

A TOUCH OF ROMANCE IRELAND TOUR 2027

A Private Chauffeur-Driven Tour

This magical eight-day tour combines the stunning beauty of Ireland and the warmth of her people with an added touch of romance. We can customize any itinerary to include any additional interests you may have.

DAY 1 DUBLIN

Morning arrival, where we make our way to our hotel, Clontarf Castle. Picture the scene: hordes of Viking warriors driven from Clontarf Strand by Brian Boru, High King of Ireland. They would ultimately have their revenge, for the legendary warlord was slain as he knelt in prayer, close to where Clontarf Castle stands today. The rest of the day is free to enjoy Dublin. Want an excuse to cozy up over a drink? Be sure to stop at the Dawson Lounge, also known as Dublin's smallest pub. It has only a few seats in its tiny underground bar, which means you have no choice but to snuggle up over a few pints. Enjoy a romantic welcome dinner this evening at Clontarf, and a complimentary bottle of champagne in your room. **Overnight at Clontarf Castle.**

DAY 2 DUBLIN

Today you may want to start with a visit to stately St. Patrick's Cathedral. It may not have the relics of Saint Valentine, but Ireland's national cathedral does have a "til death do us part" love story: it is the final resting place of the author Jonathan Swift and of Stella, whom he called "one of the most beautiful, graceful and agreeable young ladies in London." While strolling the streets you may want to stop at the Guinness Storehouse for a pint, as the seventh-floor circular glass Gravity Bar offers amazing views of Dublin. Why not also visit Love Lane, part of the Love the Lanes initiative by Dublin City Council, in which artists were given free rein to create an open-air gallery, one of them a very romantic tribute. Make your way back to your hotel to relax and plan dinner. Tonight you may want to dine at Trocadero, which prides itself on being Dublin's theatre restaurant. It has attracted stars of the stage and screen for decades, and diners from Dublin and beyond return to St. Andrew's Street time and again for the excellent food and wonderful atmosphere. Enjoy dinner in the glow of candlelight for a meal you will not soon forget. **Overnight at Clontarf Castle.**

DAY 3 DUBLIN – LIMERICK – TRALEE

Morning departure from Dublin. We travel through Kildare, with an optional stop at the Irish National Stud & Gardens, including its Japanese Gardens, and then cross the Midlands to Limerick, Ireland's third-largest city and home of author Frank McCourt, who wrote *Angela's Ashes*. Its origins date to the 9th century, when Vikings settled the site. Limerick is known as the "City of the Broken Treaty": the Treaty of Limerick (1691), which surrendered the city to William of Orange, promised respect for the rights of Catholics, but its terms were soon breached. The treaty was signed on the Treaty Stone, which can still be seen today. King John's Castle is a fortified 13th-century castle on King's Island in the heart of medieval Limerick, overlooking the River Shannon, and brings to life the stories of the people through political upheaval, war and famine. We then continue through quaint, picturesque Adare, famous for its thatched-roof cottages, to romantic Ballyseede Castle. Take a step back in time at a hotel steeped in history that offers luxurious surroundings within 30 acres of private gardens and woodland. **Romantic dinner and overnight at Ballyseede Castle.**

DAY 4

DINGLE

Today the journey begins with some of the most magnificent scenery in all of Ireland. The little town of Dingle is straight out of a storybook, with fishing boats in the harbor and tiny, brightly painted pubs that portray a time that has stood still. Its population of just under 2,000 is welcomed by around 50 pubs. Worth the wait is the native seafood chowder served at lunchtime with freshly baked brown bread. We continue on to Sleat Head. Along the way we see beehive-style huts (clocháin) associated with early Christian monks, overlooking the rugged Blasket Islands. There is no other landscape in western Europe with the density and variety of archaeological monuments found on the Dingle Peninsula. **Overnight at Ballyseede Castle.**

