

# Celebration · ESCAPES ·

— TRANSFORMING DREAMS INTO MEMORIES —

## 9 Day Highlights of Ireland



**CUSTOM ITINERARY – YOUR FLEXIBLE INCLUSIONS DATES — 9 Day ITINERARY**

### **Day 1 Arrival Ireland: US – Belfast**

**Upon arrival in Belfast**, meet your private Professional Liaison in the arrival hall for a VIP escort through customs and forward to baggage claim where you will meet your private driver who will transfer you to the Fitzwilliam Hotel Belfast.

**Upon arrival at the hotel**, you will be met by the concierge who will welcome you with a VIP private check-in. Your luggage will be managed and delivered to your accommodation.

**9:00am:** Meet your private driver in the lobby for your exciting tour of Belfast city. Belfast is Northern Ireland's capital. It was the birthplace of the RMS Titanic, which famously struck an iceberg and sunk in 1912. This legacy is recalled in the renovated dockyards' Titanic Quarter, which includes the Titanic Belfast, an aluminium-clad museum reminiscent of a ship's hull, as well as shipbuilder Harland & Wolff's Drawing Offices and the Titanic Slipways, which now host open-air concerts.

Self-Guided Titanic Tour.

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## **First you will experience Titanic Belfast.**

Titanic Belfast, named the World's Leading Tourist Attraction at the prestigious World Travel Awards in 2016, is located beside the Titanic Slipways, the Harland and Wolff Drawing Offices and Hamilton Graving Dock, the very place where Titanic was designed, built and launched in 1912.

Titanic Belfast tells the story of the Titanic, from her conception in Belfast in the early 1900s, through her construction and launch, to its maiden voyage and subsequent place in history.

The self-guided Titanic Experience extends over nine interpretive and interactive galleries, which explore the sights, sounds, smells and stories of RMS Titanic, as well as the city and people who made her.

After your experience, your guide will take you on a tour of the other Titanic sites and experiences in this area.

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**The Titanic Memorial Garden commemorates the 1,512 people who perished on RMS Titanic in 1912.**

Located on the east side of Belfast City Hall, the garden is set on two levels with the upper level containing a nine metre long plinth, inscribed with the names of those who died on RMS Titanic and a lower grassed terrace surrounding the existing monument.

The garden's memorial plinth supports fifteen bronze plaques which list, in alphabetical order, the names of 1,512 people who perished on RMS Titanic.

When the plaques were being designed, it was believed that a complete list of names was already in existence, however this was not the case.

**Eight well-known Belfast-made ships are represented by spectacular sculptured masts that line the east side of Donegall Place.**

The Masts.

**Donegall Place, Belfast City Centre**

Titanic, her sister ships Olympic and Britannic, and Nomadic are among eight famous Belfast made ships represented by spectacular sculptured masts that line the east side

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of Donegall Place in the heart of Belfast. Each mast carries a sail which celebrates Belfast's maritime heritage.

The Kit

## **Abercorn Basin, Titanic Quarter**

The innovative genius that lay behind the building of Titanic is celebrated in this spectacular see-through 13.5 metre tall bronze structure. A giant modelling kit - using scale replicas of Titanic's component parts - recreates the legendary liner beside the Abercorn Basin, near where the real ship was built. The £200,000 piece was inspired by the plastic frames of the Airfix model kits. At night it lights up Titanic Quarter with blue and white phosphorous lighting.

## **RMS Titanic's tender ship and the last remaining White Star Line vessel has been restored to her original glory.**

Walk the decks, explore the ship, and take journey through over 100 years of authentic maritime and social history.

SS Nomadic is most famous for the part she played in the Titanic story when she ferried first and second class passengers to Titanic from Cherbourg, but this was only the beginning of her extraordinary journey that stretches over 100 years. Restored to her original 1911 glory and back home in Belfast where she was designed and built, a visit to SS Nomadic and Hamilton Dock combines the authentic heritage and atmosphere of this historic ship with the intriguing stories of her passengers and the ups and downs of her dramatic career.

Stretched over four decks a visit to Nomadic allows you to experience first-hand what it was like to be a passenger boarding Titanic on her fateful maiden voyage, to marvel at the intricate details and the contrasts between the separated class areas on board.

## **Behind Titanic Belfast you can walk along the historic slipways where Titanic and Olympic were built and launched over 100 years ago.**

See where Titanic first touched the water back in 1911. The Slipways have since been restored and now play host to a variety of open air concerts and events.

Titanic Belfast stands at the head of the historic slipways where Titanic and Olympic were built and from where these famous ships were first launched into the water. Walk

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down the very slipway where Titanic was constructed and explore a life size plan of Titanic's Promenade Deck which is inlaid in white stone.



