
Ireland Gardens

Northern Counties

With Ciscoe Morris

September 21st to October 4th 2017

This tour includes

- 12 nights in first class hotels throughout Ireland
- Motor Coach Transportation
- Local guide
- Meals including
 - All breakfasts
 - Nine Dinners
- Admissions to the sites mentioned in the itinerary
- All taxes and fees

Airfare is not included in the cost of this tour. Estimated flight costs from Seattle are approximately \$1000. A suggested flight schedule will be provided when airlines post schedules and fares, approximately 11 months out.

This tour is limited to just 20 participants. Some of the gardens and historic sites we're visiting simply don't accommodate larger groups. Tour cost is \$4590 per person, double occupancy. Single supplement is \$900. Deposit of \$1000 to confirm reservation. Balance is due July 1st, 2017.

Visa and Mastercard are accepted. If you choose to pay by check for the tour, you may deduct \$150 per person from your final payment.

We're staying 12 nights in Ireland

3 nights	Belfast
2 nights	Derry
2 nights	Donegal
3 nights	Galway
2 nights	Birr, County Offaly

Thursday, September 21st

Depart for Belfast

Depart Seattle for Belfast, Northern Ireland. Flights from Seattle or Vancouver depart all day, arriving the following day in Belfast.

Friday, September 22nd

Belfast Arrival

Arrive Belfast in the early part of the day on Friday, September 22nd*. We're staying at an estate on the northern edge of the Ards Peninsula, just outside of the city, overlooking Belfast Lough. Afternoon is free to explore Belfast and acclimate to the time change. We'll meet this evening for a welcome pint before dining at the hotel. Overnight Belfast (D)

*Guests wishing to arrive early in Dublin for a day or two prior to the start of this tour would travel with us to Belfast.

Saturday, September 23rd

We start the day with a visit to Mount Stewart Estate and Garden. We'll spend the morning with a tour of the world class gardens. After a break for lunch, we'll have time to visit the historic house, recently reopened after an £8M restoration. Overnight Belfast (B,D)

Sunday, September 24th

We start the day with a morning visit to Rowallane Garden just south of Belfast in County Down. This is a National Trust Garden, with a walled garden wooded

walk, and rock garden. Though we can't make any purchases, their annual plant sale will be fun to attend.

After lunch, we'll travel into the city to visit Titanic Belfast, the world's most complete collection of artifacts and displays from the pride of the Wolfe Shipyard, RMS Titanic. Overnight Belfast (B,D)

Monday, September 25th

We'll drive up the coast this morning through the Antrim Dells on our way to the first tip of the day, the Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge. This optional event entails walking across a rope bridge that spans 66 feet. The original bridge was first used over 350 years ago by local fishermen.

We're then traveling to the basalt stone formation known as the Giant's Causeway. We'll break for lunch in the town of Bushmills for lunch, followed by a tour and tasting at the historic Bushmills Distillery. Our afternoon will continue with a garden tour of Downhill, the estate of Frederick Hervey. We're then moving on to Derry, our base for the next two nights. Overnight Derry (B,D)

Tuesday, September 26th

We'll start the day with a tour of the walled city, including the Derry Bogside Murals. We'll break for lunch in town before traveling the rugged Donegal Peninsula to Glenveagh National Park for a tour of the gardens and castle. Overnight Derry (B)

Wednesday, September 27th

We depart Northern Ireland for the Republic of Ireland this morning with a visit to the Ulster American Folk Park. This museum showcases cottages, farms, schools and shops as they were 100 years ago and looks at the Irish exodus to the United States during the famine. After lunch in Donegal, we'll have a guided tour of the town and historic castle. With time, we'll visit a family owned woolen mill in the area before traveling to our hotel. We're spending the next two nights on the lake at a castle hotel dating back to the 1800s. The castle is located just outside the town of Donegal. Overnight Lough Eske (B,D)

