

# ENGLAND, SCOTLAND, WALES & IRELAND



This is a 4 week comprehensive tour of The British Isles, covering all four countries, England, Scotland, Wales and the Island of Ireland. Under the guidance of Guides and Driver/Guides you will visit and explore these individual countries history, culture and wonderous treasures, stay in some of the most welcoming hotels and have a thoroughly amazing experience to cherish.

## DAY 1

### ARRIVAL DAY

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Today on your arrival to London, you will be met in the arrivals hall by your driver, who will then transfer you to your central London Accommodation. Once you have checked-in you can then relax and enjoy free time for the rest of the day.

**Hotel:** Central London, 3 Nights; 4 Star Deluxe Boutique Hotel, Inclusive of Breakfast

Subject to availability, a choice of one of our hotel partners luxury central hotels, very hard to choose between them, options will be offered at time of booking.

Day is Inclusive of:

- Meet & Greet and Transfer to Central London Hotel

## DAY 2

### HALF DAY DISCOVER LONDON WITH YOUR BLUE BADGE GUIDE

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#### **Classic London Private Tour - typical Itinerary**

Your guide will meet you at your central London hotel at the specified time. Then, laugh, gasp and shake your head as your Classic London Private Tour takes you through the sights, sounds and stories of one of the greatest cities in the world. For lunch, how about fish & chips in a traditional London pub?

#### **Westminster Abbey**

Crowning glory, focus for royal events, and one of the world's greatest churches. This private guided tour visits the place where kings and queens have been crowned for a thousand years. Your guide will take you through a gothic labyrinth where you'll discover the tombs of the legendary royal women of the past, such as the Virgin Queen, Bloody Mary and Mary Queen of Scots. See too, the magnificent Henry VII Chapel ceiling.

#### **Churchill's War Bunker**

Winston Churchill was the British Prime Minister during World War Two, and here, in his underground HQ, that terrible conflict is brought to life. This series of underground war rooms was completed just before the outbreak of war, accommodating map rooms, cipher rooms, switchboards and emergency living quarters used for the entire 1,562 nights of the war. From here, many of Churchill's great speeches were broadcast.

#### **Changing the Guard at Buckingham Palace**

All the Queen's horses and all the Queen's men in the kind of pomp that only London does best. Your guide will explain this centuries-old ceremony, run through the regiments that take part, regale you with regal tales, and, as the military band marches by, bag you the best spot for photos of this popular pageant of colour. (Specific days only. Alternative attractions may be substituted such as the Royal Stables.)



**Hotel:** Rubens at the Palace

Day is Inclusive of:

- Half Day Private Tour with Blue Badge Guide
- All Entrances

### DAY 3

#### FREE DAY WITH LONDON EYE FLIGHT

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Today is a free day to explore as you wish, you have a Fast Track London Eye Ticket, which allows you to arrive at anytime to take your flight and jump the long queues that can occur for one of London's favourite attractions.

Another wonderful place you may wish to visit is Kew Gardens, you will need a taxi to get yourselves here, but a colourful and peaceful afternoon in this botanical garden is there for the taking.

Kew Gardens is a botanical garden in southwest London that houses the "largest and most diverse botanical and mycological collections in the world". Founded in 1840, from the exotic garden at Kew Park in Middlesex, England, its living collections include more than 30,000 different kinds of plants, while the herbarium, which is one of the largest in the world, has over seven million preserved plant specimens. The library contains more than 750,000 volumes, and the illustrations collection contains more than 175,000 prints and drawings of plants. It is one of London's top tourist attractions and is a World Heritage Site.

Kew Gardens, together with the botanic gardens at Wakehurst Place in Sussex, are managed by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, an internationally important botanical research and education institution that employs 750 staff and is a non-departmental public body sponsored by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The Kew site, which has been dated as formally starting in 1759, though it can be traced back to the exotic garden at Kew Park, formed by Henry, Lord Capell of Tewkesbury, consists of 132 hectares (330 acres) of gardens and botanical glasshouses, four Grade I listed buildings, and 36 Grade II listed structures, all set in an internationally significant landscape. It is listed Grade I on the Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

Kew Gardens has its own police force, Kew Constabulary, which has been in operation since 1847.

Day is Inclusive of:

- Fast Track London Eye Tickets

### DAY 4

#### LONDON TO BRIGHTON

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After breakfast and once you have checked out, make your way to City Thames Link Train Station, which is about 3 miles from your hotel, here you catch a direct train to Brighton, taking just over 1 hour 20 minutes (First Class) Once you arrive in Brighton, take a taxi to your hotel, where you can then check-in and relax for the remainder of the day.

Fashionable, fun and packed with style, Brighton has everything you could want from a trip to the seaside – a royal palace, elegant architecture, great museums, laid-back beach life and superb shopping.

