**YOUR HOLIDAY**

1. **ARRIVE SHANNON – GALWAY** Europe’s Capital of Culture extends a warm welcome as you prepare to discover a land where religious beliefs run deep in the hearts and minds of the locals. You’ll enjoy an orientation of Galway with your Travel Director before paying a visit to the Cathedral of Our Lady Assumed into Heaven and St. Nicholas, built in the mid-20th century. This evening, you’ll join your Travel Director and companions at a Welcome Reception to begin your trip. (W) Hotel: Maldron Oranmore

2. **GALWAY – WESTPORT** ‘Dive Into Culture’ and celebrate nature and the cycle of life when you visit the award-winning Celtic gardens at Brigit’s Garden set within woodlands and wildflower meadows in Rosscahill. Join a weaving workshop and create your own Brigit’s Cross. Leave your tranquil surroundings behind and continue to Kylemore Abbey, a magnificent castle-like structure built as a family home and transformed into a Benedictine monastery. See its magnificent Victorian Walled Garden before continuing to Westport. En route, we’ll stop at Croagh Patrick Visitor Centre to see the statue of St. Patrick at the foot of the ‘Holy Mountain’. This evening, we’ll dine at our hotel. (B, D, L) Hotel: McWilliam Park

3. **WESTPORT – KNOCK** Meet your ‘Local Specialist’ this morning for a walking tour during which you’ll learn about the town’s heritage – from its settlement 5,000 years ago to modern times. Next enjoy a Small Group Sightseeing guided tour of Ballintubber Abbey, the only church in Ireland founded by an Irish king that is still in use. Then continue to the pilgrimage town of Knock to view the Marian Shrine where villagers witnessed an Apparition of Our Lady in 1878. This evening you will have an opportunity to experience Mass at the Parish Church. (B) Hotel: McWilliam Park

4. **KNOCK – CO. KERRY (2 NIGHTS)** Ireland’s Wild Atlantic Way provides a beautiful backdrop for our visit to Poulnabrone Dolmen, one of the country’s most iconic archaeological and oldest megalithic monuments. Learn what lies below these mystical stones before a memorable encounter with the Cliffs of Moher, which plunge dramatically into the Atlantic Ocean. We ‘Connect With Locals’ and join Oonagh to forage ingredients that will be used to create our ‘Be My Guest’ lunch at Barrtra Seafood restaurant. Cross the Shannon Estuary next, keeping a keen eye out for dolphins as the Tarbert Ferry makes the brief crossing between Counties Clare and Kerry. (B, BMG, RD) Hotel: The Rose

5. **RING OF KERRY EXCURSION** Ireland’s soul-stirring Ring of Kerry takes centre stage today as we embark on a scenic drive past its mountains, lakes and lush green countryside – unquestionably one of the most scenic routes in Ireland. We’ll see Daniel O’Connell’s Cahirciveen, the fishing village of Waterville, Moll’s Gap and Black Valley, whose remoteness saw it become the last area in Ireland to receive electricity. (B)

6. **CO. KERRY – BLARNEY CASTLE – YOUGHAL – WATERFORD** Your first stop today is a memorable visit to Blarney Castle to kiss the stone and acquire the ‘gift of the gab’. Now, it’s on to the seaside town of Youghal, once home to Sir Walter Raleigh. Later this afternoon, you’ll arrive in Waterford, once a thriving Viking settlement and your home for the night. (B) Hotel: Marina

7. **WATERFORD – GLENDALOUGH – DUBLIN (2 NIGHTS)** We journey to the peaceful 6th century monastic ruins at Glendalough which survived repeated Norman attacks over the centuries. Arriving in Dublin later today, you’ll embark on a sightseeing tour of the Irish capital. Walk the cobbled courtyard of Trinity College to see the Book of Kells, before enjoying a spiritual encounter, as many have for over 1,500 years, in St. Patrick’s Cathedral, the largest church in Ireland. (B) Hotel: Clayton Leopardstown

8. **DUBLIN** Join an informative and poignant tour with a ‘Local Specialist’ at Glasnevin Trust this morning. Our visit will ‘Make a Difference’ to its efforts to preserve Irish history and we’ll hear Stories about some of the country’s bravest characters. Enjoy the rest of the afternoon at leisure. Our pilgrimage nearing its end, we join our Travel Director and fellow travellers for a memorable Farewell Dinner. (B, FD, L)

9. **DEPART DUBLIN** Say farewell to new friends and take a transfer to the airport for your onward journey. (B)

**MORE ABOUT YOUR TRIP**

* All prices are per person, twin share.

**Airport transfers:** On arrival at Shannon Airport, transfers will operate at 8am and 12:30pm. Guests arriving later should make their own way to the hotel. Return transfers on the last travel day will arrive at Dublin Airport at 7am, 9am and 11am.

**Gratuities:** Option to pre-pay gratuities for Travel Director and driver, US$88 per person.

**Drinking Water:** Tap water is safe to drink in all of Ireland.

**Trip code:** RIRF

**TRAVEL DIRECTOR TIP**

The ancient monastic site of Glendalough, home of St. Kevin, offers an intriguing legend. It is said that if you stand next to St. Kevin’s Cross and can wrap your arms around the entire width of the cross body and close the circle by touching your fingertips, you will have your wish granted. Be sure to try your luck!

Deanne Menaghan