

# *A Custom Designed Itinerary to*

## *IRELAND*

*by*

### *IN QUEST OF THE CLASSICS*

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**DAY 1: DUBLIN/ GWEEDORE.** You will be met at Dublin Airport by your driver/guide (who will remain with you until you reach Dublin) and taken by deluxe air-conditioned car north. First stop will be at **The Ulster American Folk Park**, an open-air museum that tells the story of



emigration from Ulster to America in the 18th & 19th centuries and provides you with a "living history" experience. Costumed demonstrators go about their everyday tasks in the traditional manner in authentically furnished Old and New World buildings. The park is very realistic and beautifully done. (Entrance fee included.) You will then travel to the **Giant's Causeway** - the most famous tourist attraction in Northern Ireland. It is a mass of basalt columns, which were created when volcanic lava flows cracked as it cooled. From here, you'll travel into County

Donegal to Gweedore, where you will check into **An Chuir Hotel** for two nights. [www.anchuir-hotel.ie](http://www.anchuir-hotel.ie). The hotel is situated in the heart of the Donegal Gaeltacht and with a magnificent riverside location, boasts some of the most breathtaking views to be found. The building has been renovated to provide a blend of modern convenience and elegant touches of the past. Scenic walks, fishing, hill climbing, island tours and golfing are only a few of the nearby activities.

**DAY 2: GWEEDORE/TORY ISLAND.** An early start this morning for a full day of sightseeing to **Tory Island** and a meeting with Ireland's last recognized King, Patsy Dan Rodgers, Rí Thoraigh. On arrival, meet Patsy Dan, who will do a short walking tour of the main part of the island and tell you the history of the island. There is a school of painting associated with the island called Tory Island Primitive. Ask Patsy Dan about it. He is quite the artist himself! Later you'll enjoy lunch in the small hotel on the island – Ostan Thoraigh – before returning on the ferry in the afternoon to the mainland. If you're not too tired from the sea air, you may wish to drop in at **Leo's Tavern** this evening for dinner. Leo Brennan is the father of Clannad and the world-famous singer, Enya, and is a well known local musician in his own right. If you're lucky, he'll be playing in Leo's Tavern during your meal. After dinner (not included), return to hotel for your final night in Donegal.



**DAY 3: CO MAYO/ CLIFDEN.** Depart from Gweedore this morning and travel south with an optional stop at Donegal Town for some shopping at Magees – famous for its tweed. Continue south through Sligo to Co Mayo for a visit to **Hennigan's Heritage Farm**. Hennigan's Heritage Farm houses a comprehensive collection of agriculture and trade implements and many other items of interest from the rich heritage of the surrounding area. Here you will experience the barter and Meitheal systems used for survival by the people.

Fowl and farm animals are also available to view in the original farmyard. You can experience how people lived in a frugal, self-sufficient community when work was hard and luxuries few - a revelation for younger generations and an authentic experience of life and traditions in rural Ireland. On a recent study tour to Ireland, many of the participants called Hennigan's the highlight of their trip! You can have an optional farmhouse lunch here before continuing south for a visit to **Kylemore Abbey**, home of the Irish Benedictine nuns. Unique to Kylemore Abbey is its distinctive pottery that you can see being made, decorated and fired in the studio.



Travel on to Clifden, where you will check into Mal Dua House for two nights. **Mal Dua House** is a guesthouse that has to “be seen to be believed”. [www.maldua.com](http://www.maldua.com). It offers a unique, relaxing retreat and personalized service in elegant surroundings in the heart of Connemara.

**DAY 4: CLIFDEN/ ARAN ISLANDS.** A full day trip to Inis Mór, the largest of the Aran Islands, famed for sweaters and knitwear. The three islands, Inis Mór, Inish Mann and Inisheer have some of Europe's finest examples of pre-historic and early Christian antiquities. Gaelic is the everyday language of the islanders and much of Ireland's folklore and culture is enshrined in their songs and stories. The main village on the island is Kilonan, which has quite a large harbor. Your driver/guide will take you to the boat pier and when you arrive you will be met by your local guide and taken on a coach tour of the island. (An additional, short, optional tour is available by horse drawn cart, payable direct) At the end of your coach tour you will take the boat back and your driver/guide will meet you at the pier to take you back to Clifden.