Reaching out into the sea from the dazzling seafront is the

famous Brighton Pier. Expect amusements, rides, and all kinds of fun - not to mention gorgeous sea views. Colorful shopping streets, known as The Lanes, are awash with vintage gear, antiques and jewelry, all brought together around a historic network of narrow city streets.

**Hotel:** The Grand Hotel, classic sea view room, 3 nights inclusive of breakfast.

The Grand Hotel Brighton is an iconic and luxury independent hotel standing centre stage on Brighton's famous seafront.

Day is Inclusive of:

- First Class Train Tickets to Brighton

### DAY 5

#### PRIVATE BRIGHTON HALF DAY WALKING TOUR

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Conveniently close yet just far enough away from the capital, Brighton came into its own during the early 1800s when George, Prince Regent commissioned the building of the Brighton Pavilion. This royal pleasure dome is an extraordinary architectural confection combining European, Indian and Chinese styles, a gilded setting for legendary partying by fashionable Regency bucks and the dalliances of 'Prinny' with his clandestine wife, Mrs Fitzherbert.

Today, Brighton is still famous for its bohemian vibe and permissive lifestyle, among many other attractions!

Your guide will take you to North Laine, an amazing area with a wealth of interesting and unique shops, studios, restaurants, galleries and markets.

Tour the seafront with its fishing boats and explore the 120 year old Palace Pier that stands out over the sea.

Find out about the 1960s history of Mods and Rockers and hear about classic films that have been shot in Brighton.

See the infamous punk rock venue The Vault, a world famous vegetarian shoe shop and so much more.

Your guide will point out highly creative street art and fine architectural details, while introducing you to little streets and corners that only a local expert knows.

Day is Inclusive of:

- Local Blue Badge Guide - (any entrances paid locally)

### DAY 6

#### FREE DAY

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Today is a completely free day with nothing planned, just enjoy the seaside, do something British, find a deck chair and an ice-cream and watch the world go by!

### DAY 7

#### STONEHENGE AND BATH

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This morning you will meet Kevin, our Blue Badge Driver/Guide who will spend the next couple of days with you.

First stop this morning is Stonehenge, the mythical circle of stones that have had the very best wondering just how they got there! Here will be a stop for about 2-3 hours.

Walk in the footsteps of your Neolithic ancestors at Stonehenge – one of the wonders of the world and the best-known prehistoric monument in Europe. Explore the ancient landscape on foot and step inside the Neolithic Houses to discover the tools and objects of everyday Neolithic life. Visit the world-class exhibition and visitor centre with 250 ancient objects and come face to face with a 5,500 year-old man.



Next you continue your scenic drive to the England's smallest City Wells, here will be a great place to have lunch. The historic City of Wells is just a short 45 minute drive from the beautiful City of Bath (UNESCO World Heritage City). The 22 mile route heads over the Mendip Hills and opens up a gateway to the one of England's less explored gems - Somerset. Wells makes an ideal destination for a short break or long weekend and has much to see in it as well as providing an excellent base for exploring the surrounding area.

Wells is a medieval city nestling on the southern side of the Mendip Hills with the mystic Somerset Levels stretching away to the south and west. The history of Wells goes right back to Roman times when we know that there was a settlement, probably because of the springs that bubble up here. Wells gets its name from these springs which can today be found in the gardens of the Bishop's Palace. Wells is the smallest city in England with about 12,000 inhabitants. It can call itself a city because of the famous 13th century Cathedral. It remains remarkably unspoilt and has many other historic buildings including the moated Bishop's Palace, Vicars' Close, St Cuthbert's Church and a good local museum. The Wells Market Place, with lively markets twice a week, the narrow streets and an eclectic mix of building styles all reflect on the continuing development of the town throughout the ages.

Later in the afternoon, continue your journey to Bath, where you can check-in to your hotel and relax for the remainder of the day. Entrances in Wells paid locally.

Day is Inclusive of:

- Full Day with Blue Badge Driver/Guide

- Entrance to Stonehenge

**Hotel:** Roseate Villa, 2 nights; superior king, inclusive of breakfast.

The Roseate Villa Bath occupies a quiet corner of the city, moment's walk from the heart of the city of Bath, favoured for its heritage and cultural tourism. The Villa overlooks Henrietta Park, a 7 acre park opened to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria of 1897.

## DAY 8

### BATH TOUR

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Today you will have a tour of the city with one of the local Blue Badge Guides. You will on your tour of the city of Bath, hear stories of the city's origins as the country's only natural hot-water springs. Be enraptured by legends of Celtic gods and Bladud, a local king with a nasty skin problem and learn how it developed under the Romans into a sophisticated cultural resort and social settlement.

Visit inside the ancient Roman baths, see the water bubbling up from underground and sip a sample (if you wish). Walk across the honey-coloured limestone bridge designed by Robert Adam in the late 18th century - the only river crossing in England that still has shops along it. Take in the perfection of neo-classical architecture cascading down the hillsides around the Royal Crescent and The Circus.

