

NEW A Grand Tour of the Emerald Isle's Enchanting Gems

September 14 to 28, 2024 ♦ From \$9,845 per person

Join us on an unforgettable grand tour of magical Ireland, steeped in folklore and sprinkled with mystical castles, atmospheric houses and charming cities. We saunter through breathtaking landscapes and natural wonders, including the Wild Atlantic Way, Achill Island, the Cliffs of Moher, the Ring of Kerry and the Giant's Causeway, all while exploring a host of historic gems and delving into Irish cultural heritage. Fascinating experiences illuminate the fabric of this enchanting little isle; we get a taste of rural life at Glen Keen Farm, journey back in time aboard the Dunbrody Famine Ship, sample a perfect pint of Guinness atop a Dublin rooftop, kiss the iconic Blarney Stone of Eloquence, enjoy the craic at a traditional Celtic show and so much more – *sláinte!*



Itinerary

September 14: Depart your home city and arrive the next day in Dublin

September 15: Arrival

On arrival at Dublin Airport, a private transfer will take you to the Dylan Hotel, where we stay overnight. In the evening, join the group for a welcome drink, followed by dinner.

Meals: Dinner

September 16: Titanic Belfast and Hillsborough Castle

This morning we cross the border into Northern Ireland and head straight to the vibrant capital of Belfast. We first visit Titanic Belfast, a fantastic interactive exhibition located on the site of the original shipyard where the famous liner was built. We hear heart-breaking tales about the vessel's passengers, discover the detail behind the mammoth task of building the ill-fated ship and dive into the depths with an immersive video exploring the wreckage on the ocean floor.

We are then treated to a private evening guided tour of Hillsborough Castle, a beautiful late Georgian mansion created in the 1770s by Wills Hill, first Marquis of Downshire. Surrounded by 100 acres of glorious gardens, Hillsborough boasts elegant State Rooms filled with wonderful paintings, furnishings and curiosities. Generations of the Hill family lived at Hillsborough until the early 20th century when the castle began to develop the political and royal associations for which it is famous today. Elizabeth II, Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother and Princess Margaret spent many holidays at Hillsborough and since the 1970s, it has been the official residence of both the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and the British monarch.

Later we check into the Merchant Hotel, our base for the next three nights, and enjoy dinner at the Cloth Ear, nestled in the oldest quarter of Belfast.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

What's Included

- ♦ Arrival/departure airport transfers from Dublin*
- ♦ 3 nights at the Dylan Hotel, Dublin
- ♦ 3 nights at the Merchant Hotel, Belfast
- ♦ 3 nights at the Delphi Resort Hotel, Galway
- ♦ 2 nights at the Muckcross Park Hotel & Spa, Killarney
- ♦ 1 night at the Cashel Palace Hotel, Tipperary
- ♦ 1 night at the Faithlegg Hotel, Waterford
- ♦ Welcome drink and canapés
- ♦ Full English/Continental breakfast each day
- ♦ 3-course *table d'hôte* dinner on 9 nights at the hotels (with after-dinner tea and coffee)
- ♦ 2 dinners at local restaurants
- ♦ Services of a tour director throughout your stay
- ♦ Travel to and from all excursions
- ♦ All excursion costs
- ♦ Porterage where available

*Supplement applies for transfers from all other airports and all other locations, including central London.

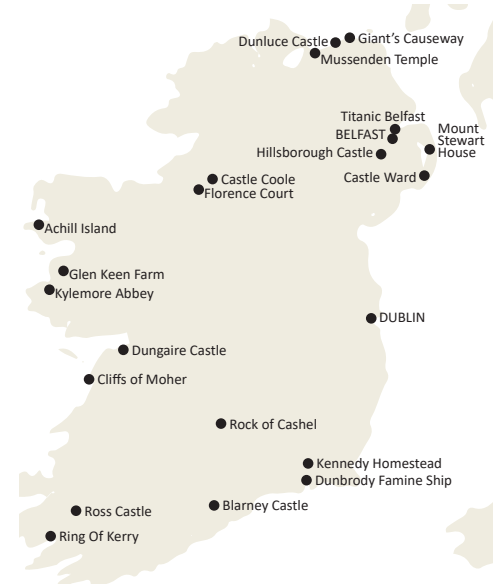


Ireland

© National Trust Images/Matthew Antrabus



Florence Court



September 17: Castle Ward, Strangford Lough and Mount Stewart House and Garden

We head to Castle Ward, an eccentric 18th-century house that features a curious mixture of architectural styles, including classical Palladian and elaborate Gothic. Set in 820 picturesque acres of demesne with superb views over Strangford Lough, the estate also has a stable yard that houses a tea room and second-hand bookshop.

