

Cycling Safaris

CONNEMARA, GALWAY & MAYO

SELF GUIDED TOUR 2017

265km | 8 days/7 nights



This tour explores the beautiful region of Connemara famous for its rugged granite landscape as well as its beautiful lakes and rivers. The route offers an incredible variety of scenery each day. In the morning you can be cycling along beautiful coastline while in the afternoon you could be on a quiet bog road with stunning views of the surrounding mountains.

The roads are all tarmac and the route is designed to ensure that you spend most of the week on quiet back roads, away from the main tourist routes. The emphasis of our cycling holidays is to give you the freedom to fully enjoy Connemara and its beautiful landscape at your own pace whilst having the security of knowing there is a support van there if you might ever need it. During the day you can be an independent traveller, genuinely experiencing all the sights and sounds of hidden Ireland on routes most tourists never get to see, while in the evening over a delicious meal you can share your days experience with a group of like-minded people from all over the world.

TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 GALWAY CITY

When you arrive in Galway make your way to your accommodation anytime after 2.00pm. You can then explore this bustling medieval city. We will send you on full accommodation details and the necessary contact details for your tour closer to your departure date. A folder containing your route details will be waiting for you at the guesthouse and the bikes will be waiting for you in a local bike shop.

DAY 2 TRANSFER TO CLONBUR CYCLE TO WESTPORT

38 miles / 60 kms

You head north along the quiet back roads through rolling green fields full of grazing sheep, before descending down to Lough Mask and a wonderful cycle along the shores of the lake.

After lunch you have our biggest climb of the week over the Partry Mountains and then cycle along a quiet back road with stunning views of the surrounding landscape all the way to colourful village of Westport.



DAY 3 WESTPORT TO LEENANE

33 miles / 52 kms



You cycle between Croagh Patrick and the beautiful Clew Bay with its many small islands, to the village of Louisburgh where we stop for lunch.

In the afternoon you head south through one of the highlights of the week, the stunning Delphi Valley with its beautiful lakes overlooked by Ben Bury, the highest mountain in Connemara.



That night we stay in the small village of Leenane which looks out over Killary Harbour, Ireland's only fjord.

DAY 4 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 where you can watch cars travel across the beach to Omey Island only accessible when the tide is out! Clifden, the capital of Connemara, where you spend the next two nights is a pretty and bustling town of art galleries, cafes, pubs and restaurants established 200 years ago at the whim of John D'Arcy



DAY 5 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.

DAY 6 CLIFDEN TO ARAN ISLANDS

35 miles / 58 kms

You cycle out of Clifden along beautiful waterside roads crossing extensive wild bogs with freshly cut peat waiting to be harvested against a backdrop of the Twelve Bens Mountains.

The afternoon cycle takes you through Gaelic speaking areas to the ferry in Rossaveel which will bring us to Inis Mor, the largest of the Aran Islands where you will spend the night.



DAY 7**ARAN ISLANDS TO GALWAY****22 miles / 35kms**

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

In the late afternoon you return to the mainland and take a transfer back to Galway city for a final night on the town together before going our separate ways the following morning.



2017 TOUR DATES

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

2017 TOUR PRICE

- €840.00 per person sharing May, June & September
- €885.00 per person sharing July & August
- €245.00 single occupancy (if travelling with others)
- €350.00 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
- Coach transfer from Galway to Clonbur & and from Rosaveel to Galway
- 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

Extra Expenses

The optional cruise of Killary Harbour is approx €13.00.

The entrance to Kylemore Abbey is approx €7.00.

Are there facilities to change money?

There are banks in Galway, Westport and Clifden (open Monday – Friday: 10.00am - 4.00pm). Credit cards are also widely accepted. Cashpoint machines are available in Galway, Westport and Clifden.

WHAT TO BRING

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

***We do not provide helmets on our self led tours, please make sure you bring one with you.**

*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.

*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 which we can attach to our bikes (the pedals on our bikes do not accommodate toe clips)

BIKE

In 2017 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.

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.

ACCOMMODATION

We stay in a mixture of B&Bs (in Galway & Westport) and small hotels (in Clonbur, Leenane, Clifden & Aran Islands).

The B&B accommodation is a combination of two or three guesthouses in each night stop, 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 week, but we will always endeavour to provide a high standard.

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

We would be happy to help you organise extra accommodation outside of Dublin for the start 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 there are a huge range of websites offering a reservation service. A good starting place is Dublin Tourism – their website (www.visitdublin.com); www.booking.com is also a good website if you need extra accommodation in Dublin.

Other accommodation websites for Dublin/Ireland

www.discoverireland.ie www.dublinhotels.com www.irelandhotels.com www.goireland.com www.hiddenireland.com

Accommodation list – subject to availability

Day 1 & 7: Galway Consilio B&B consiliobandb.com		Day 2: Westport Waterside B&B watersidebb.com	
Day 1 & 7: Galway Rock Lodge rocklodgegalway.com		Day 3: Leenane Leenane Hotel (Dinner inclusive) leenanehotel.com	
Day 1 & 7: Galway Dormers B&B bandbireland.com/accommodation/26163/the-dormers		Day 4 & 5: Clifden Foyle's Hotel foyleshotel.com	
Day 2: Westport Cillcoman Lodge westport-mayo.com		Day 6: Inishmore Aran Islands Hotel aranislandshotel.com	
Day 2: Westport Rosmo House rosmo-accommodation.com		Day 6: Inishmore Pier House pierhousearan.com	

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 website providing a wealth of information on all regions of the country.

www.connemara.ie - a good source of information on the region we will be exploring

www.heritageireland.ie info on historical sites

If you plan to spend some extra time in **Dublin**, the following will give you some more ideas of things to see and do:

www.visitdublin.com Dublin Tourism, Tourism Centre, Suffolk Street, Dublin 2

Calling within Ireland - 1850 230 330 Calling within the U.K. - 0800 039 7000

Calling from any other country - +353 66 979 2083

www.dublinuncovered.net

www.indublin.ie

www.irishfolktours.com