

# Secrets of Ireland

Sep. 19<sup>th</sup> – Oct. 1<sup>st</sup>, 2020

*Ireland, The Emerald Isle... with its "forty shades of green", it's a place knee deep in charm! Home to many of our ancestors, enveloped in rich history & filled with wonderful friendly people. It is the perfect place to take a holiday; this lovely island has physical and spiritual qualities that are seldom found in the Western world. The life is relaxing, the scenery both beautiful and varied!*

## Includes:

- ❖ Round trip motor-coach transportation to the Portland Airport
- ❖ Personal service from your OregonWest Tour Director
- ❖ Round trip air on United Airlines – 1 bag included
- ❖ All hotels listed below - luggage handling included
- ❖ All attractions & gratuities as described
- ❖ Full Irish breakfast daily, other meals listed below
- ❖ All transportation in Ireland
- ❖ Personal service from a professional Irish tour director

**Day 1 - Saturday Sep 19th - Home to Dublin** - We'll fly to Chicago O'Hare airport, then on to Dublin arriving the morning of the 20<sup>th</sup>

**Day 2 – Sunday Sept 20th – Dublin** - Welcome to Dublin... we meet our wonderful local guide here for a panoramic city tour. Dublin is special... a place where tradition, culture and heritage have merged over the centuries to create an atmosphere that is simply unique. After our city tour, we'll have lunch at one of Dublin's many fine pubs. Our home for the next 3 nights is the Iveagh Hotel located in the heart of the city near St Stephens Green and Grafton Street. **Iveagh Hotel (L)**

**Day 3 – Monday Sept 21st – Dublin Local Touring** - This morning we'll view the Book of Kell's at Trinity College - a Latin text of the four Gospels with illuminated pages which dates from 800 AD. On to St. Patrick's Cathedral, founded in 1190, on a site where St. Patrick baptized converts to Christianity in the 5<sup>th</sup> Century. There has been a Church on this site ever since! The morning ends with a tour of the Guinness Storehouse and a pint of "the black stuff" for those who wish. The afternoon is free to explore the city center, or perhaps; walk along Grafton and O'Connell Streets, cross the River Liffey on the Halfpenny Bridge or find out more about Temple Bar or Dublin Castle. We'll meet up for dinner at the hotel before saying goodnight. **Iveagh Hotel (B, D)**

**Day 4 - Tuesday Sept 22nd – Wicklow Mountains** - This morning we'll travel through the scenic Wicklow Mountains (The Garden of Ireland) to visit Powerscourt House & Gardens... one of the world's great gardens! Set against the backdrop of the Sugarloaf Mountains. From the ornate Italian Gardens, to the formal walks of the Rose and Kitchen Gardens, there are many hidden treasures to explore. We'll also stop in Glendalough to visit the 7<sup>th</sup> Century monastic settlement. It is home to one of the most important monastic sites in *Ireland*. This early Christian monastic settlement was founded by St. Kevin in the 6<sup>th</sup> century. We stop at a country pub for lunch before heading back to Dublin where your evening is free to explore. **Iveagh Hotel (B, L)**

**Day 5 - Wednesday Sept 23rd – Dublin to Galway** We'll depart Dublin this morning and drive west through farming country and small market towns into the heart of Ireland. Our first stop is the 6<sup>th</sup> Century Clonmacnoise Monastery on the banks of the River Shannon (Cluain Mhic Nóis in *Irish*, meaning "Meadow of the Sons") A walk amongst the peaceful stone ruins will conjure images of the saints and scholars of Ireland's renowned golden age of learning. We continue to Galway City where we'll have a walking tour before checking into our home for the next 3 nights the Victoria Hotel... a stylish hotel located in the center of the city. **Victoria Hotel (B, D)**

**Day 6 - Thursday Sept 24th – Connemara National Park** After breakfast we'll embark on a tour of the wild and rugged Connemara National Park. We'll stop at Roundstone Music to learn about the full range of Musical Instruments associated with Irish Music. Fiddles, Accordions, Concertinas, Banjos, Bagpipes, Uuliaan Pipes, Bouzoukis, Dulcimers and of course Bodhrans, Ethnic Drums and lots of Percussion. We'll take in the pretty hillside village of Clifden and visit Kylemore Abbey... a beautiful mansion in a lakeside setting against a mountainous backdrop still home to Irish Benedictine Nuns with a unique tradition dating back 300 years. We'll indulge in a wonderful lunch before making our way back to Galway where your evening is free. **Victoria Hotel (B, L)**

