



WELCOME TO IRELAND!

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Discover the magic of
Ireland...

Simply Discover...



IRELAND TOURS: THE CYCLEWEST DIFFERENCE

It's said that Ireland, once visited, is never forgotten. The Irish landscape has a mythic resonance, due as much to the country's almost tangible history. Castles, gardens, hiking, music, and festivals - Rediscover what is bringing visitors back to Ireland time and again.

Our specialty is creating memorable routes and combining these with local culture, multi sport activity and hidden gems selected from an array of private hotels, country manors, and historic castle hotels: a **MAGICAL** combination.

Come and discover what is bringing our guests back to Ireland time and again!

SMALL GROUPS - MORE INTIMATE EXPERIENCES

As well as being a wonderful travel experience, sampling the best that the West of Ireland has to offer, we believe that our trips should be an opportunity to meet people and make new friends. Our groups are limited to a maximum of 12, which is the largest number that we can give a personal service to. Enjoy the benefits of group travel without the hectic pace of a larger group tours.

AUTHENTIC ITINERARIES

The CycleWest Ireland philosophy is to offer you a true immersion into the region into which you visit. We will of course visit those famous sites and locations, however, in addition we think it is important to take our guests to lesser known, hidden gems! The West of Ireland is our backyard and we know and understand it intimately!



Biking in Ireland

Located in the West of Ireland, we offer you the opportunity to enjoy our unique Bike Tours. Our personalized biking adventures take you through the spectacular vistas of Galway Bay, the historical Burren, the Aran Islands and scenic Connemara.

RELAX AND ENJOY!

Our tours offer an immersion of rich and vibrant culture; fun filled sightseeing, great routes and physical interaction with the landscape: the perfect blend for all.

'What is this life, if full of care, we have no time to stand and stare'. (W H Davies)

ACCOMMODATIONS

Accommodations are booked on your behalf at a selection of charming inns, private hotels, country manors, historic hotels. These can be hand picked to suit your individual itinerary. See each tour for details. Accommodation has been selected to ensure the highest quality and comfort, combining with old world charm with a friendly, contemporary touch! Many of our lodgings are award winning for various reasons: green tourism, high culinary standards, overall quality, service. We choose carefully for you.

Our lodgings are divided into two different categories.

Luxe: Castle Hotels and Country Lodges. Our lodgings possess both elegance and authentic regional flair. Each has its own unique quality and charm. In addition, each has a proven track record in conservation and commitment to the local community on which it does business.

Charming Inns: These lodgings are a selection of small, luxury offerings and appropriate to the area with such characteristics as terrific hospitality, authenticity, scenic settings and proximity to our activities. Again, the overall experience is important to us, so we have hand selected these lodgings on your behalf.

IRISH CULINARY DELIGHTS!

We strive to introduce our guests to good food and high food standards on our tours. We use restaurants and hotels that serve locally sourced produce and are vested in the local community in which they operate. Evening meals are included on our tours and we carefully select the restaurants for cuisine and ambience, and favour those prepared with wonderfully sourced local produce: seafood, beef, vegetables and lamb, for example. All meals include a starter, main course and dessert. We are happy to arrange for our restaurants to cater for specific dietary requirements and allergies etc. We believe you will be pleasantly surprised!

Breakfasts are included, usually continental although many hotels will provide a buffet-style breakfast, of fresh fruit, yoghurts, home baked breads, often a serving of bacon, eggs or a complete Irish Breakfast! We do not include lunch as different people have different requirements, but we do suggest



**Come join us in the
West of Ireland!**

restaurants for lunch. On all tours, your guides will be happy to organize picnics on days where the itinerary and weather are suitable.

GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

You'll see that we have many departure dates for our GUIDED TOURS. We offer set departure dates for tours that have bookings and are already guaranteed departures (see our Tour Dates and Prices page on our website) as well as the ability to select your own dates on our SELF LED TOURS. We also offer Tailor Made trips to suit your needs in the event that you need additional dates or desire to have a Private trip for your group or family or to celebrate a honeymoon, for example.

Unlike most other tour operators, once we've accepted your booking and you've paid your deposit, we promise that we will not cancel your tour unless forced to do so by extreme circumstances beyond our control. Even on those rare occasions when there are less than four passengers on a departure we will guarantee the trip and provide you with a memorable experience!

HOW FIT DO I NEED TO BE?

Anybody who is reasonably active should be able to take part and enjoy our tours. Our tours are designed to bike at your own pace and enjoy the surrounds - and there is always vehicle support if things get too tough! If you choose to be 'Speedy Gonzalez' or desire to re-enact the Tour de France on our tours - that is your choice! But we promise you that you will be missing out on a lot. We encourage Slow Travel on our trips - soak up the food and culture and enjoy!!

We do recommend that anyone who has not taken any regular exercise for some time to consult their doctor before considering any activity based holiday. Bear in mind that a little regular riding (outdoors, not just in the gym!) before coming on a cycling vacation will always be a benefit to you on our tour.

Do I NEED TRAVEL INSURANCE?

We request that all participants have travel insurance with full medical cover. If you have any questions about the cover required please contact us for advice. We recommend a site on which you can compare Travel Insurance Policies. Please look at www.insuremytrip.com for more details.

WHAT YOU SEE IS WHAT YOU GET - REAL VALUE!