Walk the elegant streets and hear stories from your private guide of Jane Austen and her life in Bath. Find out how the city became the most fashionable town in Britain during the 18th century - an elegant spa and social scene to which the fashionable world flocked for 'the season'.

After visiting the Abbey, try a local Bath bun with tea or sample a Sally Lunn.

**Hotel:** Roseate Villa

Day is Inclusive of:

- Private Guided Tour of Bath

- All Entrances

## DAY 9

### BATH TO WALES FOR YOUR NEXT ADVENTURE

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Today you will arrive in Wales where you will have the chance to explore Cardiff. This vibrant city is built around a castle and features plenty of impressive historic buildings to visit as well as handsome parks and gardens. Enjoy a half-day private walking tour here to discover the highlights of the city before spending time at leisure to explore the shops, restaurants and parks in the city

**Hotel:** Radisson Blu Cardiff, 1 night, king room, inclusive of breakfast.

Enjoy dazzling views of the capital during your stay at the stylish, contemporary Radisson Blu Hotel in Cardiff. This chic hotel in Cardiff's city centre is ideal for exploring nearby attractions, so you can make the most of the capital's rich culture,

Day is Inclusive of:

- Driver Guide Full Day

- All Entrances

## DAY 10

### WYE VALLEY DAY TOUR AND BRECON

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On this private day tour, you will explore some of the finest ruins and ancient Roman architecture South Wales, beginning with a visit to Britain's most preserved Roman town - Caerleon - "Fort of the Legion". Explore the amphitheatre where gladiators fought to their death, the bath house around which much of a Roman soldier's life revolved and the National Legionary Museum displaying all the archaeology of a way of life which existed almost 2000 years ago. A highlight of the day is sure to be a visit to the majestic ruins at Tintern Abbey, stepping into the footsteps of the Cistercian Monks who lived here long ago. Finally, make sure to visit Raglan Castle, one of the finest late-medieval fortresses in Britain, and enjoy the wonderful views of the Monmouthshire countryside along the way.

**Overnight:** Castle of Brecon Hotel, Brecon. king room, 1 night inclusive of breakfast

Formerly an 11th Century Norman Castle, then an early coaching inn and later the residence of the Morgans of Tredegar Park, in 1809 part of the castle ruins and outbuildings were renovated by Sir Charles Morgan to become one of the first 'modern' hotel in Wales.

Day is Inclusive of:

- Driver Guide Full Day

- All Entrances

## DAY 11

### MID WALES

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Today you can spend the day exploring the stunning National Park. An Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it is the perfect place to take a walk and discover some of the wonderful waterfalls it is known for. Why not take a trip to

the particularly dramatic Carreg Cennen castle, located in a position which overlooks the stunning surrounding area? The award-winning whisky distillery of Penderyn is also located in the area if you fancy a tour! Travel North later through the rugged scenery of Mid Wales to the popular coastal town, Aberystwyth.

**Overnight:** Hafod Hotel, Devils Bridge. king room 2 nights inclusive of breakfast.

Our Bar, Brasserie and Hotel is located in an exceptional location. Situated only steps away from the World Famous Devil's Bridge waterfalls and a two minute walk to the award winning Rheidol Valley steam train.

The mountains are all around where you can step into the wild landscapes of the Cambrian Mountains and enjoy the nearby breathtaking views of the Elan Valley.

Day is Inclusive of:

- Driver Guide Full Day
  - All Entrances
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## DAY 12 ABERYSTWYTH

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The bustling market town of Aberystwyth has plenty to offer everyone! Spend some time exploring the town and taking the train up Constitution Hill where you will be offered fantastic views of the bay and the castle ruins. Later on, enjoy a half-day tour of the surrounding area and take a trip from the town centre through the beautiful valley of Cwm Rheidol on the Vale or Rheidol Steam Railway. This will take you all the way to Devil's Bridge where views here are simply stunning, and the nearby waterfalls are shrouded in myth about when the Devil visited Wales for the last time!

**Overnight:** Hafod Hotel, Devils Bridge

Day is Inclusive of...

- Driver Guide Full Day
  - All Entrances
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## DAY 13 MID WALES - SNOWDONIA

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Today you will continue your stay in North Wales, having the chance to explore another of our country's National Parks - Wales has three! - Snowdonia National Park which holds the highest mountain in England and Wales. Enjoy a day touring this famous area of Wales and spend some time in the picturesque Betws-y-Coed, nestled in the heart of Snowdonia. Stroll around this traditional Welsh village, enjoying the iconic landscape around you.

