

GRAND TOUR OF IRELAND

ITINERARY

 DAY
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DAY 1: ARRIVAL DAY IN DUBLIN

Upon your arrival in **Dublin**, you will be greeted by a private driver who will take you directly to your accommodation. Immerse yourself in the eclectic mixture of heritage sites, museums and historic pubs. Take a stroll along the cobbled streets of the **Temple Bar** district, grab a pint at the **Guinness Storehouse** for a taste of the world-famous beer or visit the historic Trinity College to see the ancient **Book of Kells**. You could enjoy an afternoon tea sightseeing tour of the city on a vintage bus or stroll along the characterful **O'Connell Street** filled with interesting shops and landmark buildings.

Spend the night in Dublin.

Attractions: Book of Kells and Old Library, Dublin, Guinness Storehouse, Temple Bar District, Trinity College Dublin

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DAY 2: MEGALITHIC NEWGRANGE & SCENIC LANDSCAPES

Start your road trip towards Northern Ireland. Your first stop is the charming 12th-century **Malahide Castle**. Visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site of **Newgrange**, where you can see megalithic passage tombs which are believed to be older than the Great Pyramids of Egypt. This is one of Ireland's most popular and fascinating attractions. Next, stop to admire the high crosses of **Monasterboice**, the historic ruins of a Christian settlement. Cross into Northern Ireland to reach the capital **Belfast**.

Spend the night in Belfast.

Driving distance: 195 km / 121 miles

Attractions: Belfast, Malahide Castle, Monasterboice, Newgrange

 DAY
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DAY 3: DISCOVER BELFAST

Today you have a full day to explore Belfast, an exciting city with a mix of Victorian grandeur, industrial grit and living history. Don't miss out on the city's leading attraction, the **Titanic Belfast**. Experience the story of the world's largest and most luxurious ship, which was constructed in Belfast in 1909. You can also see the **Peace Walls** and their famous murals, admire the architecture of the **City Hall**, or opt to visit the **Ulster Folk museum**, a complete recreation of an early 1900s traditional Northern Irish town.

Spend another night in Belfast.

Attractions: Belfast, Belfast City Hall, Belfast Peace Walls, Titanic Belfast, Ulster Folk and Transport Museum

DAY

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DAY 4: GIANT'S CAUSEWAY & ANTRIM COAST

Explore the beautiful Antrim Coast. First, pass by the atmospheric **Dark Hedges**, a *Game of Thrones* filming location. Then, enjoy a scenic coastal walk at **Carrick-a-Rede** to cross its rope bridge swaying 30m above the sea and providing stunning views of the cliffs below. The highlight of the day is the jewel of Northern Ireland and World Heritage Site, the **Giant's Causeway**, with its iconic basalt columns. Nearby, visit **Bushmills Distillery** the world's oldest whiskey distillery. We also recommend stopping for a view of the breathtaking, medieval ruins of **Dunluce Castle**, located by dramatic coastal cliffs.

Spend the night in the **Donegal** area.

Driving distance: 257 km / 160 miles

Attractions: Bushmills Distillery, Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge, Donegal, Dunluce Castle, Giant's Causeway, The Dark Hedges

DAY

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DAY 5: WILD ATLANTIC WAY & CLIFFS OF SLIEVE LEAGUE

Today, you will get your first taste of the iconic Wild Atlantic Way route, a journey past soaring cliffs, buzzing towns, epic bays and hidden beaches. Your first stop is **Glenveagh National Park** where you'll explore towering mountains, lakes, valleys and woodlands. Drive past the imposing Mount Errigal and over the winding Glengesh Pass to **Glencolumbkille**, one of Ireland's best living-history museums. Then experience breathtaking views at the imposing cliffs of **Slieve League**, which, at 600m, are some of the highest marine cliffs in Europe. Alternatively, you can enjoy a leisurely day in Donegal.

Spend another night in the Donegal area.

Driving distance: 223 km / 138 miles

Attractions: Glencolumbkille village, Glenveagh National Park, Slieve League cliffs

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DAY 6: RUGGED COASTLINES & STONE AGE SITES

Head south to County Sligo, driving past the stunning **Ben Bulbin**, perhaps one of Ireland's most recognisable mountains. Visit the small fishing village of Mullaghmore with its lovely sandy beach. Here, you'll find **Mullaghmore Head**, one of the signature discovery points along the Wild Atlantic Way. We also recommend a visit to the atmospheric **Carrowmore**, Ireland's largest Stone Age cemetery where you can roam around megalithic tombs and stone circles. Continue your drive to **Downpatrick Head** to enjoy a walk along the majestic sea cliffs and take in the vast views of the rugged coastline.

