



## Irish Castles, Gardens and Manor Houses

Make your fairy tale come true on this four-day tour of grandiose gardens, majestic manor houses and captivating castles. Visit pretty villages with thatched-roofed, stone buildings and shop at bustling markets.



YOUR  
ADVENTURE  
AWAITS

4 days/3 nights

### ITINERARY

#### Day 1: Dublin – Emo Court House – Birr Castle – Killaloe/Ballina

You depart Dublin and travel west through the Midlands to Emo Court House, an 18th century neoclassical mansion set in stunning parkland and gardens. There's time for a stroll in the grounds and refreshments in the excellent tea rooms. Continuing west through the Slieve Bloom Mountains, you arrive at the unique Birr Castle. You can learn about the bygone age of scientific discovery at the Great Telescope, the largest in the world for over 70 years. The castle is a private residence but the substantial and beautiful grounds are open to the public, as are the excellent exhibitions. The tour continues south to the twin towns of Killaloe, Co Clare and Ballina, Co Tipperary – situated on the banks of the River Shannon – where you will spend your first night.

#### Day 2: Clonmacnoise – Strokestown Park – Carrick-on-Shannon

Begin the day experiencing the best of rural Ireland. A scenic drive takes you to Clonmacnoise – an early Christian site in a beautiful setting on the banks of the River Shannon. You head through Athlone and then northwards alongside Lough Ree to the grandeur of Strokestown Park. This great mansion house sits in stunning grounds and hosts a fascinating museum about the great famine. From here, you drive a short distance to the bustling town of Carrick-on-Shannon, your home for the next two nights.

#### Day 3: Florence Court, Northern Ireland – Enniskillen

A relaxed day exploring the Lakelands in County Leitrim awaits and County Fermanagh in Northern Ireland. You visit Florence Court, one the grandest 18th century country houses in Ireland and a former home of the Earls of Enniskillen. The lush parkland and majestic grounds are the perfect opportunity for photos. You stop at the nearby historic market town of Enniskillen, where you can view the impressive 600 year old castle atop the banks of the River Erne. Then we head back to Carrick-on-Shannon. The rest of the day is yours to explore.

#### Day 4: Kells – Trim Castle – Dublin

In the morning you have a chance to take a lovely stroll through the hotel grounds. We then head to the heritage town of Kells and the famous monastic site where the Book of Kells was created. This phenomenal ancient treasure exhibits the height of medieval design and craftsmanship. You have time to take a leisurely lunch amongst the historic sites of St Columba's Church and the traditional High Crosses. After lunch, you travel through the flourishing countryside to Trim Castle, the setting for the movie "Braveheart". Relive the scenes from the film as you explore the massive three storied keep, a structure so large that it took over 30 years to build. Weather permitting, you head for the ancient Hill of Tara, the traditional seat of more than 140 Kings of Ireland. From this regal site, you head back to Dublin.

We can arrange for accommodation in Dublin before and after this tour, to allow you time to explore this lively and historic city. Accommodation ranges from hostels, B&B/guesthouses, all categories of hotels up to castle stays. Please inquire.



## Details

**Group Size:** 16

### 2018 Departures:

Sundays

April: 22

May: 06, 20

June: 03, 24

July: 15

August: 05, 26

September: 09, 23

October: 07

### 2018 Pricing:

B&B accommodation

US\$649 – twin

US\$760 – single

Hotel accommodation

US\$825 – twin

US\$830 – single

Prices are shown in US\$ per person based on two people sharing a twin room and one person in a single room. Prices are approximate US\$ equivalent of the Euro rate and will vary depending on currency conversion of the Euro at the time of payment of your deposit and re-calculated at the time of final payment. CA\$ rates are also available on request. You may choose to lock in the US\$ or CA\$ rate by paying in full when you make your reservation.

### Trip Code:

002334 - W20

## INCLUDED

- Transportation by 16-passenger Mercedes mini-coach for 4 days of touring
- The services of an experienced and knowledgeable driver/guide
- 3 nights of accommodation as outlined in itinerary
- Breakfast daily at accommodation

## NOT INCLUDED

- Airfare to/from Dublin
- Accommodation in Dublin
- Meals not specified
- Admissions to attractions
- Optional Tours
- Gratuities to driver/guide
- Travel Insurance
- Items of a personal nature

## TOUR NOTES

These small group tours are a bit more casual than many of the large-coach tours. They offer you the choice of paying admission locally to the sites you wish to visit or skip some and do something else that interests you more. There is the opportunity to have some free time in the evenings to go out for dinner to a cafe or restaurant of your choosing on your own, buy some food at a supermarket or take-out and eat at your accommodation or hang out with other people from your tour. The choice is yours!

### Places You'll Explore on this Tour:

Birr Castle Gardens and the Great Telescope – Explore the lush gardens and discover one of the 19th century's



greatest scientific instruments, The Great Telescope.

The Village of Adare – ‘Ireland’s Prettiest Village’ – A stunning ‘chocolate box’ collection of thatched houses and historic buildings.

Clonmacnoise Monastery – This 1,500 year old abbey was once a major centre of religion, learning, craftsmanship.

Strokestown Park House and Gardens – Uncover the secrets of the 19th century famine in the incredible grounds and house museum.

Fermanagh Lakelands and Florence Court – Pass along these wonderful waterways and sweep through the grounds of this beautiful 18th century house.

St. Columba’s Church in Kells – Admire the beauty and brutality of the past at this church built on the site of a ruined monastery.

Trim Castle – Stare in wonder at the largest Anglo-Norman castle in Ireland, the famous location for the film ‘Braveheart’.

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## ROUTE MAP



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