To get to our next stop, we take the picturesque Strangford Lough ferry before continuing to the magnificent Mount Stewart House and Garden, located on the shores of the lough. This recently restored and much-loved family home offers a wealth of treasures, which we discover on our intriguing guided tour. The wonderfully atmospheric garden, with its series of formal-themed garden compartments full of rare and tender plants from across the globe, has been voted as one of the top ten gardens in the world.

This evening we sample a delicious Irish stew at the traditional Crown Liquor Saloon in Belfast, one of North Ireland's best-known pubs and owned by the National Trust.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

September 18: North Coast Scenic Drive, Dunluce Castle, Mussenden Temple and Giant's Causeway

Today we head out on a scenic drive along the north coast, known as the Causeway Coastal Route, winding between picturesque villages and admiring the spectacular sea and cliff views. Dunluce Castle is our first stop, a ruined medieval fortress which sits atop a striking basalt outcrop. Once home to both the feuding McQuillan and MacDonnell clans, we find out more with the exhibits on display here.

Next is the Italian-inspired Mussenden Temple, built in 1785 as a summer library and precariously poised above the Atlantic. Make sure your camera is on hand, as it's now one of the most photographed spots in the country.

“An unforgettable grand tour of magical Ireland, steeped in folklore and sprinkled with mystical castles, atmospheric houses and charming cities.”

We meander along to the Giant's Causeway, so-named for the enormous basalt columns produced by volcanic eruptions some sixty million years ago, and now a designated UNESCO World Heritage Site. Interactive displays, exhibitions and audio guides in the state-of-the-art visitor center unveil the stories and science that surround this natural phenomenon.

Meals: Breakfast

September 19: Castle Coole and Florence Court

After checking out of our hotel, we make our way to Castle Coole, one of Ireland's first Neo-classical houses where the grandeur of its sumptuous Regency interior is matched by the stunning wooded landscape park. There is plenty to discover during our visit, including a state bedroom fit for royalty and the vast servants' quarters below stairs, one of the most impressive in the entire National Trust collection.

We continue to 18th-century Florence Court, an idyllic Irish mansion featuring exquisite Rococo decoration and fine furniture, surrounded by lush parkland, peaceful woodland, stunning gardens and an apple orchard. It's even home to one of Ireland's most famous trees, the 250-year-old mother plant of every Irish yew tree across the globe.

Later we check into the Delphi Hotel in Galway, where we stay for the next three nights.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner



© National Trust Images/David Armstrong

Mount Stewart House



Kylemore Abbey

September 20: Achill Island

Today we enjoy a scenic drive around the enchanting Achill Island, the largest of Ireland's offshore isles. The island's striking natural beauty and rugged landscapes has it all; spectacular mountains, remote lakes, soaring cliffs and secluded beaches. First inhabited 5,000 years ago, the island is peppered with ancient forts, historic churches and megalithic tombs, and was used as a filming location for the award-winning 2022 period tragicomedy, *The Banshees of Inisherin*.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

September 21: Glen Keen Farm and Kylemore Abbey

This morning we get an authentic taste of rural life with a visit to Glen Keen Sheep Farm, one of Ireland's largest sheep farms located on the Wild Atlantic Way and with a spectacular backdrop of picture-perfect mountains. Here we enjoy a sheep herding and wood spinning demonstrations plus delicious homemade Irish scones.

We take a drive past the stunning Killary Fjord en-route to our next destination, Kylemore Abbey, where we can wander through the restored rooms of the beautiful Gothic Abbey, home to a monastic community of nuns since 1920. Outside, the six-acre Victorian Walled Garden is a delight to explore, where only flower and vegetable varieties from that era are grown. This was one of the last walled gardens built in Ireland during the Victorian period, and its magnificence at the time was compared to London's Kew Gardens.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

September 22: Quiet Man Museum, Dungaire Castle and Cliffs of Moher

We head to The Quiet Man Museum after checking out of our hotel this morning. Perfect for fans of the 1952 American classic, the museum is an exact replica of White O'Morn cottage from the movie. Complete with all of the iconic furnishings and artifacts, you can just imagine John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara on set here!