Discover the positions of the liner's lifeboats and funnels and have a seat at one of the benches positioned exactly as they would have been on board the deck of Titanic.

### **Lunch is on your own today.**

Have a pint in Belfast's oldest traditional pub – Kelly's Cellars Located in Bank St, Kelly's Cellars is one of Belfast's oldest traditional Irish pub, situated in the heart of the city. Described as "a hidden gem that oozes old traditional values", it is famous for a pint of Guinness, served with homemade Irish beef stew. Built in 1720, Kelly's Cellars has changed very little in 200 years and still has most of its original features. Undoubtedly one of the best things to do in Belfast.

**After lunch** Meet your professional local guide to enjoy a private tour of the highlights of Belfast.



Visit Belfast City Hall. This is a stunning Edwardian civic building in the centre of the city which was built during the early part of the 20th century.

Take a tour around the beautifully decorated interior and learn about its history or walk in the gardens to discover the Titanic memorial and art work and statues linked to everyone from Queen Victoria to President Clinton.

If you are ready for a cuppa, there's even a café, the Bobbin Coffee Shop.

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Visit St. Anne's Cathedral with its maze like floor, the iconic Crown Liquor Saloon, The Botanic Gardens,



before they go!)

Drive by the Great Walls of Belfast -“The Peace Walls” Another bizarre yet interesting part of this city is the fact that there are massive walls separating communities. It is hard to believe that in a modern European city in the 21st century that such walls exist. However, it is planned to take down these walls in the next 20 years so you should see them



Murals of The Troubles: You can't escape the fact that Belfast is a divided city. There are peace walls and security gates dividing staunch Catholic and Protestant areas with political murals across the most loyally defended parts of the city. There is nothing quite like this anywhere else in Europe and taking a bus or walking tour to see and hear about the background to the artworks is an absolute must.



## Visit Stormont – The Northern Irish Parliament Buildings

Stormont is often seen on the TV in news reports about Northern Ireland and you would think it is way out of the city in the countryside because of the surrounding green. However, this building is just 15 minutes from the city centre, set in parkland, and enjoys imposing views across Belfast to the Black Mountain and Belfast Hills.

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Explore Belfast Castle (#2).

Belfast Castle is set on the slopes of Cavehill Country Park, Belfast, Northern Ireland in a prominent position 400 feet above sea level. Its location provides unobstructed views of the city of Belfast and Belfast Lough.

There is a lovely outdoor cafe where you can enjoy a coffee and cake whilst taking in the phenomenal beauty!

After your tour, you will be returned to your hotel, where you will be at leisure for the rest of the day until dinner.



**8:00pm: Dinner** - you will enjoy dinner in one of Belfast's wonderful restaurants on your own tonight. (TBD).

**After Dinner**, you will continue your evening with a traditional Irish Pub Crawl. The Belfast Pub Crawl. It wouldn't be right to visit Belfast and leave out the best pubs Belfast has to offer, and why not do them all in one night!?

To experience a traditional Irish night in Belfast then look no further than this. We have put together a pub crawl with some of the best traditional pubs where you can drink the best Guinness while listening to traditional music! Our suggested pub crawl would consist of Lavery's, The Crown Bar, Robinsons, Maddens, Kelly's Cellars, Whites Tavern, McHughs, The Harp Bar, The Duke of York, The Dirty Onion.

Make your way back to your hotel on your own. The remainder of the day is at leisure.

Overnight in the Fitzwilliam Hotel Belfast.

**Day 2 Ireland: Belfast – Glens of Antrim**

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## Breakfast in the hotel.



**After a full Irish Breakfast**, you will check out of your hotel and meet your private driver in the lobby for your exciting tour of the Glens of Antrim.

The Glens of Antrim, known locally as simply The Glens, is a region of County Antrim, Northern Ireland. It comprises nine glens, that radiate from the Antrim Plateau to the coast.

**From the County Antrim town of Larne, rugged cliffs stretch north for 80 miles, broken only by nine**

**deep green glens, each with its own unique character.**

First stop, Ballygally, where, no surprise in a land steeped in legend, the hotel is reputed to have a (friendly) ghost.

Winding on past spectacular scenery, solve the mystery of the beech maze at **Carnfunnock Country Park**. Splash down at the beaches of Ballygally, Glenarm, Carnlough, Cushendall or Cushendun. The Glenarm Estate is certainly worth viewing on its open days. Not far inland is **Slemish Mountain**, where St. Patrick tended sheep as a young slave.

**You will have a picnic lunch from the Castle that you will enjoy today en-route. Loads of snacks, too for a day exploring the glens makes one hungry.**

The coast road becomes even more tortuous, but the views of Scotland are worth it. Glenariff, Queen of the Glens, is fairest of them all with the wild beauty of its waterfalls and trail skirting a sheer plunging gorge, within Glenariff Forest Park.

