

IRELAND

County Wicklow

A Self-Guided Walking Adventure





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Travel Style

Our Self-Guided Walking Adventures are ideal for travelers with an independent spirit who enjoy exploring at their own pace. We provide authentic accommodations, luggage transfers, and some meals, along with comprehensive Route Notes, detailed maps, and 24-hour emergency assistance. This gives you the freedom to focus on the things that matter to you—no group, no guide, and no set schedule to stand in the way of enjoying your adventure, your way.



Overview

This five-day, self-guided walking tour takes you south of Dublin to the Wicklow region, known as the “Garden of Ireland” and considered to be Ireland’s most romantic valley. A premier walking destination, the Wicklow Mountains form a granite chain of hills stretching 50 miles from Dublin to Wexford. And at the center is the famous “Wicklow Way,” Ireland’s oldest long-distance walking trail, the 82-mile north-south route that starts in Dublin. Beginning in famous Glendalough, with the evocative 6th-century remains of the monastery of St. Kevin, you walk part of the Wicklow Way, through parkland and beside rivers, through glens, and along panoramic cliff tops to two welcoming accommodations nestled between mountains and lakes, sampling Ireland’s best flavors along the way.



Daily Itinerary

DAY 1

Arrival in Dublin. Transfer to Glendalough. Monastic site visit

You are met in Dublin and transferred just over an hour south to the Vale of Glendalough in the Wicklow region and the Wicklow Mountains National Park. This U-shaped valley houses a fascinating and important early Christian and medieval monastic settlement, originally founded by St. Kevin in the 6th century. Your hotel is situated in the heart of the small village of Laragh, less than a mile from both the monastery buildings and the national park, with its network of walking trails and access to the Wicklow Way. Glendalough, meaning “valley of the two lakes,” contains religious structures from the 8th and 12th centuries—the most famous of which is a 100-foot stone tower—as well as a cathedral, churches, and decorated crosses. You may want to start your explorations with a visit to the comprehensive Glendalough Visitor Centre, and then proceed to walk amidst the 6th-century site. Dinner tonight is a short walk away at a charming local restaurant.

Heather House B&B, Laragh

A lovely bed-and-breakfast in the heart of the picturesque village of Laragh and the Wicklow Mountains National Park. Spacious apartment-style guestrooms are comfortably furnished, with classic décor and warm colors. The affiliated and highly-acclaimed Wicklow Heather Restaurant is just a short walk away, as is the local historical pub dating from 1776. With views of the national park and miles of trails and forest roads out the door, the hotel is also just under a mile from the monastic complex of St. Kevin at Glendalough.



DAY 2

Derrybawn Woodland Trail; 6.8 miles, easy to moderate, 600-ft. elevation gain

After awakening in the heart of the countryside and to a full Irish breakfast, you start your walk just out the door of the hotel. Your route today takes you along the Derrybawn Woodland Trail, comprising terrain of very well-maintained paths and forest road. Beginning on the Green Road walking trail, you cross the river on a footbridge, passing the valley's lower lake before heading up into the hills by the Poulanass Waterfall. The route then ascends the side of Derrybawn Mountain through mixed woodlands, with views over the valley. After a pleasant descent through the forest, you arrive back at the Green Road on the valley floor, returning to the starting point. The well-marked network of trails in the area offers several possibilities to extend the walk by a few miles, or you may return to your hotel to relax over a pint (and enjoy music in the pub on Saturday nights).

Heather House B&B, Laragh



DAY 3

The Spinc and Wicklow Way; 8 miles, easy to moderate with one moderate climb of 600 steps, 1,400-ft. elevation gain

Today's route not only joins the Wicklow Way, Ireland's first long-distance walking trail, but it also provides perhaps some of the most stunning cliff-

top views in Ireland. The route starts as yesterday, heading up the valley and gently climbing by the Poulanass Waterfall. Here you split off to climb 600 steps to the cliff-edge viewpoint on the Spinc—a sweeping panorama of the hills around, the valley below, and, on a clear day, the Welsh mountains out to sea behind you. You enjoy the views along the Spinc boardwalk for a mile, and then continue to gain height gently until you are just above the saddle between Mullacor Mountain and Lugduff Mountain. From here you have wonderful views into the steep U-shaped valley of Glenmalure, which runs parallel to the Glendalough Valley. You can also see the highest mountain in Leinster, Lugnaquilla (just over 3,000 feet). As you descend into the col, you meet up with the Wicklow Way walking trail, which brings you gently down the partly wooded slopes to the Poulanass Waterfall and back to your hotel along the edge of the lower lake.

