



WILD IRELAND

EXPLORING THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

JUNE 8TH - 18TH 2023

From the Rose of Tralee to Dublin's fair city, Ireland is an almost mythic land of lyrical folk song, romantic poetry, turbulent history and deep green fields. *Wild Ireland* focuses on the dramatic beauty of the rugged West Coast, where the Atlantic Ocean first hits the European continent.

Join Discover Europe for an in-depth exploration of the Wild Atlantic Way, stretching from County Donegal in the north down to County Clare. From the pre-Celtic hill forts punctuating the island to her dramatic seascapes and fabulous formal gardens, Ireland is a land of gracious discoveries. Our itinerary offers an introduction to Ireland for travellers who want to see beyond the tourist façade and explore the epic history of this small island.

We begin in Dublin, one of Europe's recent success stories, which has emerged from the recent recession more vibrant than ever. The city is introduced with panoramic sightseeing and there'll also be free time to explore its superb museums or wander through Temple Bar and the revitalized riverfront.

As we head north, we'll stop in the Boyne Valley to gaze in wonder at the 4,000 year-old tombs of the Newgrange Necropolis. We continue northwest to our castle hotel just outside Donegal and work our way south through the legendary beauty of Connemara. We'll pause at the grave of W. B. Yeats, in the shadow of Benbulbin Mountain, and explore "Yeats Country" en route. From Galway, we'll take a day-trip over to the Aran Islands and then turn south to Co. Clare, as we discover the extraordinary flora of The Burren, a unique landscape of geological wonder, and visit the dramatic cliffs of Moher.

This summer, join us on an adventure to *Wild Ireland*.



KYLEMORE ABBEY



THE CLIFFS OF MOHER

THE COST OF THIS ITINERARY, PER PERSON, DOUBLE OCCUPANCY IS:

LAND ONLY:	\$ 4580
SINGLE SUPPLEMENT:	\$ 1190

Airfares are available from many U.S. cities. Please call for details.

THE FOLLOWING SERVICES ARE INCLUDED:

- HOTELS:** 9 nights' accommodation in first-class hotels including all hotel taxes and service charges
- COACHING:** All ground transportation as detailed in the itinerary
- MEALS:** Breakfast daily, 1 afternoon tea, 5 dinners
- BAGGAGE:** Portage of one large suitcase per person
- ENTRANCES:** Entrance fees to all sites included in the itinerary
- GUIDES:** Discover Europe guide throughout

*Please note that travel insurance is not included on this tour.
Insurance information will be mailed on receipt of deposit.*

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THURSDAY, JUNE 8TH - Departure from your chosen US gateway city. **OVERNIGHT: PLANE**

FRIDAY, JUNE 9TH - Arrival at Dublin Airport, where you will be met for the transfer to our central Dublin hotel. This afternoon, your tour guide will offer a short orientation tour of the neighborhood before we visit Trinity College to view the magnificent book of Kells. We gather this evening for a welcome dinner at the hotel. **(D) OVERNIGHT: DUBLIN**

SATURDAY, JUNE 10TH - We begin our morning with a sightseeing tour of Dublin. We'll visit Christ Church, St. Patrick's Cathedral and drive through Phoenix Park, ending at the newly built EPIC museum. This museum chronicles the story of Irish emigration and is very interactive and engaging. You will have time to view the museum at your own pace with an audio guide. The rest of the afternoon and evening are free to do some shopping and search out a suitable pub or restaurant for dinner. **(B) OVERNIGHT: DUBLIN**

SUNDAY, JUNE 11TH - This morning, after breakfast, we head north towards county Donegal. Our first stop of the day will be the Newgrange Necropolis. The three passage tombs of Dowth, Knowth and Newgrange together form what is probably the most significant and impressive Neolithic site in Europe. We'll visit the Newgrange tomb and have lunch here before we continue our journey to Donegal. Upon arrival at our 5-star castle hotel, we will have time to relax before dinner. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: DONEGAL**