Cushendall, capital of the Glens, is a lively center of music, dance and craic. Next stop is Cushendun, a National Trust Preserved village, famed for its Cornish cottages.

Dare you venture further? Whichever route you take, thrills await. White-knuckle cliff road skirting remote Fair Head, or inland to Ballycastle across the mysterious 'vanishing lake'; a watery grave to coach and horses way back when.



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The Glens are equally famous for their festivals, exemplified by the Heart of the Glens festival at Cushendall in August, where everyone sings and dances from morning to night, and vice-versa. Not to be outdone, Glenarm, Carnlough and Cushendun have festival weeks in July.



## The Glens Translated

The names of the Glens evoke their history and features - below is the meanings of each of the glens:

- Glenarm - *glen of the army*
- Glencloy - *glen of the dykes*
- Glenariff - *glen of the plough*
- Glenballyemon - *Edwardstown Glen*
- Glanaan - *glen of the little fords*
- Glencorp - *glen of the dead*
- Glendun - *brown glen*
- Glenshesk - *glen of the sedges (reeds)*
- Glentaisie - *after Taisie, princess of Rathlin Island*

A visit to the nine glens is a must-see on your list!

**After your tour** you will check in to your hotel, The Londonderry Arms Hotel, where you are a leisure for the remainder of the evening.

**Dinner is on your own at the hotel.**

**Day 3 Ireland:** Glens of Antrim - Dublin – Fitzwilliam Dublin Hotel

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## **Breakfast in the hotel.**

**8:00AM:** After an early Breakfast, you will check out of your hotel and meet your private driver in the lobby for your transfer to Dublin.



En-route to Dublin, you will stop at Malahide Castle, where you will enjoy touring the castle and the grounds (approximately 3 hrs). This refurbished landmark that dates back to the 12th century.

With your guide, wander the castle grounds, spanning some 250 acres, and keep your eyes or ears open for ghosts said to haunt the site.

You'll see the private gardens of Lord Talbot, which have been opened to the public and are described by garden

lovers as a small botanic haven.

You will enjoy lunch on your own at the castle (or en-route if you prefer).

**After the Castle visit,** you will have some time to visit the local craft shops or relax over a coffee and snack, if you wish (own expense).

**After the castle tour,** you will continue on your transfer to Dublin and your hotel.

**Upon arrival in Dublin,** you will be delivered to the Fitzwilliam Hotel Dublin.

**Upon arrival at the Hotel,** you will be met by the concierge for a VIP check-in experience. Your luggage will be handled and when you return it will be waiting for you in your accommodation.

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The remainder of the day is at leisure to relax in the hotel, or explore on your own.

Dinner is on your own tonight.

## Day 4 Ireland: Dublin – Fitzwilliam Dublin Hotel

### Breakfast in the hotel.

After breakfast, start your day in the restaurant of the hotel for a beverage with your **Celebrity guide, Pat Liddy, guide to HRH The Queen**. Get acquainted and learn some interesting facts about your morning activities. Then, you're off for a very special VIP walking tour of Dublin City.

Enjoy a 3-hour walking tour of Dublin, and discover the historic city's main sites, such as the bohemian Temple Bar district, and Dublin Castle. Immerse yourself in Irish history, and hear music and stories that make Ireland's capital city so unique.



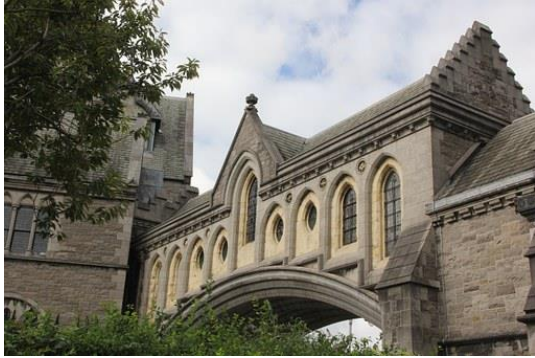
Some of the highlights of your experience today are:

- Stroll along the cobbles of Temple Bar and Trinity College, catching the cadences of Irish accents cascading through the streets
- Stand by the River Liffey and tilt your nose to inhale the hops wafting from the Guinness Brewery
- Marvel at the soft lilt of the Gaelic language
- Learn about some of Ireland's famous writers and freedom fighters
- Walk across the enchanting Ha'penny Bridge
- Later enjoy afternoon tea with historian Turtle Bunbury at Number Ten
- Speaker on Irish Culture - Turtle Bunbury – quite special!

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You will visit Trinity College for your tour of the Book of Kells exhibition.



### **Book of Kells**

No visit to Dublin would be complete without seeing this world renowned book containing the four Gospels of the New Testament in Latin expertly illustrated.