**DAY 5: DROMOLAND CASTLE.** Get an early start today. Depart Clifden and travel to the city of Galway, where you will have some free time for shopping and sightseeing. (The less time you spend in Galway, the sooner you will arrive at the castle!) Then travel south via the Cliffs of Moher to that dates back to the 16th century when it belonged to the O'Brien clan. It is set in 370 acres of woods and parkland and includes a championship golf course. It has intimate public rooms with roaring fires, elegant and comfortable seating, many period antiques and a huge collection of family portraits. In addition to golf, it offers riding, fishing, clay pigeon shooting, archery, tennis, snooker and bicycles. Here we include a night in a deluxe room. [www.dromoland.ie](http://www.dromoland.ie)



**DAY 6: KILLARNEY.** After a stop for sightseeing at the Bunratty Folk Park, you'll head south to the town of Adare for a brief stop. Because of its thatched roof houses, Adare is considered to be the prettiest village in Ireland. History had already endowed Adare with an exquisite backdrop to further please the eye - an ivied Norman Castle beside the River Maigue and the best collection of ruined medieval friaries in Ireland. You will continue on to **The Foynes Flying Boat Museum** that recalls the era from 1939 to 1945 when Foynes was the center of the aviation world for air traffic between the USA and Europe. Travel back in time in the authentic 1940's cinema while watching the “Atlantic Conquest”. Exhibits include an original terminal building, and a radio and weather room complete with transmitters, receivers and Morse code equipment. Then on to Killarney to check into **Old Weir Lodge** for three nights. Old Weir Lodge is a modern Tudor designed guesthouse, set in three quarters of an acre of landscaped gardens, 500 yards from Killarney town.

**DAY 7: KILLARNEY/ RING OF KERRY.** A full day sightseeing on the **Ring of Kerry** today. Your driver/guide will head out toward the Gap of Dunloe, and continue in a counter-clockwise direction to avoid meeting all the tour busses as he negotiates the narrow bends in the road. The spectacular indented coastline of charming fishing villages has a pleasant, rural atmosphere that hasn't changed in over 200 years. Be sure to stop in the charming villages of Waterville and Sneem. This is truly what Ireland is all about!



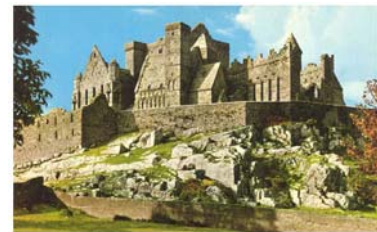
**DAY 8: KILLARNEY/ DINGLE PENINSULA.** Another full day sightseeing today on the **Dingle Peninsula**, one of the most spectacular parts of Ireland. This area is as beautiful as the Ring of Kerry but much less crowded and "touristy". Those magnificent scenes from the award-winning film, "Ryan's Daughter", were shot along the Dingle Peninsula. Driving around clockwise you'll pass through Castlemaine, then to Inch where there is a beautiful beach, and on to the charming little harbor at Dingle Town. You'll have a marvelous drive clockwise around Sleah Head before returning to Dingle Town, where you might have lunch (not included) in one of the many good seafood restaurants.



Then this evening enjoy a performance of **Siamsa Tíre**, Ireland's most famous folk show incorporating song, dance and mime. The Siamsa Tíre mission is to reflect Ireland's great wealth of music, dance and folklore on stage, through vibrant, colorful theatrical entertainment and to continue creating new folk theatre presentations, drawing on Irish traditions.

If you depart a little later from Killarney in the morning you can do the Dingle Peninsula; see the show and then return to Killarney.

**DAY 9: BLARNEY/ ROCK OF CASHEL/ DUBLIN.** It's off to Dublin today, stopping at **Blarney** to visit the ruins of Blarney Castle and to kiss the famous "Stone of Eloquence". You may also want to visit the **Blarney Woolen Mills** for a positively huge selection of Irish crafts and products. You can then stop at the **Rock of Cashel**. The Rock of Cashel rises 200 feet above the Tipperary Plain and is topped by one of the most striking ecclesiastical ruins in Ireland. This is where St. Patrick converted the Irish King, Aengus, to Christianity in the 5th century. It is perhaps Ireland's holiest monument. After a brief panoramic tour of Dublin, check in at **Buswells Hotel** for two nights. <http://www.quinnhotels.com/buswells.html>. Buswells Hotel, one of Dublin's 18th century Georgian town houses, has been open as a hotel since the early 1920's. Nestled a quiet Georgian area of Dublin; the hotel is perfectly situated in the heart of Dublin's historical and cultural center across the road from the Houses of the Oireachtas and the National Museum of Ireland, just off St. Stephen's Green. Bid your driver/guide farewell at check in.



**DAY 10: DUBLIN.** Hop on/hop off Dublin city sightseeing tickets included today and valid for 24 hours. Ask the hotel concierge for the nearest pick up location to your hotel. Trinity College, where you'll see the famous Book of Kells, Parliament, and St. Patrick's Cathedral are well worth visits. You'll find the best shops on Grafton Street, where you'll see a great selection of crystal, woolens, lacework and other Irish crafts.

**DAY 11: DEPARTURE.** A departure transfer from your hotel to the Dublin Airport in time for your flight home.

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