The next stop is Dungaire Castle, an atmospheric 16th-century town house nestled on the shores of Galway Bay. Legend has it, if you stand at the front gate and ask a question, you will be given an answer by the end of the day. Steeped in folklore, it was built by descendants of Guaire, the ancient king of Connacht, and was later a meeting place for literary giants such as George Bernard Shaw, Lady Gregory and W.B. Yeats.

We continue to the magnificent Cliffs of Moher, stretching for eight miles along County Clare's Atlantic Coast and 214m at their highest. The cliffs offer stunning views towards the Aran Islands and Galway Bay from three different viewing platforms, while the fascinating visitor center brings the different aspects of the cliffs to life. They are also home to one of the major colonies of cliff nesting seabirds in Ireland.

Later we check into the Muckross Park Hotel & Spa in Killarney, our base for the next two nights.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

September 23: Ross Castle, Jaunting Car and the Ring of Kerry

Located on the shores of Lough Leane, Ross Castle is a 15th-century tower house built by Irish chieftain O'Donoghue Mór (who still slumbers under the gentle waters according to local legend)! It was one of the last strongholds to surrender to Oliver Cromwell's army during the Irish Confederate Wars and is shrouded in folklore today. Here we enjoy a jaunting car ride, horse-drawn carts operated by the local *jarvies*, as well as a tranquil boat trip on the lake.



Ring of Kerry

We then take a scenic drive through the Ring of Kerry, journeying across an untouched landscape of tranquil lakes and a skyline of dozing mountainous peaks.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

September 24: Blarney Castle and Rock of Cashel

The medieval Blarney Castle awaits, built nearly 600 years ago by a powerful Irish magnate and now one of the country's most famous visitor attractions. Millions have flocked here to kiss the legendary Stone of Eloquence and never again be lost for words, but there is so much more to see, including the atmospheric dungeons, a poison garden and the lovely countryside views from the battlements.

The iconic sites continue with a trip to the Rock of Cashel, one of Ireland's top archaeological spots, set on a rocky outcrop. The prominent hill is dotted with a range of ancient fortifications, including a storied 12th-century round tower, 13th-century Gothic cathedral and 15th-century castle.

This afternoon we check into the Cashel Palace Hotel in Tipperary, where we stay overnight.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

September 25: Kennedy Homestead and Dunbrody Famine Ship

We explore America's connections with Ireland today, beginning with The Kennedy Homestead in Dunganstown, the birthplace of John F. Kennedy's great-grandfather, Patrick Kennedy. Through a state-of-the-art exhibition, memorabilia and more, the unique museum celebrates the tale of this famous Irish-American family, from Patrick leaving as a famine emigrant to his great grandson's homecoming as President of the United States.

Ireland's history is brought to life at the Dunbrody Famine Ship, our next stop. We learn about the bravery of Irish people onboard an authentic replica of an 1840s emigrant boat, complete with costumed performers, insightful displays and details of their harrowing journey. After weeks spent dangerously crossing the Atlantic, the emigrants arrived in North America and made up a quarter of the population in Boston, New York City, Philadelphia and Baltimore by 1850.

This evening we stay overnight at the Faithlegg Hotel in Waterford.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

September 26: Abbey Theatre and Guinness Storehouse

Today we take a backstage tour of the Abbey Theatre, also known as the National Theatre of Ireland, where Irish creativity is celebrated. We discover behind-the-scenes secrets and learn about the history of this cultural institution, founded in 1904 by W.B. Yeats and Lady Gregory, who wanted 'to bring upon the stage the deeper emotions of Ireland.'

We continue our dive into Irish heritage with a visit to Guinness Storehouse, where we uncover the history of the world-famous drink through a seven-storey interactive experience. There's also a chance to sample the 'Black Stuff' in the rooftop Gravity Bar, complete with panoramic views over Dublin.

Later we check back into the Dylan Hotel in Dublin, where we stay for the remaining two nights of our tour. There's time to freshen up before we are treated to dinner at Celtic Nights, a traditional Irish Dance show known for its great *craic!*

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

September 27: Trinity College, Book of Kells and The Old Library

We start the day with a guided tour of Trinity College, Ireland's oldest university, founded in 1592. The college's magnificent Old Library displays Ireland's greatest cultural treasure, the Book of Kells. Written around 800AD and celebrated for its lavish decoration, the manuscript contains the four Gospels in Latin based on a Vulgate text, written on vellum (prepared calfskin).