The Book of Kells is famous for its lavish and beautiful decoration. You will enjoy a full and complete tour of the exhibition, including an explanation of the magical Ogham alphabet, leading to a better

understanding as to why this book is so famous.

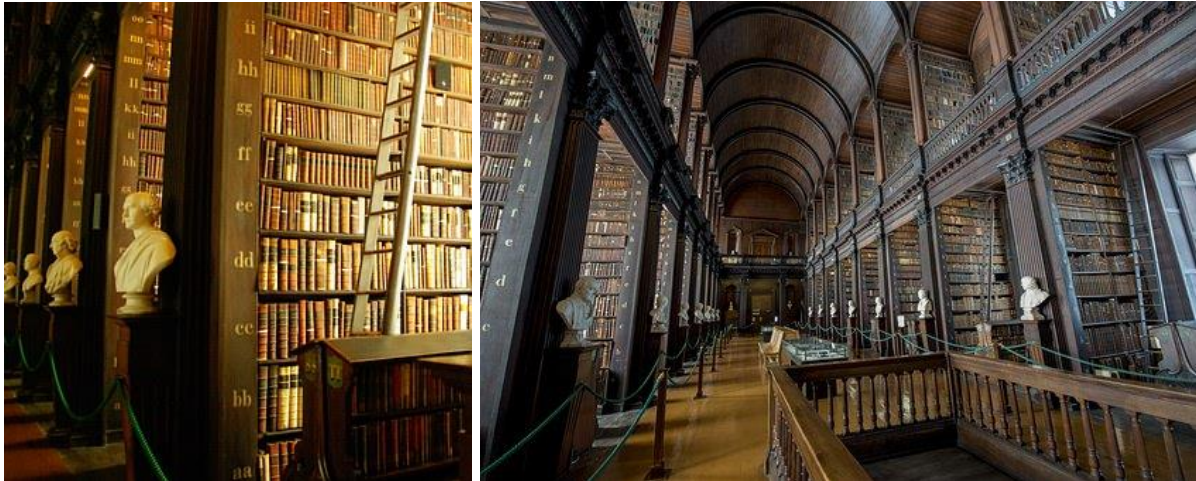
We also look at the magnificent Long Room in the Old Library and walk through Trinity College and discover some of the history of this fascinating college.

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**Lunch today will be on your own.** Your guide will leave you here. You are free to stop at any restaurant on your way back to the hotel or eat in the hotel dining room or bar upon your return.

**You are at leisure** to relax in the hotel, explore on your own the center city area around the hotel.

The metro is right outside the hotel, but you are in the heart of the action. Wander the streets loaded with shops, pubs, restaurants, and so much more. Don't miss the grand Park right across the way from the hotel.

The Doormen at the Fitzwilliam are incredibly knowledgeable and helpful 0 they treat you like family. They can help you with directions to specific places or tell you where to go for what you are interested in for your private exploration.

**6:30pm:** Meet your private driver in front of the hotel for your transfer to your Irish House Party.

**7:00pm:** Dinner is a special treat tonight.

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Welcome to the party! A traditional Irish house party is the perfect introduction to Dublin, with great entertainment and a warm and friendly atmosphere.

You'll enjoy good food, local musicians, storytellers and dancing on an evening out that's unlike any other you'll experience in Dublin.

The Irish House Party is Dublin's unmissable Irish music and dance show. Now

in its seventh successful year it is hosted by All Ireland champion musicians, dancers and entertaining presenters in an intimate and homely dinner theater setting. No Irish house party is complete without a good meal beforehand and you will be served a delicious three-course Irish dinner. Once you have finished your meal, the music, singing and dancing begins.

The show is suitable for all ages, and families with children are welcome. You can take part in the entertainment as much as you like, or simply sit back in comfortable surroundings and enjoy a presentation about traditional music and dancing, traditional live music and a dancing session as well as storytelling.

During the evening you will also have a chance to learn a song in the Irish language with a songbook, try some simple Irish dancing and potentially perform something yourself! It's great fun and everyone gets into the energized spirit of the show.

**After the party**, you will meet your driver where he dropped you off for your return trip to your hotel.

Overnight in the Fitzwilliam Dublin Hotel.

**Day 5 Ireland:** **Dublin – Kilkenny - Waterford**

**Early Breakfast in the hotel.**

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**8:00AM: After breakfast**, check out of your hotel and meet your private driver in the lobby for your transfer and tours today.

**Upon arrival in Kilkenny**, you will tour the Kilkenny Castle and experience the grandeur of a building built in the 1100s still occupied today. It's an amazing place.



**After your castle tour**, you will enjoy lunch in town on your own.

**After lunch**, you will enjoy a private city tour of the main sites in this historic and thriving town. This is one of my favorite communities to visit in Ireland.