Heather House B&B, Laragh

DAY 4

Glendalough to Enniskerry—The Wicklow Way; 8 miles, easy to moderate, 900-ft. elevation gain

Today, the longest walk of your tour rambles over a combination of boardwalks, walking paths, forest roads, and quiet back roads. The day begins with a transfer to the road above the mesmerizing Lough Tay. This dark lake is set below the imposing cliffs of Luggala, and is surrounded by land that was part of the Guinness family estate. When viewed from above, the lake, with its cream-colored sandy beach, resembles a pint of Guinness! You leave the road and join the highest and most scenic section of the Wicklow Way, along the side of Djouce Mountain. Here you have extensive views along Ireland's east coast and, if the weather is clear, you might again catch a glimpse of the mountains around

Snowdonia in Wales. After Djouce, the route descends to the Dargle River, an excellent place for a picnic lunch. A short steep climb out of the Dargle Valley brings you to a path overlooking the Powerscourt Estate and waterfall. At almost 400 feet, it is the highest waterfall in Ireland and the UK. You may even spot some of the area's abundant deer. The route continues downhill into the Glencree Valley, where you walk along the flower-filled banks of the Glencree River. Finally, you transfer to the lovely village of Enniskerry.

Ferndale B&B, Enniskerry

An intimate, upscale bed-and-breakfast in the charming 18th-century village of Enniskerry. Guest rooms are individually decorated with antique furnishings and carpets in this historical home and garden. Nearby is the Powerscourt Estate, one of Ireland's most beautiful historical castle and garden complexes, dating from 1300, and significantly altered in the 18th century. Also within walking or short driving distance are pubs and restaurants, including the famous Johnnie Fox's Pub, where traditional music is played every night.



DAY 5

Departure from Dublin

After breakfast, you are transferred from Enniskerry back to Dublin for your onward travels.

ITINERARY CHANGES

Please bear in mind that this is a typical itinerary, and the actual activities, sites, and accommodations may vary due to season, special events, weather, or transportation schedules. We reserve the right to alter the itinerary, since tour arrangements are made up to a year in advance and unforeseen circumstances may arise that mandate change. Itinerary changes are made to improve the tour and your experience.

RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

Country Walkers is a leader in active travel with responsible tourism an integral part of our core values. Our tours reflect our dedication to best travel practices—and to the preservation of indigenous cultures and the environment. Country Walkers has made a donation on behalf of every traveler to the CW Travelers Fund, which supports designated projects in the communities and habitats in which we travel. We invite you to learn more about our efforts and initiatives for giving back.

Itinerary Overview

PLEASE NOTE: your detailed Route Notes will be mailed to you approximately one month prior to your departure. While these Route Notes may list a number of accommodation options, your specific accommodations are listed below. Please make sure to bring this Itinerary Overview with you.

STARTING POINT

Dublin, Ireland

Based upon individual arrival times

NIGHTS 1, 2 & 3

Heather House B&B

Laragh, Ireland

Tel 011 353 404 45236

Email: wicklowheather@eircom.net

heatherhouse.ie

Wireless Internet and hair dryers available. Laundry service unavailable.

NIGHT 4

Ferndale Bed and Breakfast

Church Hill, Enniskerry

Co. Wicklow, Ireland

Tel 011 353 128 63518

Email info@ferndalehouse.com

ferndalehouse.com

Wireless Internet and hair dryers available. Laundry service unavailable.

ENDING POINT

Dublin, Ireland

Based upon individual departure times

Tour Facts at a Glance

TOUR LENGTH

5 days, 4 nights

DEPARTURES

This tour is available daily, on request, from April 15 through September 30, 2017. Please note that the tiered tour price is based on a guarantee of a specified number of guests—should your group decrease in size, we reserve the right to alter the per person price if necessary as reflected in the Tour Price table. Please also note that the tour price includes one arrival transfer from Dublin to Glendalough on Day 1 of the tour and one departure transfer from Enniskerry to Dublin on Day 5 of the tour. If traveling in a group of two or more with separate arrival and/or departure times, additional charges will apply for multiple transfers.