There is then some free time in Dublin, with its historic attractions, shopping streets, abundance of convivial pubs and fascinating landmarks, from the ancient Dublin Castle to the modern Spire of Dublin.

This evening we enjoy a farewell dinner together.

Meals: Breakfast, Dinner

September 28: Departure

A private transfer will take you back to Edinburgh Airport for your return flight home.

Meals: Breakfast

Please note: the order of excursions is subject to change and guided tours are subject to restrictions.



Muckross Park Hotel & Spa

Tour Highlights

- ◆ Private evening tour of Hillsborough Castle
- ◆ Boat trip on Strangford Lough
- ◆ Guided tour of Mount Stewart House and Garden
- ◆ Scenic drive along the North Coast
- ◆ Guided tour of Achill Island
- ◆ Sheep dog and wood spinning demonstrations and Irish scones at Glen Keen Farm
- ◆ Jaunting car (horse and carriage) ride and cruise at Ross Castle
- ◆ Backstage tour at the Abbey Theatre
- ◆ Ticket to Celtic Nights Dinner & Show
- ◆ Guided tour of Trinity College and The Old Library

**Please inform us at the time of booking of any special dietary requirements.*



Rock of Cashel

Frequently Asked Questions

How do I make a booking?

Call National Trust Tours at **888-484-8785** to register by phone (preferred method) **Monday - Friday from 9am to 5pm (EST)** or register online at **www.nationaltrusttours.com**.

When are payments due?

When you confirm your booking with us, a non-refundable deposit of \$1,000 per person is required to secure your place. The final balance payment must be paid to us no later than 90 days prior to the tour departure date. Of course, full payment can be made at the time of booking if you prefer and for bookings made less than 8 weeks before the tour departs this will be a requirement.

How can I pay?

We accept debit and credit cards (except American Express), for deposits and full payment.

What paperwork will I receive?

When your booking is confirmed, we will email you a booking confirmation document along with a copy of our full Terms and Conditions and the reading list. Approximately 28 days prior to the tour, we will prepare and send you our Travel Pack with your finalized information and tour itinerary details.

Do I need travel insurance?

Yes, this is essential; we can only accept a booking on the basis that you have taken out a full and comprehensive travel insurance policy to cover the full duration of your trip. We will ask you to confirm this to us. If you choose not to take out travel insurance, this is done so against our advice and at your own risk; we will ask you to sign a declination form indemnifying us from any responsibility or cost in the event of medical emergency or repatriation. Information on travel insurance will be sent to you upon tour confirmation. USI Travel Insurance Services offers a plan designed specifically for National Trust Tours travelers. For details, please contact National Trust Tours at 888-484-8785.

Do I need a passport and visa?

It is your responsibility to ensure you have a passport which must be valid for 6 months after the return date of your trip. At the time of printing, tourist visas are not required for US citizens visiting the UK for under 90 days solely for the purpose of tourism. If you are not a US citizen or you are combining your visit with business, it is your responsibility to check the requirements for visiting the UK, you can do this by visiting the UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) website to determine whether you need a visa to enter the United Kingdom.

Are there single traveler room supplements?

We have a small number of rooms on each tour that are sold with no single supplement; once these are sold out we charge a supplement for any additional single rooms which varies for each tour. You can contact us to enquire about single supplement prices. Please book early as single rooms sell fast.

Are room upgrades available?

All of the hotels on these tours have been hand-picked for their high quality of accommodation and service. However, in some instances room upgrades are available and we would be happy to assist you to arrange these should you be interested. For more information on the hotels please visit our website.

Can you arrange extra hotel nights?

Yes, if you decide to arrive a few days before the start of the tour or leave a few days after the end of the tour, we are happy to arrange extra nights' accommodation. However, this service is only available at hotels that feature in the tour on which you are traveling and a \$35 administration fee is charged for this service.

Are meals included?

All breakfasts are included on all tours. Certain lunches and dinners are also included and you should study the tour itinerary in this brochure to determine what meals are included on your chosen tour. Meals not mentioned are not included and all beverages are at your own expense throughout the tour.

What do I do about any dietary requirements?

Please inform us at the time of booking, we will pass your information on to the hotel, property or restaurant who will do their best to accommodate your requirements.

How many passengers will be in the Albion Journeys tour group?

Typically, between 10 and 30.

What is the role of the Tour Director?

