

A Celtic Journey: Self Led Tour



7 days / 6 Nights
Charming Inns Option

CycleWest Ireland
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www.cyclewest.com

INTRODUCTION

Nothing could adequately describe the resplendent rock garden that is the Burren, with its abundance of exotic flora, bird and wildlife. Dotted with megalithic stone tombs, some representing the regions earliest monuments (from about 3,800 BC) including Poulnabrone Dolmen. There is an abundance of Christian and pre-Christian monuments, along with medieval settlements - castles, ring (fairy) forts, wishing wells and ancient churches spanning the centuries of time.

You will enjoy the stone forts, monuments, alpine and arctic flowers and plants that grow side by side, the seeds having been deposited by glacier millions of years ago. This is the mystical land of disappearing rivers and lakes, closed valleys, caves and limestone pavements. You may even find a real fairy fort!

The Aran Islands, three timeless islands in an endless sea showcase weathered monuments on awesome cliffs, great labyrinths of limestone, meandering walls, patchwork fields, quiet beaches and a welcoming island people.

For this rewarding bike trip, we have chosen a wonderful variety of quality, select accommodations that offer a blend of comfort, location and personal hospitality. You will enjoy the delights of stunning settings and vibrant culture.

Experience the Irish welcome: "Cead Mile Failte" (A Hundred Thousand Welcomes!) and small village life as you travel the winding roads of the West.

"Our trip was fabulous! You really know how to organize a tour for the greatest scenery and wonderful accommodations.the little lanes we spent the majority of our time on were so relaxing and fun to ride on. They also got us into the wilderness and I often felt we were a hundred miles from anywhere!"

Dan Peters & Family, Superior, Colorado

**A Celtic Journey: Guided Cycling Adventure
DETAILED ITINERARY: 7 Days / 6 Nights**

Charming Inns, Private Hotels and Guesthouses.

Trip Highlights:

- Towering Cliffs of Moher
- Falcon and Hawks Flying
- Island Safari – the Aran Islands
- Ring Forts and 4,500 year old Dolmans

Day One: Your Adventure Begins!

Meeting point at your tour start point in the village of Kinvara. The journey will take about 45 minutes to one hour depending on traffic from Galway City. Spend the afternoon exploring Dunguaire Castle and strolling by the village harbour. Learn about the 'Galway Hooker', a local fishing boat used by local fishermen for more than a century. Late afternoon bike fit out, slideshow and briefing. **Overnight at the Merriman Inn Hotel.**

Day Two: Kinvara to Corofin

You begin today's biking with a warm up ride through winding country roads and farmland to Kilmacduagh Monastic site, where present day church buildings and round tower date back to the 13th and 14th centuries. See one of Ireland's last remaining ancient Round Towers, an 111 ft tall leaning tower. You cycle onward to a picnic site where you may have lunch. This is a unique area steeped in ancient history and dotted with ancient archaeological sites, which you take time to explore. Onward to the village of Corofin, where you overnight at **Corofin Country House. (Days miles: 19 – 35)**

Day Three: Corofin to Dolin via Lisdoonvarna

You cycle onward through the heart of the remarkable Burren hills to our lunchtime stop at Kilfenora. You may visit the Burren Interpretative Centre and the ancient Kilfenora Cathedral. This is a unique area steeped in ancient history and dotted with ancient archaeological sites, which you take time to explore. A short trip to the Caherconnell Ring Fort followed by the ancient 4500 year old Poul nabrone portal dolman. Overnight in Ireland's matchmaking town of Lisdoonvarna! **(Days miles: 29)**

Day Four: Doolin to Aran Islands (8 Miles on islands plus ferry)

Step back in time and enjoy the traditional and cultural flavours the islands have to offer. Early morning ferry ride to the Aran Islands from Doolin to the Island of Inishmore, the largest of the Aran Islands. Witness the tranquility, the whitewashed cottages and the intricate network of stone walls built by generations of island inhabitants. The island offers several ancient sites to visit, including the hilltop fort, Dun Aengus, one of Europe's oldest forts.

