

Ireland: County Clare, Killarney & Dingle

Tour-Only Itinerary

No visit to southwest Ireland could be complete without a stay in the vibrant town of Dingle—teeming with traditional Irish music, fresh seafood, and the stunning natural beauty of its coastline. Here, in the company of local leaders, you'll stroll the dramatic sandspit at Inch Beach, then relax at your lovely waterfront hotel against the backdrop of Dingle Bay. Hike the three peaks of Annascaul—with views of lofty mountains to the north and the shores of the shimmering blue Atlantic to the south. Along the way, explore the Kerry Peninsula and Killarney—hiking through the Gap of Dunloe, a mountain pass that cuts through Ireland's tallest range. With included visits to historic castles and quaint Irish cottages, your local guides introduce you to the authentic Ireland—enhanced by their deep personal insight and irresistible Irish charm.



Highlights

- On a jaunty horse-drawn cart (or by foot if you prefer), enter the narrow Gap of Dunloe—a rugged mountain pass with beautiful scenery.
- Beneath the ever-changing skies of Killarney National Park, view elegant mountains and stunning lakes as you walk along the scenic Kerry Way.
- Embark on a cruise to Ross Castle while learning of Ireland's most well-known visitors.
- Walk the legendary Wild Atlantic Way and experience the power of the Atlantic Ocean as waves crash beneath remote, weather-beaten cliffs.
- Explore the life and birthplace of Irish seaman and Antarctic explorer Tom Crean, Ireland's famous unsung hero.

On all Fully-Guided Adventures you can count on ...



Expert local guides to introduce you to the best of your destination.



Gracious accommodations that are a clean, comfortable home away from home.



Off-the-beaten-path places you'd never find on your own.



Experts to handle all the details.



A maximum of 18 fun-loving fellow travelers to share the journey.



Air Packages include plane tickets, airport car service, and pre- and post-tour accommodations.



Delicious, authentic multi-course meals—virtually all are included.

Activity Level

This tour is one of our Guided Walking Adventures, rated easy to moderate with an average of 2 to 5 hours of hiking per day. The trails feature a combination of paved roads and easy terrain, mixed with moderate hills, moorland, and uneven footpaths. Due to Ireland's climate, the footpaths can often be wet and muddy.

DAY 1

Your Country Walkers Vacation Begins

Muckross Park Gate to Muckross House; 2 miles, easy. Muckross House and Gardens, Muckross

Abbey to Cahernane House Hotel; 3.5 miles, easy

After breakfast on your own, meet one of your Country Walkers leaders at the meeting hotel in Ennis at 8:30 a.m.

Following a brief introductory meeting, you'll travel by private bus from Ennis to Killarney—a journey of approximately two hours, depending on traffic. Your first stop is Killarney National Park. Be sure you're prepared for a day of walking, as your bus will continue on to the hotel with your luggage after dropping you off at the park entrance.

Here, you'll meet your second Country Walkers leader and begin exploring the breathtaking landscapes of the Killarney Lakes, framed by the towering Shehy and Tomies mountains. Your walk will lead you through a lush meadow, along a peaceful river, and through shaded woodlands to the lakeshore. Across the water, admire the forested slopes of Tomies Wood, stretching up toward the mountain peaks.

Continue along the shoreline through a picturesque woodland glade until you arrive at the magnificent Muckross House, a stately Victorian-era manor.

Lunch is included today at the manor's Garden Restaurant. Afterward, you can choose to enjoy a relaxing stroll through the beautifully maintained gardens—featuring ornamental shrubs, colorful flower beds, and wide lawns—or continue walking along the scenic Muckross Lake loop. This trail takes you through ancient woodlands, over Brickeen Bridge, and across Dinis Island to the Meeting of the Waters and the historic Old Weir Bridge. Along the way, take in tranquil lake views, quiet beaches, and rocky coves.

You'll then rejoin your bus and travel to Cahernane House Hotel in Killarney—your home for the next three nights—picking up non-walkers from Muckross House en route.

Take some time to settle into this charming country manor house before joining your fellow travelers and leaders for a welcome reception and dinner this evening.

Included Meals: Lunch, Dinner

DAY 2

Glenbeigh and the Kerry Way. Independent Exploration of Killarney

Start of Walk to Meet Minibus; 3 miles, easy or Start of Walk to Glenbeigh; 5 miles, easy to moderate.