**Overnight:** Chateau Rhianfa, Anglesey. king room, 2 nights inclusive of breakfast.

Our real-life fairytale is one we enjoy telling, but even better, it's one we like to show you as we take you on an exciting journey back in time. The Château was built in 1849 by Sir John Hay Williams, Baronet of Bodelwyddan as a gift for his wife Lady Sarah. The Château was originally built as a dower house, beautifully positioned on the water. However, inspiration and artistic imagination influenced the design from the couple's travels in the Loire region of France, where they were particularly enamoured with the architectural style favoured in the region during the reign of Francois I (1515-1547).

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## DAY 14 SNOWDONIA AND ANGLESEY

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Continuing your exploration of the wonders of North Wales, continue to the busy market town of Caernarfon. The imposing medieval Castle, built by Edward the 1st, dominates the town and has well-deserved UNESCO World Heritage status. Nearby is also the University town of Bangor, where you can visit the neo-Norman Penrhyn Castle and Bangor Cathedral. Why not book yourself onto the Snowdonia Mountain Railway this afternoon which will take you up the highest mountain in England and Wales? The views are unforgettable! From here head to your fairy-tale, French-style chateau for the final evening of an amazing journey and relax in its surroundings overlooking the Menai Strait.

**Overnight:** Chateau Rhianfa

Day is Inclusive of...

- Driver Guide Full Day
  - All Entrances
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## DAY 15 WALES TO SCOTLAND

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Today you will be driven to Manchester Airport, where you will catch a plane to Edinburgh. On arrival to Edinburgh, you will be met in the arrivals hall by our driver who will transfer you to your city centre hotel. Once you have checked in, you will be free to relax for the remainder of the afternoon.

**Hotel:** Principal George Street, 3 nights deluxe room inclusive of breakfast.

The Principal Edinburgh on George Street has been welcoming hotel guests since 1881. At its heart are five listed Georgian townhouses, built in 1775 as homes for Edinburgh's most prosperous citizens.

Winner of Luxury Brand Hotel of the Year at the 2019 Scottish Hotel Awards, The Principal is an ideal base from which to explore the city or conduct business. The sensitive, multi-million-pound restoration and refurbishment combines luxurious natural materials such as oak, marble and leather with a palette of colours inspired by the great 19th-century Scottish landscape painters.

A nod to Edinburgh's rich literary heritage, The Printing Press Bar & Kitchen was once home to acclaimed novelist Susan Ferrier (an equal of Jane Austen, according to Sir Walter Scott), whilst Burr & Co. is a lovely coffee shop with a devoted local following.

Day is Inclusive of:

- Transfer to Manchester Airport
  - Flight from Manchester to Edinburgh - (arranged by agent)
  - Meet & Greet and Transfer to Edinburgh Hotel
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## DAY 16 EDINBURGH CITY DISCOVERY TOUR

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The city was one of the major centres of the Enlightenment, led by the University of Edinburgh, earning it the nickname Athens of the North. The Old Town and New Town districts of Edinburgh were listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1995. There are over 4,500 listed buildings within the city. Our day begins with a familiarisation tour of Edinburgh.

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We'll introduce you to the city's main attractions before arriving at Edinburgh Castle. Here you can take a guided tour, view the Scottish Crown Jewels, visit the National War Museum or see the famous Stone of Destiny (traditional crowning seat of ancient Scottish monarchs). There are superb panoramic city views from the castle ramparts, where you can also visit Mon's Meg and the One O'Clock Gun.

As we walk down the Royal Mile there's time to explore some of the narrow and highly atmospheric alleyways or 'closes' of the Old Town. This is the historic heart of Edinburgh and part of a World Heritage Site. There will also be an opportunity to visit St Giles' Cathedral and the striking Scottish Parliament building.

After lunch we'll enjoy the magnificent Palace of Holyroodhouse. The official residence of the British Royal Family in Scotland, it is perhaps best known as home of the ill-fated Mary Queen of Scots following her return from France in 1561.

Our tour continues via picturesque St Mary's Loch in Holyrood Park to the foot of Arthur's Seat where there's an opportunity for panoramic photos of this beautiful city. Time permitting the rest of the afternoon is flexible. We may visit the Royal Yacht Britannia in the Port of Leith (maritime home to Her Majesty the Queen for over 40 years), explore the New Town and Calton Hill, climb the impressive Scott Monument or visit Craigmillar Castle.

**Hotel:** Principal George Street

Day is Inclusive of:

- Local Blue Badge Guide
- All Entrances

## DAY 17

### DAY TRIP TO ST ANDREWS

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Today is a quiet and simple day out to one of Scotland's most famous towns. St. Andrews in Fife, Scotland, has quite a history for such a small place. St Andrew's is just an hour and a half away. Once there you can visit the historical sites, wander around the town and have a really good lunch, there are plenty of places to choose from.

Legend claims that the town was so called because it harboured the relics of St. Andrew, which were brought here by a bishop, St. Rule, from Patras in Achaea.

