

Ireland: County Clare, Killarney & Dingle

Air Package Itinerary

No visit to southwest Ireland could be complete without a stay in the vibrant town of Dingle—teeming with traditional Irish music, fresh seafood, and the stunning natural beauty of its coastline. Here, in the company of local leaders, you'll stroll the dramatic sandspit at Inch Beach, then relax at your lovely waterfront hotel against the backdrop of Dingle Bay. Hike the three peaks of Annascaul—with views of lofty mountains to the north and the shores of the shimmering blue Atlantic to the south. Along the way, explore the Kerry Peninsula and Killarney—hiking through the Gap of Dunloe, a mountain pass that cuts through Ireland's tallest range. With included visits to historic castles and quaint Irish cottages, your local guides introduce you to the authentic Ireland—enhanced by their deep personal insight and irresistible Irish charm.



Highlights

- On a jaunty horse-drawn cart (or by foot if you prefer), enter the narrow Gap of Dunloe—a rugged mountain pass with beautiful scenery.
- Beneath the ever-changing skies of Killarney National Park, view elegant mountains and stunning lakes as you walk along the scenic Kerry Way.
- Embark on a cruise to Ross Castle while learning of Ireland's most well-known visitors.
- Walk the legendary Wild Atlantic Way and experience the power of the Atlantic Ocean as waves crash beneath remote, weather-beaten cliffs.
- Explore the life and birthplace of Irish seaman and Antarctic explorer Tom Crean, Ireland's famous unsung hero.

On all Fully-Guided Adventures you can count on ...



Expert local guides to introduce you to the best of your destination.



Gracious accommodations that are a clean, comfortable home away from home.



Off-the-beaten-path places you'd never find on your own.



Experts to handle all the details.



A maximum of 18 fun-loving fellow travelers to share the journey.



Air Packages include plane tickets, airport car service, and pre- and post-tour accommodations.



Delicious, authentic multi-course meals—virtually all are included.

Activity Level

This tour is one of our Guided Walking Adventures, rated easy to moderate with an average of 2 to 5 hours of hiking per day. The trails feature a combination of paved roads and easy terrain, mixed with moderate hills, moorland, and uneven footpaths. Due to Ireland's climate, the footpaths can often be wet and muddy.

Flight Day

Depart from the United States or Canada

Your vacation is about to begin! Spend your first night aloft and arrive ready for an unforgettable trip.

Arrival Day

Arrive in Shannon, Ireland. Travel to Ennis

Start off your first day in Ennis right by having a Country Walkers representative greet you at the airport. A complimentary car service will whisk you to your centrally located hotel. From here, you are perfectly positioned to explore this charming city at your leisure.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 1

Join your *Ireland: County Clare, Killarney & Dingle* tour

Muckross park gate to Muckross House; 2 miles, easy. Muckross House to Old Weir Bridge; 4 miles, easy

After enjoying an included breakfast meet one of your Country Walkers leaders in the hotel lobby at 8:30 a.m.

Following a short introductory meeting, travel via private bus from Ennis to Killarney (a journey of approximately two hours, depending on traffic). Your first destination is Killarney National Park. Ensure you are prepared for a day of walking, as the bus will continue with your luggage to your hotel after leaving you at the park entrance. Here, you meet your second Country Walkers leader and enter the stunning vistas of the Killarney Lakes with their impressive mountain backdrop. You'll walk through a lush meadow, along a river, and through the woodlands to reach the lakeshore. Across the waters, admire the tree-covered slopes of Tomies Wood, stretching upwards towards the peaks of the Shehy and Tomies mountains. Continue along the shoreline through a delightful woodland glade until you come across the magnificent manor, Muckross House.

Your lunch today at the manor's Garden Restaurant is included. Once you've finished, you have the choice of enjoying a stroll through magnificent displays of ornamental shrubs, flower beds, and wide expanses of manicured lawns or continuing with a walk around Muckross Lake. This walk takes you through ancient woodlands, over Brickeen Bridge, and across Dinis Island to the Meeting of the Waters and the Old Weir Bridge. All the while, you are surrounded by wonderful views, small lakeside beaches, and rocky coves.

You'll then meet your bus and drive to your hotel in Killarney—your home for the next three nights—collecting non-walkers at Muckross House on the way.

Take some free time to settle in, then get to know your fellow travelers and leaders during a welcome reception and dinner this evening.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

DAY 2

Glenbeigh and the Kerry Way. Independent Exploration of Killarney

Start of Walk to Meet Minibus; 3 miles, easy OR Start of Walk to Glenbeigh; 5 miles, easy to moderate.

