

An Irish Whirl

14 Day tour

*featuring the Irish Music Festival, Dublin
2008 "Fleadh Cheoil na hEireann"*



\$3,999*per person*(twin share)

Day 1: Monday 18th August 2008 (D)

Upon arrival at Dublin Airport, you will be met and transferred to the hotel in Dublin.

You have the remainder of the afternoon at leisure to explore this wonderful city.

Welcome dinner in a traditional Irish evening with band and dancers pub.

Overnight at hotel (**Dublin**)

Day 2: Tuesday 19th August 2008 (B)

Breakfast at the hotel.

Today you will have a full day sightseeing tour to discover Dublin's Fair City. Your tour will take you to all the sights including the famous "Doors of Dublin," the elegant Georgian squares and Phoenix Park. Highlights of the tour will be a visit to **Trinity College** followed by a visit to **St. Patrick's Cathedral**, Ireland's largest church made famous by its former dean Jonathan Swift, author of "Gulliver's Travels."



Trinity College is the oldest University in Ireland. It was founded by Elizabeth 1st in 1592. Within its walls, you will be able to admire Parliament Square and its 18th Century edifices. The visit of the ancient library, containing over twenty thousand manuscripts, is often surprising by its splendor. The ninth Century Book of Kells, famous for its precious illuminations, is exhibited on these premises.

St. Patrick's Cathedral is an Anglican cathedral built in 1213; it is the largest in Ireland. This Gothic Cathedral with a splendid interior is adorned with Funeral Monuments, for example The Boyle family and the grave of Dean Jonathan Swift (Dean of St. Patrick's 1713-1745). The Chancel with its ornate stained-glass windows, some by Harry Clarke, are some of the magnificent features to behold.

Overnight at the hotel (**Dublin**)

Day 3 Wednesday 20th August 2008 (B)

Breakfast at the hotel.

A full day at leisure to explore the city.

Perhaps you will succumb to the decadent shopping experience you will find in the bustling shopping areas of Nassau Street, Grafton Street, St. Stephen's Green, Temple Bar, O'Connell Street and Henry Street.

In the evening you will take part in a **Dublin literary pub-crawl**. The literary pub-crawl meanders through the streets of Dublin, talking in the sights, the smells, the sounds and the scenes. Follow in the footsteps of Joyce, Shaw, O'Casey, Behan, Beckett, Stephens and other literary giants. As you discover some of Dublin's finest pubs and sample some of the finest drinks, you never know, you may absorb some of their genius.

Overnight at hotel (**Dublin**)

Day 4 Thursday 21st August 2008 (B)

Breakfast at the hotel.

Today travel to **Wicklow**. Start the day with a walking tour in the fascinating landscape of Wicklow. The walk leads you to the fairy circles, an unusual variety of trees growing in a very large circle. It is well known as one of the remnants of mythological and historical times.



Continue to **Powerscourt House & Gardens**. Powerscourt is one of Europe's great treasures and Ireland's most famous House & Gardens. The gardens at Powerscourt were laid out in two main periods. When the house was rebuilt after 1731, the surrounding grounds were also remodeled. The design reflected the desire to create a garden, which was part of a wider landscape. A century later the architect Daniel Robertson created a garden influenced by features of the Italian Renaissance Villas and designed the terrace nearest to the house. Today the public can still enjoy the charming walled garden, the striking terraces, fine statuary and varied trees linked by carefully designed walks and set in the magnificent surroundings of the Wicklow Mountains. The magnificent house is home to the best of Irish design in gifts, clothes and furniture in the Avoca Stores and the Interiors Gallery.

Overnight at hotel (**Dublin**)

Day 5 & 6 Friday 22nd and Saturday 23rd August 2008 (B)

Breakfast at the hotel

Enjoy the festival during these 2 days.

Overnight at hotel (**Tullamore area**)

Day 7 Sunday 24th August 2008 (B)

Breakfast at the hotel

Travel to the medieval town of **Kilkenny**.

