

BRITISH ISLES by TRAIN

LONDON - BATH - YORK - LAKE DISTRICT - SCOTLAND
Ireland Optional Extension: Galway - Dingle - Kinsale - Dublin

2 weeks in England & Scotland, 8 days in Ireland

Date and Price To Be Announced

Leisurely tour visiting: London, Bath, York, Lake District and Edinburgh,

Ireland optional extension exploring the rural west and southern shores, visiting Galway, Connemara, Kilarney, Dingle, Kinsale and Dublin.

In Britain we travel by first-class train on the high-speed Intercity express service, while in Ireland we shall have a customized motorcoach tour that will bring us to remote unspoiled areas. Our comfortable pace will spend 2 nights in most locations so you can have a good look around without being in a rush. Escorted from Honolulu by Dennis Callan, who has traveled this route several times before and will take you to the most beautiful & interesting places.

Fly to London. Day 1,2

LONDON

Day 3,4,5: We shall have three days to explore the capital city in all its grandeur, with an ambitious look at some of the most interesting highlights of London. Come along with us on a comprehensive walk through some of the most interesting parts of town. We will walk through the heart of town in Piccadilly Circus, St. James, Leicester Square, and Trafalgar Square. This will bring us through grand examples of the finest



urban architecture, and into many fine shops along the way. Afterwards there are various choices: for the art lovers, a visit to the National Gallery, right next to our hotel, and the British Museum would be very rewarding. For the shoppers, an expedition to Oxford Street and Bond Street is in order. The next day will feature a half-day tour with a London guide on a comfortable motorcoach, passing the Houses of Parliament, Big Ben, St. Pauls, and highlights of the West End. This evening you really should take in one of the hit musicals or comedies in the exciting theater district along





Shaftesbury Avenue. Perhaps you would also enjoy a final round

of some pubs for the incomparable British ales or stout. An alternative would be a relaxing meal at one of London's better restaurants, followed by an evening stroll around our hotel's neighborhood in Leicester Square, an ever-busy urban marketplace filled with people having fun. Third day is free for you to do as you wish, or come along on some more walking adventures.



BATH

Day 6 and 7: Today we explore the



spa resort of Bath, which takes its name from the elaborate Roman-built baths and pump room which we shall visit in this well-preserved 18th century town, lined with elegant "Georgian" townhouses that form one of the most perfect and beautiful urban patterns in the world.

Bath is second in popularity to London itself in any proper tour of England, for it abounds with sightseeing opportunities. We will enjoy a city tour in an open-top bus that takes us around the center, as well as into the surrounding areas to give us an overview of town from the surrounding hillsides.



We shall also enjoy a walking tour of the center of town to show you the beautiful layout of this well-planned town. The visual harmony of this splendid collection of cream-colored stone row-houses reaches a climax in the Royal Crescent, and the thriving town center bustles with modern shops inside the 200 year-old buildings.



One fascinating option you will want to try is the Roman Bath exhibit, which features a walk through the ancient hot water system and many related artifacts. It shows you how the Romans civilized this remote outpost 2,000 years ago, with such innovations as central heating,

town planning, swimming pools, and healing waters. In the evening you might take in a live show in the town theater, which features major stars from London's West End in an intimate setting, with charming cafes and sidewalk restaurants nearby for before or after refreshments.



The second day in Bath affords the option for a day-trip into the Cotswolds: Full day tour of the Cotswolds including Bibury, Stow on the Wold, the Slaughters and other beautiful villages with the chance to have a Cotswold cream tea and a countryside walk.



Alternatively you could choose a full day tour to Stonehenge, Avebury, Lacock and Castle Combe. See white horse chalk carvings, thatched cottages, Meriton from BBC's *Pride & Prejudice* and Harry Potter's parents' house, with an optional lunch in a traditional 700 year old pub.

The following morning we travel for four hours on the fast Intercity express train across the British midlands to York.



YORK

Day 8 and 9: the best-preserved medieval town in England. We will enjoy a guided bus tour of its most famous features, and our walking tour will show us the heart of this town, with the cobbled alleys, antiques shops, fish & chip joints, open markets, and 13th century walls, amongst the finest in Europe. We will spend two nights here which gives you a chance to thoroughly enjoy York.



In town, "the Shambles" is the narrowest shopping street you will ever see, and it is part of an extensive network of medieval pedestrian lanes perfect for sightseeing and shopping, which are honored traditions in this ancient market town. This truly is the closest you will get to the medieval period in England, for the surrounding wall has protected this town from modernization, just as it protected the villagers from



attack 700 years ago. Now, we are welcomed as visitors by the friendly shopkeepers and residents.

There are several outstanding museums here. One of the major attractions is the Jorvik Museum, re-creating life in the Viking days. This town was conquered by the "barbarian" invaders from Scandinavia in the Dark Ages, and now you can ride in a shuttle car that will take you through actual archaeological excavations that recreate life in those days.

