

Northern Ireland & Ireland

Day 1

(Meals in flight)

Board your wide-bodied jet for departure from USA for an overnight flight to Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Day 2 – Belfast

(Dinner)

2 nights

Arrive at Belfast Airport where you are met by your Irish driver/guide and escorted to your waiting luxury motor coach. On our way to the hotel we will enjoy a panoramic sightseeing tour of Belfast City. The birthplace of the Titanic and home to some of the world's most famous faces, Belfast is rich in history and steeped in culture. Today it is as famous for its stylish shops, gourmet restaurants and wicked nightlife as it is for its troubled past. Some of the notable sights we will see are Belfast City Hall, Linen Hall Library, Stormont House, Grand Opera House; St. Anne's Cathedral, Ulster Museum and the Botanic Gardens. At the end of your tour you may wish to visit one of the city's fine art galleries or museums. Tonight we will enjoy dinner at the hotel.

Day 3 – Antrim Coastline

(Breakfast)

After our hearty breakfast this morning, we board our coach and depart for the city of Derry. Our drive is along the magnificent coast road through Larne, Carnlough, Cushendall and Cushendun. We are traveling through the nine green Glens of Antrim. We shortly arrive at the Giant's Causeway, often described as the "eighth wonder of the world". Stop in at the Visitors Center and enjoy a short audio visual presentation before beginning the circular walk around the spectacular rock formations. Our next stop is in the small town of Bushmills. Here we visit the world's oldest whiskey distillery. We return to Belfast where you will be free for the balance of the day.

Day 4 – Ulster American Folk Park (Breakfast, Dinner)

2 nights

This morning after breakfast we will travel to Derry. Along the way we will stop to visit the Ulster American Folk Park, an open air museum that tells the story of Emigrants that left the Irish shores to travel to a different life in America. We continue past the standing stones in Strabane and arrive in the afternoon into Derry city where you will be free for the rest of the day. Dinner will be at the hotel tonight.

Day 5 – Derry

(Breakfast)

Londonderry, also known as Derry has a long and fascinating history. A city of many contrasts, ancient and modern sights sit alongside one another – you could be sipping a cappuccino in the middle of a 21st Century shopping center, and a few minutes later you could be standing beside a 1595 cannon on ancient ramparts looking over streets and buildings that have survived for centuries. The Gateway to Ireland's Northwest, the city is most famous for its historic walls. This morning we will enjoy a walking tour which will include exploration of the city with a stroll along the famous walls and views across the Foyle bridges to Waterside and the landscapes far beyond. This afternoon you will be free to enjoy all that this city has to offer. Socializing is never a problem in Derry as there is a huge variety of pubs and clubs and an unequalled selection of live music.

Day 6 – Donegal**(Breakfast, Dinner)****1 night**

Today after breakfast we leave Derry and head to Donegal. We will take a tour of this rugged and beautiful county. Our route takes us through the town of Letterkenny, north to the coastal town of Dunfanaghy, where Killyhoey Beach fringes the Atlantic. Our drive continues southwards through the charming towns of Glenties and Ardara, to the fishing village of Killybegs and along Donegal Bay. As we drive over wild mountains that flow down to the sandy coast and through the patchwork glens, dotted with stone walls and small cottages, it is here that every field, path and ruin has its memories and every last corner has its own story. We will have time to shop for the famous tweeds that are hand woven in this area. Tonight we will be staying at the magnificent Lough Eske Castle where we will enjoy 5* service and dinner with views of the lake.

Day 7 – Knock**Breakfast)****2 nights**

This morning, we are leaving Donegal and traveling southward to Galway, the city of the Tribes! Our route is along Donegal Bay, through Bundoran and Sligo, passing Drumcliffe Churchyard where William Butler Yeats, one of Ireland's finest poets, lies buried. On then through the market towns of County Mayo and the village of Knock, Ireland's place of pilgrimage, arriving in Galway in the afternoon. Before checking into our hotel, we will enjoy a tour of the city visiting the new Cathedral and the Old Claddagh area.

Day 8 – Connemara**(Breakfast)**

This morning, after a hearty Irish breakfast we will explore the rugged yet serene Connemara area which John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara made famous in the classic, "A Quiet Man". This rocky land of broad-backed mountains and pearl-like lakes is the largest Irish speaking section of the country and the old traditions and way of life are as much a part of Connemara's attractions as is the scenery. We drive along the shores of Lough Corrib and then westward through Maam Cross to Leenane and Kylemore. Here we will visit Kylemore Abbey, the only Irish home of the Benedictine Nuns. Built originally as a Castle it is one of the best examples of Irish neo-gothic architecture, the estate features include a Victorian Walled Garden, restored Abbey reception rooms, Gothic Church, tranquil walks, craft shop, pottery, and restaurant. We'll return to Galway via the coastal route, stopping at Spiddal, a coastal market town to explore Staunton's Shoppe, which offers a wide selection of Irish hand knits and other local products this region is known for. Overnight: Harbour Hotel, Galway

Day 9**(Breakfast)**

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