



**WELCOME TO
IRELAND!**

CEAD MILE FAILTE

Discover the magic of
Ireland...
Discover the Child
Within...
Simply Discover...



IRELAND TOURS: FAMILY BIKING INFORMATION

CycleWest Ireland offer a selection of **Family Tours** and **Private, Bespoke Tours**.

Our Family Tours are designed for families with children and teenagers and we these are run apart from our group tours.

Our **Private, Bespoke Tours** are designed for one specific family and may not mean just children – but are designed for cyclists of all ages, but travelling together as one group – for example extended family: many of our guests choose significant family events to celebrate on your trips: Graduation, Retirement, Reunion, etc.

We strongly encourage families to join our **Family Trips**, trips that are assigned family specific dates and are designed with a mix of kid and adult friendly features, including custom miles. While we don't see many families with very young children, we do have a minimum age requirement of 3 year for all Inn trips. Other than that, we do not *restrict* trips to a minimum age except in the rare case of a hotel age restriction. We do, however, **recommend** minimum ages based on the following criteria:

Wild Connemara Family Adventure: Age 8+/12+

West Coast Family Adventure: Age 10 +

Our Celtic Journey Age 5+



Family Biking in Ireland

Located in the West of Ireland, we offer you the opportunity to enjoy our unique Family Bike Tours.

Designed for children, teens and adults alike, our custom and personalized family biking adventures take you through the spectacular vistas of Galway Bay, the historical Burren, the Aran Islands and scenic Connemara.

AGE RESTRICTIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

Our guidelines are guidelines only. Younger children are permitted and we do offer tagalong trailer bikes as well as baby burleys. We do advise however that our guidelines are based upon (a) difficulty of route and (b) the fact that a parent may not be able to pull a burley due to the terrain.

For safety reasons, children under 7 may not ride their own bikes and are required to ride on a Tagalong or in a Burley. For certain destinations, children must be 9 or older to ride their own bikes.

Q. Are CycleWest Ireland Family Trips just for parents and children?

Our definition of *family* is quite broad. We invite all parents and extended family (including single parents), grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and family friends to join in the fun of a Family Trip! Many of our guests choose significant family events to celebrate on your trips: Graduation, Retirement, Reunion, etc.

Q. Is it possible to find out the ages and gender of other children booked on a trip?

We know it's more fun when kids have playmates near their own age. Just ask for a breakdown of ages. Remember, of course, that this information may change before your trip departs. Please also keep in mind that for the **majority of our trips we have age recommendations, *not* age restrictions.**

Q. Do the optional activities have age restrictions?

Yes. Some *activities*—such as kayaking and horseback riding—have minimum age requirements. We do have a minimum age requirement of 3 years on our Celtic Journey Charming Inns trip and 8- 10 years for all West Coast Trips and our Connemara trips.



Come join us in the
West of Ireland!

Q. What happens when kids are too young to participate in an age-restricted activity?

We consider this question carefully when setting recommended minimum ages for our family trips. While we pride ourselves on providing flexibility, there are times when available options are limited. For kids at or above the recommended age for the trip but too young for a specific activity, we always provide an alternate activity. When the child is below both the trip age recommendation and the specific activity requirement, we ask that a parent remain with the child and we do our best to suggest alternative activities.

Q. My 6-year-old daughter is steady on her bike but not ready for the open road. What is your policy on this?

For safety reasons, we do not allow children under 7 to ride their own bikes.

On some of our trips, children ages 7-8 years may pedal their own bikes as long as they are safe, competent riders. This means they must be comfortable with light traffic, able to ride a straight line without weaving or losing balance, and able to handle gears and hand brakes. Please be aware that if your leaders determine that your 7- or 8-year-old child is not riding safely, they will require a switch to a Tagalong or alternate activity.

Kids who are under the required age for riding their own bikes may ride in a Burley Trailer or on a Tagalong with a parent. Note that pulling a 3-4 year old in a Burley Trailer or a 7-8-year-old uphill on a Tagalong can be challenging. There is a weight limit of 60 pounds for a Burley and 85 pounds for a Tagalong. Also note that the adult pulling the Tagalong must weigh at least twice as much as the trailing child in order to safely control the Tagalong.

Q. Are some trips better than others for younger or older kids?

Yes, though we understand that kids are individuals and have varying needs and desires regardless of their age. Taking many factors into consideration, we set **recommended minimum ages** for all of our family itineraries. You can ask your Trip Consultant for minimum age recommendations by trip or see the **Family Trips** section. Once again, we do not have minimum age *restrictions* for trip enrollment unless there is a hotel restriction. You can ask your Trip Consultant for minimum age recommendations by trip or see the **Recommended Ages** section.



"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*

Q. How exactly do you determine the recommended minimum age for a given trip?

We make a judgment call based on our detailed knowledge of the itinerary and many years of experience in providing fantastic family vacations, including feedback from past guests. Specifically, we consider the number of age-restricted activities and alternate activities; whether the terrain is well-suited for Burleys and Tagalongs; and the sophistication level of the hotels, dinner venues, even the cultural content. Please remember that if your child is younger than the recommended minimum age for your trip, then your child and one adult relative will need to refrain from any age-restricted activity and we will do our best to suggest alternatives.