It is the birthplace of golf, and the Royal and Ancient Club, which was created in 1754, has been the headquarters of golf ever since.

St. Andrews also has a castle and a university, which is the oldest in Scotland, founded in 1412. Prince William is perhaps the university's most recent famous alumnus. The College Chapel contains the pulpit where John Knox preached, and in the grounds there is a thorn tree reputedly planted by Mary, Queen of Scots.

The whole place is redolent with historic happenings!

Entrances Paid Locally

**Hotel:** Principal George Street

Day is Inclusive of:

- Driver/Guide Full day

## DAY 18

### BRAEMAR AND BALMORAL CASTLE

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Heading into the heart of The Cairngorm Mountains and National Park are two iconic castles.

Braemar Castle is a 17th Century Castle with an exciting story. Built in 1628 by the Earl of Mar as his Highland hunting lodge, burned in the first Jacobite uprising, home to the leader of the 1715 rebellion and garrison for government troops after the final defeat of the Jacobites at Culloden.

Balmoral Castle has been the Scottish home of the Royal Family since it was purchased for Queen Victoria by Prince Albert in 1852, having been first leased in 1848.

In the autumn of 1842, two and a half years after her marriage to Prince Albert, Queen Victoria paid her first visit to Scotland. They were so struck with the Highlands that they resolved to return. A further visit to Perthshire and then Ardverikie encouraged them to seize the opportunity to purchase Balmoral.

After searching enquiries they bought the estate on the 17th February 1848 and on 8th September 1848 they arrived to take possession of a property they had never seen, but to which they had committed themselves for many years to come. They were not disappointed and when they returned South they opened negotiations for the purchase of the land on which Balmoral stood.

Entrances Paid Locally

**Hotel:** Deeside Inn, 1 night, Victoria king room, inclusive of dinner and breakfast.

Deeside Inn is known for its traditional Scottish hospitality and lively music scene as much as it is for its homely lounge, open fires and welcoming bar with quality homemade food. Awarded its four star inn status by the AA, the team prides itself on a reputation for quality service.

The décor of the inn is reflective of the Victorian era, when the inn was originally built. Many period features such as wooden panelling, wooden beamed ceilings give Deeside Inn its character – and you will even find Queen Victoria's famous wooden toilet (ask us when you get here and we can fill you in on that little gem of history!).

## DAY 19

### BATTLEFIELDS AND MONSTERS

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Today is your final full day, not only in the UK but with your new friend, companion and historical mobile encyclopaedia of historic facts.

First stop today is Culloden Visitor Centre; cared for by the National Trust for Scotland. Visit the powerfully moving site of the final Jacobite Rising – the last and most harrowing pitched battle to be fought on British soil. Explore the interactive visitor centre, view fascinating artefacts from both sides of the confrontation, and experience the battle in our immersive surround cinema.

Loch Ness is brimming with history, and tales of the world's shyest monster. You might just spot Nessie. But the real stars of the Loch are its castles, monuments and scenery.

So all-aboard one of our cruises for a seat to one of the greatest shows on earth. You have to sail it to believe it. Cruise the Canal & Loch and visit a castle on this four-hour tour packed with history, legends and breathtaking views. Your journey takes you along Thomas Telford's famous Caledonian Canal and onto the world-famous waters of

Loch Ness. Here, you'll be treated to panoramic views of the Highlands, Aldourie Castle and Bona Lighthouse. What's more, you'll disembark to take in the stirring sights and stories of Urquhart Castle, with two hours to have a good nose around this once mighty stronghold - entry fee included.

**Hotel:** Culloden House: Garden Suite, 1 night inclusive of dinner & breakfast.

By the end of the 18th century, Inverness, the capital of the Highlands, attracted wealthy families from all over the Highlands to settle and enjoy the balls, assemblies and pleasures found in a metropolitan city.

A ring of mansions and fine houses sprang up around in the neighborhood of Inverness. The finest of the country houses still survives, Culloden House, an exquisite Georgian mansion set in open parkland.

But the existing house, already over 200 years old, is not the first house to stand on the site. Originally it was a 16th century Jacobean castle and parts of the house date back to this time.

Early on various owners claimed Culloden as their home ranging from the family of the first Stuart King, Robert II, to the chieftain of the Macintosh clan.

Day is Inclusive of:

• Entry to Culloden Battle Field Museum

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• Loch Ness Cruise

## DAY 20

### SCOTLAND TO IRELAND

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Today you head for Northern Ireland, your driver will come and collect you from the hotel and take you to Inverness Airport. As your flight does not depart until late afternoon, once you land you will head straight to your hotel for the evening, where you can book your table for dinner.

**Hotel:** Fitzwilliam Hotel, superior room, 2 nights inclusive of breakfast.

Recently awarded Five Stars by the AA, The Fitzwilliam Hotel is a super-elegant masterpiece located in the heart of the city centre.