Our friendly Tour Director will meet you for a welcome dinner at the beginning of each tour. Their role is to facilitate the smooth organization of all operational aspects of the tour. If you have any queries or experience any issues during the tour, they are there to assist you.

Will the excursions change?

Please note that we plan our tours far in advance and the order and availability of excursions may be subject to change. In the event of a property not being available to visit, we will substitute with a similar visit, and you will be informed of the full details.

How much walking will there be on these tours?

As much or as little as you like. Any included guided tours will operate at a fairly relaxed pace, as with many historic houses and gardens, you may experience some uneven flooring and steps along the way. Of course, you will always have the option to explore any venue by yourself at your own pace. If you have any specific concerns, please contact us.

What are the arrangements for luggage?

The standard luggage allowance is one item of hand luggage and one suitcase per person restricted to a maximum weight of 20kgs (44 pounds). We do provide porterage at each of the hotels used on our tours, however, as with all things of a personal nature, it is your responsibility to ensure your suitcase is loaded onto the vehicles we use throughout the tour.

What clothing should I bring?

Comfortable leisurewear is recommended for the daytime. In the evening many participants prefer to wear smarter dress for dining. While gentlemen may choose to wear a jacket in the restaurant in the evening, at most hotels this is not obligatory, we will of course inform you if any hotel does have a dress code. It is advisable to bring layered clothing and a light waterproof jacket. We recommend sturdy footwear when visiting gardens as the ground may be soft underfoot. Many historic properties request ladies do not wear high heels which may damage flooring.

Can you arrange my flights to the UK?

Albion Journeys do not arrange your air travel for our tours; this is your responsibility and gives you the flexibility to decide on your own routing.

What should I budget for tipping?

While it is not compulsory, it is customary to tip the coach driver and Tour Director as well as offering a small gratuity to the transfer drivers to acknowledge the services they have provided. As a guideline we suggest a rate of £5 (about \$6.50 as of this printing) per day for your coach and transfer drivers and £10 (about \$13 as of this printing) per day for your Tour Director. Gratuities for hotel staff and the tour guides you may meet at properties are at your discretion.

For more information, please telephone the Tours Program at the National Trust at **(888) 484-8785**

- web: www.nationaltrusttours.com
- email: info@nationaltrusttours.com

All tours offered subject to availability. Terms and conditions apply. Errors and omissions excepted.



Windsor Castle



Nostell Priory



Sissinghurst Castle Garden



Hatfield House Gardens



Charlecote Park

Terms & Conditions Extract

It is important that you read the following booking conditions extract and the full booking conditions shown on our website at albionjourneys.com/terms-and-conditions. These online booking conditions form the basis of your contract with us. Please read them and the extract below carefully as they apply to all bookings you make with us unless otherwise specified.

1. VACATION PAYMENT: When you make a booking you must pay a deposit for every person named on the booking. Deposits per person and the balance due date (the period before the departure date on which your full balance normally becomes due) are:

Deposit	Balance due date
\$1,000 (USD)	90 days before departure

If you cannot make a payment by card at the time of booking, please speak to one of our Reservations staff to discuss other options. You can make payments against your balance anytime between making the booking and the balance due date. If the balance is not paid on time we reserve the right to treat your booking as canceled by you and apply cancellation charges as set out in clause 3 below. For bookings made after the balance due date, the full amount is due at the time of booking.

2. OUR AGREEMENT: A contract is formed when we issue to you the booking confirmation document and terms and conditions. It is important you read through these and any other documents you receive and advise us of any inaccuracy within 14 days of the document date. By accepting the booking is correct you agree to our terms and conditions.

We regret we cannot accept any liability if we are not notified of any inaccuracy in any document within 14 days of our sending it out. This contract and all matters arising out of it will be governed by English law and will be subject to the exclusive jurisdiction of the courts of England and Wales.

3. VACATION CANCELLATION BY YOU: If you want to cancel your booking after we have confirmed it with you either verbally, over the telephone or by email, you can do so over the phone or in writing. The following cancellation charges will apply:

More than 91 days prior to departure	\$1,000 (USD)
90 days or less before departure	100% of the program cost is non-refundable

If any member of your party is prevented from traveling, that person may transfer their place to someone else (introduced by you) providing we are notified no less than two weeks before departure.

Full terms and conditions will be provided with your booking confirmation. They are also available on request or via our website: albionjourneys.com/terms-and-conditions.

Bookings are accepted on the basis that you have read and understood them.

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Journeys Inspired By Heritage