

Island and Coastal Walking Tour

Self-guided walking tour 2008



This is a splendid trip along Irelands Western Coastline

where as part of the trip you visit and walk three beautiful islands of the Western Coast, starting with Clare Island off the coast of Mayo, Inishbofin off the coast of Connemara and Inishmore, the biggest of the Aran Islands off the coast of Galway. You will also get to climb Croagh Patrick, which is Irelands Holy Mountain, and along by the Famine Track as you overlook Irelands only fjord the Killary Fjord. On this trip you will get a glimpse of some dramatic scenery and the opportunity to meet real Irish characters.

You will be staying in the welcoming town of Westport a picturesque market town, the scenic village of Leenane on Irelands only fjord the Killary, one night on Inishmore, and finally end your journey in Galway, the bustling and historical city, Gateway to Connemara where you can shop for souvenirs, or just enjoy the atmosphere. You will stay at comfortable Guesthouses, where rooms are en-suite, breakfasts are excellent, and the scenery is one of Ireland's finest. For your walks you will be brought by vehicle to different starting points for your walks, from where you will walk, with the help of maps and detailed walk descriptions.

Duration:

8 days (7 nights)

Tour Dates 2008:

ANY DATE (April - October)

Level:

Moderate walking on even surfaces, with a fairly tough climb of Croagh Patrick, and 3 island walks accessed by ferry.

Equipment:

You are provided with route notes and maps, but correct rain proof gear and walking boots are essential to bring with you.

Accommodation:

Guesthouses

Meals:

All Irish breakfasts

Transfers:

Transfers to starting point of walks and from, where indicated. Ferry tickets to Clare Island, Inishbofin and Inishmore.

Luggage transfers as far as Rossaveal. From Rossaveal you carry your own luggage. Taxi return from Westport to Roonagh for ferry to Clare Island, taxi from Westport to Leenane.

Taxi return from Leenane to Cleggan for ferry to Inishbofin and taxi from Leenane to Rossaveal to ferry port in Rossaveal for Aran Islands. From Rossaveal to Galway city you travel by public bus, which you pay directly.

Miscellaneous:

Detailed route notes and maps.

Meeting Point:

A Killary Tours representative will meet you at your 1st nights accommodation in Westport.

Departure Point:

You depart from Galway City where there are regular bus and train services.



PRICE 2008:

Price per adult €790.00 per person sharing

All prices are in EURO, and based on per person sharing. Per person sharing means two people in one room. Single Room supplement is applied when people require a room for themselves as part of a booking of two or more. If you book for a group of 4 or more you pay €663.00pps



DAILY ITINERARY

DAY 1 - WESTPORT

Arrive to the wonderful town of Westport (there is direct bus and train service to Westport daily). Warm welcome and chance to settle in. You will be given your route pack and general information to study overnight. If there is time we meet with you to go through the details of the tour with you. Westport is a nice town with lots of restaurants and pubs where you can find music on most evenings.

DAY 2 - CROAGH PATRICK

You will be picked up in the morning after breakfast and brought to Murrisk the starting point of today's walk. Your target today is the top of Croagh Patrick - Ireland's Holy Mountain climb (750m to the top; 4-5 hours). This is quite a tough climb, but the views from the top is fantastic. The fact that you have walked where many pilgrims have before you make this a very satisfying day. Having pre-arranged a time with your driver, you are picked up and returned to your accommodation in Westport. Dinner your own choice in Westport town.

DAY 3 - CLARE ISLAND

After breakfast a taxi will pick you up and bring you to Roonagh Quay where you will get the ferry to Clare Island (30 minute ferry). Clare Island is the largest island in Clew Bay. It is 5 miles long and 3 miles wide and there are wonderful options for you to walk. On the rocky headland at the harbour is the square tower which served as Grace O' Malley's (Granuaile's) castle. Clare Island was the stronghold of this remarkable 16th century O' Malley clan chieftain who lived by her family trade of piracy and plunder. You can also visit the 12th century Cistercian abbey that contains a remarkable series of medieval wall and ceiling paintings, The remains of a 19th century Napoleonic signal tower is situated at the western tip of the island and there are also some lovely beaches for you to explore. You return on the ferry to Roonagh Quay where a taxi will pick you up and bring you back to Westport.

DAY 4 - FAMINE TRACK

After breakfast a taxi will pick you up and bring you from Westport to the starting point of today's walk which is the tip of Killary Harbour in Leenane. With your map in hand you will walk above the shore of Killary Harbour, Ireland's only fjord, along the "Famine Track", a now disused road built after the Great Famine (1848) to provide some employment for the once extensive population of Connemara. You will continue along the Western Way to the village of Leenane where you will be staying tonight. Dinner your own choice in the village of Leenane.

DAY 5 - INISHBOFIN ISLAND

Today you will have an all day excursion to Inishbofin - one of three offshore islands just off the coast of Connemara! A taxi will pick you up at your accommodation and bring you to Cleggan where you will take the ferry to Inishbofin to sample the unique "island life" and take in one of Ireland's unique attractions! This island is an ideal spot for swimming, hill walking, cycling and angling. Irish Traditional music takes Inishbofin to its heart and world-class musicians visit it regularly. On arrival your first glimpse of Bofin, will be the impressive "Cromwell's Barracks" - these are well-preserved ruins dating back to the 17th century. There are also many kinds of unusual kinds of birds as well as colonies of seals on the island. For lucky visitors, there is also the possibility of sighting dolphins, whales and sharks! You return on the evening ferry to Cleggan where a taxi will pick you up and bring you back to Leenane.

DAY 6 - INISHMORE ISLAND

A taxi picks you up after breakfast and brings you to Rossaveal in time to take the morning ferry to Inishmore. Inishmore is the largest of the Aran Islands. There are many antiquities on the island, and some of the most fascinating are Dun Aengus, Dun Eoghasa, early Christian monasteries and many more. You may want to discover them on foot, or alternatively there are bicycles for hire at the pier. Stay the night in a Guesthouse on the island, and enjoy a dinner in one of the restaurants.

DAY 7 - GALWAY

Return to the mainland with either the morning or the evening ferry and take the public bus (at your own expense) from Rossaveal into Galway. Spend some time in this bustling, historic town. Enjoy dinner at your own choice (and expense) in one of the many restaurants, and afterwards the lively pub scene. You will be staying in a Guesthouse in Galway tonight.

DAY 8

Depart after breakfast.



Please be aware that the programme given for this tour is strictly intended as a guide only and may not be fully adhered to. Climatic conditions, safety regulations and travel options may subject the programme to changes and/or modifications without due notice, at any time. In such case, Killary Tours reserves the right to make any necessary decisions.

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