

St. Patrick's Footsteps

Self-guided walking Connemara & Mayo 2010



Follow in the footsteps of St. Patrick. Explore the pilgrim's path that he once walked and enjoy a landscape steeped in antiquity, this unspoiled countryside is liberally sprinkled with churches, Celtic artefacts and historical sites.

Ideal for independent walkers we offer the chance to discover the pleasures of the Western Way long distance trail, starting in the wonderful village of Leenane and going as far as Westport.

You have a choice of carefully chosen accommodation to suit every budget along the route. All rooms are en-suite, breakfasts are excellent, and the scenery around you could not be better. Your luggage will be transferred each day, and you will be brought to the different starting points for your walks, from where you will go along tracks, with the help of maps and walk descriptions, walking at your own pace.

You will also discover the beautiful landscape of Connemara, Killary Harbour and last but not least Croagh Patrick - Ireland's Holy Mountain.

Duration: 8 days (7 nights)
Tour Dates 2010: ANY DATE (April - October)
Level: Moderate walking with uneven surfaces, with some hill. Croagh Patrick would be a tough walk. One day walking on Clare Island which is 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: Depending on the option you choose it can be hotel, Selected B&B's and Guest houses or hostel

Meals: Irish breakfasts, 1 dinner (on day 3), 2 packed Lunch (day 3 & 4).

Transfers: Transfers to and from walks where indicated. Return taxi to Roonagh Quay for ferry to Clare Island, ferry ticket to Clare Island.

Miscellaneous: Detailed route notes and maps.

Meeting Point: A Killary Tours representative will meet you at your accommodation in Leenane.

Departure Point: You depart from Westport



PRICE 2010:

Hotel Option: €799.00 per person sharing

B&B Option: €649.00 per person sharing

Hostel Option: €499.00 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.

DAILY ITINERARY

DAY 1

Arrival to the small village of Leenane, in Connemara. Situated at the head of Killary Fjord Harbour, Leenane village is surrounded by mountain and sea. You stay the night in a well-chosen family-run accommodation. Your maps and starter pack will be waiting for you to go through. There are a number of restaurants in the village of Leenane where you can go for an enjoyable evening meal.

DAY 2

After your hearty breakfast you will be transferred from your accommodation for your walk to Maumeen and St Patrick's Well (320m). Legend has it that St Patrick stood on this windy pass, looking westward towards the Twelve Bens & agreed he'd bless the land, but nary would he go a step further into the wild still pagan Connemara. Maumeen remains a place of pilgrimage & is also a point along the Western Way that offers you spectacular views over the picturesque valley of Lough Inagh with the Maamturk mountains on one side and the Twelve Ben mountain range on the other. You make your way along a paved track to your charming accommodation, which is located in the Inagh Valley where you stay tonight.

DAY 3

Taking a delicious packed lunch with you from your accommodation you continue on along the Lough Inagh Valley for a walk along the base of the mountain through lake-strewn bogland and peaceful forest for 12km until you reach the area of Kylemore. Stay the night in Kylemore and tonight's dinner is included.

DAY 4

After breakfast you will be picked up at your accommodation and taking a packed lunch with you, you leave Kylemore to explore the Killary Harbour area - walking along the Famine Track, a pathway built by local men and women in return for soup and a small allowance by the British authorities and continuing along the Western Way back to the inviting village of Leenane. Today's walk provides you with beautiful views over Killary Harbour, Ireland's only fjord, whilst you follow its shores for approximately 14kms. You stay in choice accommodation in the village of Leenane.

DAY 5

After breakfast you will be picked up at your accommodation and brought to the starting point of today's walk near Westport. Journey along the Pilgrim's Walk, which brings you under the lower slopes of Croagh Patrick, Patrick's sacred mountain as you travel into Westport. The tradition of pilgrimage to this holy mountain stretches back over 5,000 years from the Stone Age to the present day without interruption. It was on the summit of this mountain that Saint Patrick fasted for forty days in 441 AD and the custom has been faithfully handed down from generation to generation ever since. Westport is a small colourful market town and winner of Ireland's national tourism award for the tidiest town in 2006. It has lots of nice restaurants and a lively pub scene and very welcoming people. You will stay the next three nights in Westport B&B.

DAY 6

After breakfast a taxi will pick you up and bring you to Roonagh Quay where you will get the ferry to Clare Island. 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, the remains of a 19th century Napoleonic signal tower 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 7

You will be picked up at your accommodation in Westport and transferred to Murrisk for today's walk. Your target today is the top of Croagh Patrick - Ireland's Holy Mountain. This is quite a tough climb, but the views from the top are fantastic (climb 750m to the top; 4-5 hours). It is quite a tough climb and the ground is uneven, with the top being most difficult with small rocks that make it tricky underfoot. The fact that you have walked where many pilgrims have before, makes this a very satisfying day. You return to the bottom where you will be picked up and brought to your accommodation in Westport to spend a relaxing evening.

DAY 8

Breakfast, followed by departure.

Suggested Addendum:

DAY 8

Transfer from Westport to Rossaveal the ferry port for the Aran Islands and take the ferry to Inishmore, the largest of the Aran Islands. You walk on this fascinating island, which has history, archaeology and magnificent scenery. Stay the night in island guesthouse.

DAY 9

You stay another night to fully explore this island, again choose your own dinner this evening.

DAY 10

You leave the Aran Islands and take the ferry to Rossaveal and from there, a public bus (you pay direct the public bus) to Galway city. Enjoy the atmosphere of this lively city and stay the night in guesthouse.

DAY 11

Breakfast and departure.



The added cost for transfer to the ferry x ferry ticket to Inishmore, 3 nights B&B, at Euro 268.00 per person sharing (single supplement available).

The programme is subject to weather conditions and may be changed if required. 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.