DAY 5

TRALEE – CONG

After breakfast we depart Tralee and take the Tarbert Ferry into County Clare and head towards the west coast and the Wild Atlantic Way. You may want to tour the Burren (Bhoireann), “the stony place.” It is home to rare alpine plants, delicate wonders that grow in the thin soil and crevices, including gentians, orchids and maidenhair ferns. The survival of both alpine and Mediterranean plants in this unusual habitat continues to delight visitors. The Burren contains dozens of megalithic tombs, Celtic crosses and the ruins of Corcomroe, a 12th-century Cistercian abbey. You can find villages abandoned since Famine times and green roads on which you can walk for miles without seeing a car. We continue to the majestic Cliffs of Moher, which rise up to 700 feet above the Atlantic. O'Brien's Tower is the best place from which to view the cliffs, and from this vantage point you can see the Aran Islands as well as the Twelve Bens and the Maumturk Mountains to the north in Connemara. As you leave the cliffs, you travel through the little village of Liscannor, and across the bay you can see the seaside village and golfers' mecca, Lahinch. We continue through vibrant Galway to Cong and Ashford Castle. Ashford Castle is a five-star hotel and one of the Leading Hotels of the World. This 13th-century fairy-tale castle overlooks a picturesque lake and is one of the most luxurious castle hotels in Ireland. On the grounds of the estate you will feel transported back in time. Ashford was once home to the Guinness family, renowned for their brewing expertise. Perhaps you will choose to walk through the estate's spectacular gardens. Ashford Castle also offers an equestrian center, a spa and a 9-hole golf course. Tonight we enjoy a gourmet dinner in the George V dining room. Sleep like a king or queen this evening. **Dinner and overnight at Ashford Castle.**

DAY 6

CONG – CONNEMARA – CONG

After breakfast we meet our Driver Guide in the lobby of the hotel. Connemara (Connmhaicne Mara, “the tribe of Cormac by the sea”), with its white sand beaches, dark bogs and tall, jagged mountains, is one of the most scenic and unspoiled areas in the country. Wild and rugged, it is in some places still Irish-speaking. We travel first to Clifden (An Clochán), founded in the early 19th century by John D'Arcy, which retains much of its Georgian architecture. Placed at the head of a broad Atlantic bay and nestled below the Twelve Bens, the town is blessed with a beautiful setting. Known as the capital of Connemara, Clifden is a lively place full of shops, pubs, restaurants and cafés. There is an optional stop at the Connemara Brewing Company. We then make our way back to Ashford Castle for your romantic massage. **Overnight at Ashford Castle.**

DAY 7

CONG – CLONMACNOISE –
CAVAN

After a full Irish breakfast we travel via the Irish Midlands to Clonmacnoise. This ancient monastic site in County Offaly dates back almost 1,500 years. St. Ciarán, the son of an Ulsterman who had settled in Connaught, chose the site in AD 545 for its ideal location at the junction of river and road travel in Celtic Ireland. The monastery lies on the east bank of the River Shannon, in what was then the Kingdom of Meath, in a position so central that it became the burial place of many of the kings of Connaught as well as those of Tara. Ciarán was educated by St. Diarmuid of Clonard and St. Finian, tutor of the ancient saints of Ireland. His last place of formal learning before establishing his own monastery was with St. Enda on Inis Mór, off the coast of Galway, where under the strict discipline of Enda he studied sacred learning and prayer and worked with his hands. We then make our way to Cabra Castle for our overnight. **Dinner and overnight at Cabra Castle.**

DAY 8

CAVAN – DUBLIN AIRPORT

Today make your way to Dublin Airport by taxi or private transfer (not included) for your flight home and some duty-free shopping. You will already be planning your next trip to the Emerald Isle.

YOUR DISTINGUISHED PRIVATE TOUR INCLUDES

DRIVER GUIDE

- Professional, blue-badged Irish Driver Guide in a deluxe Mercedes vehicle from Day 3 (depart Dublin) until arrival in Cavan on Day 7

ACCOMMODATIONS

- 7 nights as follows, or similar:
- **Dublin – Clontarf Castle** – 2 nights, 4-star clontarfcastle.ie
- **Tralee – Ballyseede Castle** – 2 nights, 4-star ballyseedecastle.com
- **Cong – Ashford Castle** – 2 nights, 5-star ashfordcastle.com
- **Cavan – Cabra Castle** – 1 night, 4-star cabracastle.com

MEALS

- Full Irish breakfast daily (except day of arrival)
- Romantic dinners at Clontarf Castle, Ballyseede Castle, Ashford Castle and Cabra Castle

ROMANTIC EXTRAS

- Bottle of champagne on arrival
- Romantic hour of massage at Ashford Castle

ALSO INCLUDED

- Fully escorted sightseeing as per itinerary
- All Driver's expenses (except tip to the driver)
- Hotel taxes

NOT INCLUDED

- Tip to your Driver Guide
- Any items of a personal nature
- Dinners and suggested optional sightseeing mentioned in the itinerary
- Admissions not listed above. These are paid directly to each venue so that, because a private tour is meant to be flexible, you never pay for a site you later decide not to visit

This is a suggested itinerary and can be customized to your interests. Dates, hotels and pricing are provided on request.