

Below is the proposed itinerary for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

DAY 1

Meet at Dublin hotel, introductions and Welcome dinner

Arrive in Dublin on Day 1 in time to meet at our hotel at 5:00 p.m. If you arrive before your room is ready, the hotel is happy to store your luggage. We will meet in the lobby of our hotel for introductions and then go out together for a welcome dinner, where we will continue getting to know each other and talk about our upcoming Irish hiking adventure. Dublin is a very happening place on any night and if you don't need an early bedtime, it's a safe and fun place to walk around.

Overnight: Dublin (D)

DAY 2

Hike Wicklow Way from Roundwood to Glendalough

After eating breakfast and packing up, we'll meet our Irish guide and head south. Our destination is a section of the Wicklow Way, one of Ireland's premiere long-distance paths. While the entire Way is 79 miles, we'll be hiking 2 sections of it widely regarded as among the finest.

Our section today, from Roundwood to Glendalough, is an excellent warm up hike. While considered one of the easier sections, it's our first exposure to a true mountain route. This will also allow some time for exploring the very heart of the Wicklow uplands, located at the junction of four major glacial valleys: Avonmore, Glenmacnass, Glendasan and Glendalough. A combination of public road (briefly), forest track, and mountain trail takes us across rivers, down into valleys, and onto mountain sections. Our final section is a descent into lovely Glendalough (pronounced glen-da-lock), which is Gaelic for "The Valley of Two Lakes", and formerly a monastic site founded by a 6th century hermit. We'll end at the Glendalough Visitors Center and shuttle to our hotel for the night.

Driving: 1.5 hours. Hiking: 4 hours, 7.5 miles, 1,130-foot elevation gain. Overnight: Glendalough Hotel or similar. (B, D)

DAY 3

Hike Wicklow Way from Glendalough to Glenmalur

We'll spend another day on the Wicklow Way, starting where we stopped at the Visitor's Center and continuing on to Glenmalur. Our hike starts in the valley and then steadily heads up. We'll see the ancient ruins of the Monastic City as we pass Polnass Waterfall, after which we follow a forest road that heads up steadily to the boggy saddle between Mullacor and Lugduff. Here, we're rewarded with a view of Ireland's longest valley, where we'll soon find ourselves enjoying the hospitality in the evening at dinner.

Hiking: 5 hours, 8.7 miles, 1,270-foot elevation gain. Overnight: Glendalough Hotel or similar. (B, D)

DAY 4

Rock of Cashel and Muckross Estate

We have a longer drive today as we head towards the western side of Ireland and Killarney National Park. Killarney is home of the MacGillycuddy Reeks and the famous Muckross Estate. We'll enjoy a short hike today on a lovely, looped walk featuring lakeshore trails, medieval ruins, babbling brooks, and woodland solitude. It takes us past the estate and into the historic ruins of Muckross Abbey. Originally the home of Franciscan friars who then relocated into town, the ruins feature well-preserved cloisters that surround a famous Yew Tree. The path leads back by a different way, ending with a total of about 1.5 miles.

Then it's on to Dingle Town, known for its pretty setting, good restaurants, and most of all - 54 pubs! (in a town of 2,000) Traditional music can be found playing any day of the week. We'll stay here for the next four nights, so you'll have plenty of time to explore.

Driving: 4 - 5 hours. Hiking: 1.5 miles. Overnight: Dingle (B, D)

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DAY 5

Hike the Dingle Way

Today's hike is undoubtedly the most demanding one of the trip, on a very popular section of the Dingle Way. We'll choose between one of two options: Dingle to Dunquin or Dunquin to Feohanagh to hike for the day. With either option, you'll see wonderful vistas, beaches, and archaeological sites with cultural significance.

Dingle to Dunquin Hiking: 5 - 7 hours, 12.4 miles, 1,214 foot elevation gain. Dunquin to Feohanagh Hiking: 5 - 7 hours, 12.4 miles, 410 foot elevation gain. Overnight: Dingle. (B)

DAY 6

Gap of Dunloe

There are many options for hikes today and our final choice depends on the weather and our energy. One possible option is a popular walk through The Gap of Dunloe. The gap is a long narrow valley, splitting the MacGillycuddy Reeks from the Purple Mountain Massif, and is widely considered one of the most beautiful areas in Killarney. The hike starts from Kate Kearney's cottage and after hiking through the gap, a boat picks us up for an hour boat ride to Ross Castle. It's a mellow hike after yesterday and well worth it.

Driving: 1 hour Hiking: 3 - 3.5 hours, 8.8 miles 650-foot elevation gain. Boat ride: 1 hour. Overnight: Dingle (B, D)

DAY 7

Hike Three Peaks of Annascaul loop on Dingle Peninsula

The morning is yours to explore Dingle. The gaily colored buildings, craftsman's studios, and multitude of shops make this a fun town to explore. If towns don't interest you, there is a lovely walk along the bay. In late morning we'll drive to Annascaul where we'll have lunch at the South Pole Inn. Tom McCrean, a very famous Irish hero and explorer who is credited with being instrumental in the rescue of the Shackleton Expedition to the South Pole, was born on Dingle and when he returned, he settled in Annascaul and opened the South Pole Inn. Our hike today is called the Three peaks of Annascaul, one of those hikes where you are well rewarded for your effort. We'll be walking across the Brackloon Ridge with its trio of 1000-foot mountains, including Brackloon Mountain and Knockafeehane. Along the way it offers magnificent views of the Slieve Mish mountains, the Com Dubh river system, majestic Dingle bay and the never-ending Inch strand. We'll return tonight to Dingle for a dinner is on your own and your last chance to enjoy some local music.

Hiking 2 -3 hours, 4.3 miles. Overnight: Dingle (B)

DAY 8

Transfer to Liscannor, Hike Burren Way from Liscannor to Cliffs of Moher

We'll head north today to the Burren Way as it traverses a spectacular coastal path from Liscannor in the south to the Cliffs of Moher. On a clear day there are expansive views of the Aran Islands, Galway Bay, Aill Na Searrach and the Atlantic Ocean way below your feet! The trail starts from Liscannor, following quiet country roads and paths to Hags Head and the signal tower. From here it's a relatively flat as it follows the remote and exposed cliff top path. It's the views more than the exertion that might leave you breathless. Approaching the Cliffs this way allows us to experience them without the crowds, which gradually increase as we approach the Visitor's Center where our transport awaits.

Driving 4 hours, Hiking: 3 - 4 hours, 7.5 miles, 650-foot elevation gain. Overnight: Hotel in County Clare (B, D)

DAY 9

Hike in Burren National Park

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We'll spend our last day of hiking in Burren National Park. The Burren is one of Ireland's most unique landscapes. Burren comes from the Irish word "Boireann", which means a rocky place. And that is an accurate description: call it "limestone karst meets glaciation". It is also described as a lunar landscape. There are many trail choices here, from nature trails to treks into the remote upland, and which and how many trails we hike will be guided by the weather and our energy. One popular route is the Mullaghmore Loop, a 4.9-mile loop that traverse the classic limestone landscape and ascends Mullaghmore Mountain. The view from the top offers a sweeping view of the geology. There are also two nature trails starting from the same area, so it is possible to offer shorter options or add additional hiking. Whichever we choose, you can be sure of a stunning end to our trip. We'll return to the same lodging to the same lodging tonight and share a final Farewell Dinner.

Overnight: Hotel in County Clare (B, D)

DAY 10

Depart from Shannon Airport

After breakfast, it's an hour drive to Shannon airport. We'll have you there in time for flights out after 11:00 AM. (B)