Afternoon: Glenbeigh to Curra Hill; 2 miles, easy

Today's walk takes you to the northern part of the Kerry Peninsula. After a short drive, your bus will drop you at the trailhead—a quiet, paved country road that loops around Seefin Mountain. As you walk, enjoy sweeping views over Lough Caragh. At the end of the road, you'll have the option to rejoin the minibus and meet the group in Glenbeigh or continue on foot along a mountain path through Windy Gap, a section of the Kerry Way—an iconic 135-mile walking route that follows old droving paths and coach roads.

You'll enjoy a picnic lunch prepared by your leaders in the village of Glenbeigh. After lunch, you have two options for your afternoon activity. You can shuttle two miles to Rossbehy Creek and take a short walk along White Strand, a beautiful sandy beach that stretches into Dingle Bay from a small peninsula. Alternatively, you may walk along the banks of the River Behy and follow the Kerry Way through the wooded slopes of Curra Hill before shuttling down to Rossbehy Beach.

This evening, dinner is on your own. Take a stroll into town and explore Killarney's vibrant culinary scene. Surrounded by the natural beauty of Killarney National Park, the town offers a lively mix of historic charm, scenic views, cozy restaurants, and traditional pubs—making it the perfect base for exploring the nearby mountains and lakes.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 3

Discover the Gap of Dunloe

Kate Kearney's Cottage to Lord Brandon's Cottage; 7 miles, easy to moderate

This morning, you'll drive to Kate Kearney's Cottage, the site where the legendary 19th-century beauty made and sold an illicit brew "very fierce and wild, requiring not less than seven times its own quantity of water to tame and subdue it." Now a popular shop and pub, it's also the starting point for today's walk. You ascend a steady paved incline and traverse a spectacular glacial valley, known as the Gap of Dunloe. Your trail parallels a mountain stream over rugged terrain lined with massive boulders until you reach the pass between Macgillycuddy's Reeks—Ireland's tallest mountain range, at 3,414 feet—and the Purple Mountains. Then you'll descend into the Black Valley. Throughout your journey, you'll have a horse-drawn jaunting cart at the ready if you want a break.

From here, you'll board open boats and cruise to Ross Castle, a 15th-century tower house, as your boatmen regale you with tales of Napoleon, King Brian Boru, and others who have passed this way. An included lunch awaits you back in Killarney.

The afternoon and evening is yours to explore the vibrant town of Killarney. You'll be sure to have the chance to mingle with locals and catch live music in one of Killarney's lively pubs.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 4

Walk through Killarney National Park into Killarney and Ross Island. Visit Inch Beach

Castle Ross Hotel to Killarney; 2 miles, easy. Loop walk around Ross Island; 2 miles, easy. Killarney House to St. Mary's Cathedral; 2 miles, easy

After breakfast, pack your luggage, as today you depart Killarney for Dingle. First, though, you'll take a very short drive to Castle Ross Hotel for a walk in Killarney's beautiful parklands. More of a peninsula than an island, Ross Island is heavily wooded with a network of paths leading to attractive viewpoints overlooking Lough Leane. Also visible are remains of former copper mines throughout the ages—some remains date back 4,000 years to the prehistoric Bronze Age, and others are from the 19th century. You can stop at Killarney Cathedral or join your leaders for a walk around Ross Island. Then, explore the

discovery trail around the landscaped gardens at Killarney House before continuing on to St. Mary's Cathedral and Killarney town center.

You'll have free time for an independent lunch in Killarney before continuing on to Dingle Peninsula. On route to Dingle, you will visit impressive Inch Beach, a wild and wind-swept sand spit and dune system that separates Castlemaine Harbor from the Atlantic Ocean. There'll be time to walk its stunning sands before continuing on to Dingle.

Tonight is free for you to explore lively Dingle Town, a 10-minute walk from your hotel, or relax at the generously appointed property. Dinner is on your own. Perhaps enjoy the freshly prepared dishes at your hotel's Coastguard Restaurant (reservations required) or at the more casual Blaskets Bar. Dinner is on your own.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5

Annascaul Village and South Pole Inn. Independent exploration of Dingle Town

Three Peaks of Annascaul; 4.5 miles, moderate or Annascaul Village Loop walk; from 2 miles, easy

Start your morning with a leisurely breakfast overlooking the blue-glass waters of Dingle Harbor. Early risers may choose to set forth into Dingle Town, a village that has been described as an artistic girl who's out for rowdy fun. Browse eclectic shops along the shoreline and watch as fishermen bring home their morning catch. Afterward, you travel 15 minutes to Annascaul. This authentic sleepy Irish town at the foothills of the Slieve Mish Mountains is set in the heart of the Dingle Peninsula. The village is also the celebrated birthplace of Tom Crean, the famous explorer who accompanied Ernest Shackleton on three Antarctic expeditions. With beaches to the south and mountains to the north, Annascaul is a walker's paradise.

