharges
- Private Motor Coach with Irish Driver / Guide & all hotel accommodations based on double occupancy
- 8 Irish Breakfasts & 6 Suppers including Welcome Supper Galway Bay, 1 Supper in Cork, 1 Supper in Dublin, Kate Kearney's Traditional Irish Supper and Show, Corn Barn Traditional Irish Night & Farewell Supper Clontarf Castle
- Free time to explore the local Pubs & all sightseeing and entrance fees as listed in the itinerary
- 1 suitcase per person maximum 50lbs (any airline fees are included) with all baggage handling & taxes
- Fully escorted

How to book

- Early Booking Discount!! Book and pay in full by November 24th 2016 and save \$150pp! Otherwise...
- Deposit due of \$200 per person
- Further Deposit due of \$400pp by November 10th 2016
- Further Deposit due of \$400pp by January 10th 2017
- Balance due by February 28th 2017 (or at time of booking if after this date)

What you'll need

- A Passport is required for this tour – please call if you need help
- A camera is a must!
- The currency in Ireland is the Euro - you may wish to buy currency or carry travelers checks
- Providing you have a major credit or debit card (VISA or MasterCard) you will be able to use local ATMs. Remember to check the charges with your bank prior to departure.

Weather

Weather in Ireland is typically changeable at this time of year however a light rain coat is recommended just in case - check out weather.com for average temperatures.

Travel Advice

Please visit the travel advice section of this site for further information and government advisories and warnings.



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