

Ireland



Shamrocks & Shenanigans

July 15 – 28, 2022

From the Irish people's sparkling wit, hospitality and cozy pubs to the Isle's incredible emerald landscapes and spectacular coastlines, this small country packs quite a punch. See the history, experience the culture and Xplore Ireland's natural wonders as we travel from Dublin to Doolin and points beyond. Surprising moments, epic adventures and all that can happen in-between!

HIGHLIGHTS

Dublin City Tour
Old Library Exhibit
Book of Kells
Welcome Dinner
Cycling tour on Royal Canal Greenway
Athlone Castle
Portumna Workhouse
Wild Atlantic Way
Galway Walking Tour
Kylemore Abbey & Victorian Gardens
Connemara National Park
2 nights on Inishmore Aran Islands
Ferry to/from Inishmore
Dun Aonghasa
2 nights in Doolin
The Burren
Ailwee Cave
Poulnabrone Dolmen
Guided Cliff Walk
Cliffs of Moher
Gus O'Connor's
Quaint Irish villages
3 nights in Killarney
Killarney National Park
Gap of Dunloe
Boat ride on Killarney's Lakes
Guided Trail Ride through Killarney National Park
Kilkenny Walking Tour
Kilkenny Castle
Wicklow Gap
Glendalough
Farewell Dinner

Day 1 – Home City to Dublin. Fly from home city to Dublin Ireland.



Day 2 – Dublin. Welcome to the Emerald Isle! Met by our driver/guide, we embark on a **City Tour**, enjoying the sites of **Ireland's capital city**. We see the **Georgian Squares, St. Patrick's Cathedral, Phoenix Park**, statue filled **O'Connell Street** and fashionable **Grafton Street**.



We stop at **Trinity College** to visit the

Old Library, housing the 1,200-year-old **Book of Kells**. Entering the **Long Room**, you might think you've stepped into one of J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter books. After checking into our hotel, the remainder of the afternoon is free to rest or explore Dublin on our own. Enjoy a **Welcome Dinner** this evening.



Day 3 – Dublin to Athlone. Leaving Dublin, we travel through the Irish midlands to the town of Mullingar to Xplore the **Royal Canal Greenway** on a **guided cycle tour to Lough Owel**. Visiting **St Bridget's Well** and an old famine graveyard along the way. After, we relax with tea/coffee and scones in a picturesque setting overlooking the **Royal Canal Harbour**. Next we travel to **Athlone**, steeped in history and culture. A place where you can Xplore Ireland's ancient east and discover hidden gems.

Engage in a journey through 5,000 years of history on a **guided tour of Athlone Castle**. Find yourself walking in the footsteps of kings, queens and monks, listening to phenomenal tales from fables and folklore of the town, castle and townsfolk. Enjoy the company of your fellow Xplorers this evening at **Dinner**.

Day 4 – Athlone to Galway City. Departing Athlone, we travel to **Portumna** for a **guided tour of Portumna Workhouse**. One of many in Ireland, opened in 1852 and was used as a place of shelter for the poor and homeless during the great famine. Listen to stories of the famine and learn what life was like for those forced by circumstance to seek shelter here. Then we travel to **Galway City** where we abandon our coach and see Galway as it should be seen – on foot. Joined by a **local guide** for a fun and entertaining **walking tour**. Wandering through the charming old cobble stone streets, our guide recounts tales of success and folly, war and conquest, joy and tragedy, emigration and slavery. Followed by free time to experience the blend of past and present housed in century old buildings.





Day 5 – Galway City to Inishmore.

Today we travel through the quiet wilderness of Connemara, with captivating landscapes, heather covered mountains, beautiful lakes and bogs. Stopping for lunch at **Kylemore Abbey** built in 1866 and operating as a private residence until 1920, when

it became home to Benedictine Nuns. Visit the beautiful period rooms, learn its story of tragedy, romance, education, and spirituality. Xplore the **Victorian Walled Garden** with its delightful buildings and formal flower gardens. Our next stop is **Connemara National Park and Visitor Centre**, with acres of scenic landscape complete with its own herd of ponies! We may catch a glimpse of them on our walk along the **Diamond Hill Trails**. After, we board the ferry to **Inishmore**, for a two-night stay. It's a short stroll to the local pub for dinner and an evening of Irish hospitality...Guinness anyone!