One could easily spend several days here seeing how people in a small bustling town in the middle of Ireland lives. It's a tourist town but it also is a regular town where many people live and work and move forward with their lives.

**Kilkenny is a medieval town in southeast Ireland.** Its grand Kilkenny Castle was built in 1195 by Norman occupiers.

The town has deep religious roots and many well-preserved churches and monasteries, including imposing St. Canice's Cathedral and the Black Abbey Dominican priory, both from the 13th century. It's also a crafts hub, with shops along its winding lanes selling pottery, paintings and jewelry.

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After the tour, you will be delivered to Waterford for the evening.

You will be delivered to your hotel, The Granville House, in the city center with an incredible heritage of being in the thick of things throughout Irish history. It echoes with Irish history. The building, dating from the 1700s and sensitively restored in the 1980s, was the birthplace of Thomas Francis Meagher, who first unveiled the Irish tricolour in Waterford in 1848. It has also played host to political leaders including Daniel O'Connell and Charles Stuart Parnell (after whom a grand meeting room on the first floor is named).

**Upon arrival at the hotel**, you will enjoy a private check-in experience. Your luggage will be managed and delivered to your accommodation.

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**Dinner is on your own tonight.** We recommend the hotel restaurant, the Bianconi Restaurant, (named after the Italian founder of Ireland's first public transport system).

**After dinner,** there's the Thomas Meagher Bar, all mahogany and stained glass, which has a wall devoted to Irish whiskeys (more than 40 of them) as well as an extensive collection of other spirits.

## Day 6 Ireland: Waterford – Cobh - Cork

**Early Breakfast in the hotel.**

**9:00AM: After breakfast,** you will check out of the hotel, they will store your luggage for you, and make your way on your own to the **House of Waterford Crystal.**



The House of Waterford Crystal comprises of a manufacturing facility, visitor center and retail outlet.

Visitors can enjoy all aspects of the manufacturing process through the factory tour and learn about both historical and contemporary production techniques through direct interaction with the craftsmen and audiovisual materials.

The manufacturing facility contains a brand new continuous melt tank furnace that uses leading edge technology to deliver molten crystal, for skilled master blowers to hand-shape and hand-blow into Waterford Crystal's range of premium products.

The retail center represents the largest display of Waterford Crystal in the world.

**On the tour,** guests visit the mold room where they witness mold making – a technique that has remained unchanged throughout the centuries, as the Master Blowers shape the molten crystal flawlessly with the use of wooden molds and hand tools.

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**The next part of the tour is truly magical**, as visitors enter the blowing department where they see glowing balls of crystal transformed into majestic shapes as they are put through the 1300-degree furnace. The Waterford Crystal pieces are then hand marked for precision and accuracy, and they are then cut, sculpted and engraved.

**While getting this behind the scenes sneak peak** of this highly skilled method of crystal manufacturing, visitors also see the high standards that the House of Waterford Crystal has for each and every piece that leaves the factory.

**The crystal is inspected at each stage of production**, so each piece no matter how small goes through six inspections, and if it fails to reach the Waterford Crystal standards at any stage it is smashed and returned to the furnace to be re-melted so that the piece can be started again. The tour is fully guided and takes approx 50 minutes to complete.

**On completion of the tour**, visitors can experience over 12,000 sq ft of crystal heaven in the largest retail and showcase of Waterford Crystal in the world. The retail store represents everything that is made in crystal, including a showcase on golf and sport, which is a major part of the international business at the House of Waterford Crystal.

The main feature in the retail store is a centre dining table, with twelve Waterford Crystal Chandeliers on display. The lifestyle displays communicate the various brand stories including the Jo Sampson Collection, John Rocha, Jeff Letham and the core Waterford Crystal patterns.

The product range includes Waterford Crystal, House of Waterford Crystal, John Rocha, Jasper Conran, Jo Sampson, Archive Stemware, Marquis, Lighting, Holiday Heirlooms and the new Waterford Crystal Jewellery Collection.

Waterford Crystal continues to provide some of the most prestigious trophies to the world's great sporting events made at the facility, and some of these trophies are on display in the retail store.

**The store will ship anywhere in the world, so you do not have to worry about getting your precious objects home. In addition, they also do all the paperwork for the tax free service**, all you have to do is turn it in at the airport before you board your plane for the US.

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**After your tour**, you will make your way back to the hotel to meet your private driver in the lobby. He will manage your luggage for you and you will get underway for Cobh and beyond.

Upon arrival in Cobh, (formerly Queenstown) **you will enjoy lunch on your own** (your driver will make recommendations or try one of the restaurants across from your next tour where you will visit the Titanic Experience – At the Original White Star Lines Ticket Office.

