

IRELAND – KERRY WAY & WEST COAST HIGHLIGHTS

8-days / 7-nights small group GUIDED walking based at Glenbeigh & Killarney



This walking holiday is based in the southwest of Ireland in County Kerry, affectionately known to Kerry people as “*The Kingdom*” and one of the most beautiful walking areas in Europe. This popular holiday offers the convenience of only two accommodation bases (no packing and unpacking every single day) but with a walking itinerary that joins several legs of the Kerry Way, giving you a real sense of completing a journey. The intense natural beauty of the area combines with history, culture and legends for an unforgettable holiday.

The Kerry Way is Ireland’s premier walking trail and we have chosen four stages of the way which allow us to explore a wide variety of habitats and landscapes. Discover the glens, mountains and valleys of Mid Kerry and the sweeping beaches, dramatic coastline and rugged islands of Dingle Bay and the North Atlantic Ocean. Visit Killarney National Park, with its three lakes, oak forests, waterfalls, bog land and native Irish Red Deer – a highlight for many is the scenic boat trip in a traditional open-topped wooden boat across the lakes of Killarney. Relax and unwind with superb views, a landscape imbued with folklore, and unique ‘sub-tropical’ flora growing in a climate warmed by Gulf Stream currents. Join in the *craic* (fun) and enjoy traditional Irish music in local pubs.

We stay four nights in Glenbeigh, a picturesque, vibrant village tucked between the Seefin Mountains and Castlemaine Harbour. Glenbeigh is situated directly on the Kerry Way so on some days we can walk directly to or from our guesthouse. Rossbeigh Beach, a six-mile-long stretch of beach, is nearby, offering the opportunity for peaceful strolls or a refreshing swim.

We spend three nights in Killarney, a bustling town with excellent shops, restaurants and traditional pubs, and you have a free day here, with options such as hiring a bike, having a spa treatment, or taking a day tour to Dingle or the Skellig islands. We explore the spectacular lakeside gardens in the grounds of 19th Century Muckross House and pass by the ruins of the 15th Century abbey.

Departs: 11th May; 22nd June; 6th, 20th July; 10th, 24th August; 7th, 21st September, 2019

Cost from: \$2275 per person, twin-share
Single room supplement from \$605 – on request, limited availability

Inclusions: 4 nights in an Irish Tourist Board approved guesthouse, 3 nights in 3-star hotel with en-suite bathroom facilities, full Irish breakfast on seven days, five packed lunches, five dinners, transfers to and from walks each day, boat trip on the lakes of Killarney, experienced local guide throughout.

Not included: Meals not mentioned, entry fees, personal expenses & transfers to/from start point. Airport transfers are not included but can be arranged from Kerry or Shannon Airports at extra cost. Please ask for details when booking.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations



Suggested itinerary: *The actual route and distances each day is at the complete discretion of the tour guide.*

Day 1 Arrive Glenbeigh

Plan to arrive by 6.30pm for a welcome dinner and briefing with your tour guide. Glenbeigh can be reached by local bus (two to three services daily) or taxi from Killarney. Killarney is well-connected by bus or train to Cork and Dublin. Ask us about transfers to Glenbeigh from Kerry or Shannon Airports, at extra cost if required.

Day 2 Valentia Island

walking @ 6km (ascent @ 200m)

We explore Valentia Island today. The island is linked to the mainland by bridge and ferry and has many secrets to discover. We visit the slate quarry, which provided slate for the Houses of Parliament; the 385-million-year-old tetrapod tracks, fossilised footprints of a primitive vertebrate; and the cable station at the eastern terminus of Transatlantic telegraph cable. We walk up to the Napoleon-era watch tower at Bray Head for expansive views of the Iveragh peninsula, Dingle Bay, and the Skellig and Blasket Islands. We also get our first taste of Irish folklore, hearing about the mythical blind Druid warrior who lived on Valentia Island and figures in many legends.

Day 3 The Kerry Way (Kells to Glenbeigh)

walking @ 17km (ascent @ 300m)

Our first walk on the Kerry Way takes us on an early Christian route and medieval coaching road, with detours to see archaeological artefacts and 4,000-year-old rock art. Weather permitting we may take a swim in the Atlantic, and we see the wave at the end of Rossbeigh Beach, from where characters of Irish myth and legend made their way to *Tír na nÓg*, the 'land of youth' and of the pagan gods of Ireland, the *Tuatha Dé Danann*.

Day 4 The Kerry Way (Glenbeigh to Glencar via Windy Gap)

walking @ 13km (ascent @ 350m)

We walk from the seaside village of Glenbeigh, ascend gradually to circle Seefin Mountain then stroll downwards into the lush valley of the Caragh River in Glencar. We are entertained on our walk by tales of Fianna warrior bands and the story of Oisín and Niamh's ill-fated romance.

Day 5 Killarney National Park

walking @ 15km (ascent @ 230m & descent @ 330m)

We walk the final stretch of the Kerry Way into Killarney National Park through ancient oak woods and bog-moorland, along the Old Kenmare Road. We descend beside the spectacular Torc Cascade into the gardens of Muckross House, a 19th Century mansion, with its welcoming teashop, and pass the ruins of the 15th Century Muckross Friary en route to our hotel.

Day 6 Free day in Killarney

Rest day

The day is yours at leisure. You may like to relax at the hotel, book a spa treatment in town, spend the day exploring the tea houses, bookshops and craft stores in Killarney, or take one of the many tours to the Ring of Kerry or Dingle Peninsula. Fishing, golfing, horse riding or cycling may also be available locally (at extra cost).

Day 7 The Lakes of Killarney and the Gap of Dunloe

walking @ 11km (ascent @ 200m)

Take a scenic boat trip in a traditional open-topped timber boat through the Lakes of Killarney, from Ross Castle to Lord Brandon's Cottage. After lunch walk through the dramatic Gap of Dunloe, a narrow mountain pass carved by glaciers. We finish a wonderful week's walking in Kate Kearney's Cottage.

Day 8 Departure.

Tour ends after breakfast. Ask for details on transfer options if you need to get to Kerry or Shannon airports.

Outdoor Travel offer small group guided walking or cycling holidays in Ireland, including **Galway**, **County Mayo**, **Dingle** and the **Wicklow Way**, and self-skipped or hotel barge boating holidays on the **River Shannon**. We offer guided or self-guided European walking holidays including the **Camino de Santiago** in France and Spain, Wainwright's **Coast to Coast** in England, and walks in other areas of Europe, Japan or New Zealand.

Contact Outdoor Travel for details and reservations:

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