

Best of Ireland & Scotland

A Country Roads tour

Departures May – September 2017



Experience one of the world's wildest, most enchanting and culturally rich coastal routes as you travel the Emerald Isle. Along the way you'll encounter ruined castles, quiet lakes and natural wonders. Scotland offers a rich cultural heritage with impressive natural features and the great capital of Edinburgh.

Day 1 - Your Journey Begins

Board your overnight flight to Europe

Day 2 - Welcome to Dublin

On arrival at Dublin Airport, your airport transfer service leaves for your hotel at 08:30, 11:00 & 13:30. At night, join your Tour Director for a warm and friendly Welcome Reception with drinks and the opportunity to mingle and get to know each other over a pleasant evening of dinner and wine. Hotel: Clayton Cardiff Lane, Dublin Welcome Reception and Dinner

Day 3 - In Dublin's Fair City

Orientation takes you past the Custom House and along O'Connell Street. Travel along the River Liffey to see the Guinness Brewery and Dublin Castle before admiring the historic buildings of the Georgian section of the city. Enjoy your VIP priority entrance to the 9th century Book of Kells and a walk through the cobbled courtyards of Trinity College accompanied by a University insider, gaining their insight into modern life and the establishment's impressive history. Hotel: Clayton Cardiff Lane, Dublin Full Breakfast

Day 4 - Waterford & Cork

Kildare offers a look behind the scenes at one of the country's main racehorse breeding centres and visit the finest Japanese Gardens in Europe, for a 'journey through life'. Then head for Waterford to see Reginald's Tower, the ruined city walls and for a guided visit of the House of Waterford Crystal and meet a master craftsman. Then travel on to Cork, Ireland's second most populous city, built on the River Lee. Hotel: Oriel House/Maldron Hotel, Cork Full Breakfast

Day 5 - Travel to Blarney Castle & Killarney

(Relaxed Start) In the morning, see Cork's City Hall and Opera House, before visiting ruined Blarney Castle, the home of the famous Stone of Eloquence, once

kissed – never forgotten! Continue on to Killarney where you join a local 'Jarvey' on-board one of the jaunting cars. The rest of the afternoon is at leisure. Hotel: Killarney Avenue Hotel, Killarney Full Breakfast, Dinner

Day 6 – Ring of Kerry Experience

(Relaxed Start) Tour the superb seascapes, towering cliffs and spectacular mountains of the Ring of Kerry. Follow the narrow road as it winds through delightful villages like Sneem, cross the peat bogs of the Black Mountains to Moll's Gap and admire Queen Victoria's 'Ladies View'. Return mid-afternoon for time at leisure. Hotel: Killarney Avenue Hotel, Killarney Full Breakfast

Day 7 – To Limerick; the Land of Song & Legend

Begin the day with a delightful ferry ride across the Shannon Estuary. Journey to the Visitors' Centre at the 700-foot Cliffs of Moher. Enjoy magnificent views of the Clare Coast before continuing to Limerick. See St. Mary's Cathedral, King John's Castle and the Treaty Stone. Hotel: Castle Oaks House Hotel, Limerick Full Breakfast

Day 8 – Glorious Galway to Sligo Bay

(Relaxed Starts) Join your Tour Director in Galway to see the infamous Lynch Memorial and the Church of St. Nicholas, where Christopher Columbus reputedly prayed before his discovery of America. Also see the aged Spanish Arch and Eyre Square, dedicated to the late US President, John F Kennedy. Tour the wild Connemara region, a scenic wonderland of rivers, lakes and silent hills. In the evening, your perfect country retreat is set on the scenic shores of Sligo Bay. Hotel: Radisson Blu, Sligo Full Breakfast, Dinner

Day 9 – Walk in the Giant's Steps on the way to Ballygally

The day begins in Drumcliffe, with a visit to the final resting place of Ireland's famous poet, William Butler Yeats. Cross into Northern Ireland to visit Derry. What better way to experience sightseeing than with one of Northern Ireland's best storytellers, Ronan, as he takes you on a tour inside the city walls, still topped with cannons. Walk down steep Shipquay Street, with its elegant Georgian houses, to the Gothic Guildhall. Continue around the coast to the amazing Giant's Causeway, then take a spectacular drive along the Antrim coast road to your hotel, that overlooks the sea at the head of Ballygally Bay. Hotel: Ballygally Castle Full Breakfast, Dinner

Day 10 – Ayrshire Coast and Burns Country

(Relaxed Start) Ride the ferry to Scotland and continue along the Ayrshire Coast, taking in views of the Firth of Clyde and the Island of Arran. Pass The Open golf links of Turnberry before arriving in Alloway, where you visit Robert Burns'

birthplace and see the Burns' monument Brig 'O Doon'. Hotel: Winnock Hotel, Loch Lomond Full Breakfast

Day 11 - Journey through Glencoe and Loch Ness to Inverness

In the morning, head north for a scenic drive along the bonnie banks of Loch Lomond. Absorb the dramatic landscape of Glencoe, still echoing with the cries of massacred clansmen, before reaching Fort William. Pause at the Commando Memorial for a view of Britain's highest mountain, Ben Nevis, then go on a journey of discovery on a Loch Ness cruise. Soak up the scenery, historic monuments and intriguing tales of 'Nessie' in the heart of Scotland's great glen. Hotel: Kingsmills Hotel, Inverness Full Breakfast, Dinner

Day 12 - Highlands Experience

(Relaxed Start) Participate in an orientation tour of Inverness before driving out to the Culloden Moor Visitor Centre, where Bonnie Prince Charlie's Jacobite army was finally defeated. Not much more than a cannon shot away lie the prehistoric Clava burial cairns, dating back to around 2,000BC. Then have a 'wee dram' at a visit to the Glen Ord Distillery, hear stories of the whisky smugglers and delve into the fascinating world of the single malt. Hotel: Kingsmills Hotel, Inverness. Full Breakfast, Dinner

Day 13 - St. Andrews & Edinburgh

A scenic drive takes you through the Grampian Mountains past the Duke of Atholl's Blair Castle. Drive down and cross the Tay to visit St. Andrews, the home of golf. Continue across the majestic Forth Road Bridge to the Scottish capital. In the evening, selected departures attend the spectacular Edinburgh Military Tattoo. Hotel: The Roxburghe/Holyrood Hotel, Edinburgh. Full Breakfast

Day 14 - Edinburgh, Scotland's Capital of Culture

In the morning, join your Local Expert for a visit to Edinburgh Castle, housing the Scottish Crown Jewels. At the bottom of the Royal Mile, stands the Queen's Holyroodhouse Palace. Turn onto Princes Street, past the Scott Memorial to see Edinburgh's famous Georgian New Town. Later, there is still time to shop. In the evening, join your friends at a stylish restaurant for a grand finalé Celebration Dinner. Bon Appetit! Hotel: The Roxburghe/Holyrood Hotel, Edinburgh. Full Breakfast, Celebration Dinner

Day 15 - Farewell Edinburgh

Transfers arrive at Edinburgh Airport at 06:15 & 09:00. Full Breakfast