

Cycling Safaris

CLARE & CONNEMARA

NEW Self-Guided Tour 2016

8 days/7 nights



A popular request is to combine the unique features of the Burren with the “savage beauty” of Connemara, all within the confines of a weeks cycling. Last year we have connected these two regions neatly by utilising the ferry to Inishmore and spending the night on the biggest of the Aran Islands. A wonderful opportunity to explore the West Coast of Ireland

On our self led tours, you can relax while we organise your seven nights accommodation, bike hire, daily luggage transfer between your different locations and of course route details.

TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 ENNIS, CO. CLARE

On arrival in Ennis you should make your way to your B&B. Check in is after 2.00pm on your day of arrival. We will send you on full accommodation details closer to your departure date. A folder containing your route details and information on collection of your bikes will be at the guesthouse.

Ennis is a fantastic town for music and entertainment so you can relax for the rest of the day and take in the atmosphere.

DAY 2 ENNIS TO DOOLIN 18 miles / 30 kms

You get away from the hustle and bustle of the town by taking a short transfer to the village of Inagh where you will be fitted out with your bike. You cycle by farmyards through backroads towards the Atlantic Coast and the town of Lahinch where you can stop for lunch.



In the afternoon there is the visit of the Cliffs of Moher rising a spectacular 660ft up from the Atlantic waves below. You can stroll along the cliff face and watch the birds gliding in the updraft. After visiting the cliffs you head to the village of Doolin. That night you can have a pub meal and enjoy the wealth of traditional music for which the village is famous.



DAY 3

LOOP OF THE BURREN

33 miles / 52 kms

Today's cycle will bring you to the very best the area has to offer. In the morning a beautiful cycle along the coast with Galway Bay and views of the Aran Islands on your left and the limestone cliffs which make the Burren such a unique landscape on your right. After lunch in the seaside village of Ballyvaughan you continue on your journey into the heart of this magnificent landscape, cycling through this limestone plateau back towards the coast and the village of Doolin



DAY 4

ARAN ISLANDS

22 miles / 35kms



You start the day by taking a morning ferry to Inis Mor, the largest of the Aran Islands

The day can then be spent touring the unique landscape of the island with its wealth of ancient stone forts and monastic sights.

You spend the night on the island



DAY 5

ARAN ISLANDS TO LEENANE

29 miles / 45 kms

You take the morning ferry back to the mainland but this time our destination is the port of Rossaveal in Connemara.

Today's cycle takes you through the beauty of Connemara on quiet backroads on your way to the village of Leenane located on the shores of Killary Harbour where you spend the night.



DAY 6 LEENANE TO CLIFDEN

35 miles / 58kms

You cycle into the heart of Connemara overlooked by the Twelve Bens mountain range and visit Kylemore Abbey, a wedding gift from a wealthy Liverpool businessman to his wife in 1868.



You then cycle along quiet backroads past small fields with grazing cattle to the seaside village of Cleggan where you can stop for lunch. In the afternoon you follow the scenic coast road to Clifden, the capital of Connemara, where you spend the next two nights in a pretty and bustling town of art galleries, cafes, pubs and restaurants established 200 years ago at the whim of John D'Arcy



DAY 7 REST DAY IN CLIFDEN



The day can be spent in rest and relaxation or you can take part in a variety of activities including walking, golf or horse riding.

You can also spend the day just relaxing on one of the many beautiful white sandy beaches which line the indented coast line or visit the landing site of the first transatlantic flight by Alcock and Brown.

The town itself is a nice place to spend time visiting the museum, art galleries and book shops and cafes. In the evening there are a number of bars which have traditional music sessions.

2016 TOUR DATES

Our Self guided tours can start any day from April to mid October

2016 TOUR PRICE

- €805.00 per person sharing May, June & September
- €845.00 per person sharing July & August
- €235.00 single occupancy (if travelling with others)
- €310.00 solo tour supplement (if travelling alone)

WHAT THE BROCHURE PRICE INCLUDES

- Seven nights accommodation with full Irish breakfast
- One Evening Meal (in Leenane)
- 24 speed touring bike with bag carrier, mudguards, water bottle carrier and a small pannier bag.
- Route maps and details
- Luggage transfer each day
- Ferry ticket to the Aran Islands
- Transfer from Ennis to start of cycle on Day 2
- Transfer from Clifden back to Galway at the end of the tour
- 24 hour service hotline

Meal expenses

All breakfasts are included in the tour price. Clients buy their own lunches and dinner throughout the trip. You should budget between €10 and €15 for lunch each day and an evening meal each night costing somewhere between €20 and €30.

Price of other extras (these are only approximate prices and will vary from region to region)

Coffee/tea	€2.00	Glass of Beer	€2.80 (this is half a pint!)
Soft drink	€2.00	Pint of Beer	€4.80 (this is a full pint!)
Bottle of water	€1.70	Bottle of wine	€18.00+

Are there facilities to change money?

There are banks in Ennis and Clifden (open Monday - Friday, 10.00am - 4.00pm) and cashpoint machines in Lahinch. Credit cards are also widely accepted.

WHAT TO BRING

*We would seriously recommend that you bring **padded cycling shorts and / or a gel saddle cover** which will definitely make your days cycling more comfortable. Cycling gloves are also a good investment. You can also bring your own saddle which should be possible to attach to our bikes.

