



IRELAND'S HIDDEN HEARTLANDS: 7-DAY ITINERARY

At Ancient Ireland Tourism, our motto is: "From ancient east to Atlantic way, visit Ireland your way." Besides our small group departures and self-drive packages, we specialize in custom itinerary planning offering our clients exceptional service and an outstanding experience filled with many wonderful memories when visiting Ireland. All of our itineraries can be customized and structured for any size of group.

***An Ancient Ire-
land Tourism
client on her 10-
day Ireland Tour***

"Our recent trip was a phenomenal success. The pre-trip process was very easy. Because we had enough to fill the entire bus, our tour director worked very closely with us to help design a custom tour, and it went off without a single issue. That's impressive. Once in Ireland we were guided by our guide and driver. He's an Irishman's Irishman. He's got the knowledge, personality, sense of humor and driving skills that makes him the best driver we could have asked for. I promise if you use Ancient Ireland Tourism, you will have a great trip. "

IRELAND: 7-DAY ITINERARY

Pricing from: €1699 (Est. \$1939) for 7-Day excursion led by an expert guide

(Also available as a private guided charter or self-drive package. [Contact us for details](#))

Includes:

- Airport Transfers
- 24x7 support during your visit with us in Ireland
- Daily transport to scheduled attractions, hotel and scheduled meals
- Double occupancy accommodations (single supplement available)
- Knowledgeable Guide as well as local guides at selected attractions
- Admission tickets to all scheduled sites and attractions
- Breakfast each day (with exception of day of arrival)
- Snacks and beverages (water, soft drinks) during the day

Tour Highlights:

Day 1 - Arrival at Dublin Airport, Driving tour of Dublin, [Hill of Uisneach](#) , Welcome dinner

Day 2 - Athlone Castle, [Kilbeggan Distillery Experience](#), Fore Abbey

Day 3 - Loughcrew Cairns, Battle of the Boyne Visitor Center

Day 4 - Newgrange Megalithic Site, Trim Castle

Day 5 - Rock of Cashel, [Lough Gur Heritage Center](#), Shannon

Day 6 - Cliffs of Moher and [Aran Islands](#) Ferry, Dublin

Day 7 - Breakfast, Departure from Dublin Airport



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WHY BOOK THIS TOUR?

Many visitors to Ireland arrive in Dublin and head to the west coast, but this strategy misses the hidden heartlands where there is so much to see! On this unique and intimate excursion, our group departure size is limited to a maximum of 16 persons. (No limit for private charters) Explore the Hidden Heartlands of the real Ireland. The tour starts with a driving tour of Dublin before settling into home base near Mullingar for a few days. No need to change hotels until later when the tour heads west to the coast.

This tour is also a perfect option for those wishing to extend their stay in Ireland.

TOUR MAP



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DAY 1: DUBLIN AND SACRED CENTER OF IRELAND

Uisneach is the mythological and sacred centre of Ireland and is said to be the home of the sovereignty goddess, Ériu, after whom Ireland is named. Ériu, according to legend, rests under the Catstone. It is at the Catstone, or Aill na Mireann, where the ancient five provinces of Ireland meet. Uisneach is also linked with the Sun God, Lugh. It is said that Lugh, who gave rise to harvest celebration Lunasa, was drowned in a lake on the Hill and rests beneath an adjoining tumulus. According to one theory, the God Lugh, with his 'long arm trailing behind him' and his face too bright to look at, was a comet. Every year during the first week of May, the Bealtaine fires are lit atop the hill and when seen, people on the surrounding hillsides also light bonfires as it has been done since ancient times. Bealtaine celebrates the beginning of the summer season. This is a private tour for your group and is always a special experience. After the tour, we stop at the Visitor Centre for a cup of tea and a chat.

After exploring the mythology and archaeology of Uisneach, enjoy a welcome dinner at **Weirs award winning Bar and Restaurant** in the charming little village of Multyfarnham. Weirs Bar & Restaurant, Multyfarnham, in County Westmeath is a charming old world, family run pub that serves some of the best food and drink in Ireland in a relaxed, family friendly atmosphere. All their food is home made on the premises, from their soups and sauces right through to their delicious desserts. They also have available specialty coffees and a full range of liqueurs. Share tales, yarns, truths and your host is available to answer the many questions provoked by today's activities.

After your Angus beef steaks, the night warms up with a little lesson in Úisce Beatha, better known as whiskey - single malt, blended, aged, Irish and Scottish. You will sample the delights and may quickly come to recognize what you like and want out of any whiskey. Ferried back to your accommodation, your first night's sleep beckons.



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DAY 2: ATHLONE AND THE SEVEN WONDERS OF FORE

After a good night's rest and a hearty breakfast, take a short, 40-minute drive to Athlone. Situated on the mighty River Shannon, Athlone serves as the gateway between Ireland's Ancient East and the West.

Today's first stop will be Athlone Castle. Experience a magnificent journey through history at the Athlone Castle Visitor Centre. Climb the steps to the Castle Keep and enjoy the views across the majestic River Shannon or climb higher still to the Castle battlements and look across the town's rooftops. Take a step back in history through playful interactive exhibits, touch screen animations and an immersive 360-degree cinematic experience that brings the Great Siege of Athlone to life.