You will get your ticket and board. You are now a passenger on the titanic (you could be in any class, but you will see them all), you will explore created spaces throughout the ship and experience what life on board was like during this fated voyage.



You will learn facts and hear stories about the journey and at the end you will find out what happened to you and others traveling with you – Do you live or die? This is a fascinating interactive museum and a totally different experience than the one you enjoyed in Belfast.

This was the departure point for the final 123 Passengers who boarded Titanic on the morning of April 11th 1912. The tour is presented in two parts, the first is an immersive audio visual tour retracing the foot steps of the 123 Passengers. With Fourth Officer Boxall as your virtual guide and with the use of innovative audio visual technology and replica set designs visitors will experience what life on board would have been like on board for those passengers.

The second part of the tour examines how it went wrong. Using computer generated graphics to recreate the collision and subsequent sinking, film analysis of Titanic on the seabed and expert interviews these interactive exhibits allow visitors to find out how and

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why the Titanic sank on that fateful night. Touchscreen computers allow you to look at personalities on board the ship and in particular the fate of our 123 Queenstown passengers.

**After the tour**, you will have some time to check out the little shop next door for beautiful authentic Irish gifts and all sorts of luxury handmade items from local Irish designers (My favorite shop in Ireland – well, at least one of them).

**From here you will have a short drive to Cork.**

Upon arrival in Cork, you will enjoy a tour of the Jameson Whisky Distillery. A Whisky, Whisky, Whisky Experience, like you've never experienced before...



At the Jameson Middleton Distillery you will enjoy a private tour and at the end a unique tasting experience.

Set on 15 acres and beautifully restored, this is where the true heart of Irish whiskey beats.



The old distillery is a unique experience with some of the buildings dating back to 1795. Take a journey through history and see the old kilns, mills and malting, water wheel and old warehouses.

You will be lead through the extraordinary story of Jameson Irish Whiskey. A short film sets the scene before your guide walks you through the old

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distillery, many surrounding buildings, and the grounds.



After the tour enjoy a tutored whiskey tasting to become a certified Irish Whiskey Taster!

**Don't forget to pick up your personalized bottle of Jameson, with your choice of engraving.**

**After the tour**, you will have time to spend in the gift shop searching for your own items or gifts you want to ship home. They will ship for you, no need to carry anything.

**Next**, you will be delivered to your Manor House Hotel, Hayfield Manor.

Upon arrival at Hayfield Manor, you will enjoy a private check-in experience. Your luggage will be managed and delivered to your accommodation.

**You are at leisure** to relax in your hotel accommodation, enjoy the spa, spend some time in the beautiful garden, explore the manor, sit in tranquility in the butterfly house, or enjoy a beverage in the bar.

**Dinner is on your own this evening** in the restaurant of the hotel. Reservations have been made for 8:00pm.

## **Day 7 Ireland:** Cork - Kerry – Dingle Peninsula – Muckross Park Hotel

**Early Breakfast in the hotel.**

**8:00AM: After breakfast**, you will check out of the hotel and meet your private driver in the lobby of the hotel for your Blarney Castle and Parts of the Ring of Kerry, the Gap of Dunloe Day Tour - Once in Killarney **tour to the world renowned, Kate Kearney's cottage.**

**First, it is time to continue on to Blarney Castle – Perhaps Kiss The Blarney Stone (A tradition for all tourists coming to Ireland).**

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Blarney Castle is a medieval stronghold in Blarney, near Cork, Ireland, and the River Martin.

Though earlier fortifications were built on the same spot, the current keep was built by the MacCarthy of Muskerry dynasty, a cadet branch of the Kings of Desmond, and dates from 1446. The Blarney Stone is among

the machicolations of the castle.

**The castle is now a partial ruin with some accessible rooms and battlements.** At the top of the castle lies the **Stone of Eloquence, better known as the Blarney Stone.** Tourists visiting Blarney Castle may hang upside-down over a sheer drop to kiss the stone, which is said to give the gift of eloquence.

There are many versions of the origin of the stone, including a claim that it was the Lia Fáil — a numinous stone upon which Irish kings were crowned.

**Surrounding the castle are extensive gardens.** There are paths touring the grounds with signs pointing out the various attractions such as several natural rock formations with fanciful names such as *Druid's Circle*, *Witch's Cave* and the *Wishing Steps*.

The grounds include a poison garden with a number of poisonous plants, including wolfsbane, mandrake, ricin and opium, as well as cannabis. **Blarney House**, also open to the public and within the estate grounds, is a Scottish baronial-style mansion that was built in 1874.

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Next, we are off to part of the Ring of Kerry. Here you take a 7 mile jaunt on a pony and trap through the Gap of Dunloe where you can view a spectacular glaciated valley.