Fabulous guestrooms, incredible food, a much-loved bar and the best service you've ever experienced: A new definition of boutique hotel, it's Belfast's five-star superstar.

Day is Inclusive of...

• Transfer from Hotel to Inverness Airport

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• Flight to Belfast (booked by agent)

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• Meet & Greet on Arrival and Transfer to Hotel

## DAY 21

### GIANT'S CAUSEWAY

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Today you head out with your Personal Driver/Guide on a fantastic excursion of Northern Ireland's amazing attractions. The first stop of the day is at the beautiful town of Carrickfergus so you can have a walk round the 12th century castle and see the ramparts stone walls and ancient harbour. Next you are off to The Magheramorne Quarry which has featured in HBO's TV series Game of Thrones and has been used to film scenes for Castle Black, Hardhome & The Wall. You will be travelling along the fantastic Antrim coast road with the Irish sea on our right and the Glens of Antrim on the left, you will also be passing the spectacular

Glens of Antrim and even climbing Glencorp and crossing the Glen Dun Bridge before climbing to the top of Glen Dun and then descending into the town of Ballycastle.

There will be a stop at the Carrick-a-Rede rope bridge or visit the old quarry of Larrybane which was featured in HBO's Series Game of Thrones throughout season two as it was used for Renly Baratheon's camp.

After a busy morning there will be a 30 min lunch stop at The Giant's Barn.

After lunch the highlight of the day is your stop to the Giant's Causeway itself where you will be able to walk across the stones themselves.

Lastly on your way back to Belfast the final stop of the day is at the amazing Dark Hedges.

**Hotel:** Fitzwilliam Hotel.

Day is Inclusive of:

• Full Day Driver/Guide

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• All Entrances

## DAY 22

### BELFAST TO DUBLIN

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Your journey from one capital to another, before you depart Belfast though, you will have one last visit, which will be to The Titanic Museum. Enjoy a self-guided visit to the newest "must-see" visitor attraction in Belfast, Titanic Belfast. Located in the heart of Belfast city, this state of the art visitor experience tells the story of the Titanic ship, from her conception in Belfast in the early 1900's, through her construction and launch, to her famous maiden voyage and her tragic end. You will learn about Belfast at the turn of the century as a thriving boom town and experience a thrilling ride through a dramatic presentation of the shipyards and the Titanic under construction. Be brought deep into the stories of the passengers, the crew and the heroes of the day.

Includes: entrance ticket and audio headset (the driver will be waiting outside the museum for you).

Your route to Dublin will take in some wonderful views and stops. County Down which is arguably, Northern Ireland's most scenic mountainous region, immortalized in ancient folklore and the songs of Percy French. The picturesque village of Rostrevor has a history of ancient kings and buried giants and is a beautiful point in which to explore more of Carlingford Lough. Make a stop in Newcastle, famous for long, sweeping beaches and its golf course, then head to Downpatrick, an ancient town where you can visit the reputed final resting place of Ireland's patron saint, St Patrick, as well as the lovely 12th and 13th century ruins of Inch Abbey, on the bank of the Quoile River.

Once you pass over to the south you will be stopping to explore Newgrange and the Morne Coast en route. You'll first set your sights on a visit to Newgrange, a stunning Neolithic passage tomb that is quite simply one of the great wonders of ancient western civilization. Be swept back to a time over 5,000 years ago, admiring the massive stone mound and its internal passages and chambers, letting reality set in that you're experiencing a monument which predates both Stonehenge and the Egyptian pyramids, with passages aligned to illuminate with the summer and winter solstice. Nearby is the River Boyne where the famous Battle of the Boyne took place.



The land here is lush and full of ancient and medieval ruins that are testaments to Ireland's impressive heritage

**Hotel:** The Westbury Hotel, king deluxe, 2 nights inclusive of breakfast.

The unrivalled location and luxury of The Westbury in Dublin, a member of Leading Hotels of the World, blends city living with an oasis of comfort and calm. From the moment guests ascend the hotel's central staircase to be introduced at check-in, there is a sense of being welcomed into a home from home. Take The Gallery, the supremely appointed and positioned space where afternoon tea is an institution and to one side, The Sidecar, with its 1930s, Gatsby-esque look and feel, sees white-jacketed bartenders fix martinis at your table. Meanwhile, with its buzzy outdoor terrace and walk-in entrance, all-day eatery Balfe's marries the easy elegance of a Parisian bistro with the dynamic energy of a New York brasserie. And, signature restaurant WILDE couples 1930s elegance with a botanical aesthetic, its floor-to-ceiling windows and an array of greenery, looking out over the city centre.

Day is Inclusive of:

- Entrance Tickets to Titanic Museum
- Private Transfer to Dublin

## DAY 23

### PRIVATE DUBLIN TOUR

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Relive a thousand years of Dublin's history from a Viking trading port to a medieval walled city with two cathedrals to the elegance of Dublin's Georgian development that made Dublin the 2nd city of The British Empire. Then the decay that led Ireland to becoming the second country after The United States to gain independence from The British empire through force of arms.