LEADERS & SAFETY

Q. Are your Trip Leaders trained to effectively deal with the dynamics of children?

For Family Trips, our guides respect and want to be around kids and have experience in managing and/or teaching children. Our leaders are experts at creating a comfortable, safe and fun environment. Please note that Trip Leaders do not provide childcare outside of these specific kids' activities and kids must be accompanied by a parent for all activities and in the vehicle support van.

Q. How do you encourage safe practices among children?

Safety is our top priority. Your Tour Leader presents a safety talk every day, providing tips for preventing accidents and staying safe. Playing games and leading by example are some ways we communicate the importance of safety to children.

Q. How do you safely manage a group of kids of different ages and athletic abilities?

For starters, we design the biking routes on our Family Trips with an array of length and challenge options. We will review these with you each morning and help you to make great choices for your family. During the course of the day, your Trip Leaders will monitor every family to provide desired support. Our Family Trips are staffed with an additional leader and supported with an extra van so that we can provide the flexibility needed to keep traveling families happy.



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

DAILY LOGISTICS

Q. Do adults and children spend all their time together?

A. We know from our own experience that families need a balance of time together and time apart. Each day of your CycleWest Ireland try to feature specific activities that are designed to engage adults and children alike – not just for kids. The themes will always be exploration and fun! Please note that Trip Leaders do not provide childcare outside of these specific kids' activities and that kids must be 5 and older to participate without a parent.

Q. Do adults have a chance to bike or walk at their own pace and sometimes take longer options?

A. You will have some time on your own each day when special activities for kids are scheduled. We typically plan two separate half-day activities for kids when the hiking or biking is more challenging, or if there's a cultural experience, shopping or a spa for adults to enjoy, without kids. And, of course, there will be something spectacular for the kids to do too!

Q. Can kids ride in the support van without an adult relative?

A. Your child needs be accompanied by a parent in order to ride in the support van. If you have a younger child who wants a lift, one adult relative must ride along.

Q. Do kids need car seats when riding in the van?

A. Car seat laws vary by state and country. While CycleWest Ireland provides car/booster seats for children 30-80 lbs and 4-8 years of age, parents with children below this minimum age and/or weight are responsible for bringing their own seats.



Great food – suitable for all of the family with child specific, healthy menu options

FOOD & DINING

Q. Do you offer healthy meal choices?

A. We know that kids have special tastes, so we make sure that our meals cater to their varied appetites without sacrificing yours. You and your family will find freshly made, healthy *and* delicious food with good kid options at all of our hotels and restaurants.

Q. Do adults and children dine together every night?

A. While it is not necessary, our Luxe trips offer adults and children the opportunity to dine separately. We realize that adult conversation and relaxed dining in the fine restaurants found on CycleWest Ireland trips are an important part of the experience for parents. We also realize that long dinners can be tough on kids. On these evenings, our leaders may organize separate dinners for children 5 and older.

On our Charming Inns tours our selection of restaurants are more casual and designed to cater for childrens and adults alike. Up to 8.00pm at night our Irish pubs cater to families with children also – so you do have the opportunity to visit a local pub with a family friendly atmosphere.

If you are traveling with children under age 5, you can either join the kids' dinner with your child, or you can arrange for a childcare provider (if available). And, of course, you can always choose to dine separately as a family.

ROOM ASSIGNMENTS

Q. What are the rooming choices for families?

A. Rooming options are dependent upon your own individual needs. Typically we can arrange for single, double or triple rooms on all Family Trips. We can also at some locations have rooms that interconnected. At smaller locations such as our Charming Inns tours a family room may include a rollaway bed. Please note that all of our Family accommodations are small and private and very welcoming to families with children. They do understand your needs.

Q. Can you guarantee connecting or adjacent rooms for families when requested?

Once you make a specific request, we will guarantee to secure rooms that connect, are adjacent, or are at least near one another. Hotels will be advised of your request and Trip Leaders will follow up with hotels about special requests prior to check-in. Please note that connecting rooms are not available in all of our inns.

FAMILY BIKES AND EQUIPMENT

ADULT BIKES

21 Speed Trek Hybrid Bikes equipped as follows:

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.

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.



KIDS BIKES

Our kids bikes are especially selected to enhance your child's overall experience. While the wheels might be small, the performance is big and the safety superb. On all of our Family Trips, we offer 20" and 24" bicycles for children.



Tagalongs

Designed for children ages 4 to 10 or up to 85 pounds, this innovative trailer bike is equipped with It turns an adult bike into a type of tandem with your child providing some of the pedal power. With the Tagalong, young travelers can exercise some independence while securely connected to an adult's bike.



Baby Burley

For children 60 pounds and under, this sturdy carrier easily attaches to our bikes and provides a comfortable ride in the spacious interior with inner pockets for snacks and drinks, a shoulder harness as well as an adjustable sunshade.





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.

Quality Assured

On the rare occasion when Trek bikes are not available for your children on a particular trip, models of comparable quality will be offered.