MONDAY, JUNE 12TH - Today we have a full day exploring the rugged coastline of county Donegal. Our first stop of the day will be the Slieve League Cliffs, which are the tallest cliffs in Europe at 1,998 feet. Here you will have a chance, if you're feeling brave, to hike up to the top for an outstanding view over the Atlantic. After a stop for lunch in the heritage center and cafe, we will head north to Glencolumbkille Folk Village to see how they lived in years past. Our last stop of the day is at Donegal castle. After our visit to the Castle, we'll return to the hotel, where you are free for the evening. You may choose to dine at the hotel again or venture into Donegal Town. **(B) OVERNIGHT: DONEGAL**

TUESDAY, JUNE 13TH - Leaving Donegal this morning, we turn south, crossing into Yeats Country in County Mayo. We'll stop for a photo opportunity at Mullaghmore Head and Creevykeel Court Cairn, and pay our respects at the grave of W. B. Yeats in the church at Drumcliff, before continuing on to Sligo, where we'll have time for lunch. From Sligo, we'll head towards our hotel in the town of Westport in county Mayo where you will have time to check in and relax before dinner at the hotel this evening. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: WESTPORT**

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 14TH - Today we will explore Connemara. After breakfast, our first stop will be at Glen Keen Farm, a working sheep farm in county Mayo. Here we'll learn about farming in Ireland and enjoy a sheep dog demonstration, followed by tea and scones. From here, we travel through the stunning Connemara landscape on our way to visit the Benedictine monastery of Kylemore Abbey. It has a rich history, stunning views, and an impressive Victorian Walled Garden. We'll have a guided tour of the Abbey, and then you will have free time for lunch and to visit the church, walled garden, and the gift shop that is filled with handmade treats made by the nuns that still live in the abbey. After our visit, we will head back to Westport where your afternoon and evening are free. **(B, T) OVERNIGHT: WESTPORT**

THURSDAY, JUNE 15TH - This morning, after a leisurely breakfast, we will visit the historic Westport House for a guided tour. With history dating back to the 16th century, you will immerse yourself in the time when the Pirate Queen Grace O'Malley ruled the land and seas around the estate. After our guided tour, you will have time to explore the grounds of Westport House and take a walk on the many walking paths around the estate, before we gather again to make our way to our next hotel just outside of Galway. You will have time to check in and relax at the hotel before we head into Galway for a city tour and dinner. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: GALWAY**

FRIDAY, JUNE 16TH - Today we take an excursion to Inishmore, the largest of the Aran Islands, set in Galway Bay (in the event that bad weather prevents flying today, we will substitute an alternate excursion). On arrival we'll enjoy a tour on an island mini-bus, or simply pick up a bicycle at the town pier and explore the island independently (no private cars are allowed on the island). We visit mystical Dun Aengus, a 2000 year-old fort with an imposing position overlooking the Atlantic, and The Aran Island Heritage Centre. The Islands are still largely Gaelic speaking, and maintain many of the traditional Irish Island customs, which reflect the harshness of island life. Observe local ladies hand-knitting traditional Aran sweaters. We return to the mainland late afternoon and return to Galway for a free evening. **(B) OVERNIGHT: GALWAY**



SATURDAY, JUNE 17TH - This morning, following the Wild Atlantic Way, we bid farewell to Galway and head south to County Clare to visit the dramatic Cliffs of Moher. We then turn inland into the Burren, one of the most remarkable geological formations in Ireland—a wild, limestone plateau filled with rare flora. We end the day at our hotel in Ennis where we will enjoy a farewell dinner. **(B, D) OVERNIGHT: ENNIS**

SUNDAY, JUNE 18TH - This morning, after breakfast, there will be transfers to nearby Shannon Airport for return flights to the USA. **(B) OVERNIGHT: HOME**

Key to included meals: B - breakfast, T- tea, D - dinner