On this tour you will visit the following sites:

- Trinity College (Book of Kells)
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- St Michans Church
- 

- The Georgian Squares
- 

- The Phoenix Park
- 

- Dublin Castle
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- St Patricks Cathedral
- 

- Kilmainham Gaol
- 

- Guinness Brewery/Storehouse
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- Christchurch Cathedral

**Hotel:** The Westbury Hotel

Day is Inclusive of:

- Dublin Tour with Local Guide
- All Entrances

## DAY 24

### DUBLIN TO CONG

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Today you depart Dublin and travel west across Ireland to County Galway, and another truly magnificent and historic hotel. Enroute you will have a stop at Birr Castle.

The Award-Winning Gardens of Birr Castle Gardens and Science Centre in Ireland are both rich in amazing feats of science and engineering as well as rare trees and flowers, wonderful wildlife, and walks along peaceful rivers and the lake. The Parsons family invite you to explore one of the most extraordinary places in Ireland.

Created over generations it is an environmental and scientific time capsule.

Birr Castle is a very impressive 90 room castle situated on a 1200 acre walled estate in the Magical Midlands of Ireland. The castle is only open to the public on a limited basis throughout the summer as it still the family home of Lord & Lady Rosse, descendants of the Parsons family been there since 1620.

Next you head to Lisloughrey Pier on Lough Corrib for a 2 hour Lough and Island Cruise, which departs at 3pm, the drive takes about 2 hours to reach, but the scenery you pass all tells a story of the history of the region and Ireland, leaving Birr around midday you will have time for lunch at one of the villages you pass through, your guide will certainly know the best and most traditional to stop at. Take a Cruise to Inchoigoill Island From Lisloughrey Pier This is a two hour cruise which includes a 40 minute visit to Inchoigoill Island, the most famous island on Lough Corrib. After leaving Lisloughrey Pier from where passenger steamers once operated the cruise travels out across the lake towards Inchoigoill Island.

This cruise arrives at Inchoigoill at approx 3:30pm for a 40 minute visit. While on the island passengers are taken on a guided tour of St. Patrick's 5th Century Monastic site. Historic points of interest include:

St. Patricks Church (5th Century)

The stone of Lugna (470AD: Gravestone of St. Patricks navigator)

- The Church of the Saints  
(Built in 1180AD by the Augustinian Monks of Cong)
- 

- The burial tomb of Muirgeas O'Nioc  
(Archbishop of Tuam in 1128AD)
- 

- After the guided tour, passengers board the "Isle Of Inisfree" to return to Lisloughrey

Once you are back on dry land, you take the short drive to your hotel, where you can then check in and relax for the evening.

**Hotel:** Ashford Castle Lodge Hotel, 2 nights, lake view suite, inclusive of dinner & breakfast.

Sitting within the magnificent 350 acre estate of Ashford Castle, our property overlooks the magical Lough Corrib.

Day is Inclusive of...

- Driver/Guide Full Day
- 

- Entrance to Birr Castle
- 

- Loch Corrib Cruise

## DAY 25

### CONNEMARA EXCURSION

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Today see the hidden Ireland off the main tourist track this tour is a must with the first stop at Ross Errilly Friary- a hidden but atmospheric 14th century monastery before entering Cong Village. This is where you have time to explore Cong Woods not far from Ashford Castle. You will stroll the town famous for being the location for the 1950s classic movie, 'The Quiet Man'- (Starred John Wayne) or simply have a coffee on the edge of Lough Corrib- the largest lake in the Republic of Ireland.

Entering Connemara on the Lough Nafooy route allows you to see the stark beauty of the hidden valleys of Connemara. Killary Fiord and the village of Leenane



make for a beautiful photostop. The tour then continues to Kylemore Abbey where you can break for lunch and sightseeing for 2 Hours. Leaving Kylemore late afternoon you drive through the Inagh Valley, Maam Cross & Oughterard and complete the circuit of Lough Corrib before arriving in Galway for the evening.

Any entrances paid locally

**Hotel:** Ashford Castle Lodge Hotel

Day is Inclusive of:

- Full Day Excursion with Driver/Guide

## DAY 26

### GALWAY

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Today you depart with your driver/guide to explore more of the County of Mayo, driving up around the Ring of Connemara along the coast of The Wild Atlantic Way, visiting wonderful towns such as Westport. This is actually your guide's back yard, and will know the area better than any other, taking you to their special places not normally visited by the main tourist groups, and showing you some real secrets.