Afternoon: Glenbeigh to Curra Hill; 2 miles, easy

Today's walk takes you to the northern part of the Kerry Peninsula. After a short drive, your bus will drop you at the trailhead—a quiet, paved country road that loops around Seefin Mountain. As you walk, enjoy sweeping views over Lough Caragh. At the end of the road, you'll have the option to rejoin the minibus and meet the group in Glenbeigh or continue on foot along a mountain path through Windy Gap, a section of the Kerry Way—an iconic 135-mile walking route that follows old droving paths and coach roads.

You'll enjoy a picnic lunch prepared by your leaders in the village of Glenbeigh. After lunch, you have two options for your afternoon activity. You can shuttle two miles to Rossbehy Creek and take a short walk along White Strand, a beautiful sandy beach that stretches into Dingle Bay from a small peninsula. Alternatively, you may walk along the banks of the River Behy and follow the Kerry Way through the wooded slopes of Curra Hill before shuttling down to Rossbehy Beach.

This evening, dinner is on your own. Take a stroll into town and explore Killarney's vibrant culinary scene. Surrounded by the natural beauty of Killarney National Park, the town offers a lively mix of historic charm, scenic views, cozy restaurants, and traditional pubs—making it the perfect base for exploring the nearby mountains and lakes.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 3

Gap of Dunloe

Kate Kearney's Cottage to Lord Brandon's Cottage; 7 miles, easy to moderate

This morning, you'll drive to Kate Kearney's Cottage, once home to the legendary 19th-century beauty known for crafting and selling an illicit brew "very fierce and wild, requiring not less than seven times its own quantity of water to tame and subdue it." Today, the cottage is a popular shop and pub—and the starting point for your walk. From here, you'll ascend a steady, paved incline into the spectacular glacial valley known as the Gap of Dunloe. The trail follows a mountain stream through rugged terrain, flanked by massive boulders, until you reach the mountain pass between the MacGillycuddy's Reeks—Ireland's

tallest mountain range at 3,414 feet—and the Purple Mountains. Then, you'll descend into the remote and peaceful Black Valley. Throughout the journey, a horse-drawn jaunting cart will be available if you'd like to take a break and enjoy the ride.

From the valley, you'll board open boats and cruise across the lakes to Ross Castle, a 15th-century tower house, as your boatmen share colorful tales of Napoleon, King Brian Boru, and others who passed through these storied waters. Afterward, you'll return to Killarney, where an included lunch awaits.

The afternoon and evening are yours to enjoy at leisure. Explore the vibrant town of Killarney, mingle with locals, and perhaps catch some live traditional music in one of its lively pubs.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 4

Killarney National Park to Killarney. Visit Inch Beach

Copper Mines and Ross Island Loop Walk; 2 miles, easy. Ross Castle to Killarney House and Gardens; 3 miles, easy

Before breakfast, pack your luggage, as today you'll depart Killarney for Dingle. The morning begins with a short journey to Ross Castle, where you'll enjoy a peaceful walk through woodlands with scenic viewpoints overlooking the lake and surrounding mountains. Along the way, you'll discover an old mining trail and the remnants of ancient copper mines dating back to the Bronze Age.

From Ross Castle, you may choose to travel by bus to the town center for a few hours of free time, or continue walking along the Deenagh River Walk, a scenic path that follows the lakeshore and river to Killarney House and Gardens. Soon after leaving Ross Castle, look across the lake for Inisfallen Island, home to the ruins of a 6th-century monastery. As you approach the river walk, keep an eye out for native Red Deer or Sika Deer, which often graze along the shoreline. Continuing along the path, you'll enter the beautifully landscaped gardens of Killarney House. You may choose to explore the house and gardens, stroll through the town center, or visit St. Mary's Cathedral before leaving Killarney.

You'll have free time to enjoy an independent lunch in Killarney before continuing on to the Dingle Peninsula. En route, you'll stop at the impressive Inch Beach, a wide, windswept sand spit and dune

system that separates Castlemaine Harbor from the Atlantic Ocean. You'll have time to walk its stunning shoreline and take in the dramatic coastal scenery before continuing to Dingle.

This evening is yours to explore lively Dingle Town, just a 10-minute walk from your hotel, or relax at the comfortably appointed property. Dinner is on your own tonight. You might choose to enjoy fresh, seasonal dishes at the hotel's Coastguard Restaurant (reservations recommended), or opt for a more casual meal at the Blaskets Bar.

Included Meals: Breakfast

DAY 5

Annascaul Village and South Pole Inn. Independent Exploration of Dingle Town

Three Peaks of Annascaul; 4.5 miles, moderate or Kerry Camino and Village Loop Walk; from 4 miles, easy

Start your morning with a leisurely breakfast overlooking the blue-glass waters of Dingle Harbor. Early risers may wish to wander into Dingle Town, a village often described as "an artistic girl who's out for rowdy fun." Browse the eclectic shops along the shoreline and watch as fishermen return with their morning catch.