Spend the night in the Westport area.

Driving distance: 241 km / 150 miles

Attractions: Benbulbin, Carrowmore Megalithic Cemetery, Downpatrick Head, Mullaghmore Head

DAY

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DAY 7: ACHILL ISLAND

Explore the charming town of **Westport**, dotted with delightful shops, cafés and pubs. Tour the Georgian mansion **Westport House** and stroll around the beautiful gardens. You can also choose to visit the remote and beautiful **Achill Island**. Connected to the mainland by a bridge, you can follow the Wild Atlantic Way around the island. Admire the views from the top of Minaun Heights and stop at the beautiful bays of Keel and Keem with their white sandy beaches and clear waters. We also recommend stopping by Slievemore, an abandoned village with the ruins of traditional stone cottages.

Spend another night in the Westport area.

Driving distance: 149 km / 93 miles

Attractions: Achill Island, Westport

DAY

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DAY 8: CONNEMARA NATIONAL PARK

Visit the striking region of Connemara with its landscapes characterised by rugged mountains, white sand beaches, picturesque lakes and heathlands. Stop by **Killary harbour**, Ireland's only true fjord with a length of 16km (9.9miles). Further along, visit **Kylemore Abbey** where you can admire spectacular Gothic architecture and take a stroll in the Victorian Walled Garden.

Stop by the **Connemara National Park** Visitor Centre to follow scenic walking trails. Drive the circular Sky Road near **Clifden** for broad views of the Atlantic and arrive in **Galway**, a lively and colourful city.

Spend the night in the Galway area.

Driving distance: 182 km / 113 miles

Attractions: Clifden, Connemara National Park, Galway, Glassilaun Bay, Killary Harbour, Kylemore Abbey

DAY

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DAY 9: GALWAY & ARAN ISLANDS

Enjoy the Galway area at your leisure. We highly recommend taking a ferry to the **Aran Islands**. These three windswept islands are one of the few places where the Gaelic language, culture and music still truly thrive. At the island of Inis Mór, opt for a traditional horse & carriage tour, the most popular way to get around. Don't miss the prehistoric fort **Dun Aengus** overlooking the Atlantic. The ideal way to end the day is to visit one of Galway's restaurants, join in with the locals and experience traditional live music.

Spend another night in the Galway area.

Driving distance: 76 km / 47 miles

Attractions: Aran Islands, Dun Aengus

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DAY 10: CLIFFS OF MOHER & LIMESTONE LANDSCAPES

Start the day by visiting **Dunguaire Castle**. Sitting on a rocky outcrop overlooking Galway Bay, it is one of the most photographed castles in Ireland. Further ahead, explore the unique, lunar-like landscape of **The Burren**. Here you can visit the iconic portal tomb **Poulnabrone Dolmen**, one of Ireland's oldest megalithic monuments.

Next stop is the breathtaking **Cliffs of Moher**, Ireland's top tourist attraction, showcasing some of the country's most iconic coastal scenery. On a sunny day the views are expansive, but even a stormy day can be exhilarating with the powerful Atlantic below.

Spend the night in the Doolin/Lisdoonvarna area.

Driving distance: 111 km / 69 miles

Attractions: Cliffs of Moher, Doolin, Kinvara & Dunguaire Castle, Poulnabrone Dolmen, The Burren

DAY
11

DAY 11: MEDIEVAL CASTLES & KILLARNEY NATIONAL PARK

Start the day visiting the 15th-century **Bunratty Castle**. Here you'll also find the Bunratty Folk Park, where you can experience Irish rural life from the 1800s. We then recommend stopping at **Adare**, one of Ireland's prettiest villages with its thatched cottages housing craft shops and restaurants. In the afternoon, explore **Killarney National Park** set beneath Ireland's highest mountains. Here, you can visit the 19th-century mansion of **Muckross House**, take an optional Jaunting Car tour of the park or a boat trip on the peaceful Lough Leane, departing from the medieval **Ross Castle**.

Spend the night in the Killarney/Tralee area.