**Hotel:** Mount Falcon, 1 night, deluxe suite, inclusive of dinner and breakfast.

Mount Falcon Estate lies by the banks of The River Moy (the most prolific wild Atlantic Salmon river in Ireland) between Foxford and Ballina (The Salmon Capital of Ireland). The Estate consists of a 4 star deluxe 32 bedroom hotel. The house was built in 1876 and was a wedding present from one young groom to his new wife. The Estate was originally owned by The Knox family whose ancestors are buried in the circular graveyard next to a Megalithic tomb located on the Estate. Opened in 2006 Mount Falcon was the youngest ever hotel to win The AA Hotel of the year. In 2015 the Hotel was named the best Manor House Hotel in Ireland. The Hotel's 'Kitchen Restaurant' holds 2 AA Rosettes and has received numerous awards for Best Hotel Restaurant in Connaught and The Best Head Chef in Connaught, the most recent award received was in 2015 for Best Chef in Connaught (by the Good Eating Guide).

Any Entrances Paid Locally

Day is Inclusive of:

- Full Day Excursion with Driver/Guide

## DAY 27

### GALWAY TO LIMERICK

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Cliffs and Castles; are the order of the day. Once you depart Galway City, you start following The Wild Atlantic Way. The Cliffs of Moher make for a dramatic vista thanks to a sheer 600 foot vertical drop into the sea. The cliffs are made up of mudstone and sandstone, which helps create the ambiance you'll experience since the mudstone is softer and erodes which creates beautiful ledges on the side of the cliffs that seabirds habitat and breed on. The Cliffs of Moher are one of the most important sea bird colonies in Europe and you'll likely see many birds flying around while visiting, including the possibility of puffins.

For a small €2 fee, you can go up in O'Brien Tower located near the cliffs and which is just a short walk from the visitor center. The tower was built by Cornelius O'Brien, a local landowner in the 19th century who was the person that originally had the vision to bring tourism to the Irish

Mid-west and specifically the Cliffs of Moher. From the top of the tower, you can see all the way to Newfoundland on a clear day.

Bunratty Castle is the most complete and authentic medieval fortress in Ireland. When visiting, you can tour the main castle plus its historic Folk Park, which is a recreation of what a village in the area would have been like in the 19th century. It is seriously cool as you feel like you've been transported back in time to a full village complete with homes and businesses. Bunratty is a great spot for families to visit; adults will appreciate the history and attention to detail while kids will enjoy the exploration factor of all the different buildings to visit plus live animals onsite.

While touring Bunratty Castle you'll learn about the home life of earls in Mid-west Ireland in the 15th century, like that the ceiling has a vent above the "central heating" fireplace and how the stone walls absorbed the heat and spread it all through the room. Much more complicated than turning a knob on a thermostat – good thing Ireland doesn't get to 20 below zero on a regular basis like the Midwest winters I remember growing up with in Minnesota.

The bedrooms are also interesting to see, particularly the beds, which are covered in a 500 year old bedspread and a nightgown that would have been worn in the era. The beds didn't have springs, just ropes. At night the ropes would have to be tightened so people didn't fall down the middle of the bed. This is where the term "sleep tight" comes from. Once you leave the main castle, there's even more fun to be had as you explore the Folk Park and see how people who weren't earls lived back in the 1800s.

The grounds of Bunratty Folk Park are also simply pleasurable to walk around on thanks to meandering trails by cute Medieval-style buildings and lots of trees.

**Hotel:** No.1 Perry Square, 2 nights, period style room, inclusive of breakfast.

Overlooking the handsome, tree-lined People's Park in Limerick's historic Georgian Quarter, No.1 Perry Square is a luxurious and intimate boutique townhouse hotel. With 20 bedrooms, delicious food & wine in the restaurant and lounges, an innovative and polished organic spa in the basement, an interestingly stocked shop, a sweet terrace and kitchen garden, and full of personality and style throughout.

Day is Inclusive of:

- Driver/Guide Full Day
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- Entrance to Cliffs of Moher
- 

- Entrances to Bunratty Castle
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## DAY 28

### RING OF KERRY

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Once again head out with your driver/guide after breakfast and experience some more fantastic attractions and scenery that makes Ireland such a stunning and memorable place to visit.

The Ring of Kerry: Rugged islands, white-sand beaches, dramatic mountain passes and a royal goat – the Ring of Kerry works its magic as you travel from rugged coastline to charming villages and buzzing towns. You can do it all in a day, but our advice? Go slow, savor the sights, get off the beaten track, and see what has made this driving route one of the most popular on the island of Ireland.



A place for lunch can be chosen with your guide, who will know the best authentic establishment for you to enjoy.

Hotel: No.1 Perry Square

Day is Inclusive of:

- Driver/Guide Full Day

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- Any Entrances

## **DAY 29**

### DEPARTURE DAY

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Sadly after this amazing tour of Europe it is time to depart, your driver will arrive and transfer you to Shannon International Airport in plenty of time for you to check-in and catch your flight home.