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**Day 7 - Friday Sept 25th – Arran Islands** - Today we'll ferry to the Arran Islands. The islands are rich in language, culture & heritage. They're also known for their unique geology, archaeology a long tradition of hospitality. This is the place to sense the spirit of Gaelic Ireland. The Arran Islands are a place of peace and tranquility. We'll have a tour on arrival including the 2000 year old coastal hill fort of Dun Aengus, it is the best-known for several prehistoric *hill forts* on the Islands and is one of the most iconic landmarks in *Ireland*. We'll head back to Galway where a delicious dinner awaits at one of their many fine pubs. **Victoria Hotel (B, D)**

**Day 8 - Saturday Sept 26th – Bunratty Castle** - This morning drive into the countryside, stopping at Rathbaun Farm, a traditional working farm to tour the thatched farm buildings... we'll also enjoy traditional Porter cake, scones and coffee here. Next, we'll visit to Bunratty Castle and Folk Park... Ireland's most complete and authentic medieval castle. Enjoy some free time to explore or have a pint at Durty Nelly's Pub before our medieval banquet within the castle walls. **Victoria Hotel (B, D)**

**Day 8 - Sunday Sept 27th – Cliffs of Moher** - Today journey into County Clare and experience the strange lunar landscape of The Burren en-route to the edge of the Atlantic and the Cliffs of Moher. The Cliffs of Moher are one of Ireland's most spectacular sights, they stand over 700ft above sea level and boast some of the most amazing views in Ireland. We'll ferry across the mouth of the broad majestic River Shannon in County Kerry. We'll learn about some of Ireland's finest writers that hailed from the area along the way... John B Keane, Brian McMahon and Brendan Kenneally to name a few. Our home for the next two nights is Killarney's Premier Historic hotel, *the Great Southern* has been welcoming visitors since 1854. **Great Sothern Hotel Killarney (B, L)**

**Day 9 - Monday Sept 28th – Ring of Kerry** - After breakfast we take in the world-famous Ring of Kerry. Poets, painters, writers and musicians have all tried to convey the beauty of this area famed for the region's mountains, lakes and coastal scenery. Your afternoon is free to enjoy Killarney or to perhaps take a short journey on one of the local horse drawn buggies known as Jaunting Cars to visit the magnificent Victorian mansion of Muckross House. We'll meet up for a great dinner at the hotel tonight before we say goodnight. **Great Sothern Hotel (B, D)**

**Day 10 - Tuesday Sept 29th – Killarney to Waterford** - We'll depart for Killarney this morning and drive through the Kerry and Cork countryside to the coast where we'll visit the highly remote village of Cobh and the Queenstown Visitor Centre. This was the last port of call of RMS Titanic and for thousands of emigrants this was the last site they had of the "Old World" before heading for the "New Worlds" of the USA & Canada. The day finishes with a tour of The Old Middleton Distillery and a well-earned glass of Irish whiskey. **Waterford Marina Hotel (B, D)**

**Day 11 - Wednesday Sept 30th – Waterford to Dublin** - This morning we'll visit the home of the famed Waterford Crystal... the opulent retail store featuring the largest collection of the world's most coveted name in crystal. Next, we'll follow the inland route via the medieval city of Kilkenny where we'll visit the castle in heart of the city. Built in 1195 to control a fording-point of the River Nore and the junction of several routeways. We'll also take in some of the best Irish craft and design in the Kilkenny Design Centre. Tonight, enjoy a farewell dinner and traditional Irish music.

**Day 12 - Thu Oct 1st – Departure** - We'll depart for home today with great Irish Memories! **(B)**



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Excluded: Items of personal nature such as telephone calls, movie rentals, etc.

**The Fine Print:** A 24 person minimum is required for this tour to operate. Tour deposits and payments are subject to penalties unless the minimum is not met and the tour is canceled. Cancellation insurance is available by calling our office. OregonWest Excursions is not liable for damage, delay, or inconvenience which may occur through acts or defaults of any other company or person engaged in providing services, provisions, accommodations, transportation or facilities in connection with this tour, nor are we liable for any acts of war, whether declared or not, damage, loss, or acts of God connected with this tour.

**A \$100 deposit per person will hold space; balance is due by July 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2020**