Driving distance: 206 km / 128 miles

Attractions: Adare, Bunratty Castle, Killarney, Killarney National Park, Muckross House & Abbey, Ross Castle

DAY
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DAY 12: RING OF KERRY

Take in the magic of the **Ring of Kerry**, a classic "must do" scenic drive of the Irish countryside. Stop at **Kells Bay House**, to see its primeval forest of planted giant ferns. Other highlights include the ancient stone forts of **Caherdaniel** and **Staigue**, and Derrynane Bay with its beautiful white sand. Complete the circle with a visit to the picturesque **Torc Waterfall**. Today, you could also take an optional boat tour from the coast to see the Skellig Islands from up close. These otherworldly islands were recently featured in the *Star Wars* movies.

Spend another night in the Killarney/Tralee area.

Driving distance: 198 km / 123 miles

Attractions: Caherdaniel & Staigue Forts, Kells Bay House and Gardens, Ring of Kerry, Skellig islands, Torc Waterfall

DAY

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DAY 13: DINGLE PENINSULA

Explore the rugged **Dingle Peninsula**, characterised by mountains and stunning coastal scenery. Visit the charming town of **Dingle**, a lively and colourful fishing port. You'll then join **Slea Head Drive**, one of the most spectacular routes in Ireland. Along the way, make stops at Coumeenole beach, the picturesque Dunquin harbour and the **Blasket Centre**, which tells the story of the Blasket Islanders. Further along, admire the unique **Gallarus Oratory**, an early Christian stone church steeped in mystery. Later, drive over the Conor pass, Ireland's highest road, offering expansive views across the peninsula.

Spend another night in the Killarney/Tralee area.

Driving distance: 187 km / 116 miles

Attractions: Blasket Centre, Dingle, Dingle Peninsula, Gallarus Oratory, Minard Castle, Slea Head Drive

DAY

14

DAY 14: GARNISH ISLAND & IRELAND'S SOUTH COAST

Today, you will travel over the scenic, winding Caha Pass to the colourful village of **Glengarriff**. From here, we recommend taking a short boat trip, with the opportunity to spot a seal colony on the way, to **Garnish Island**, which features a world-renowned garden. You could also visit the 18th-century **Bantry House**. Later, travel via **Kinsale**, a popular resort town with its picturesque yachting harbour and historic forts. Continue to **Cork**, a buzzing city with a vibrant cultural scene.

Spend the night in the Cork area.

Driving distance 191 km / 119 miles

Attractions: Bantry House, Cork, Garnish Island, Glengarriff, Kinsale

DAY

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DAY 15: ANCIENT CASTLES & THE BLARNEY STONE

Today, you can visit **Blarney Castle**, a legendary medieval stronghold that houses the Blarney Stone, surrounded by many myths and tales. Then we recommend stopping at the photogenic harbour town of **Cobh**. It is known as the last port of call of the Titanic in 1912! Continue to Cashel, where you can visit the spectacular **Rock of Cashel**, one of Ireland's most visited attractions. The historic site is a fantastic collection of medieval buildings that span over 1000 years of history. Later, drive to **Kilkenny**, a medieval town nestled around a majestic 12th-century castle.

Spend the night in the Kilkenny area.

Driving distance: 208km / 129 miles

Attractions: Blarney Castle, Cobh, Kilkenny, Rock of Cashel

DAY
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DAY 16: THROUGH THE WICKLOW MOUNTAINS TO DUBLIN

If you wish to spend more time exploring Dublin, you can opt to head straight to the city this morning.

Alternatively, we highly recommend a drive through the scenic **Wicklow Mountains** to take in the beautiful views. In the area you could visit Glendalough, a 6th-century monastic settlement, and the Powerscourt Estate, featuring the restored mansion **Powerscourt House**. On the estate, you will find Ireland's highest waterfall as well as magnificent gardens. Back in Dublin, enjoy the rest of the evening at your leisure, perhaps with a fine Irish dinner to top off your amazing journey.

Spend the night in Dublin.

Driving distance to Dublin: 123 km / 77 miles

Driving distance via Wicklow Mountains: 165 km / 102 miles

Attractions: Dublin, Powerscourt House & Gardens, Wicklow Mountains & Glendalough

DAY
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DAY 17: DEPARTURE

To get to Dublin Airport, you can take a taxi, or we can arrange a convenient private transfer directly from your hotel. If your flight is in the afternoon, you can use the morning to enjoy some last-minute shopping, visit one of the many attractions or simply relax and take in the atmosphere of the city one last time.

Whatever your needs, we are here to help. If you have any questions about our packages or services, please do not hesitate to contact us.

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