The Gap is a narrow mountain pass between Mac Gillycuddy Reeks (to the west) and the Purple Mountain (to the east) and five lakes all connected by the river Loe.

This area is often described as one of the most spectacular glaciated valleys in Western Europe. This part of the journey just takes under 2 hours.

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Your pony and trap ride ends at **Lord Brandon's Cottage** where you can enjoy a light snack (not included).

### **Lunch is on your own en-route.**

This afternoon explore the Dingle Peninsula (Part of the Ring of Kerry).



Set off along the shore of Dingle Bay to explore this lovely peninsula. You pass Inch Strand where ancient red cliffs lead down to a sandy spit going far out into the sea. This was one of the entrances to Tir na Oge, the land of eternal youth of the legend of Niamh and Ossian.

It was also used in the film Ryan's Daughter, which you should see on DVD before travelling. Here also is Annascaul, where John Crean lived, an Antarctic explorer with Shackleton.



Coming on towards Dingle the road winds along the coast, past the ruins of Minard Castle.

The Dingle Peninsula has been inhabited for almost 6,000 years. The first settlers on the peninsula were nomadic hunters and gatherers who foraged on the coast for their food.

Later Stone Age man and Bronze Age man were to build their tombs, erect their standing stones, and toil the land for the first time.



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The Celtic population arrived in the couple of hundred years before the birth of Christ and brought their ancestral goddess "Duibhne", after which the Dingle Peninsula has been named in Gaelic: Corca Dhuibhne, the tribe of Duibhne.

In the centuries that followed, the peninsula was to be visited by Vikings, Normans and English.

Overnight at Muckross Park Hotel

**Dinner is on your own in the hotel tonight.**

## Day 8 Ireland:

Early Breakfast in the hotel.

**8:45AM:** After breakfast, check out of the hotel and meet your private driver in the lobby for your transfer to Dromoland Castle.

Our first stop today is Bunratty Castle & Folk Park.

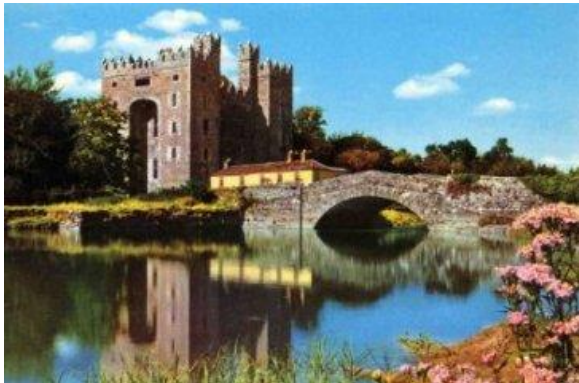
This beloved local attraction which happens to be one of Ireland's top visitor attractions. Bunratty Castle is a large 15th-century tower house in County Clare, Ireland. It is located in the center of Bunratty village,

Enjoy meandering through this very interesting and beautiful place. I recommend taking the guided tour of the castle, it is definitely worth it.

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**Bunratty Castle** is the most complete and authentic medieval castle in Ireland.

Built in 1425 it was restored in 1954 to its former medieval splendor and now contains mainly 15th and 16th century furnishings, tapestries, and works of art which capture the mood of those times.

The Bunratty Collection: Browse the castle and marvel at the finest collection of medieval furniture in the country which brings to life a

vital part of our Medieval past.

**Bunratty Folk Park:** Enjoy the sights, sounds tastes, scents, of this enchanting place as you stroll from house to house or around the charming village street complete with school, post office, doctors house, hardware shop, printers and of course McNamara's pub!



This 19th century village pub and restaurant is fitted with old world furnishings. It's a great spot for a break and a pint!



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**Bunratty Walled Garden:** The gardens at Bunratty Folk Park have been restored to their former glory.

The gardens are modeled on the original Regency period garden which supplied fruit, vegetables, and flowers to Bunratty House (built in 1804) and are refurbished in typical Victorian style.

This is your opportunity to experience one of the great gardens of Ireland.

Next, you will travel through Limerick, see King John's Castle and pass through the town. You will continue on to Adare, considered to be the prettiest village in Ireland

Your first stop **Enjoy a beverage and Lunch at Pat Collins Bar** It is a family business located in the heart of the village of Adare. Come, sit and relax over a pint of Guinness and a plate of home made Irish Stew. The bar is famous for its good pint and delicious Irish home made dishes. All meals are prepared using fresh local produce and served with homemade brown bread.