Day 6 – Inishmore. The largest of the three Aran Islands and a highlight of the Wild Atlantic Way. We spend the day Xplore the Island by **bicycle**, only 12km long and 3km wide, with narrow winding roads, quaint shops and breathtaking costal views. Inishmore resembles an outdoor museum with over 50 different monuments many of Celtic mythological heritage. Take the 1km walk to the world renowned fort of **Dun Aonghasa**. A prehistoric hill fort perched precariously on a cliff over the harsh Atlantic.

Standing in Dun Aonghasa, feels a little like teetering on the edge of the world.



mountain we stop at the 6000+ year old **Poul nabrone Dolmen** one of the most famous landmarks in the Burren. This evening its **Dinner at Gus O' Connors Pub** established in 1832, known world-wide for its Irish hospitality and traditional music.

Day 8 – Doolin. We are joined this morning by a **local guide** for a **cliff walk** to the majestic **Cliffs of Moher**. Following the cliff edge, we make our way to the highest point standing 702 feet above sea level. Waves crashing against the cliffs, puffins in their natural habitat, the walk offers the best and most rewarding way to view the cliffs. Following some free time to appreciate the awe-inspiring vista, we return to Doolin. Stopping for a well-deserved bevy may be in order before heading out to Xplore the village on your own.



Day 9 – Doolin to Killarney. Leaving a piece of our hearts in Doolin, we travel along the Wild Atlantic Way, past castle ruins, picturesque villages and country cottages with their thatched roofs, making our way to the vibrant town of **Killarney** for a three-night stay. Surrounded by beautiful countryside, Killarney is a very special place indeed. Brim full of history, heritage and of course wonderful Irish hospitality. Some of which you will experience this evening while enjoying **Dinner** with your fellow Xplorers.

Day 10 – Killarney. Today's amazing journey starts with a beautiful walk through a mountain pass known as the **Gap of Dunloe**. Weaving our way around lakes and between the slopes of **Purple Mountain** and **Mac Gillycuddy's Reeks** to **Killarney's Upper Lake**. Followed with a **traditional style boat ride** captained by a local Irishman entertaining us with his stories. Gently gliding our way across the surface of the lakes concluding at beautiful **Ross Castle**.

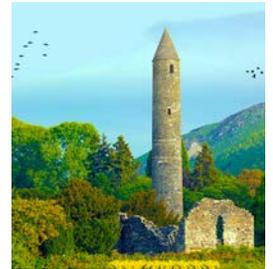


Day 11 – Killarney. There is no better way to Xplore the jaw-dropping beauty of **Killarney National Park** than with a **gentle horse ride through the park**, led by a **local expert**, no experience required. Travelling over vast expanses of green grass, past collectives of deer, sparkling lakes in the distance and mountains lining the backdrop adding that extra layer to the awe-inspiring landscape, a truly magical experience creating unforgettable memories. The remainder of the day is yours to enjoy at leisure. With many options available, your guide will have plenty of suggestions for you.



Day 12 – Killarney to Kilkenny. It's a fond farewell to Killarney, and hello to **Kilkenny**, home of the **Medieval Mile**. During our **Walking Tour** we discover what makes Kilkenny so unique as our guide recounts the tales of yesteryear. After, we visit **Kilkenny Castle**, decorated in 1830's splendor and set in extensive parklands, a beautiful and impressive structure not to be missed. Following hotel check in, the remainder of the day is free to explore this medieval city on our own.

Day 13 – Kilkenny to Dunboyne. Today we travel over the scenic **Wicklow Gap** to **Glendalough**. An early Christian settlement founded in the 6th century. Set in a peaceful glaciated valley with two lakes. Following an audiovisual presentation at the **Visitors Centre** and a **guided tour** of the site we take the scenic **Green Road Walk** to serene **Upper Lake**. From here we continue to the village of **Dunboyne** and check into our hotel. This evening we enjoy a **Farewell Dinner** with our fellow Xplorers.



Day 14 – Depart Dublin Airport. After breakfast we transfer to Dublin Airport for our flight home with fond memories, new friends, newly acquired accents and many stories to relate to friends and family.

Go n-éirí an t-ádh leat

(May the Luck of the Irish be with you).



PRICING

\$5,649 Double / Room Share

\$6,659 Single

All prices are per person.

LAND ONLY.

Not included in price: airfare, taxes & fees.

Total meals included:

All Breakfasts

5 Dinners

2 Snacks



To book, visit your professional travel agent: