

# American Celebration of Music In Ireland & Scotland

## Standard Tour #2 (11 nights / 13 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 / Dublin

Transfer to Dublin. Stop en route to visit Clonmacnoise, a medieval monastery founded by St. Ciarián in 545. Known for its scholarship and piety, it thrived from the 7th to the 12th century. Many kings of Tara and of Connaught were buried here. Plundered by the Vikings and Anglo-Normans, it fell to the English in 1552. Today, a group of stone churches, a cathedral, two round towers and three High Crosses remain. Continue to Dublin for dinner and overnight.

*Dublin - originally a Viking settlement, Dublin sits on the banks of the River Liffey, which divides the city north and south. The liveliest round-the-clock spots, including Temple Bar and Grafton Street, are on the south side, although a variety of construction projects on the north side are helping to reinvigorate these areas. Dublin, Europe's most intimate capital, has become a colossally entertaining, engaging city, astonishing considering its general size, and all of the city's main attractions are within a short walking distance of each other.*



## **Day 5 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 6 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.*



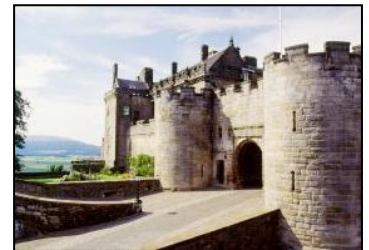
## **Day 7 Edinburgh**

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 8 Edinburgh / Stirling / Inverness**

Transfer to Inverness via Stirling. In Stirling we will enjoy a visit to Stirling Castle, one of Scotland's strongest and most impregnable fortresses. The castle's rock has been fortified since the Iron Age, though what you will see today dates largely from the 15th and 16th centuries. ***Possible noon concert in Stirling Castle as part of the American Celebration of Music in Scotland.*** Continue through to Inverness for overnight.



*Inverness is the administrative center for the Highland region, which consists of the old counties of Inverness, Nairn, Ross and Cromarty, Sutherland and Caithness. The town has benefitted from its sheltered position at the mouth of the Moray Firth and at the northeastern end of the Caledonian Canal. Given the town's favorable location at the gateway to the Northwest Highlands, Inverness has become a busy tourist center and it makes a good starting point for excursions.*



### **Day 9 Inverness**

Enjoy a half-day tour of Inverness, including St. Andrew's Cathedral, the Inverness Museum and Art Gallery, and see Inverness Castle and Urquhart Castle. Travel 13 miles outside of town to visit Cawdor Castle. With its turreted central tower, moat and drawbridge, Cawdor Castle dates from the late 14th century and was built as a private fortress by the Thaners of Cawdor. It is most famous for being the 11th century home of Shakespeare's MacBeth and the scene of his murder of King Duncan, but it is historically unproven that either actually came here. The medieval tower was built around the legendary hollytree. *Evening concert in St. Andrew's Cathedral as part of the American Celebration of Music in Scotland*



### **Day 10 Inverness / Ft. William**

Transfer via Lochness to Ft. William. Enjoy a boat cruise on Loch Ness. Loch Ness is 23 miles long, 1 mile wide and averages 700 feet deep. Visibility is almost zero, due to the peat content of the water. Loch Ness is undeniably one of the most famous lakes in the world. It is also, certainly, a place of outstanding natural beauty, but it has to be admitted that the worldwide fame of Loch Ness owes more to the legend of its famous occupant, the Loch Ness Monster - or 'Nessie' - than the breathtaking location of the loch itself. Continue on to Ft. William for overnight.



*Fort William lies on the shore of Loch Linnhe in the shadow of Britain's highest mountain, Ben Nevis. The town makes an ideal touring centre from which to discover the beauty of the surrounding countryside. The fort referred to in the town name was built by William of Orange in the middle of the 17th century but it was demolished in 1890 to make way for the new railroad line. Local people find employment in the aluminum works, a paper factory, the Ben Nevis distillery (founded in 1825 by John MacDonald but now owned by the Japanese firm, Nikka Distillers) and, increasingly, tourism.*



### **Day 11 Ft. William / Glasgow**

Transfer to Glasgow via orientation tours of Oban (the town has been one of Scotland's most popular resorts and it is also an important harbor for services to the West Highlands and the Hebrides) and Dumbarton (The town; dominated by Dumbarton Castle locally known as the Rock).

*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 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.



### **Day 13 Depart for home**

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