

The High Kings of Ireland Trail

Self-guided cycling & walking in Connemara & Mayo 2010

Explore a landscape steeped in the history of high kings of Ireland.

The unspoiled countryside is liberally sprinkled with churches, Celtic artefacts and historical sites of the Ancients. For independent travellers we offer the option of enjoying walking and cycling in fantastic settings, and explore the many attractions in the area at their own pace and leisure. For the walks we bring you to the starting points and collect you again in the evenings if needed. For the cycling we provide 21 speed-touring bicycles

One day cycling, one day hiking in alternating order, will delight guests, who wish to explore the countryside on foot and on bike. We provide well-chosen pre-booked accommodation, as well as bikes and any equipment that is needed. The luggage is transferred each day in order to lighten the load. A full itinerary, maps, and suggested options are also part of this attractive package.

Destinations visited include landscapes of immense beauty like Killary Harbour, Croagh Patrick (the Holy Mountain), Lough Mask and Lough Corrib, but also charming towns like Westport and Cong. The tour can be tailored to your individual needs, with 3 choices of accommodation to suit every budget and is available for any start date.



Duration:

Tour Dates 2010:

Level:

8 days (7 nights)

ANY DATE (April - Oct)

Moderate cycling days with average of 40km a day with longer and shorter options available on most days. Walking on Croagh Patrick needs good support boots. Rainwear essential.

Bicycle:

Touring Bike

CANNONDALE HYBRID €100 extra

Equipment:

Helmets, front handlebar bag
water bottles, bicycle repair-kit.

Accommodation:

Depending on the option: Hotel,
Guesthouse & B&B or hostel.

Meals:

Irish breakfasts

Transfers:

Luggage transfers, transfers to and from walks.

Miscellaneous:

Detailed route notes and maps.

Meeting Point:

A Killary Tours representative will meet you at your first nights accommodation in Leenane

Departure Point:

You depart from your last night's accommodation in Leenane. We can help with arranging transfers if required.



PRICE 2010:

Hotel option €899.00 per person sharing

B&B option €679.00 per person sharing

Hostel option €529.00 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. This is €195.00pp.

DAILY ITINERARY

DAY 1 - ARRIVAL

Arrive to the village of Leenane (we can help arranging transfers). 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 will allocate bikes and equipment. Dinner is available in one of the restaurants in the village of Leenane.

DAY 2 - FAMINE TRACK WALK

You will be dropped to the starting point of Rosroe for the Famine Track Walk along the shore of Killary Harbour Ireland's only fjord, The "Famine Track", built after the Great Famine (1848) to provide some employment for the once extensive population of Connemara (3½ - 4 hours). Return on the Western Way to Leenane village, which overlooks the harbour as you come into the village.



DAY 3 - CYCLE LEENANE TO WESTPORT

You leave Leenane this morning for Westport. Westport is a lovely town with lots of shops and restaurants and very welcoming people. Westport is also very well known for its Irish music in the pubs. Your journey from Leenane brings you along by Aasleagh Waterfalls through the very scenic Doolough valley to Westport (45km - with longer option). Stay the night in Westport B&B, and enjoy dinner in one of the many restaurants that Westport has to offer.

DAY 4 - CROAGH PATRICK

You cycle from Westport to Murrisk, a short cycle of 10km from where the ascension of Croagh Patrick takes place (climb 750m to the top; 4-5 hours). Lock your bikes at the car park and head up the clear pathway. Croagh Patrick is Ireland's Holy Mountain. It is quite a tough climb, but the views from the top are fantastic. The fact that you have walked where many pilgrims have before, makes this a very satisfying day. You get back on your bike and return to your accommodation in the evening.

DAY 5 - CYCLE WESTPORT TO CONG

Depart after breakfast from Westport and cycle via Aghagower, Toormakeady, Lough Mask, Finny, and Clonbur to Cong (58kms). A good long cycle through a variety of scenery; hills, fine trout lakes, small country roads and you will find many suitable pubs along the way to enjoy a lunch. Stay the night in B&B in Cong, dinner is available in the picturesque village of Cong, which has a number of restaurants.

DAY 6 - CONG

A day to relax and enjoy a meander around historical Cong. The majestic monastic remains that adorn Cong today are the relics of a monastery built by the High King of Ireland, Turlach O'Connor in 1120 for the Augustinian monks. The Abbey, which was endowed and supported by Celtic royal families of this era, is considered to be one of the finest examples of early architecture in Ireland, and it was here that Rory O'Connor, last high King of Ireland died and was buried in 1198. Stroll around the monastic cloisters and cast your mind back to the psalm-chanting monks following the ornate Cross of Cong, which is now in the National Museum. Cong has also been made famous through the film the Quiet Man starring John Wayne and Maureen O' Hara.

DAY 7 - CYCLE CONG TO LEENANE

Depart Cong after breakfast to cycle to Leenane (40kms). You cycle through Joyce's country. This is a fairly straight road although the longer option on this day will be taking you over a variety of passes and through the Twelve Bens. Be prepared to hold your breath in awe, as the approach to Leenane is spectacular from all directions. This pretty, old world village lies nestled between the Mweelrea, Devil's Mother and Maamturk Mountains and faces onto Killary Harbour - Ireland's only Fjord.

DAY 8

Breakfast, followed by farewell and departure!

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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