The ancient city of Kilkenny was named after a 6th century monk St Canice. A native of the area, St Canice built a monastic enclave on the site where today we find the beautifully restored 13th century **St Canices Cathedral**. The town is dominated by 12th century **Kilkenny Castle**, built by the Normans on their arrival in this part of Ireland. You will visit these two monuments and then discover the town of Kilkenny at leisure.

Capital of County Kilkenny, the town of Kilkenny is often referred to as “the Marble City”. It is the most interesting and best preserved of the medieval Irish cities. It owes its immense charm to the various impressive historical monuments. A medieval city of 24,000 people it is characterised by many beautifully restored buildings and winding slipways ~ it is small and compact enough to explore on foot, yet full of fascinating historical buildings and contemporary shops, design galleries and restaurants.

Dinner & overnight at the hotel (**Kilkenny area**)

Day 8 Monday 25th August 2008 (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel

Today you travel from Kilkenny to Killarney to enjoy the beautiful scenery and magnificent Irish landscape.



You will visit **Ross Castle**, which is considered as a typical example of the stronghold of an Irish Chieftain during the middle Ages. The castle is surrounded by a fortified bawn, its curtain walls defended by circular flanking towers, two of which remain.

Dinner & overnight at the hotel. (**Killarney area**)

Day 9 Tuesday 26th August 2008 (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel

Today you will enjoy a truly memorable day as you experience the magnificent **Ring of Kerry**. As you leave Killarney you will start a journey that takes you on narrow roads through Ireland's highest mountain range, the Macgillicuddy Reeks.

On your way you will visit the world-renowned **Muckross House & Gardens**. Henry Arthur Herbert built this magnificent Victorian 65-room mansion in 1843.



Notable features of the house are its mullioned windows and steeped gables. Portland stone was used for the facing and this was shipped from England to Kenmare and then by horse and cart over the mountains to Muckross. The Gardens are renowned worldwide for their beauty. Location and botanical collection make this a garden of world calibre. Extensive areas of natural rockery, water garden, large lawns, arboretum, flowers, trees - surrounded by wood, in a lake and mountain setting.

Later on you will visit the **Crag Caves**. They have been discovered in 1983 and are thought to be over one million years old. Crag Cave is a magical wonderland of stalagmites and stalactites.

Dinner & overnight at the hotel. **(Killarney area)**

Day 10 Wednesday 27th August 2008 (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel.

Today you will travel through the county of Clare.

On your way you will admire the **Cliffs of Moher**. Situated on the Atlantic Ocean and bordering the Burren Area, the Cliffs of Moher are one of Ireland's most spectacular sights. Standing 230 metres above the ground at their highest point and 8km long, the Cliffs boast one of the most amazing views in Ireland. On a clear day, the Aran Islands are visible in Galway Bay as well as the valleys and hills of Connemara. Visitors are advised to dress warmly when visiting the cliffs because of the cool Atlantic winds blowing in off the ocean. The Cliffs of Moher are one of Ireland's most visited attractions and certainly merits a visit.

Then proceed to Doolin, a small seaside village on the northwest coast of County Clare. Set against the rugged Atlantic Ocean and surrounded by the spectacular bare limestone landscape of the Burren, Doolin is a place of breathtaking beauty. Traditionally a fishing village, Doolin is now renowned world-wide as the traditional musical capital of Ireland.



You will also visit **Aillwee Cave**. Aillwee is one of the most ancient caves in the Burren and perhaps in Ireland. This stunning creation of nature was formed by the melt waters of a prehistoric ice age. The cave, carved out of limestone, cuts into the heart of the mountain.

Dinner & overnight at the hotel. **(County of Clare)**

Day 11 Thursday 28th August 2008 (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel.

Travel to Galway and morning guided tour of the medieval city, which is rich of culture. See the impressive **Galway Cathedral** located on an island in the River Corrib and one of Galway's landmark buildings and also one of the largest. Built in the early 1960s its modern construction contains an impressive interior including a 145 foot high dome.



