



A Scottish, Welsh and Irish Adventure

16 days

Tour Description

This Celtic adventure will take you through the highlights of Celtic history, art and nature. Although the Celts once settled in each of these lands, Scotland, Wales and Ireland all have a unique culture. From the kilted warriors and lochs of Scotland to the stunning natural scenery of Wales and Ireland's quaint towns and jovial pubs, there is much to see and do.

Highlights

- ❖ View the Burrell Collection with over 9,000 works of art
- ❖ Visit the cottage of Robert Burns, Scotland's favorite poet
- ❖ Cruise Scotland's famous lochs
- ❖ Visit the home of golf – St. Andrews
- ❖ Enjoy a Scottish Banquet of traditional food and bagpipe music
- ❖ Castle stay
- ❖ Narrow gauge steam railway ride
- ❖ See the location from which the Titanic sailed its only voyage
- ❖ View the Book of Kells at Trinity College, Dublin

Sample Tour Itinerary

Glasgow – 3 nights

Day 1: Arrive Glasgow

Upon arrival at Glasgow airport, collect your luggage and proceed to the arrivals hall. A representative will be there to meet you and direct you to your waiting motor coach. This evening we will enjoy a welcome drink reception followed by evening dinner together.

Day 2:

This morning we will embark on a tour of the city, passing George Square and Glasgow Cathedral, a magnificent medieval structure built in the 14th century. Or you are free to enjoy the sights and sounds of Glasgow. This afternoon perhaps enjoy a visit to the Burrell Collection, a private collection of over 9000 works of art that was donated to the City of Glasgow. As you wander around the collections of medieval art, tapestries, alabasters and stained glass you are sure to find pieces from well-known artists such as Degas, Cezanne and Rodin. Also enjoy the wonderful park and wood lands that the Pollock Estate offers. Or you are free to enjoy the sights and sounds of Glasgow.

**Day 3:**

This morning after breakfast we will travel south along the Ayrshire coast and into Robbie Burns Country, the ploughman poet. Here we will visit Burns Cottage in Alloway where you can walk in the footsteps of Tam O'Shanter in Alloway's "Auld haunted kirk" and across auld Brig O'Doon, where Tam's mare, Meg, had her narrow escape from the witches. We continue on to the 18th century Culzean Castle, which overlooks the Atlantic coast. Part of this castle was gifted to General Eisenhower who resided here during his presidency and retirement on several occasions. We return to Glasgow where you will be free for the balance of the evening.

Loch Lomond – 2 nights**Day 4:**

After breakfast we will visit The "Bonnie, bonnie banks of Loch Lomond" where we will stop for a short cruise on this famous Loch. So much myth, legend and history precedes a visit to the expanse of Glencoe and Loch Leven, that many visitors are unprepared for the sheer beauty and breathtaking serenity of this vast sweeping pass. We will pass Urquhart Castle, a stronghold on a rocky peninsula overlooking Loch Ness, where we will stop for pictures. Continuing on to Inverness, the capital of the highlands and our hotel tonight, we will enjoy evening dinner together.

Day 5:

After a leisurely breakfast we visit a local kilt maker where we can learn all about the famous tartans (plaids) and then continue on to the famous Culloden Battlefield where Bonnie Prince Charles's army was defeated by government troops in 1746. This afternoon take the time to explore Inverness with its suspension bridges across the River Ness, old stone buildings and Ben Wyvis soaring above the skyline. This evening after your included dinner you are free to enjoy the local pubs and nightlife.

Edinburgh – 2 nights**Day 6:**

Leaving the Highlands behind us, we travel southward where we visit a Scottish shepherd at work with his faithful sheepdog. We continue to the Edradour Distillery in Pitlochry. Sample a wee dram at Scotland's smallest distillery. We continue our drive to ancient St Andrews, the birthplace of golf. See St Andrews University; founded in 1413 it is the oldest university in Scotland! There will be time in the quaint village of St. Andrews which is full of traditional Scottish craft shops, pubs and restaurants, or perhaps you will prefer exploring the ruins of St Andrews Cathedral.

We travel on to the imposing city of Edinburgh and our downtown hotel. Tonight you are free to enjoy the many culinary delights this city has to offer - why not round the evening off in one of the many pubs & wine bars?

Day 7:

This morning's tour takes us along Princes Street with its fine shops and through the lovely Georgian squares and terraces of the new town. We continue along the historic Royal Mile to the palace of Holyrood, the official Scottish residence of Her Majesty the Queen. Our tour concludes at Edinburgh Castle where we will enjoy a hearty Scottish lunch in the castle before we view the Scottish Crown Jewels and take in the breathtaking views of the city from the castle ramparts. This evening we will take a short walk to a local venue where we will enjoy a Scottish Banquet where you can sample some haggis and enjoy traditional bagpipe music, songs and dancing.