Later, you'll travel about 15 minutes to Annascaul, a quiet, authentic Irish village nestled at the foothills of the Slieve Mish Mountains, in the heart of the Dingle Peninsula. This charming town is also the celebrated birthplace of Tom Crean, the legendary explorer who accompanied Ernest Shackleton on three Antarctic expeditions. With mountains to the north and beaches to the south, Annascaul is truly a walker's paradise.

You'll experience its beauty firsthand during today's trail options. A moderate loop walk passes rolling sheep pastures and climbs to the area's iconic "three peaks," a series of rises and descents that include Brackloon and Knockafeehane. Along the way, enjoy sweeping views across a patchwork of green farmland, scattered farmhouses, and the dramatic southern Kerry landscape. For a gentler option, choose a shorter walk along a section of the Kerry Camino, offering beautiful views over Inch Beach. Later, delve deeper into Annascaul with a peaceful riverside walk that crosses scenic bridges and passes notable landmarks, including a statue of Tom Crean, proudly standing in front of the South Pole Inn, which he

opened after his return from the Antarctic.

After lunch together in Annascaul, you'll return to your hotel in Dingle. Enjoy the many amenities available, including the pool, outdoor hot tub, and the on-site Peninsula Spa.

Dinner is on your own this evening.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch

DAY 6

Visit Slea Head and the Blasket Interpretive Center. The Wild Atlantic Way to Ballydavid Pier

Lub na Cille Walk; 3 miles, easy. Ballydavid Coastline Walk; options from 2 miles, easy

This morning, you set out toward Slea Head, where small farms cling to the steep slopes along the stunning Dingle Way. Your coastal walk begins between emerald-green farmland and the deep-blue Atlantic, revealing remnants of Iron Age life—most notably, the beehive huts once used by Eremite monks and early farmers. As you round the headland, you're rewarded with breathtaking views of the Blasket Islands, once the westernmost inhabited lands in Europe. By 1953, the population had dwindled to just 22, and with no access to emergency services, the remaining residents relocated to the mainland.

Your walk continues along grassy paths that wind through sheep-dotted pastures, past curious donkeys, over stiles, and along ancient stone walls. Each hill climbed offers expansive views of the dramatic Irish landscape.

Afterward, visit The Blasket Center, a fascinating cultural and heritage museum that brings the story of traditional island life vividly to life. Through exhibitions, interactive displays, artifacts, and audio-visual presentations, the center chronicles the resilience and hardship of the island's former residents. During your visit, enjoy lunch on your own at the center's Bialann Café, where floor-to-ceiling windows frame panoramic views of the sea and islands.

Following lunch, you'll travel north along the Wild Atlantic Way, tracing more spectacular coastline on foot. Your afternoon walk delivers you to Ballydavid, where you can explore the pier and perhaps enjoy a pint

overlooking Smerwick Harbor. On your return to Dingle, you'll stop to visit the medieval ruins of Kilmalkedar, a National Monument of Ireland. This remarkable site preserves one of the most significant early Christian settlements in the country, influential in the evolution of the Irish Church from the 6th to the 12th centuries.

Later this afternoon, enjoy free time to explore Dingle Town at your own pace—where music spills from cozy pubs into the streets—or relax at your hotel with its award-winning leisure club, pool, and spa. This evening, gather for a sumptuous final dinner at the hotel's acclaimed Coastguard Restaurant, with sweeping views over Dingle Harbor and the mountains of the Iveragh Peninsula.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

DAY 7

Your Country Walkers Vacation Ends

Your tour concludes at the hotel after breakfast. Please note: The hotel staff will be happy to assist you in booking a taxi, at your own expense, to either Cork Airport (approximately two hours and 15 minutes) or Shannon Airport (approximately 2.5 hours). Alternatively, you are welcome to join the motorcoach to Mallow train station, which departs at 8:00 a.m. The drive takes approximately two hours.

Included Meals: Breakfast

What's Included

Tour Only

Air Package

Exceptional boutique accommodations	✓	✓
13 on-tour meals: 7 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 2 dinners	✓	✓
Local leaders with you throughout tour	✓	✓
Local wine and/or beer with dinner	✓	✓
Entrance fees and special events as noted in the itinerary	✓	✓
Telescopic walking sticks provided on tour	✓	✓
Roundtrip airfare		✓
One extra night in Ennis and one extra night in Dublin		✓
Airport car service for arrival and departure		✓
Pre- and post-trip breakfasts		✓
Business-class upgrades available		✓