

## **Emerald Isle With Belfast**

**Day 1** ARRIVE IN DUBLIN, IRELAND. Céad míle fáilte—a hundred-thousand welcomes! Check into your hotel. At 3 pm, meet your Tour Director and traveling companions for an afternoon orientation drive through statue-lined O’Connell Street, elegant Georgian squares, and past St. Patrick’s Cathedral and Oscar Wilde’s Trinity College. Tonight, enjoy a welcome dinner at your hotel. (D)

**Day 2** DUBLIN–KILDARE–STROKESTOWN–BALLINA. Horse-racing country awaits this morning. Drive across the Curragh to the IRISH NATIONAL STUD at Kildare, whose thoroughbreds command respect on the racecourses of the world. Then, head north to Longford for a guided tour of STROKESTOWN HOUSE, the 1740s mansion with its fine gardens. Experience an insight into the circumstances of the Great Irish Famine of the 1840s at the Famine Museum. Overnight in Ballina, famous for its hospitality and internationally renowned for its exceptional salmon fishing in the Moy River. Today’s Distance: 179 mi / 300 km (B,D)

**Day 3** BALLINA–KYLEMORE–GALWAY. Via Westport, head for the unspoiled region of Connemara, an area known for its hardy breed of ponies. Visit KYLEMORE ABBEY, a massive yet graceful castle acquired by Benedictine nuns as a precious heirloom for Ireland. At Moycullen, visit the Joyce family at their MARBLE WORKSHOP before arriving in the port city of Galway. Tonight’s recommendation: an optional evening at Dunguaire Castle, where the intimate banquet has an enlightening literary theme. Today’s Distance: 104 mi / 166 km (B)

**Day 4** 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. Your fascinating day continues with a presentation about life on Inishmore by an island historian. After [LF] a light LUNCH at Tí Joe Watty’s pub, board a minibus to enjoy your driver/Local Guide’s commentary on a tour of the island. End with a visit to clifftop DUN AENGUS, one of the most spectacular and dramatic prehistoric stone forts in Europe. Back in Kilronan, board your ferry back to the mainland. There are plenty of dining options in Galway this evening. Today’s Distance: 45 mi / 72 km (B,L)

**Day 5** GALWAY–CLIFFS OF MOHER–LIMERICK. Enjoy a real Irish farm experience at RATHBAUN FARM this morning. Try your hand at [LF] SCONE BAKING, and learn from the farmer about sheep shearing and herding. Afterwards, enjoy coffee and your scones, fresh from the oven. Take the scenic route across the desolate limestone plateau known as The Burren, and stop for photos of prehistoric Poul nabrone Dolmen. At the CLIFFS OF MOHER, rising 668 feet above the Atlantic Ocean, savor the breathtaking panorama of the Clare coast. This evening, why not take part in a unique optional dinner excursion to Bunratty Folk Park? Today’s Distance: 129 mi / 207 km (B)

**Day 6** LIMERICK–FOYNES–DINGLE PENINSULA–TRALEE. This morning, make your way to Foynes for a guided tour of the FLYING BOAT MUSEUM. Board and explore the world’s only full-size replica of a Boeing B314 “Clipper.” In the flight simulator, re-enact the thrilling experience of crossing the Atlantic in a 1930s long-range flying boat. You will also be treated to an IRISH COFFEE DEMONSTRATION, complete with a sample of the classic drink. Then, enjoy the wonderful views during the Sleah Head drive on Dingle Peninsula, stroll through quaint Dingle, and maybe catch a glimpse of Fungi, the resident dolphin. Dinner will be at a [LF] LOCAL PUB on the peninsula. Today’s Distance: 145 mi / 238 km (B,D)

**Day 7** TRALEE. RING OF KERRY EXCURSION. At Killorglin, join the famous RING OF

**KERRY** for a 100-mile panoramic drive around the island's southwestern tip. Plenty to focus your camera on here: sparkling 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. Stop in the popular resort town of Killarney and enjoy 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. Today's Distance: 104 mi / 166 km (B,D)

**Day 8 TRALEE–BLARNEY–WATERFORD.** Across the Kerry Mountains, drive into County Cork for a visit to Blarney, renowned for its castle and magical Kissing Stone. Time for lunch, to walk up to the castle, and to shop for traditional Irish handicrafts. In the afternoon, proceed via Cork, Youghal, and Dungarvan to Waterford, a stronghold founded by the Danish Vikings in 853. Here, enjoy a visit to the **HOUSE OF WATERFORD CRYSTAL**. Today's Distance: 150 mi / 236 km (B,D)

**Day 9 WATERFORD–AVOCA–GLENDALOUGH–DUBLIN.** Today's agenda: Enniscorthy, site of the final battle of the Great Rebellion of 1798; Ireland's oldest **HANDWEAVING MILL** at Avoca; and **GLENDALOUGH**, the early Christian monastic site founded by St. Kevin in the 6th century. See the engaging audiovisual Ireland of the Monasteries, then your Local Guide will show you the remains of this ecclesiastical settlement. Back in Dublin tonight, join your traveling companions for a fitting farewell to Ireland: an optional cabaret evening with dinner, followed by dance, song, and laughter. Today's Distance: 120 mi / 192 km (B)

**Day 10 DUBLIN–BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND.** Travel by **TRAIN** (first-class) to Belfast. Your Local Host is available to help you make the most of your stay. (B)

**Day 11 BELFAST.** Your **HOP-ON/HOP-OFF SIGHTSEEING TOUR** will take you past all the city's attractions, including City Hall, the Albert Memorial Clock Tower, Queens University, the murals on Falls Road and Shankill Road, and the Parliament Buildings at Stormont. Also included is a ticket to the fascinating **TITANIC EXPERIENCE**, where you learn all about the construction of the largest passenger steam ship, its maiden voyage, and the tragic night of April 14, 1912. (B)

**Day 12 BELFAST.** Your Local Host will have many suggestions for your day at leisure. (B)

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