Ruthin – 1 night

Day 8:

This morning we depart Edinburgh for Wales. Our first stop of the day will be Rosslyn Chapel, founded in 1446 by the Prince of Orkney. This intriguing church has been visited by many famous people and has most recently been featured in the Da Vinci Code. We re-board our coach and travel south to the border of Scotland and England, passing Gretna Green the famed location for British runaway marriages! We will stop near Carlisle for lunch and a visit to see the remains of Hadrian's Wall, a 6 year undertaking that was built to separate the Romans from the barbarians. In the afternoon we continue on to Ruthin Castle in Wales where we will overnight in the Castle and enjoy a medieval banquet.

Cardiff – 2 nights

Day 9:

This morning after breakfast we will be heading to south Wales and the town of Cardiff. First we will enjoy an exciting ride on one of Wales's Great Little Trains from Blaenau Ffestiniog to Minfford. This narrow gauge steam railway takes you back in time while enjoying some of the stunning scenery of the Snowdonia National Park. We continue on to Portmeirion, the fascinating Italianate fantasy village created by Sir Clough Williams-Ellis, and home to the Portmeirion pottery. We then continue south to Cardiff where we will spend the next two nights. Tonight dinner is included at the hotel.

Day 10:

This morning we will enjoy a panoramic tour of the capital city of Cardiff including a visit to Cardiff Castle. We continue on to Dyffern Gardens where you will enjoy the opportunity to enjoy these wonderful gardens. We return to our hotel in Cardiff where you are free for dinner.

Wexford – 3 nights

Day 11:

This morning after a leisurely breakfast we travel to Fishguard where we will catch our ferry that will bring us across the Irish Sea to Rosslare near Wexford. Sit back and enjoy the crossing which will take approximately three hours. Upon arrival in Rosslare we continue to our hotel in Wexford where we will enjoy dinner together.

Day 12:

Our first stop today is the village of Blarney where you will have the opportunity to climb the stairs of Blarney Castle and kiss the famous stone to get the 'gift of the gab'! You can also enjoy the wonderful wildlife gardens and landscape that Blarney Castle cultivates every year. Also available is the opportunity to shop at the famous Blarney Woolen Mills. We then visit the Cobh Heritage Museum at the restored Victorian Cobh Railway Station where the Titanic made its last port of call before its one and only voyage. Cobh was also the port where many of the survivors of the Lusitania were brought in 1915.



Day 13:

After a hearty Irish breakfast, we depart on one of Ireland's most popular and beautiful drives, the Ring of Kerry. Traveling northwards from Killarney, you come to the town of Killorglin, famous for the 'Buck Fair' and from here you commence the 'Ring tour', your drive along the coastline of the broad Iveragh peninsula, through the towns of Glenbeigh, Cahirciveen, Waterville and Sneem. The scenery is spectacular - wind-swept cliffs, still lakes, lost valleys and rocky mountains blend in awesome beauty. From Sneem, you continue via 'Ladies View' back to Killarney and on to your hotel.

Dublin – 2 nights

Day 14:

This morning we depart Killarney and travel north to Adare, a charming old world village with thatched roofed cottages. We continue on through Limerick, Roscrea, Portlaoise and Kildare arriving in Dublin in the mid afternoon. The balance of the afternoon is free for you to enjoy the hotel's facilities. Tonight we will enjoy dinner together at the hotel.

Day 15:

After breakfast this morning, we board our coach for a sightseeing tour of Dublin's fair city, which though modern and cosmopolitan, still retains the grace and atmosphere of the eighteenth century through its Georgian squares and terraces. On our tour we visit Trinity College and its library, home to the Book of Kells, the Book of Durrow and one of the finest collections of manuscripts and early printed books in Ireland. We also visit St. Patrick's Cathedral, founded in 1190, with its memories of Jonathon Swift, Handel, King William and many more. As we continue we see Christchurch Cathedral and O'Connell Street, reputed to be one of the widest main streets in Europe and the Bank of Ireland, formerly the Irish House of Parliament. The afternoon is free. This evening enjoy a farewell dinner followed by an Irish Cabaret with traditional Irish music song and dance.

Day 16:

This morning we transfer to Dublin International Airport with ample time to check your luggage and board your flight back to the USA.

INCLUSIONS

- Accommodations: Glasgow 3 nights, Loch Lomond 2 nights, St. Andrews 2 nights, Ruthin 1 night, Cardiff 2 nights, Wexford 3 nights, Dublin 2 nights
- Meals: Continental breakfast daily, lunch and dinner as noted in itinerary
- Ground transportation via air conditioned luxury coach
- English speaking assistants and guides
- Admission tickets as outlined in the itinerary