

Ireland Women-Only Tour

Itinerary dates: April 20 – May 2, 2018

Tour Leader: Beth Whitman

HIGHLIGHTS

- Tours of the **Wild Atlantic Way**, including the **Ring of Kerry**, the **Cliffs of Moher** and the **Dingle Peninsula**
- A trip to the magical **Aran Islands**
- The chance to kiss the **Blarney Stone**
- Tastings at the **Guinness Storehouse** and **Jameson's Old Midleton Distillery**
- An **Irish soda bread-making demonstration**
- A **5% discount** on land costs for returning WanderTours participants

ITINERARY

The tour begins on April 20, 2018, with a full day of touring. We encourage you to arrive the previous day (or earlier) so you can take advantage of this first full day. If you arrive on Day 1, you may join the tour in-progress. We can help you book your first night in Dublin and your transportation from the airport—neither are included in the tour cost.

Day 1

Friday, April 20, 2018 – Dublin

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

After a wonderful breakfast at the hotel, this first day on the Emerald Isle will be spent touring the country's sophisticated capital of **Dublin**! We'll travel through the city and enjoy a tour that includes visits to **Kilmainham Gaol** (jail), the **Trinity College Library** and the **Book of Kells** exhibition. We'll also stop by the **Guinness Storehouse** for a tour and sample! Along the way, we'll have lunch (not included in tour cost).

In the afternoon, we'll visit **Phoenix Park** and **St. Patrick's Cathedral**.

In the late afternoon, we'll have some free time to relax, shake off jet-lag or shop prior to our **welcome dinner**.

Overnight in Dublin at the [Camden Court Hotel](#) or similar.

 **HIGHLIGHT!** Today we'll get an excellent overview of Dublin and experience the highlights of this very sophisticated, yet historical city.

Day 2

Saturday, April 21, 2018 – Dublin

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

After breakfast, we'll travel to the country estate of **Powerscourt House and Gardens**, home to what is considered one of the top gardens in Europe. We'll have lunch at the **Happy Pear**, a specialty restaurant owned by twins (get it? pear/pair?). We'll then continue to the village of **Avoca** to see the famous handweavers at work at the Avoca Mill. On our way back to Dublin, we'll visit **Glendalough**, a 6th century monastic site that's nestled in a valley in the **Wicklow Mountains**.

Upon returning to Dublin, the remainder of the day will be free for sightseeing on your own, shopping and dinner.

Overnight in Dublin at the Camden Court Hotel or similar.



HIGHLIGHT! Today is all about **Ireland's countryside** with its many **charms, fun locals** and **beautiful landscape**.

Day 3

Sunday, April 22, 2018 – Dublin – Galway

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

This morning after breakfast, we'll check out of our hotel and make our way west toward the dynamic city of **Galway**. Along the way, we'll stop at **Clonmacnoise**, an early Christian site founded by St. Ciarán in the mid-6th century. Located on the eastern bank of the River Shannon, we'll find the **ruins of a cathedral**, churches from the **10th – 13th centuries** and the largest collection of **early Christian grave slabs** in Western Europe. We'll have lunch (not included) at a nearby restaurant.

Upon arrival in Galway, we'll check into our hotel and then take a **walking tour** of the city with a local guide who will help bring the city (and Ireland) alive with stories! There will be plenty of options to enjoy dinner on your own this evening.

Overnight in Galway at the [Park House Hotel](#) or similar.

Day 4

Monday, April 23, 2018 – Galway

Meals: Breakfast

Today we'll have a free day to explore this magic **City of the Tribes!** Once a city of merchants (tribes), Galway is now an **artistic and contemporary destination** also known as one of Ireland's most Irish of cities.

There's so much to enjoy here, including the **Spanish Arch** and **Lynch's Castle**. You might also simply wander the **narrow cobblestone streets** to shop or to listen to some of the best **buskers** in the world perform.

Overnight in Galway at the [Park House Hotel](#) or similar.

★ **HIGHLIGHT!** What's not to love about Galway?! This very manageable city has lots of things to do but somehow maintains a small town feel.

Day 5

Tuesday, April 24, 2018 – Galway – Inis Oirr

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

After breakfast, we'll take the ferry to **Inis Oirr**, the smallest (and many say best!) of the **Aran Islands**. This island is a splendid example of **Celtic and early Christian heritage**. The island is rugged and natural with **thatch-roofed stone cottages** dotting the landscape. In the afternoon, we'll take an **Aran knit workshop**, attend an **Irish bread-making** workshop and then have dinner at a local restaurant.

Overnight on Inis Oirr at various B&Bs.

NOTE – On this day, we'll only be carrying a small overnight bag for our two nights on Inis Oirr. We'll leave the majority of our things secured with our driver who will meet us in two days.

★ **HIGHLIGHT!** Today we'll get to experience the **Wild Atlantic Way** on the water when we take the ferry to **Inis Oirr**. We'll instantly be **transported back in time** once we set foot on the Aran Islands.

Day 6

Wednesday, April 25, 2018 – Inis Oirr

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Today we'll take the local island ferry and venture to the largest Aran Island, **Inis Mor**. Here, we'll take a tour that will include a visit to the island's main attraction, the stone fort, **Dun Aengus**. During our time on Inis Mor, there will be time for shopping and wandering around on our own.

