

American Celebration of Music in Ireland

Standard Tour #3 (8 nights / 10 days)

Day 1

Depart via scheduled air service. The destination is Shannon or Dublin, Ireland

Day 2

Galway

(D)

Arrive in Shannon or Dublin. Meet your MCI Tour Manager, who will assist the group to awaiting chartered motorcoach for a transfer to Galway via the Cliffs of Moher, one of Ireland's most spectacular sights. On a clear day, the views are tremendous

Evening Welcome Dinner and overnight

Galway is picturesquely situated at the northeast end of Galway Bay, at the point where the short tidal River Corrib, coming from Lough Corrib, pours its abundant flow of water into the Atlantic. Galway is the see of the diocese of Galway county, and has a university (part of the National University of Ireland), in which much of the teaching is in Irish. With its narrow streets, old stone and wooden shopfronts, good restaurants and bustling pubs, it is one of Europe's fastest growing cities and ranks fourth in size in Ireland, after Dublin, Cork and Limerick

Day 3

Galway

(B,D)

Half-day sightseeing to Knockmoy Abbey. Picturesquely situated on a small lough, are the ruins of Knockmoy Abbey (National Monument), a Cistercian house founded in 1190. The nave is undecorated but the choir has some fine carving. On the north wall is one of Ireland's few examples of medieval wall painting, dating from about 1400

Performance in Galway as part of the American Celebration of Music in Ireland

Day 4

Galway / Limerick / Killarney

(B,D)

Transfer to Killarney via Limerick for a visit to Bunratty Castle in County Clare. The castle was begun by the Vikings, who built a fortified settlement on a former island surrounded by a moat. Then came the Normans, who built the first stone structure in the 1270's. The present castle is the fourth or fifth to occupy the location beside the River Ratty and was built in the early 1400's. Continue to Killarney for overnight

Renowned for its beauty, famed for the splendor of its scenery, Killarney is one of the world's best-loved tourist spots. Killarney (Cill Airne - The Church of Sloes) became a magnificent town around 1750 when the local magnate, Lord Kenmare, developed the tourist business and four major roads were built to the outside world. Killarney's present population is around 9,000 and the main economic base is tourism

Day 5

Killarney / Ring of Kerry

(B,D)

Full-day excursion along the Ring of Kerry, a 179 km road circuit around the Iveragh Peninsula. It has captivating mountain and coastal scenery, dotted with slate-roofed fishing villages. The Ring is one of Ireland's premier tourist attractions



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Performance in Killarney as part of the American Celebration of Music in Ireland

Day 6 Killarney / Cork / Waterford / Kilkenny (B,D)

Transfer to Cork where we will visit the Blarney Castle and Stone. The castle dates from 1446 and is built on solid limestone in beautiful grounds. The sacred stone is found at the top of the castle and when you catch a glimpse of it, you may well feel compelled to bend over backwards and kiss it!

Continue to Waterford for a walking tour of the city given by Jack Burtchaell. Jack Burtchaell has for years now charmed and informed visitors on his historic tours. A walled city of Viking origins, Waterford retains much of its medieval character together with the graceful buildings from its 18th century expansion. Reginald's Tower marks the city's Viking heart and the surrounding area is particularly attractive. Also visit the Waterford Glass visitors center to some of the famous hand cut crystal. Finally reach Kilkenny for overnight.

Kilkenny is considered by many to be second only to Dublin in its attraction for visitors. Its narrow winding streets lend it an atmosphere of old world charm; its terraces of handsome Georgian houses give it elegance; and with all this it is a busy modern town and market center for a fertile agricultural area.

Day 7 Kilkenny (B,D)

Morning sightseeing in Kilkenny. Enjoy a tour of Kilkenny Castle, begun by William de Marshal in the 13th century. From 1391 to 1931 the castle was the principal seat of the Butler family. Finely situated on the high river bank and surrounded by gardens, the castle is now open to the public. Some of the rooms have been restored; particularly charming is the Victorian Great Hall.

Performance in Kilkenny as part of the American Celebration of Music in Ireland

Day 8 Kilkenny / Glendalough / Dublin (B,D)

Transfer to Dublin via Glendalough and the Wicklow Mountains. The steep wooded slopes of Glendalough the "valley of the two lakes" harbor one of Ireland's most atmospheric monastic sites — established in the 6th century. Here we visit the Round Tower, Cathedral, St. Kevin's Cross and Kitchen, and Gatehouse.

Continue to Dublin for overnight.

Dublin is Ireland's capital and its largest, most cosmopolitan city. It wasn't before the Viking raids of the 9th century that Dublin was fully established. The 'boom years' came in the 18th century and the city expanded across the river forming a new Dublin of stately squares, streets and Georgian mansions. Today, with its elegant Georgian streets, gregarious inhabitants and over one thousand years of history, it's little wonder Dublin is a city of writers.

Day 9 Dublin (B,D)

This morning's touring includes visits to Dublin Castle and Trinity College. Trinity College is Ireland's oldest university. It was founded by Queen Elizabeth I in 1592 on grounds confiscated from a monastery. Trinity College's official name is the University of Dublin, although it is popularly known by the name of its sole college. The highlight of the tour will be a view of the Book of Kells, which dates from AD 800, making it one of the oldest books in the world.



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Performance in Dublin as part of the American Celebration of Music in Ireland

Farewell Dinner and overnight

Day 10

Depart for hom

(B)

Transfer to Dublin's International Airport for return flight
Arrive home in the evening of the same day

This is a very flexible itinerary. Except for confirmed appointments and performances, the places of interest and the sequence of sightseeing might be changed if necessary or desirable. In the event of an unavoidable conflict in the performance and the sightseeing schedule, the concert schedule will prevail, and it may be necessary to exclude some sightseeing activities.

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