Swords, cannon balls and stunning sculptures gives these ancient stories great depth. Vibrant displays with historic artifacts will lead you along a 3D timeline that illustrates Athlone's last 200 years. Enjoy the wonderful voice of John Count McCormack in a display dedicated to the memory of the world-famous Athlone tenor. Rain or shine, this is a Castle with a story to tell.

Pause for lunch before heading over to Ireland's oldest bar, [Seáns Bar Athlone](#). Walking into Sean's Bar, immerse in the oldest pub in Europe, never mind Ireland! Join the uncountable number of visitors who have been stopping here for a drink, a chat and maybe a bit of music for more than a thousand years and they have the distinctions to support it.

After exploring Athlone, head to Kilbeggan and take a distillery tour where the oldest, still operating single pot still in Ireland can be seen.

Before heading back to Mullingar for the evening, stop at the heritage village of Fore Co. Westmeath. [Fore Village](#) is off the beaten track but is wedged with rewards for the people who visit her; from the Stories of the Seven Wonders of Fore to the ancient Benedictine Monastery. Walk through its cloisters in the footsteps of the original French speaking monks. French Monks in Westmeath? Come and walk in their wake and all questions will be answered such as why some locals hadn't much time for the Benedictines, who was St. Feichin of Fore, what's an anchorite in a cell and what are The Seven Wonders of Fore.



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DAY 3: THE WITCHES HOPS AND BOYNE VALLEY

The first day stopped to explore The Hill of Uisneach which revealed the many solar alignments having Uisneach at the center. Venturing from Uisneach, head to three ridges known as the "Witches Hops" and there, find the Loughcrew Cairns. (Seasonal) Walk to the central summit to explore Cairn T, the largest of the passage tombs. And sit on the Hag's Chair As seen from Uisneach, Cairn T will align with the midsummer sunrise.

Extending the same radial line from Uisneach another 65 kilometers, we would be in line with Slieve Gullion in County Armagh which connects sacred Uisneach with both Leinster and Ulster.

The midwinter sunset also creates the same alignment, reversed back through Uisneach completing the 180-degree cycle from midsummer sunrise to midwinter sunset.

Moving from the ancient past to a more recent past is the Battle of The Boyne Visitor Center, site of the famous 1690 battle between William of Orange and James II. The ramifications of this pivotal battle still influence the division of Ireland today.

Today concludes back in Mullingar.



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DAY 4: BRÚ NA BÓINNE AND BRAVEHEART!

Newgrange, or Brú na Bóinne draws the journey today back to the Boyne valley visiting a site significant to humans for over 5000 years. To this day, crowds gather here at the winter solstice hoping to see the sunrise illuminate the passageway at Newgrange and illuminate the rear of the chamber. Each year, a lucky few, 60 in all, will have the opportunity to stand inside the chamber for the event. Want to enter the annual draw for one of the 60 spaces? [You can apply here.](#) Oh, and there are no guarantees that the morning will not be overcast, but why not try anyway?



Most remember Mel Gibson in the movie “Braveheart.” While the plot takes place in Scotland, most of the filming was actually done in the town of Trim in Ireland. Before heading back for a last night in Mullingar, stop in Trim and take in a tour of Trim Castle. “Freedom!”

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DAY 5: ROCK OF CASHEL AND AN ENCHANTED LAKE

This morning will require packing up and leaving Mullingar. Make your way west towards the Atlantic coast, first heading south to visit the Rock of Cashel. The Rock of Cashel is the ancient seat of the Kings of Munster although the legends go much farther back into mythology having been created when St. Patrick is said to have banished the devil from a cave. At the Rock of Cashel, learn about the peculiar water supply via a well at the top of the rocky outcrop. Here, view a group of Medieval buildings including the 12th century round tower, High Cross and Romanesque Chapel, 13th century Gothic cathedral, 15th century Castle and the restored Hall of the Vicars Choral. On many visits, a crow can be seen in the window of the round tower, keeping a watchful eye on visitors.

After The Rock of Cashel, head west and visit Lough Gur, the mythical lake and one of the four royal sites aligned with Uisneach. At Lough Gur, take a tour of the heritage center (seasonal) and after a short walk, view the hollow mountain, said to be the home of the Fairy King. Gazing into the waters of the lake, explore the legend of the Earl of Desmond and the Castle at the bottom of the lake. Time permitting take a stop at the largest stone circle in all of Ireland located nearby.

After a busy day, head to the hotel check-in near the town of Shannon.



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DAY 6: CLIFFS OF MOHER AND ARAN ISLANDS

The spectacular Cliffs of Moher are on everyone's checklist for a visit to Ireland, and we head there as our first stop this morning. Depending on the season and weather conditions the day of our visit, we catch the ferry in Doolin to see the cliffs up close from the sea. After viewing the Cliffs, our ferry takes us out to one of the Aran Islands for a sail by, or depending on the time of year, a day visit ashore.

Catching our return ferry after a day of exploring, we hit the road and wind up in Dublin for the evening where the remainder of the day is free for you to explore the city, have dinner or hit a few pubs.



DAY 7: SLÁN ABHAILE!

Start the day with a full Irish breakfast before gathering your things and heading to the airport. We bid you farewell and as we say in Ireland, "Slán Abhaile," have a safe journey home. Be sure to arrive at Dublin airport at least three hours before flights bound for the USA as passengers must clear [US Preclearance](#) at Dublin airport.

After Dublin airport security (prior to US Preclearance), there are opportunities for last minute shopping including a vast selection of Irish whiskies which can be brought onto the plane for US bound flights.

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