

Coalisland Tours / Donegal Square

July 1-10, 2010

Itinerary

Thu, Jul 1

UNITED STATES TO DUBLIN

Depart your hometown and take an overnight flight across the Atlantic. Enjoy in-flight entertainment and meal service as you travel to start your vacation.

Fri, Jul 2

DUBLIN ARRIVAL & BOYNE VALLEY

After landing at Dublin Airport, complete customs and immigration formalities. Then your CIE Tours driver/guide will welcome you to Ireland and escort you and your luggage to the coach. Travel north to the Boyne Valley Visitor Centre where you can learn about the nearby underground burial sights, exhibits and audio-visual presentations. Walk through a full-size replica of the largest tumulus, Newgrange, before visiting the actual site. The Megalithic Passage Tomb at Newgrange was built about 3200 BC. The kidney-shaped mound covers an area of over one acre and is surrounded by 97 kerbstones, some of which are richly decorated with megalithic art. It is estimated that the construction of the Passage Tomb at Newgrange would have taken a work force of 300 at least 20 years. After your visit travel towards Drogheda and stop to visit Monasterboice which is famous for its intricately decorated Celtic high crosses which date from the early Christian era. Then drive into the city of Dublin to check into your hotel. After you settle into your room you may like to rest or explore some of the city on your own. In the evening you are free to choose from the many restaurants and pubs that Dublin has to offer.

OVERNIGHT: DAVENPORT HOTEL, DUBLIN

Sat, Jul 3

GUINNESS STOREHOUSE & BRAZEN HEAD PUB

Today visit the Guinness Storehouse to see exhibits on how this world famous stout was first created and why it is so popular today. Finish your visit in the roof-top bar, Gravity, overlooking the city center where you can sample a draft Guinness and enjoy the view of the city. The afternoon is free for independent activities, sightseeing, shopping, and much more.

This evening enjoy dinner and entertainment with your fellow travelers at The Brazen Head Pub which is located on Bridge Street. Established in 1198, the Brazen Head is over 800 years old and is the second oldest pub in Ireland.

OVERNIGHT: DAVENPORT HOTEL, DUBLIN

Sun, Jul 4

KILKENNY CASTLE & KINSALE

Leaving Dublin travel to Naas and through Kildare, which is prime horse-breeding country. Drive south through pleasant farmland to the marketing town of Carlow and on to Kilkenny. Take a guided tour around Kilkenny Castle, home of the Butlers, Earls and Dukes of Ormonde. The castle was first built in 1192 and added to over the centuries. Restored to 1830's splendor, it houses wonderful paintings and furniture. Browse around the town, which is known for its winding streets and medieval merchants' houses. Then continue to the scenic town of Kinsale. Check into your hotel with time to take a stroll along the harbor before dining in the hotel restaurant.

DINNER & OVERNIGHT: ACTONS HOTEL, KINSALE

Mon, Jul 5

KINSALE WALKING TOUR & CHARLES FORT

This morning embark on a walking tour with a local guide to learn the Kinsale's history. The town traces its origins back to 1177 when the Anglo-Normans founded a town in a small walled area close to the water. It grew as a port town during the 18th century and today the harbor is favored by yachtowners. The town has steep, narrow streets with many fine Georgian houses. Stop to visit Charles Fort, which was constructed in the late 17th century on the site of an earlier coastal fortification. Charles Fort is a classic example of a star-shaped fort and William Robinson, architect of the Royal Hospital in Kilmainham, Dublin, and Superintendent of Fortifications, is credited with designing the Fort. As one of the largest military forts in the country, Charles Fort has been associated with some of the most momentous events in Irish history. Return to your hotel where the balance of the day is free for independent activities and dining.

OVERNIGHT: ACTONS HOTEL, KINSALE

Tue, Jul 6

BLARNEY & KILLARNEY

Leaving Kinsale travel north through the rich farming country of Cork to Blarney and stop to climb to the battlements of Blarney Castle to kiss the famous "Stone of Eloquence." Also visit the Blarney Woollen Mills, which has an excellent range of Irish products of all types. You will also have time to browse around the village, charmingly set around a large village green. Then depart Blarney and drive through the pleasant hilly country of County Cork. Visit the scenic area of Gougane Barra National Forest Park and stop to visit Saint Finnbar's Oratory which was built in 1905 on a small island. Then head to Killarney, widely celebrated for its setting overlooking lakes and mountains. After checking into your hotel, you may like to browse around this busy little town before dining with your group at the hotel.

DINNER & OVERNIGHT: KILLARNEY PLAZA HOTEL, KILLARNEY

Wed, Jul 7

JAUNTING CAR & MUCKROSS HOUSE

This morning an old-fashioned horse drawn jaunting car will bring you through the Killarney National Park, which is closed to motorized vehicles. Drive along the shores of Lough Leane to Muckross House, an elegant 19th century mansion set beside the tranquil Muckross Lake. A guided tour around the 19th century manor house will fill you in on some local history and the family ties to the United States. Enjoy the elegant rooms and rich furnishings. Return to Killarney where the balance of the day is free for individual pursuits and dining.

OVERNIGHT: KILLARNEY PLAZA HOTEL, KILLARNEY

Thu, Jul 8

DINGLE PENINSULA TOUR & GALLARUS ORATORY

Depart Killarney and drive via Killorglin and out along the Dingle Peninsula. Journey along the scenic road which winds along portions of the shoreline and through hilly country, enjoying spectacular views of mountains and coast, with new vistas opening up at every turn in the road. You can also see the Iveragh Peninsula to the south. Stop in the town of Dingle before driving to the very tip of the peninsula to see the primitive stone "beehive" huts of the early monks and the Gallarus Oratory, built in the 6th century of unmortared stone and watertight after 14 centuries. Return along the peninsula to the town of Tralee. Then travel south back to Killarney with time to freshen up before dinner.

DINNER & OVERNIGHT: KILLARNEY PLAZA HOTEL, KILLARNEY

Fri, Jul 9

BUNRATTY FOLK PARK AND SHANNON CEILI

Travel northeast to Foynes and visit the Foynes Flying Boat Museum. During the 1930s and early 1940s, the port of Foynes was the fulcrum point for air traffic between the United States and Europe. The famous flying boats were frequent visitors, carrying passengers who ranged from celebrities to refugees. The Foynes museum recalls the era with a comprehensive range of exhibits and graphic illustrations. From Foynes drive to the village of Adare, famous for its attractive main street of thatched houses and colorful gardens. Stroll through the village, visit the Trinitarian Abbey and take some photos. Drive north to the village of Bunratty and visit the Bunratty Folk Park which comprises a collection of farmhouses from different regions of Ireland and a 19th century village street where traditional lifestyles and crafts are demonstrated. After your visit, check into your hotel and enjoy free time before dinner. You may choose to relax or explore some of the other attractions near your hotel-choose from Bunratty Village Mills and Durty Nelly's Pub.

This evening head to the Bunratty Folk Barn, which is the setting for a traditional ceili, an evening of music, song and dancing. After a home-style meal of Irish stew, soda bread and apple pie with cream, the entertainment that follows is a reminder of how farming communities created their own entertainment before the advent of cinema, radio and television.

OVERNIGHT: BUNRATTY CASTLE HOTEL, BUNRATTY

Sat, Jul 10

RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES

Sadly, today your Irish vacation has come to its final day. Transfer to Shannon Airport in good time to check in for your flight. You may do some last minute shopping at the duty free stores. Then clear U.S. Immigration before boarding your aircraft and flying across the Atlantic Ocean back to the United States.