CycleWest Ireland tours are designed to be as inclusive as possible. Please see each tour details for 'What is Included'. While we avoid making direct cost comparisons with other tour companies what we do know is that we represent outstanding value for money. Please do note however, that Driver and



"I have decided that Ireland is my favorite place on Earth! I can't tell you how much I enjoyed the bike tour. It was so beautiful and amazing! I really want to go again".

*Kelly Christensen,
Colorado*

Guide gratuity is not included in our trips. We leave this to your own discretion.

Guides and backup

There will be one guide allocated to every 6 persons on each tour: for smaller groups, one in the vehicle which stays with the group at all times, for more than 5 persons also a second guide cycles with the group. For groups with any disabilities or for our family tours, we have at least 2 guides at all times. Vehicle support will always be available for anyone at any point during the day. If for instance you want to take a day off the bike, or if a particular day seems a little hard, we will take you for as long or as little as you wish it to.

Everybody is provided with detailed route maps for each day which allow you to break away from the group at times. There are meet up locations every couple of hours and guides are easily contactable by mobile phone. The guides are enthusiastic experts on the local area and will be able to sort out any problems or special requests that you might have.

Small groups mean we can change the daily schedule, take advantage of weather conditions, and enjoy local events and your particular interest. Whilst we have set itineraries, there is always room for an unscheduled stop, an extra glass of Guinness with lunch or detour down the scenic route where time permits!

WHAT IS INCLUDED IN OUR TRIP?

Not all cycle vacations are the same. Compare what is included in a French Cycling Holidays bike tour:

- Quality Trek bikes
- Quality helmets (if required)
- Water bottles
- Detailed navigation instructions and colour route maps
- Quality Accommodations
- Gourmet dinners for all 6 nights of your trip
- Delivery of your luggage to your hotel room each day
- Entry fees to attractions and historical sites
- **A memorable experience!**



Our extraordinary Bike Tours have been designed with escape, adventure and an overall terrific experience in mind! We offer you the opportunity to enjoy your vacation safely as quality time away from all the hustle of everyday life.

WHAT IS NOT INCLUDED?

- Air Fares to Europe. Air travel must be booked independently and the flight details given to us. It is you or your travel agents, responsibility to let us have this information in a timely manner.
- Driver/Guides gratuity is at your discretion
- Lunches, social drinks, items of a personal nature and some entrance fees when not accompanied by your Driver/Guide
- Incidental expenses, such as telephone bills, newspapers and room service incurred at accommodations are the responsibility of the individual client. All expenses are to be settled prior to leaving the accommodation
- Laundry costs and any shipping charges for the return of purchases made on tour, or for the return of property lost or damaged while on tour

Bikes and equipment

We provide lightweight alloy framed 24 speed Trek hybrid touring bikes fully equipped with lock, pump and toolkit (although our guides will generally be on hand to fix punctures and minor mechanical problems).

For carrying the items you might need during the day (camera, wallet, windbreaker etc.) we fit a capacious handlebar bag and a map pocket. These clip on and off the bike in a flash so that you can always take your valuables with you when off the bike.

The bikes are meticulously maintained and we keep a wide range of sizes; some female specific saddles are also available. You may also bring your own saddle, if desired, which we will be happy to fit for you. We provide helmets automatically, but we also we find some people prefer their own.

Bike features:

Upright Handlebars Comfort, stability and gear changes with a simple flick of the lever.

Front Panniers Bags Upright handlebars can be outfitted with a handlebar bag.

Seat Post Choose "suspension" for back-end shock absorption or go "rigid" for more stability.

Pedals Opt for flat pedals, toe clips or bring your own clipless pedals, which we'll be happy to mount for you.



Great food!
Did you know that Le Routard, the prestigious French travel guide has nominated Ireland's restaurants as the best in the World in 2010!

All of our bikes feature a sturdy saddle for added comfort; specially selected, smooth-riding road tires, water bottle holders and a map holder for your directions.



WELL ACCESSORIZED

All bikes are equipped with a safety triangle, water bottles, bottle cage and for those who want it: hand pump and combination lock, inner tube, tire levers and patch kit.

HELMETS FOR YOUR SAFETY



For your protection and that of your children, bicycle helmets are required on all biking trips. You can bring your own or use one of our helmets.

Can I use my own bike?

We are happy for anyone to bring their own bikes. However, Airlines charge around \$ 75.00 - \$100.00 each way and packing and carriage can be a hassle. Our Trek bikes are of a high standard, and our customers usually express pleasant surprise at their quality, so it might be a better option to bring your saddle and/or pedals which we will be very happy to fit. In any case there will always be a backup bike should you have a mechanical problem.



What should I wear?

Layered clothing and bright coloured rainwear are highly recommended, if not a necessity, for sudden showers in Ireland!

The main thing that people who are not regular distance cyclists worry about is a sore behind. This is not as is popularly thought due to too-hard saddles, but friction between skin and garments. This is why professional cyclists wear skin-tight lycra shorts with padded inserts. Many people feel a bit self-conscious in this sort of gear and your local cycle shop will have a range of padded undershorts which can be worn under normal clothing, or regularly styled shorts with sewn-in padded liners. Otherwise, lightweight comfortable clothing (tee-shirts, shorts, trainers) is ideal, with something warmer like a fleece just in case. As we will be dining well, you might like to take something presentable (but not too formal for your evening meal. Jeans are not recommended for some locations for dinner. On our Luxe trip, jackets are required at most restaurants.