You can view it all during today's trail options. A moderate loop traverses past rolling sheep pastures and the area's famed "three peaks," a series of rises and descents that include Brackloon and Knockafeehane. Enjoy spectacular and serene views throughout this invigorating trek – a patchwork of green farmland dotted with farmhouses amidst the striking beauty of southern County Kerry and the Dingle

Peninsula. Or discover Annascaul in greater depth and follow a river path from the village, crossing scenic bridges and passing historic landmarks, including a memorial and statue to Tom Crean himself, erected in front of the South Pole Inn, which he opened upon his return from his adventures.

After lunch together in Annascaul, you'll return to your hotel in Dingle. Enjoy the many amenities at your hotel, including the pool, outdoor hot tub, and on-site Peninsula Spa. Dinner is on your own.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 6

Visit Slea Head and the Blasket Interpretive Center. Walk the Wild Atlantic Way to Ballydavid Pier

Clogher Beach Cliff Top Walk; 2 miles, easy. Ballydavid Coastline Walk; options from 2 miles, easy

This morning you set out toward Slea Head, where small farms cling to the precipitous slopes along the magnificent Dingle Way. Your morning coastal walk between emerald-green farmland and deep-blue ocean reveals Iron Age remains, such as beehive huts used by Eremite monks and farmers. Rounding the head, you take in breathtaking views of the Blasket Islands spreading out before you. These were once the westernmost inhabited lands of Europe; a population decline to just 22 in 1953—and their lack of access to emergency services—drove residents to the mainland. You continue along grassy paths through pastures dotted with sheep and an occasional donkey, tracing stone walls, crossing stiles, and climbing hills that always reward your efforts with sweeping views of the Irish countryside.

After, learn the story of traditional island life at The Blasket Center, a fascinating cultural center and museum which chronicles the island residents' struggle for existence through exhibitions, interactive displays, artifacts, and audio-visual presentations. During your stay, enjoy an included lunch at the center's Bialann Café, where large floor-to-ceiling windows offer spectacular views of the sea and islands.

After lunch, travel north and trace the Wild Atlantic Way shoreline trail. Your walk along more spectacular coastline delivers you to Ballydavid where you may explore the pier and enjoy a pint overlooking Smerwick Harbor. Returning to Dingle, you stop to visit the medieval-era remains of Kilmalkedar, a National Monument of Ireland. The remarkable site preserves an unusually dense early Christian settlement that contributed to the evolution of the early Irish Church from the 6th to the 12th centuries.

This evening is again yours to explore the imaginative and charming town of Dingle, where strains of traditional pub music pour into the streets at night. Alternatively, stay put and enjoy the many amenities of your hotel, including the award-winning leisure club, pool, and spa. This evening, savor a sumptuous final dinner at your hotel's acclaimed Coastguard Restaurant overlooking Dingle Harbor and the mountains of the Iveragh Peninsula.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 7

Your Ireland: County Clare, Killarney & Dingle tour concludes. Travel to Dublin

At 8:00 a.m. drive by private motorcoach two hours to the Mallow Train Station train station. There you will board Irish Rail train for Dublin (an approximate three-hour journey). Upon arrival at Dublin's train station, a private coach will bring you to the Schoolhouse Hotel.

Important: Upon arrival at the hotel, please reconfirm with the hotel receptionist the time of your transportation to the Dublin airport for your return flight home. You have the remainder of the day free to take in a bit of the atmosphere of Dublin and to seek out one of the city's many restaurants, pubs, or outdoor cafés for lunch and dinner on your own.

The remainder of the day is free for you to explore Dublin on your own. Country Walkers provides you with city information including recommendations about what to see and do in the city.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Departure Day

Departure

After an included breakfast this morning, complimentary transportation is provided to the Dublin airport based on your departure time.

Included Meals: Breakfast

What's Included

Tour Only

Air Package

Exceptional boutique accommodations	✓	✓
14 on-tour meals: 7 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 3 dinners	✓	✓
Local leaders with you throughout tour	✓	✓
Local wine and/or beer with dinner	✓	✓
Entrance fees and special events as noted in the itinerary	✓	✓
Telescopic walking sticks provided on tour	✓	✓
Roundtrip airfare		✓
One extra night in Cork and one extra night in Kinsale		✓
Airport car service for arrival and departure		✓
Pre- and post-trip breakfasts		✓
Business-class upgrades available		✓