TOUR PRICE

2017 departures	Per person 2–3 guests	Per person 4+ guests	Single +	Solo Surcharge
April 15–June 30	\$1,298	\$1,198	\$245	\$410
July 1–August 31	\$1,398	\$1,298	\$260	\$425
September 1–30	\$1,298	\$1,198	\$245	\$410

STARTING POINT

Dublin, Ireland

Based upon individual arrival times

ENDING POINT

Dublin, Ireland

Based upon individual departure times

ACTIVITY LEVEL

This tour is one of our Self-Guided Walking Adventures, rated easy to moderate, with an average of 6–8 miles per day, with options on some days. The terrain is fairly gentle with a few hills and one moderate section of 600 steps on Day 3. Walks are on very well-maintained trails combining single-track boardwalks, packed-dirt or grassy paths, both narrow and wide, with roots, gravel, and loose stones at times. The trails above the tree line may feel more challenging than expected because they are exposed to the elements, and some sections have a slight drop-off on one side, which may not be recommended for those with severe vertigo. The walking routes are framed by either yellow gorse or broom, almost all season, and offer dramatic views of the Irish countryside, including deep lakes the color of Guinness.

INCLUSIONS

- » Full Irish breakfast daily and one dinner (Day 1); beverages not included
- » All accommodations while on tour
- » Local transfers as noted in the itinerary
- » Orientation meeting with a Country Walkers representative
- » Luggage transfers between the hotels
- » Detailed Route Notes and maps (mailed to you approximately one month prior to your departure)
- » 24-hour tour-related support provided by Country Walkers' local partner
- » 24-hour One Call International Emergency Hotline and Travel Assistance
- » The unbeatable and cumulative experience of the Country Walkers staff

LET THE JOURNEY BEGIN

Prior to your adventure you will be asked to sign a Participation Agreement and you will receive:

- » A Guest Information Form to complete and return at least 45 days prior to your tour
- » Luggage tags
- » Route Notes and maps
- » Your trip invoice

GRATUITIES

Standard gratuities for all hotels, meals, and services that are included in your tour price will be paid by Country Walkers; however additional tips are always welcome. Should you wish to tip for meals or services not included in the cost of the tour, please do so at your discretion. Local currency is preferred.

Traveling To and From Your Tour

STARTING POINT

Dublin, Ireland

Based upon individual arrival times

A tour representative will meet you in the Arrivals Hall of the Dublin Airport (holding a sign with Country Walkers and/or your name on it) or at a Dublin city hotel to transfer you approximately one hour to the first hotel in Glendalough. He/she will provide an orientation meeting, ensure you are comfortably settled, and answer any questions you may have.

In order to arrange your arrival transfer and orientation meeting, please provide us with your arrival and departure details by returning your Guest Information Form at least 45 days prior to the departure.

Please note that the tour price includes one arrival transfer from Dublin to Glendalough on Day 1 of the tour. If traveling in a group of two or more with separate arrival times, additional charges will apply for multiple transfers.

MOST CONVENIENT AIRPORT

Dublin Airport (DUB), Dublin

dublinairport.com

GETTING TO THE STARTING POINT

Aer Lingus (aerlingus.com), Ireland's national airline, operates regular, direct scheduled flights between Dublin International Airport and numerous cities worldwide. From the U.S., direct routes are Boston, Chicago (O'Hare), and New York (JFK). American Airlines (aa.com), Delta (delta.com) and United (united.com) all fly direct to Dublin from at least one of those same cities. From Canada, direct flights are operated by Air Canada (aircanada.com). Most of the major European airlines have direct flights to Dublin.

If you are spending pre-tour time in Dublin, you may reach the city center by bus or taxi.

» **Bus:** Dublin Airport is accessible by over 1,000 buses and coaches daily, reaching many areas in and around Dublin and towns and cities across Ireland.