- There is an extensive bar menu with a wide range of Irish and international dishes for all appetites. Some of our daily specials include Traditional Irish Stew and Fresh Smoked Salmon.
- Meals range from lunches to dinner with the option of finger food available for groups.
- All produce is bought fresh from local markets. Ask a member of staff for the source of all meats and vegetables.
- All meat is 100% Irish and supplied by Costelloe Butchers, Adare. Ice cream is supplied by Adare Farm Foods.
- Ask a member of staff for the daily specials

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**After lunch**, you will continue on a drive tour of Adare Desmond Castle (#5). The Desmond Castle is located on the edge of the village of Adare.

The castle was erected with an ancient ring-fort around the early part of the 13th century. It became a strategic fortress during the following turbulent years. It was

the property of the Earls of Kildare for nearly 300 years until the rebellion in 1536, when it was forfeited and granted to the Earls of Desmond who gave the castle its present name.

**After your tour of the Desmond Castle**, you will continue your tour in the small town of Adare, in County Limerick, Ireland, located south-west of the city of Limerick.



**Renowned as one of Ireland's prettiest towns**, Adare is designated as a heritage town by the Irish government.

**Do some shopping** in Adare for many types of authentic Irish items.

Afterwards, you will have a tour of Adare Manor, an incredible manor house that was restored last year to all the glory it was built for.

Then, you are off for Dromoland Castle for the night.

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Dromoland Castle, one of Europe's finest castle hotels, offers Guest's the experience of living like landed gentry, surrounded by luxury, beauty, and service. The castle, a magnificent Renaissance structure built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, was once the royal seat of the O'Brien clan.

Refurbished and transformed into a luxury hotel in 1962, it retains priceless reminders of the Castle's historic past. Splendid woodcarvings and stone statuary, hand-carved panelling, fine antique furnishings surround guests.

On the Castle's 450-acre estate, guests can hunt, fish, ride horseback, play tennis and championship golf or alternatively The Spa at Dromoland Castle is a perfect haven to enjoy the tranquillity of Dromoland Castle.

***WELCOME TO DROMOLAND CASTLE –  
We Are Waiting For You***

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Upon arrival at the castle, you will be welcomed by the concierge with a VIP check-in experience. Your luggage will be managed and delivered to your accommodation. You will be at leisure for the remainder of the day to relax in the hotel, enjoy the spa, or to explore some of the grounds and the hotel on your own.



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**Experience the Spa** (One 55 minute spa treatment per person, per stay Included in your package) You have an appointment set for **6:00PM**.



**Historic Grounds Tour with Story-telling and historical facts about the castle and its inhabitants, the grounds, and their secrets...**

**3:30PM:** 1 Hr. Tour Included in your pkg. - Meet your guide in the front center circle driveway in the buggy. (This is not to be missed – the guide knows everything and he is funny, charming, mesmerizing, and all-in-all delivers one of the best tours you will enjoy in Ireland.)

**After your Historic Grounds Tour**, you are at leisure to explore the grounds and enjoy the activities available to you (\*some are at an additional cost).

Set on 450 acres of parkland in the peaceful Clare countryside, the sprawling Estate has much to offer. The gardens, which are based on designs by Andre Le Notre, who also planned the gardens at Versailles, include a formal rose garden and a lily pond dating from 1812. The Castle overlooks Lough Dromoland and is excellent for Trout fishing. Deer, pheasant and other wildlife roam the grounds surrounding the Castle, creating a natural ambience.

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Within the Estate, you can also enjoy falconry, archery, boating, clay pigeon shooting, tennis, walking and mountain biking.

The 18-hole championship golf course is a par 72, slope 126, measuring 6845 yards. The course which was redesigned by Ron Kirby and the late JB Carr is both thoughtful and challenging with many unique features and truly breath-taking scenery. Dromoland Castle's Golf course is complemented by a truly unique practice facility which has 10 fully automated Driving Bays, Putting Greens and bunker. All the bays are fitted with Golf-Tech's second generation fully automated 'Power Tees'.

Dinner is available in The Earl of Thomond Restaurant from 7pm (9.30 last orders) each evening and we offer casual options for dinner in The Fig Tree Restaurant until 9pm. **Please note** dress code for The Earl of Thomond is for Smart (Jacket required for gentlemen, no denim). Reservations are required (we will set this up prior to your arrival).

**8:30 PM RESERVATION: Dinner in the Earl of Thomond restaurant** (Included in your package)

**After dinner**, you are at leisure to relax in the bar with and after dinner cocktail, in the drawing room or the other areas of the castle, well-appointed with chairs and tables just waiting for you to sip at your pleasure and enjoy the ambiance and art.

## Day 9 Ireland: Dromoland Castle - US & Home

### Breakfast in the Castle.

**After breakfast**, you will check out of the hotel and meet your private driver in the lobby for your transfer to Shannon Airport for your flight to the US and Home.

NOTE: If your flight is later in the day, you can enjoy all of the facilities of the castle today until time to depart for your flight home.



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