Overnight on the Aran Islands. (Days miles: 15 plus extra as needed)

Day Four: Lisdoonvarna to Cliffs of Moher

Today's biking is a leisurely ride along one of the most scenic coastal routes to the Cliffs of Moher. A lunchtime stop at the village of Doolin, a Mecca for traditional music and traditional pub grub! Take an opportunity to explore Doolin Cave and its wonderful secret – a towering Stalactite – before returning to Lisdoonvarna. Overnight at Ballinsheen Guesthouse (Days miles 25).

Day Five: Lisdoonvarna to Aran Islands (8 Miles on islands plus ferry)

Step back in time and enjoy the traditional and cultural flavours the islands have to offer. Early morning ferry ride to the Aran Islands from Doolin to the Island of Inishmore, the largest of the Aran Islands. Witness the tranquility, the whitewashed cottages and the intricate network of stone walls built by generations of island inhabitants. The island offers several ancient sites to visit, including the hilltop fort, Dun Aengus, one of Europe's oldest forts.

Overnight on the Aran Islands. (Days miles: 15 plus extra as needed)

Day Six: Mid day transfer to Galway City.

We highly recommend spending some additional time to explore the city of Galway. The heart of Galway City is an intertwining of small winding streets, Quay Street and High Street; the city's 'left bank' area is perennially popular and full of character. Nearby is the medieval Spanish Arch and O'Brien's bridge leading out of town to the Salthill Promenade, a walk with stunning view of Galway Bay. Transfer by rail or coach to Dublin. Overnight at the Herons Rest (subject to availability). in the historical quarter of Galway City or an alternative guesthouse of choice. (optional day)

Day Seven: Departure

Sadly we must bid you farewell. Transfer by rail or coach to your next destination.

Tour highlights:

Explore Doolin cave
The Cliffs of Moher
The Burren Centre
Dun Aengus Hilltop Fort
The Aran Islands
Burren Wild Bird Sanctuary
Kilmacduagh Monastery
Kilfenora Cathedral



Tour Include:

7 days /6 nights

Accommodation on tour days
Breakfasts on tour days
First Day meeting and briefing on tour routes,
Luggage Transfers
Quality 21 speed Trek bikes,
helmets, water bottles
front handlebar panniers
Rear panniers
Detailed maps and tour directions
Details for restaurants & points of interest
Toolkit & repair kit
Emergency phone contact numbers

See Arrivals and Departures details attached

CHARMING GUESTHOUSE ACCOMMODATIONS: Private Inns and Charming Guesthouses

**** All rooms are ensuite: private bathrooms**



Merriman Inn Hotel, Kinvara

A small and friendly hotel located in renowned Kinvara, a picturesque fishing village, on the Southern Shores of the famous "Galway Bay".



Corofin Country House

Corofin Country House is a warm and friendly guesthouse located in the quaint town of Corofin in County Clare. The family run B&B takes pride in offering the best service and renowned hospitality.

Ph: 353 (0) 65 683 7791



Ballinsheen Guesthouse, Lisdoonvarna

This is a Charming, custom built, family run country style guesthouse. Superb breakfasts and great hospitality.

Ph: 353 (065 7074806



Ard Einne Guesthouse, Inishmore Island

A lovely guesthouse overlooking the ocean and beautiful beach. The accommodations are basic and pleasant! Great base from which to explore the island.

Ph: 353 (0)99 61388



A Celtic Journey
Charming Inns Option 7 days / 6 nights

SELF LED TOUR

TRIP NOTES

Charming Inns Option
Euro 695.00 pps
6 Days & 5 Nights

Charming Inns Option
Euro 825.00 pps
7 Days & 6 Nights

Deposit: Euro 250.00 pps
Single Supplement: Euro 250.00

2012 Dates:
Start Any Day March to September

OUR GREEN FOOTPRINT

We have arrived at an incredible moment in the history of travel. This is a time for us to show stewardship and leadership by embracing a new, greener set of principles, and by extension, the growing number of customers who now follow us. We know that, increasingly, international travellers are looking for unique, authentic experiences that are sustainable. Consumers today care about the environment, local communities and locally-produced food when they travel.