*We provide small **pannier bags** (not waterproof) in which you can keep your day-to-day items. Otherwise you may prefer to use a daypack and there are back carriers on each bike for this purpose.

*We do not provide **rain gear** so be sure to bring your own light weight waterproofs.

***We do not provide helmets on our self led tours. It is very important you wear one, so please bring your own.**

*Don't forget **sun cream, sunglasses, sun hat** as well as a bathing suit for that refreshing dip in the Atlantic Ocean.

*Finally if you wish to use **toe clips** please bring your own pedals with toe clips (and spanner) which you can attach to our bikes (the pedals on our bikes do not accommodate toe clips).

BACK UP SERVICE

As this is a self led trip you do not have the back-up of a guide and support van. Our aim is to allow you feel like an independent traveller, free to cycle each day at your own pace while at the same time having the security of knowing that your luggage will be waiting for you in your next accommodation.

If for any reason you are unable to cycle please contact our Dublin office (+353 1 2600749) so we can liaise with the luggage transfers to organise the transfer of bike(s) and person(s). Please note that you will be charged for any additional runs made on your behalf.

Our bikes are serviced after each tour so they should be humming perfectly! If you experience small problems with the bike (i.e., a puncture) you will have a spare tube, pump and tyre lever. You can of course phone our office if you experience any major problems (+353 1 2600749). You will also be given a mobile number when you arrive in Ireland that you can contact 24 hours a day in case of any emergencies en route.

BIKE

In 2016 we will be using the **GIANT CITY** bicycles for our tours.



To see the specification for this you can visit the website:

www.giant-bicycles.com/en-gb/bikes/model/2014.giant.escape.city.2/14980/66560/ (Gents model)

www.giant-bicycles.com/en-gb/bikes/model/alight.2.city/19207/77386/ (Ladies model)

Bikes come in different sizes and in gents and ladies style frames. It is important you give us your height on booking so that we can allocate the correct bike to you. Childrens bikes, tag alongs and baby seats are available on request.

This is not an arduous tour however there are some hills on the route but you have all day to do the cycling. With the exception of the roads in and out of Ennis, the traffic on the route should be quite light. You should however cycle carefully at all times, especially when going downhill or during any rain showers.

ACCOMMODATION

The accommodation is allocated on a twin sharing basis. We stay in a mixture of B&Bs and small hotels, where we hope to fuse the best standard we can get with the warmest welcome. We ensure en suite facilities.

We do reserve the right to change the accommodation around during the tour, but we will always endeavour to provide a high standard.

What happens if I am delayed on the first night?

Please contact the guesthouse to let them know if you are arriving late.

What if someone needs to contact me during the tour?

If you have a mobile phone which operates on the GSM 900 system, this will be compatible with the Irish system. We will send you a full list of where you are staying on the tour before departure

Looking for extra accommodation at the beginning or end of the tour?

We would be happy to help you organise extra accommodation in Ennis for the start or Clifden or the end of the week. If you would prefer to organise it yourself please see the websites below. If you are planning to spend a few days in Dublin at the end of the tour, we recommend that you book accommodation well in advance as the capital is very busy on weekends. We do not actually organise accommodation in Dublin but there are a huge range of websites offering a reservation service. A good starting place is Dublin Tourism (www.visitdublin.com) and www.booking.com.

Other accommodation websites for Dublin/Ireland









www.discoverireland.ie

www.dublinhotels.com

www.irelandhotels.com

www.hiddenireland.com

Accommodation list – subject to availability

Day 1: Ennis Westbrook House westbrookguesthouse.tripod.com		Day 4: Inishmore Pier House pierhousearan.com	
Day 2 & 3: Doolin Suantrai B&B suantraidoolin.com		Day 4: Inishmore Aran Islands Hotel aranislandshotel.com	
Day 2 & 3: Doolin Seascope homepage.eircom.net/~seascope/index.htm		Day 5: Leenane Leenane Hotel (Dinner inclusive) leenanehotel.com	
Day 2 & 3: Doolin Toomulin B&B homepage.eircom.net/~toomullin/hse		Day 6 & 7: Clifden Foyle's Hotel foyleshotel.com	

GENERAL INFORMATION

Weather

Because we are an island located near the gulf stream Ireland has a very mild climate making it ideal for cycling. We recommend that you bring your rain gear as well as your sun hat as a day that starts with rain can end with glorious sunshine! The temperature range during the summer is between 15 and 22 degrees centigrade (60 to 72 degrees Fahrenheit)

Visa requirements

If you hold an EU passport you only need to make sure your passport is valid for the period of your stay. All other nationalities require a passport that is valid for 3 months beyond the intended length of stay. Most nationalities including the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand do not require visas for Ireland and receive an automatic 90 day visitor's visa on arrival. If your nationality is not mentioned here you should check with your travel agent or consular office.

Electrical current/Mobile Phone

The standard electrical supply is 220 volts AC (50 cycles). To use small appliances mainland European visitors may require a plug adaptor to fit our 3-pin flat or 2-pin round wall sockets. The mobile phone system in use is a digital GSM 900 system.

Websites on Ireland

Some recommended websites on Ireland that might help you organise your trip if you are planning to spend more time in the country before or after your holiday with us.

www.discoverireland.com – Irish Tourist Board (Failte Ireland) official website providing a wealth of information

www.enniswalkingtours.com - guided walking tours of Ennis that give a lively and entertaining way to appreciate this historic medieval town.

www.heritageireland.ie info on historical sites