

Brendan Vacations: Iconic Ireland and Ashford Castle Summer 2018

Day 1 - Arrive Dublin (2 Nights)

The Emerald Isle puts its best foot forward in this iconic exploration of its breathtaking landscapes and whimsical charm. We kick off our epic journey along the walled gardens and rambling walks of Powerscourt Gardens - its sweeping terraces, ornamental lakes and over 200 variations of trees and shrubs ensure it befits its status as one of the most beautiful gardens in Ireland. Enjoy a Welcome Reception this evening to get to know your fellow travellers. Welcome Reception

Day 2 - Dublin Sightseeing

Lyrics and legends await this morning as we join a Local Specialist on a fascinating city tour to visit St. Patrick's Cathedral, where Jonathan Swift was once installed as Dean. We admire the colourful doorways in the stately Georgian Squares and stroll along the cobbled courtyard of Trinity College to see the ornate Book of Kells. Enjoy the rest of the day at leisure to soak up the charisma of this city. Wander along Grafton Street and see its lively performers, stop for a pint of the 'Black Stuff' in Temple Bar or relax in the 'Playground of Dublin', Phoenix Park. Full Breakfast

Day 3 - Dublin – Co. Kilkenny – Cork

We leave the bright lights and warm hospitality of Dublin behind for County Kilkenny where we delve into the history of a 'lost' medieval town - Newtown Jerpoint. Take a step back in time to the 12th century and wander through its remains that are said to be the final resting place of St. Nicholas, before joining the O'Connells at their home, Belmore House. Embrace the peaceful rural setting - the perfect backdrop to a traditional Irish Be My Guest lunch. Inspired by Irish food and the warmth of the locals, we continue south to the lively city of Cork, enjoying an evening at leisure to discover its sights, sounds and flavours. Full Breakfast, Be My Guest Dining

Day 4 - Cork – Blarney – Killarney (2 Nights)

Head to Blarney in pursuit of the 'gift of the gab'. Kiss the fabled Stone then head west to the lakeside setting of Killarney, our springboard to the enduring beauty of the Ring of Kerry. Full Breakfast, Dinner

Day 5 - Ring of Kerry Excursion

Spend a leisurely morning exploring charming Killarney or join a Local Specialist for a scenic guided walk at Torc Waterfall, meandering over wooden paths and lakeshore trails. Circle the scenic Ring of Kerry admiring its famous "forty shades of green" and seeing first-hand the breathtaking landscapes that have inspired writers and poets for centuries. Please Note: This leisurely paced walk meanders over wooden paths and lakeshore trails. Walkers should wear good walking shoes for a stroll through picturesque surroundings. Full Breakfast

Day 6 - Killarney – Cliffs of Moher – Galway (2 Nights)

Our up-close encounter with Ireland's ravishing beauty not yet at its end, we journey north stopping for a walk along the iconic Cliffs of Moher, an iconic feature of the famous Wild Atlantic Way. Admire the dramatic cliffs that rise some 700 feet above the pounding Atlantic and the endless ocean views you will see from its midst. We continue to Galway, where we enjoy an orientation tour including views of the stone Cathedral. Full Breakfast, Dinner

Day 7 - Connemara Excursion

A rugged realm of mountains, lakes, rivers and villages provides a stunning backdrop for our leisurely drive through Connemara - an unspoilt region of Western Ireland that was immortalised in John Wayne's 'The Quiet Man'. We'll visit Kylemore Abbey, and ramble through its exquisite

Victorian walled garden, then gain a Cultural Insight at the Connemara Marble Factory, to see the craft of Connemara marble first-hand. Full Breakfast, Dinner

Day 8 - Galway – Ashford Castle (Cong)

Enjoy a regal encounter with Ireland today. Board 'The Isle of Innisfree' for an exclusive cruise on shimmering Lough Corrib. Captain Patrick, Ashford Castle's Local Specialist, will share his local knowledge as you glide through its peaceful waters. Disembarking, a lone piper will escort you over the drawbridge to Ashford Castle where tonight you will dine as lords and ladies at an elegant royal dining experience (gentlemen are requested to wear a jacket). Full Breakfast, Dinner

Day 9 - Cong – Dublin

Indulge in the sumptuous surrounds of Ashford Castle. Stroll around its exquisite estate and admire its lavish interiors before you return to Dublin. Spend the rest of the afternoon delving into the centuries-old history of the Irish capital and its old-world charm. This evening, it's time to reminisce over shared memories at a delicious Farewell Dinner at a local restaurant. Full Breakfast, Farewell Dinner

Day 10 - Depart Dublin

As the curtain falls on a memorable journey with new friends, we say a fond slán go fóill to Dublin and the Emerald Isle. Transfers are available. Conditions apply. Full Breakfast