

IRELAND – CONNEMARA, ARAN ISLANDS & ATLANTIC WEST COAST

7-day / 6-night easy to moderate **SELF-GUIDED** Islands & Western Coast walks



The west coast of Ireland is one of the most spectacular walking holiday destinations in Europe. Great value and the easy going, friendly nature of the people offer a wonderful walking experience and a link to Irish communities across the English speaking world.

This is a splendid trip along Ireland's Western Atlantic coastline where as part of the trip you visit and walk two beautiful islands off the Western Coast, Inishbofin, off the coast of Connemara, and Inishmore, the largest of the Aran Islands off the coast of Galway. You also walk along the Famine Track overlooking Ireland's only fjord, the Killary Fjord, and along paths providing breathtaking views onto the wild landscape and the coastline of Connemara. You will certainly get a glimpse of some dramatic scenery and, in the evenings or if the weather closes in, the opportunity to meet real Irish characters in some of the many traditional pubs and restaurants.

These unspoiled Connemara landscapes offer magnificent views, unique villages and ancient historical sites. You can choose to stay in either hotels or traditional Irish bed & breakfasts, all with en-suite rooms and excellent breakfasts. Your hosts are friendly and welcoming and always ready with suggestions of more to see along your way. We include a transfer to the start of each walk and provide you with detailed route notes and maps and information about the many places to discover along the way. The walking is easy to moderate, mostly over level terrain with a few ascents and descents.

Highlights include the scenic village of Leenane, the seal colony and birdlife on Inishbofin, the prehistoric stone forts on Inishmore, and the lively city of Galway.

Departs: Every Tuesday from April to October 2020

Starts: Leenane **Ends:** Galway City

Cost from: \$1355 per person (twin share), Single supplement \$345, Solo Traveller supplement \$990

Includes: 6 nights' in twin-share accommodation in either 3-star hotels or traditional Irish guesthouses with 6 full Irish breakfasts; luggage transfers except Rossaveal to Galway; transport to the start & end of the walks; ferry tickets to Inishbofin and Inishmore; pre-tour briefing; route notes and a walking map.

Not included: Lunches, dinners and other meals, drinks, public bus from Rossaveal to Galway City, optional activities and any personal expenses.

Grading: Moderate walking on even surfaces and two island walks accessed by ferry. Correct rain proof gear and walking boots are essential.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

Suggested itinerary:

Day 1 Arrive in Leenane

Make your way to Leenane by mid-afternoon. There are regular buses from Galway to Maam Cross (on the Galway-Clifden line); a taxi transfer from Maam Cross to Leenane can be organised at extra cost if required. Our local representative will meet you to go through your route and answer your questions about your itinerary, either tonight or in the morning. You have two nights in this delightful village.

Day 2 Circular route from Leenane

walking @ 15km (3 - 4hrs)

After breakfast a transfer to the starting point of the walk at the tip of Killary Harbour. You walk above the shore of Killary Harbour, Ireland's only fjord, along the "*Famine Track*", a now disused road built after the Great Famine (1848) to provide employment for the once extensive population of Connemara. Then continue along the Western Way to the village of Leenane where you stay for a second night.

Day 3 Leenane to Inishbofin Island

walking @ 6 to 15km (1 - 5hrs)

Today there is an overnight excursion to Inishbofin - one of three islands just off the coast of Connemara. Transfer with your luggage to Cleggan to take the ferry to Inishbofin. The island is an ideal spot for hill walking, and cycling with far-reaching coastal views. Traditional Irish music is at the heart of life on Inishbofin and world-class musicians visit regularly. The Bofin landscape is dominated by the impressive "*Cromwell's Barracks*", well-preserved ruins dating to the 17th Century. Wildlife abounds with many sea birds, seal colonies and the possibility of sighting dolphins, whales and sharks.

Day 4 Inishbofin Island to Clifden

walking @ 6km (1 - 2hrs)

Return on the morning ferry to Cleggan, where a taxi transfers you to Clifden, the "*Capital of Connemara*". Spend the day exploring this colourful town and take a 6km walk to Clifden Castle, a 19th Century Gothic-revival manor house, now in ruins. Enjoy a relaxing evening and experience the atmosphere of this vibrant little town.

Day 5 Clifden to Inishmore Island

walking @ 8km + (1 - 6hrs)

After breakfast a taxi transfers you to Rossaveal for the morning ferry to Inishmore, the largest of the Aran Islands. There are many antiquities on the island, including the fascinating Dun Aengus, Dun Eoghasa, early Christian monasteries and many more. You may want to discover them on foot, or alternatively there are bicycles for hire at the pier. Spend tonight in a guesthouse on the island. There are several dining choices on the island.

Day 6 Inishmore Island to Galway City

Return to the mainland with either the morning or the evening ferry and catch the public bus (paid locally), taking your luggage with you, from Rossaveal into Galway where you stay overnight. Explore this bustling, historic town with a multitude of restaurants and lively pubs.

Day 7 Depart Galway City

Tour arrangements end after breakfast



Outdoor Travel offers a choice of self-guided or small group guided walking or cycling holidays in Ireland – including the **Wicklow Way**, the **Dingle Peninsula** and the magical **Ring of Kerry** and also in France, Italy, England, Scotland and in other areas of Europe. Self-skipped or hotel barge cruises are offered on the beautiful **River Shannon** in Ireland – ask for a copy of these brochures:

Contact Outdoor Travel direct for more details and reservations

- Call Toll free 1800 331 582 or (03) 57551743 or Fax (03) 57501020
- Email: info@outdoortravel.com.au
- Web: <http://www.outdoortravel.com.au>
- Mail: Outdoor Travel Pty Ltd, PO Box 286, Bright, VIC 3741, Australia

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