Thursday, September 28th

Scenic driving this morning by Lough Erne on our way to Enniskillen. We'll stop for lunch there before making a stop at the Cliffs of Magho for the outstanding views. Weather permitting, we'll take the time for a walk along the shore. We'll tour the workshop and gallery at the world famous Belleek Pottery before returning to our castle for the evening. Overnight Lough Eske (B,D)

Friday, September 29th

We make our way south through Yeats Country to our first stop, the 5,000 year old site of the Carrowkeel Megalithic Tomb Complex. On the way, we'll visit the town of Cong, which is easily recognizable as the movie setting for The Quiet Man, starring John Wayne and directed by John Ford. We'll arrive in Galway late afternoon. We'll be in town for the annual Galway Oyster Festival, one of the largest in Ireland, with food, arts, and music. Overnight Galway (B,D)

Saturday, September 30th

We'll take the morning fast ferry to the Aran island of Inishmore. Once there, we'll explore the Iron Age fort of Dun Aengus, perched high on the cliff side overlooking the North Atlantic. Overnight Galway (B)

Sunday, October 1st

We're spending the day touring Connemara with suggestions from our local guide. Overnight Galway (B)

Monday, October 2nd

We depart for county Offaly this morning, but will stop to see another with a morning stop at Birr Castle for a tour of the gardens and castle.

We're checking into another castle hotel for our final two nights on the tour. Kinnitty Castle is situated just outside Birr. There's been a fortified dwelling on this site since the late 1100s. The current castle hotel dates back to 1928. Overnight Birr (B,D)

Tuesday, October 3rd

We'll visit the monastic site of Clonmacnoise Overnight Birr (B,D)

Wednesday, October 4th

We'll be leaving Birr in the early hours to catch morning flights from Dublin the USA. (B)

Hotels

Belfast	Culloden Estate	http://www.hastingshotels.com/culloden-estate-and-spa/
Derry	Maldron Hotel	http://www.maldronhotelderry.com/
Donegal	Lough Eske Castle	http://www.solishotels.com/lougheskecastle/
Galway	Galway Bay Hotel	www.galwaybayhotel.net
Birr	Kinnitty Castle Hotel	http://www.kinnittycastlehotel.com/

Links to gardens as historic and cultural sites on the tour...

Rowallane Garden	https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/rowallane-garden
Mount Stewart	http://www.burrenoec.com/
Ulster American Folk Museum	http://nmni.com/uafp
Titanic Belfast	http://titanicbelfast.com/
Carrick-a-rede	www.nationaltrust.org.uk/carrick-a-rede
Giant's Causeway	http://www.giantscausewayofficialguide.com/
Bushmills	http://www.bushmills.com/distillery/
Downhill Garden	www.nationaltrust.org.uk/downhill-demesne-and-hezlett-house
City of Derry	http://www.visitderry.com/
Glenveagh Castle	http://www.glenveaghnationalpark.ie/
Donegal	http://www.govisitdonegal.com/
Studio Donegal	http://www.studiodonegal.ie/
Enniskillen	http://enniskillen.com/tourist-information/
Belleek Pottery	http://www.belleek.com/uk/belleek-visitors-centre/
Carrowkeel Tomb	http://www.megalithicireland.com/Carrowkeel%20home.htm
Cong	http://www.congtourism.com/
Aran Islands	http://www.aranislands.ie/dun-aonghasa-2/
Inishmore	http://www.aranislands.ie/inis-mor-inishmore/
Galway City	http://www.galwaytourism.ie/
Galway Oyster Festival	http://galwayoysterfestival.com/
Ard Carraig Garden	http://www.ireland-guide.com/gardens/ardcarraig.7123.html
Birr Castle	http://birrcastle.com/
Clonmacnoise	http://www.heritageireland.ie/en/midlands-eastcoast/clonmacnoise/
Gaelic Language resource	http://learngaelic.net/