We have been integrating sustainable practices into our business operation as well as into our trips. By incorporating change into the areas of heating, lighting, water usage, printing and paper usage we have incorporated a green strategy into our business practise.

When you travel with CycleWest Ireland you will be supporting local Irish communities, local food producers and artisans, local business and by doing so, you creating your very own rewarding experience! At CycleWest Ireland, we celebrate the authenticity, the diversity and quality of Irish country homes and hotels. Each location has been selected for its personal and charming qualities. Typically family owned and run, we offer a superior selection of Bed and Breakfast guesthouses, country houses and hotels have been tried and tested on your behalf!

A wonderful breakfast made of home grown, organic or locally sourced produce is provided at the beginning of each day's cycling. At the end of each day, we have selected a variety of restaurants, many award winning, that are known for the finest Irish ingredients: local seafood, freshwater fish, vegetables and farmhouse cheeses all featured, often from their own gardens, farms and rivers.

CycleWest offers cycling tours in Ireland that combine authenticity and ambiance by emphasizing small groups, a relaxed cycling pace and charming accommodation. In this way, we hope to deliver a unique biking experience amidst the legendary countryside of Western Ireland. By travelling by bike we introduce a greater immersion into local communities and families on our trips. You get to meet and engage with local villagers and learn more about local Irish culture. Our guided tours are designed for individuals from all walks of life and of varied interests and abilities. We usually limit the number of participants to a small group: 8 – 10 persons in each group. This way we can offer a uniquely personalized experience to each of our guests. We provide vehicle support and luggage transport. By travelling as a small group we can truly have a positive interaction and social exchange with the people we meet and visit.

We give you the opportunity to learn some of the Gaelic language. By learning a few phrases and greetings in the Gaeltacht (Irish Speaking areas) you visit shows that you have an interest in the Irish history and culture. Many places have special environmental and historical significance. We like to give you the opportunity to learn about places you visit and their impact upon our lovely country, areas of natural focus and our heritage here in Ireland.

CycleWest Ireland is a member of the Ecotourism Ireland Network and we are currently preparing for Eco Tourism Certification. Ecotourism Ireland is among the first labels in Europe to be formally recognised by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council.

TRAVEL NOTES

- **Deposit**
€250 per person. Final payment due 60 days prior to your tour (Money Order, Euro Bank Draft, Credit Card - Visa, MasterCard)
- **Cancellation Policy**
If you cancel:
61 days or more, prior to your tour we will return your tour payment, less your tour deposit. 60 days or less from the date of the tour you must pay the full tour price.

We strongly recommend you purchase Trip Cancellation Insurance as soon as possible. See www.insuremytrip.com for trip insurance or visit your local travel agent. **Please see our Terms and Conditions attached.**

Terrain: Intermediate

- Average Daily Mileage: 25 Miles (40 km)
- Average Daily Extensions with Optional Alternatives: 42 Miles (68 km)

Please limit your luggage to 15kg per bag - Mark your luggage clearly with your name, address and phone number.

Arrival to Ireland - Shannon Airport is the closest and most convenient International airport to our tour starting points. Dublin Airport is often a less costly alternative for flights into Ireland. From Dublin we recommend a coach transfer directly from Dublin airport to Galway City. Coach and rail services are readily available and frequent to Galway City. See the below links.

Start Point: Galway City / Connemara

Departure Point: Westport

Departure from Ireland - Departure from Westport to Dublin is available by coach and also by rail. Departure from Westport to Shannon is available by coach only. CycleWest Ireland can offer assistance with private transport arrangements to and from the airport as well as car hire for those of you who wish to avail of this service. A Dublin Airport to Galway City flight is available.

Coach Service: www.citylink.ie
 www.buseireann.ie

Rail Service: www.irishrail.ie