There is also the famous Castle



Museum with its extensive 19th century displays, including shop-fronts, home interiors, carriages, all manner of goods and utensils, costumes, and the whole variety of life in the previous century. Housed in what had been a prison, this is a historic collection that will keep you busy for hours. You can walk on the wall that surrounds this medieval town, and gain views over the ancient rooftops.

But the grandest sight of all is the

York Minster, the largest gothic cathedral in England. It is truly a sight to behold, rising majestically over the ancient stone walls of this jewel of a town - it is the crowning glory! Inside the Minster you will be amazed by the stained glass windows, the largest in England, and the soaring roof that towers



above, hundreds of feet high. Castle Howard, one of the most extravagant of all stately mansions, is another optional excursion you might enjoy from York.

Lake District



Day 10 and 11: Windermere
We continue by motorcoach across Yorkshire and the English countryside to the picturesque Lake District.

This route will bring us through the beautiful countryside of the Yorkshire Dales and Herriot Country. The green rolling hills of



Yorkshire, patterned with stone walls and sheep pastures, dotted with quaint villages will truly delight you.

We will spend two nights at Windermere, the most popular and attractive town in the Lakes. We will enjoy an included half-day ride in a



minivan into the countryside to see the surrounding areas. This ride will show you some beautiful mountains, various ancient archaeological sites, many sheep grazing in the bucolic hills, deep blue lakes, and some rustic pubs in the scattered villages.

Some of the options you can go for include a cruise on Lake Windermere in the peaceful setting of mountains and forests, and a visit to Grasmere



and Dove Cottage, the former home of the poet Wordsworth. Windermere is a fine place to just relax with a pleasant stroll along the shores of this poetic lake. Nature walks - or shopping in town, you will find plenty of things to keep you entertained in this popular vacation spot.

EDINBURGH

Day 12, 13, and 14: Scotland's City of Culture. Leaving Windermere,



we enjoy another picturesque ride for several hours through rolling green farmlands on our way north to Edinburgh, a city of historical and cultural variations. A guided sightseeing tour of this elegant city gives you a fine overview of the "New Town," laid out in the 18th century Georgian style as one of the first master-planned cities in Europe.

We also tour the much older Royal Mile, with its medieval cathedrals, castles, palaces, and crooked old lanes. The back alleys of this part of



town were among the most densely populated neighborhoods in Britain five centuries ago, and now they have been yuppyfied, with the new young



workers moving in and making this a very trendy neighborhood once again. In the New Town, where most of the action is today, shopping on Princes Street can be further enhanced with a pub-crawl on nearby Rose Street.

We will visit the National Gallery of Fine Arts together and see one of the best collections of old masters in Europe. An option you might



consider is a visit to Edinburgh Castle, which sits majestically on top of the hill overlooking the heart of town. In the evening there are various opportunities to catch a traditional



night of musical entertainment, complete with dinner. Scotland's capital is one of the world's favorite cities -- everyone has a different reason to love it.

We are staying here for three nights so that you can spend one full day



on an optional trip to the Scottish Highlands. Rolling along on a comfortable motorcoach tour, you soon arrive in the Highlands and visit its famous lake, Loch Ness.

This area is surrounded by lush



natural beauty, with the steepest, greenest mountains in Great Britain, watered by numerous streams, waterfalls and lakes. It is a land of history and legends, with classic castles scattered in various states of repair, and much older ancient stone monuments dating back to the time of the Druids in the Stone Age. Back to Edinburgh



IRELAND

GALWAY

Day 15 We land at Dublin Airport and are met by our private driver. Throughout Ireland we will have the services of a driver and comfortable van in our private tour.

Depart for Galway City via Athlone, the centre of Ireland & Ballinasloe.

Visit Clonmacnoise the monastery founded by St. Ciaran in 6th



Century. We then travel north to Galway situated by panoramic Galway Bay. It's a lovely town, perfect for strolling a long

cobblestone lanes lined with artisan shops, but even more attractive is the adjacent Connemara Peninsula, which we will thoroughly explore together.

Evening free in Galway City, known as the "City of the Tribes."

Take a ramble down Quay Street with its many great pubs including "The Quays" and "Ti Neachtain" a town house which belonged to "Humanity Dick", an 18th -century MP who promoted laws against cruelty to animals.

Overnight at the Imperial Hotel.

Day 16 Tour of Connemara via Oughterard, Maam Cross & Recess before travelling up the spectacular Inagh valley with the 12 Bens of Connemara on your left and the Maumturks on your right to

Kylemore. This is the essence of Irish landscape beauty-green fields bounded by miles of rock walls; ancient stone houses with thatch roofs; cows and sheep wandering freely. This is a wild and beautiful region of mountains, lakes, tumbling streams, undulating peat bogs, unspoiled beaches, and panoramic views. It is a Gaelic-speaking region that has maintained its traditional character and kept the modern world at bay. The musical accent of the friendly locals will charm your heart in a way you can never forget.



