

American Celebration of Music In Ireland & Scotland

Standard Tour #1 (10 nights / 12 days)

Day 1

Departure from the USA via scheduled airline service to Shannon, Ireland. Enjoy full meal/beverage service and in-flight entertainment during this trans-Atlantic flight.

Day 2 Shannon / Galway, Ireland

Arrive in Shannon. 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.

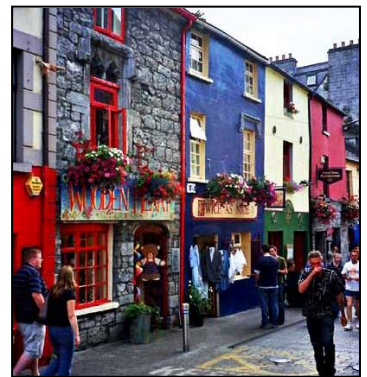
Day 3 Galway

Excursion along the Coast of Connemara and the Lakes. Visit Kylemore Abbey. Kylemore Abbey is a lakeside castle that is a romantic, battlemented Gothic Revival fantasy. It became an abbey when Benedictine nuns, fleeing from Ypres in Belgium in World War I, sought refuge here. The nuns now run the abbey as a select girls' boarding school. In the grounds, rhododendrons and fuchsias enhance lakeside walks. **Possible lunchtime or evening concert in Kylemore Abbey as part of the American Celebration of Music in Ireland.** Return to Galway for overnight.

Day 4 Galway / Limerick / Killarney

Transfer to Killarney via Limerick for a visit to Bunratty Castle. 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 main economic base is tourism.



Day 5 Killarney

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. *Evening concert in Killarney as part of the American Celebration of Music in Ireland.*



Day 6 Killarney / Dublin

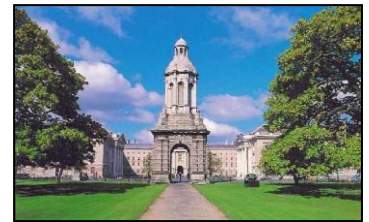
Transfer to Dublin via Cork and Kilkenny.

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 7 Dublin

This morning's touring includes visits to Dublin Castle and Trinity College. Beyond Dublin's City Hall stands Dublin Castle. In 1204 King John began the construction of a castle (completed 1226) of which little survives, and then much altered, in the present building. From the reign of Elizabeth I to the establishment of the Irish Free State in 1921 the Castle was the seat of the Viceroy and the headquarters of British administration. Next, enjoy a tour of Trinity College, which 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. *Evening concert in Dublin as part of the American Celebration of Music in Ireland.*



Day 8 Dublin / Edinburgh, Scotland

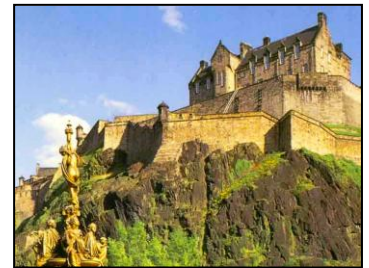
Transfer to Edinburgh. Travel through Belfast to Larne. Cross the Irish Sea by ferry to Cairnryan, then continue on to Edinburgh.

The City of Edinburgh dates from the 11th-century reign of Malcolm II and Queen Margaret. After the Act of Union in 1707, the city began to spread beyond its old boundaries. It soon became an intellectual capital of Europe, especially during the golden age of the 18th and 19th centuries. To walk in the Old City is a walk through centuries from the past.



Day 9 Edinburgh

Half-day guided sightseeing tour of Edinburgh. Tour Edinburgh Castle, which along with its rock, is probably the best known view in Edinburgh. It has been a royal residence since the 11th century, although the majority of buildings you will see are those resulting from its use as a military garrison. See the Honours of Scotland (including the Scottish Crown Jewels) and the Royal Scots Regimental Museum. Also visit Arthur's Seat, Charlotte Square, St. Giles, the Royal Mile, Sir Walter Scott Monument, St. Andrew Square and other landmarks. *Evening concert as part of the American Celebration of Music in Scotland.*



Day 10 Edinburgh

Half-day excursion to the Scottish Highlands includes a visit to Stirling, with entrance to the Castle. Over the centuries, Stirling has been a much-disputed stronghold. The earliest inhabitants were probably of Welsh descent and it is thought that the name Stirling is a corruption of the term "Place of Striving". No fewer than 15 battlefields lie within close proximity of the castle. *Possible midday concert in Stirling as part of the American Celebration of Music in Scotland.* Return to Edinburgh for afternoon and evening at leisure.



Day 11 Edinburgh / Glasgow

Transfer to Glasgow. Enjoy a half-day of sightseeing of the city, including entrance to the Burrell Collection. Shipping magnate Sir William Burrell (1861-1958) bequeathed his marvelous art collection to the city of Glasgow in 1944. Some of the finest early tapestries and embroideries in Great Britain are to be found in this astonishing collection. *Evening concert as part of the American Celebration of Music in Scotland.* Farewell Dinner and overnight.



Glasgow is Scotland's largest and most highly populated city. In the 1980's and 1990's, Glasgow transformed itself into a vibrant post-industrial city. The city centre, with its ornate Victorian buildings is the stage for the new Glasgow, sparkling with nightlife, shopping, pubs and restaurants that are just about unmatched anywhere else in Scotland.



Day 12 Depart for home

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