- An excellent airport-to-city shuttle bus service called **AirCoach** (aircoach.ie) operates 24 hours a day, making runs at 15-minute intervals. Its buses go direct from the airport to Dublin's city center and south side, including stops at most of the major hotels in Dublin City. The journey to the city center takes about 45 minutes and fares are €6–€7 for adults one-way, depending on where you are going; and to Ballsbridge, Dún Laoghaire or Dalkey, around €10. Tickets may be purchased at Dublin Airport from any Aircoach staff member at the Aircoach departure stands at either Terminal 1, Arrivals Road, or Terminal 2, Departures Road. You may also purchase your ticket from your driver when boarding the coach or online at aircoach.ie.
 - Dublin Bus's route 747, otherwise known as the **Airlink** (dublinbus.ie/Your-Journey1/Timetables/Airport-Services/), provides express coach services from the airport into central Dublin and beyond. Buses go to the city's central bus station, Busáras, on Store Street and on to Connolly and Heuston railway stations. Service runs daily from 6:00 a.m. until 11:30 p.m. (Sun 7:00 a.m.–11:20 p.m.), with departures every 15 to 20 minutes. One-way fare is €6 for adults.
 - Finally, **Dublin Bus** (dublinbus.ie) has regular daily connections between the airport and the city center from 6:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m. The one-way trip takes about 30 minutes, and the one-way fare is €6 adults, €3 children.
 - Consult the travel information desk in the arrivals concourse to figure out which bus takes you closest to your hotel.
- » **Taxi:** for speed and ease—especially if you have a lot of luggage—a taxi is the best way to reach the city center. Depending on your destination, fares average between €20 and €35. A tip of a couple of euros is standard. Taxis are available directly outside Terminal 1 & Terminal 2. Passengers should follow Taxi signage to the designated taxi stands. A taxi dispatcher is available at either stand if you require any further information or assistance.

PRE- AND POST-TOUR ACCOMMODATIONS

We recommend spending at least one day prior to and/or following the tour to explore the city of Dublin. For hotel and restaurant suggestions, please visit visitdublin.com.

ENDING POINT

Dublin, Ireland

Based upon individual departure times

A transfer will be provided (35 minutes to 1 hour depending on traffic conditions) from your last hotel in Enniskerry to the Dublin Airport or a Dublin city hotel. Please note that the journey from Enniskerry is on small roads and thus the transfer time may vary based upon traffic. Please check airline schedules carefully. If you plan to schedule return flights immediately following the tour's conclusion, please call your airline directly for specific check-in requirements.

In order to arrange your departure transfer to Dublin, please provide us with your arrival and departure details by returning your Guest Information Form at least 45 days prior to the departure.

Please note that the tour price includes one departure transfer from Enniskerry to Dublin on Day 5 of the tour. If traveling in a group of two or more with separate departure times, additional charges will apply for multiple transfers.

Information & Policies

GUARANTEED DEPARTURES

Country Walkers guarantees the departure of every tour*—no exceptions and no disappointments! From the moment you make your deposit, you can start preparing for your adventure. We take care of all the details to ensure a seamless, self-guided experience. For best availability, reserve your trip today!

**except in cases of force majeure*

RESERVATIONS

Reservations for this tour may be made by calling Country Walkers at 800.464.9255. A \$350 per person deposit is required at the time of the reservation request. Final tour cost is due 90 days prior to tour departure date. As arrangements are confirmed at least a year in advance, the tour price is subject to change.

GUEST RESPONSIBILITIES

Each guest has the responsibility to select a trip appropriate to his/her abilities and interests and to prepare for the trip by carefully reading the confirmation materials. To join this trip, you must be in good health and capable of completing activities as described in the day-to-day itinerary. Our in-house experts welcome the opportunity to discuss the tour in more detail. In order to meet your needs, we ask that you please share any relevant physical limitations or health conditions when you make your reservation.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellations received 91 days or more prior to the tour start date will incur a loss of \$150; cancellations received between 90 and 61 days prior to the tour start date incur a loss of 25 percent of the tour price; there are no refunds within 60 days of the tour start date. Up to 91 days prior to departure, you may transfer your reservation, depending on availability, from one departure to another in the same calendar year at no cost*. Please notify us in writing. Please note that the tiered tour price is based on a guarantee of a specified number of guests—should your group decrease in size, we reserve the right to alter the per person price if necessary as reflected in the Tour Price table.

**One transfer per year; afterwards a modest per person transfer fee will apply. Please note that tours with seasonal prices may involve a higher price.*

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We offer guests the opportunity to purchase a Travel Protection Plan. Please contact us for details.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Air or other travel arrangements to and from your tour are not included in the price of your trip. We encourage you to contact your local travel agent, or Better Travel, a Vermont-based agency (800.331.6996 or bettertravel@madriver.com), for any additional air, hotel, rail, or transfer arrangements you may need.