Visit to Kylemore Abbey. This Abbey's greatest attraction is its location. Nestled at the base of Duchruach Mountain on the northern shore of Lough Pollacappul, in the heart of the Connemara Mountains, it is regarded as one of Ireland's most romantic buildings.

Travel on via Letterfrack to Connemara National Park where you will have the opportunity for a self-guided hike up Diamond Hill for spectacular views of



Connemara's hills, bays & inlets

Continue on to Clifden and you might want to have a pint in Griffins Bar on Main Street.

Return to Galway.

GALWAY Day 17 Free day in



Galway with options.

Depart for Rossaveal in South Connemara.

Option 1: Travel by ferry to Inishmore, the largest of the Aran Islands.

Collect bicycles & helmets on the pier and spend the day exploring the largest of the Aran Islands with its several large prehistoric forts including a visit to Dun Aonghasa.

Option 2: Travel by ferry to Inishmore, the largest of the Aran Islands.

Guided Tour on local mini-bus of the largest of the Aran Islands with its several large prehistoric forts including a visit to Dun Aonghasa.

Return to Galway.

DINGLE

Day 18 Depart for the Gaelic speaking fishing port of Dingle via the Atlantic west coast of Clare.

Travel down the Atlantic seaboard via Galway Bay & Ballyvaughan to



Dunguaire Castle at Kinvarra.

See The Burren (Gaelic for rocky land) and visit the dramatic 650ft Cliffs of Moher.

Cross the Shannon by Ferry from Killimer to Tarbert.

Continue on to Dingle via Tralee. Today we venture even further into the true spirit of Ireland with this drive to Dingle, the westernmost outpost of Europe. We will stay two nights in the small town of Dingle, and travel around the peninsula to enjoy its many natural and historical attractions. Old traditions, customs, and crafts are very much alive in this ruggedly beautiful promontory, littered with prehistoric and Early Christian remains. The quiet atmosphere and charm will instill a peaceful glow in your thoughts of this fond place.

Overnight in Dingle Benners Hotel
DINGLE Day 19





Tour the Dingle Peninsula with its early Christian sites including the 6th century Gallarus Oratory. Take in the spectacular views from Slea Head and Connor Pass and walk the Atlantic beaches of the Peninsula.

We can also enjoy a stroll on Coomenoole beach. This small but beautiful beach was used as one of the film locations for the filming of "Ryan's Daughter". It is the closest beach to Slea Head and has dramatic views. Please note: The currents here are extremely dangerous, and visitors should not enter the sea.

Overnight in Dingle Benners Hotel



KINSALE

Day 20 Depart for historic town of Kinsale.

Pass over the Cork/Kerry Mountains via the Irish speaking villages of Ballymakeery & vBallyvourney to the old market town of Macroom, where you will see Macroom Castle, once home of Sir William Penn, whose son was later to found the state of Pennsylvania.

Travel on to the village of Blarney via the valley of the river Lee.

Continuing along the scenic



southern shore, we arrive in Kinsale, a quaint little seaside village famous for its historic charms and picturesque setting. You will be pleasantly surprised by some of the finest restaurants in Europe, and excellent shopping. This unassuming fishing town has an atmosphere that changed little during the last four centuries, with its narrow crooked lanes still meandering from block to block around the inner port.

Many great pubs in Kinsale and one of the best is the Bulman in Summercove just below Charles Fort.

Afternoon free to explore the beautiful town of Kinsale.

Overnight in Acton's Hotel Kinsale





DUBLIN

Day 21 Depart for Dublin via Tipperary & Kildare. Visit to Charles Fort, this star shaped fort was built in the 1670's by the English to protect Kinsale harbour against foreign naval forces.



Visit The Rock of Cashel. This was the seat of kings and medieval bishops for 900 years and flourished until the early 17th century. Brian Ború was crowned King of Munster here in 977 and he became High King of Ireland in 1002.

Continue on to Dublin.

Overnight in Wynn's Hotel.



DUBLIN Day 22

Depart on tour of Dublin city including St. Patrick's Cathedral, and Trinity College, home to the Book of Kells.

Visit the Guinness Storehouse at St. James Gate and enjoy a pint of Guinness in the Sky Bar (The Sky Bar is located in at the top of a glass tower that commands spectacular views of Dublin City & County in every direction.

We'll also have a walking tour in the heart of town. Then a free evening to explore the nightlife district of Temple Bar and settle in for a final dinner and a few more pints.

Overnight in Wynn's Hotel.



Day 23 DUBLIN

Free day in Dublin for independent activities, or come along with us for more walking tours, museums and dining.

FLY HOME Day 24

Transfer to Dublin Airport

Depart on return flight home