You will see Lynch's Castle, a 16th century castle that was heavily altered in 1966 when it was converted into a bank. The exterior preserves some of the few remaining Irish gargoyles as well as the arms of Henry VII, the Lynch family and the Fitzgerald's of Kildare. The stonework of the windows is of good quality. In the ground floor, historical material dealing with the castle is displayed. A doorway and first-floor window of one of the many fine 16th and 17th century houses, which adorned the city, has been re-erected in isolation on the north side of Eyre Square. Eyre Square is an open green park with many attractions such as a statue of Paraic O'Connaire and a fountain. Discover as well the history of the Spanish Arch, which was built in 1584 and is located on the banks of the Corrib, an extension of the city walls that protected the quay.

Rest of the day at leisure in Galway.

Dinner & overnight at the hotel. **(Galway area)**

Day 12 Friday 29th August 2008 (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel.

Today travel to Belfast via County Sligo. County Sligo's beautiful scenery was an inspiration for Yeats, who is buried at Drumcliff Churchyard, under loaf-shaped Benbulbin Mountain. The lakes of Sligo, with their still waters and wooded islands, are truly spectacular, and form a striking contrast to the county's rugged uplands. The imposing Neolithic cairn on the summit of Knocknarea, known locally as Queen Maeve's grave, is a striking landmark. At Carrowmore, you'll find the largest megalithic cemetery in Ireland. Sligo's scenic coast has some excellent surfing beaches, including Strandhill, Rosses Point and Enniscrone, also popular for their golf courses.

Dinner & overnight at the hotel. **(Belfast)**

Day13 Saturday 30th August 2008 (B,D)

Breakfast at the hotel.

The day starts with a sightseeing tour of **Belfast**. See the famous city hall, the Albert Memorial Clock and discover the history of Belfast.

Later enjoy an excursion to the Giants Causeway. The Causeway was formed more than 60 million years ago when red-hot lava erupted onto the surface of the earth. It was quickly cooled by the sea, which crystallized it and formed it into the 40,000 basalt polygonal columns, which today form the Giants Causeway. Legend tells a different story as to how this unique place was built by the giant, Finn MacCumhaill. Finn built this causeway over the sea to Scotland, in order to fight against his archenemy, Fingal, who had started his own path from his side of the sea. The two had never met before and when Finn heard the heavy footsteps of Fingal, he turned back. Helped by his wife, Finn dressed up as a baby! When Fingal arrived and saw Finn, the baby giant, Fingal assumed the baby's father would be much, much bigger and he became scared and went running home, destroying the causeway behind him.



The discovery of the causeway has widely been attributed to the Bishop of Derry, who visited there in 1692 and subsequently brought word of its existence to the 'learned' circles in Dublin and hence to the courts of London. A must on any visit to the North of Ireland, the Causeway is an UNESCO World Heritage site, and is often referred to as the 'Eighth Wonder of the World'. The Visitor Centre hosts a multi-lingual audio-visual show, which explains the origin, and the geology of the Causeway as well as adding credence to the various legends, told of the Giants Causeway.

Dinner & overnight at the hotel. **(Belfast)**

Day 14 Sunday 31st August 2008 (B)

Breakfast at the hotel.

Transfer to Belfast airport and flight back home.

Tour Dates: Monday 18 August – Saturday 31 August 2008

Inclusions:	
•	Return airport transfers
•	Fully guided tour, travelling in a luxury private coach
•	13 nights 3 – 4 star accommodation
•	Breakfast daily, seven (7) three-course dinners featured throughout
•	Entrance fees to all attractions
<i>Excludes airfares, tipping & portorage, drinks, meals not specified in itinerary</i>	

Tour Price	\$3,999.00 per person
Optional Meal Package	\$ 599.00 per person
<i>(includes all lunches and dinners not shown in itinerary above. (All meals are three-course and include tea or coffee)</i>	

* CONDITIONS: Prices are per person twin share. Prices are based on rates of exchange at the time of issue on 21st December 2007. Departures are based on a minimum of 15 passengers. Prices are subject to change without notice and are

correct at the time of publication. At the time of booking confirmation a non-refundable deposit of \$1000.00 p.p will be required, accompanied by a signed booking form.

For further details, please contact:



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