Upon returning to Inis Oirr, we'll enjoy **dinner in a charming restaurant** before returning to our B&Bs for the night.

Overnight on Inis Oirr at various B&Bs.

Day 7

Thursday, April 26, 2018 – Inis Oirr – Doolin – Adare

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

After breakfast, we'll take the **ferry to Doolin** where we'll meet back up with our bus and driver. From here, we'll travel through the **Burren**, a region known for its beautiful but hardscrabble **trails and ancient sites**.

After lunch at a local restaurant (on our own), we'll visit one of Ireland's natural wonders and most popular destinations in the country: the **Cliffs of Moher**. The cliffs rise to over 700 feet and provide magnificent 360 degree views. We'll have time to **walk around and photograph** the area before heading to the charming village of **Adare**.

Overnight in Adare at the [Woodlands Hotel](#) or similar.

★ **HIGHLIGHT!** You've seen them in countless photos, but the **Cliffs of Moher** are far more beautiful and dramatic in person. This will definitely be one of many highlights of the tour.

Day 8

Friday, April 27, 2018 – Adare – Killarney

Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

This morning after breakfast, we'll enjoy some sightseeing around Adare. This **quaint village** is known for its **thatched roofed cottages**, beautiful park and monastic ruins. After some touring, we'll head to the **Dingle Peninsula**. Perhaps not as well-known as the Iveragh Peninsula where the Ring of Kerry is located, the Dingle Peninsula is less touristy but **every bit as beautiful**.

After driving the spectacular road around the peninsula, we'll have lunch in the **small fishing port** town of Dingle. Here we'll also have a chance to try our hand at making pottery at **Louis Mulcahy's studio** before traveling on to **Killarney**.

Overnight in Killarney at [The Lake Hotel](#) or similar.

★ **HIGHLIGHT!** It's difficult to say which you'll love more: the **drive around the Dingle Peninsula** or the truly **charming town itself**. Either way, this will be another incredible day on Ireland's west coast.

Day 9

Saturday, April 28, 2018 – Killarney

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Today we'll visit **Jameson's Old Midleton Distillery** and learn how their whiskey is made and how it differs from whiskeys made elsewhere.

We'll end the day with a visit to **Blarney Castle** where the famous Blarney Stone can be found. Don't forget, it must be **kissed** to receive the luck!

Dinner and overnight in Killarney at [The Lake Hotel](#) or similar.

Day 10

Sunday, April 29, 2018 – Killarney

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Today we're going to experience more of Ireland's legendary scenery as we drive the **Ring of Kerry**. The road winds around Ireland's highest mountains, the Macgillycuddy's Reeks, and the Atlantic coast. This is called the **Wild Atlantic Way** for a reason and you'll soon see why.

At the most **dramatic scenery**, we'll stop for photos and to take in the **brehtaking views**. We'll also visit The Skellig Experience Visitor Centre where we'll learn about the monks who lived on the Skellig Islands. (By the way, Skellig Michael was recently used as a location for **Star Wars: The Force Awakens**. Watch it before the trip!)

We'll continue through the remote villages of **Cahirciveen** and **Waterville**—one of Charlie Chaplin's favorite places—and pass through the colorful village of **Sneem**. We'll also stop at **Moll's Gap** to

see the Three Lakes of Killarney. We'll even have a chance to stop and stroll around the **Muckross Gardens** located on the shores of Muckross Lake.

We'll return to the hotel for an early dinner and then enjoy a **dance workshop** where we'll learn some simple **Irish dance steps**.

Dinner and overnight in Killarney at [The Lake Hotel](#) or similar.

★ **HIGHLIGHT!** Today will be a full day with lots of sightseeing. You'll see perhaps some familiar sights around the **Ring of Kerry** and then you'll have a chance to break out your **dancing shoes**.

Day 11

Monday, April 30, 2018 – Killarney

Meals: Breakfast

Today we'll have a day free to explore the **charming town of Killarney**. You might choose to: **wander the town on your own** (take a **two-hour guided tour**, **rent a bike** and peddle through **Killarney National Park**), **shop** in the downtown area, or **visit a pub** (or two!) and take in some of the local "trad" music.

Dinner and overnight in Killarney at [The Lake Hotel](#) or similar.

Day 12

Tuesday, May 1, 2018 – Killarney – Bunratty – Shannon

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

Today, on our last full day in Ireland, we'll leave Killarney and visit **Bunratty Castle**. Dating back to the 1400s, this is one of the most **well-restored and authentic castles** in Ireland. We'll tour this beautiful and ancient fortress and then have lunch at **Durty Nelly's**, the quintessential Irish pub. We'll then visit the **Folk Park**, which recreates life in rural Ireland during the 19th century.ireland dromoland

Afterward, we'll check in to the spectacular **Dromoland Castle** and then head out for our final dinner, a **medieval banquet(!)** at either Bunratty or Knappogue Castle.

Overnight in Shannon at [Dromoland Castle](#).

★ **HIGHLIGHT!** This will be a wonderful final day in Ireland as we experience not only **sleeping in a castle** but also enjoying a **traditional banquet dinner**.

Day 13

Wednesday, May 2, 2018 – Shannon – Departure Home

Meals: Breakfast

Today we'll depart via nearby Shannon Airport for home (or onward to your next destination).