

Scenic Ireland

Day 1 ARRIVE IN SHANNON, IRELAND–LIMERICK. Céad míle fáilte—a hundred-thousand welcomes! After checking into your hotel, free time to relax and perhaps enjoy the hotel’s leisure amenities or explore the city. This evening, meet your Tour Director and traveling companions for a welcome dinner at your hotel. (D)

Day 2 LIMERICK–CLIFFS OF MOHER–GALWAY–CLIFDEN. Drive to the CLIFFS OF MOHER, rising 668 feet above the Atlantic Ocean, and savor the breathtaking panorama of the Clare coast. Next, a special treat: at RATHBAUN FARM, try your hand at [LF] SCONE BAKING and watch the farmer shear a sheep and maneuver a flock with the help of a sheep dog, then enjoy coffee and your scones, fresh from the oven. On to Galway, a popular seaside destination and a buzzing cosmopolitan center with colorful shops and a busy café and bar culture. Visit the Joyce family’s MARBLE WORKSHOP before spending the night at Clifden, a small fishing town in the far west. Today’s Distance: 144 mi / 230 km (B,D)

Day 3 CLIFDEN–KYLEMORE–WESTPORT–SLIGO. Visit KYLEMORE ABBEY this morning, the massive castle acquired by Benedictine nuns, and see the restored house, church, and gardens. Pause at Westport on the banks of the beautiful Carrabawn River and travel through rugged landscapes to the coastal seaport and county town of Sligo, known for its literary heritage. Today’s Distance: 116 mi / 190 km (B,D)

Day 4 SLIGO–DERRY, NORTHERN IRELAND–GIANT’S CAUSEWAY–BELFAST. Cross into Northern Ireland this morning and, in Derry, walk the city walls in the company of a Local Guide. After lunch, visit awe-inspiring GIANT’S CAUSEWAY. Hear how millions of years ago, erupting lava cooled slowly and evenly to form more than 40,000 interlocking basalt columns, leading from the cliff foot into the sea. Spend the next two nights in Belfast, Northern Ireland’s seat of government. Today’s Distance: 203 mi / 328 km (B)

Day 5 BELFAST. This morning’s “Living History” tour in the company of a Local Guide will take you past all the city’s attractions, including City Hall, the Albert Memorial Clock Tower, Queen’s University, and the Parliament Buildings at Stormont. Next, visit the fascinating TITANIC EXPERIENCE and learn all about the building of the largest passenger steam ship, its maiden voyage, and the tragic night of April 14, 1912. The afternoon is free for you to explore the lively town on your own. (B)

Day 6 BELFAST–CARLINGFORD, IRELAND–DUBLIN. Your first stop today is at HILLSBOROUGH CASTLE, where you will be treated to a guided tour of the official residence of the Royal Family when they are in Northern Ireland, and home of the Secretary of State. Afterward, enjoy morning coffee. Then stop in the charming village of Carlingford on the Cooley Peninsula, known for its oyster farms and medieval buildings, before heading for Dublin. For a first taste of the Irish capital, join an optional cabaret evening with dinner and entertainment. Today’s Distance: 121 mi / 200 km (B)

Day 7 DUBLIN. An orientation drive in the “Fair City” includes statue-lined O’Connell Street, elegant Georgian squares, St. Patrick’s Cathedral, and Oscar Wilde’s Trinity College. The afternoon is at leisure for you to enjoy this vibrant city. Tonight, maybe take in an optional dinner outing to the Guinness Storehouse. (B)

Day 8 DUBLIN–KILKENNY–WATERFORD. Kilkenny, one of Ireland’s prettiest towns with

medieval cobblestone streets and Old-World charm, is your first destination today. Visit magnificent KILKENNY CASTLE, which overlooks the Nore River and has guarded this important river crossing for more than 900 years. The gardens, with extensive woodland paths, rose garden, and ornamental lake, create the setting for a beautiful stroll. Then, to Waterford for a guided tour of the HOUSE OF WATERFORD CRYSTAL. You may also want to join an optional excursion to a local pub. After dinner at your hotel, enjoy an [LF] IRISH COFFEE DEMONSTRATION. Today's Distance: 132 mi / 213 km (B,D)

Day 9 WATERFORD–BLARNEY–KINSALE. The first of the day's highlights is an entertaining walk through Waterford, Ireland's oldest city, in the company of a Local Guide. Then, visit BLARNEY CASTLE, renowned for its magical KISSING STONE. Overnight is in picturesque Kinsale, a historic port and fishing town. You will have time to stroll along the waterfront, admire yachts moored in the harbor, walk up the winding streets and marvel at brightly painted galleries, shops, and houses. Today's Distance: 105 mi / 171 km (B,D)

Day 10 KINSALE–GARINISH ISLAND–KILLARNEY. This morning, board a [LF] private boat for the short crossing to GARINISH ISLAND in Bantry Bay, whose warm waters attract colonies of seals. Follow the winding paths between the fragrant flowering trees and shrubs of this lush tropical island garden. Then, head over the mountains into County Kerry. At Kenmare, join part of the RING OF KERRY and stop for spectacular photos of the Lakes of Killarney from Ladies View before arriving in the popular resort of Killarney. Tonight, an entertaining optional evening in Tralee with dinner and tickets for Siamsa Tire National Folk Theatre. Today's Distance: 100 mi / 158 km (B)

Day 11 KILLARNEY. DINGLE EXCURSION. Enjoy panoramic views on Dingle Peninsula on the way to the BLASKET ISLANDS CENTRE. Learn about the way of life and unique literary achievements on the string of remote offshore islands evacuated by the last inhabitants in 1953. Visit Dingle, then return to Killarney. Today's Distance: 107 mi / 172 km (B,D)

Day 12 KILLARNEY–ADARE–LIMERICK. A final morning at leisure in Killarney with time for an optional excursion by horse-drawn jaunting-car. In the afternoon, drive via quaint Adare, renowned for its pretty thatched cottages, to Limerick. A suggestion for a very special night out: attend an optional medieval banquet at an historic castle. Today's Distance: 68 mi / 110 km (B)

Day 13 LIMERICK. Your vacation ends with breakfast this morning. (B)