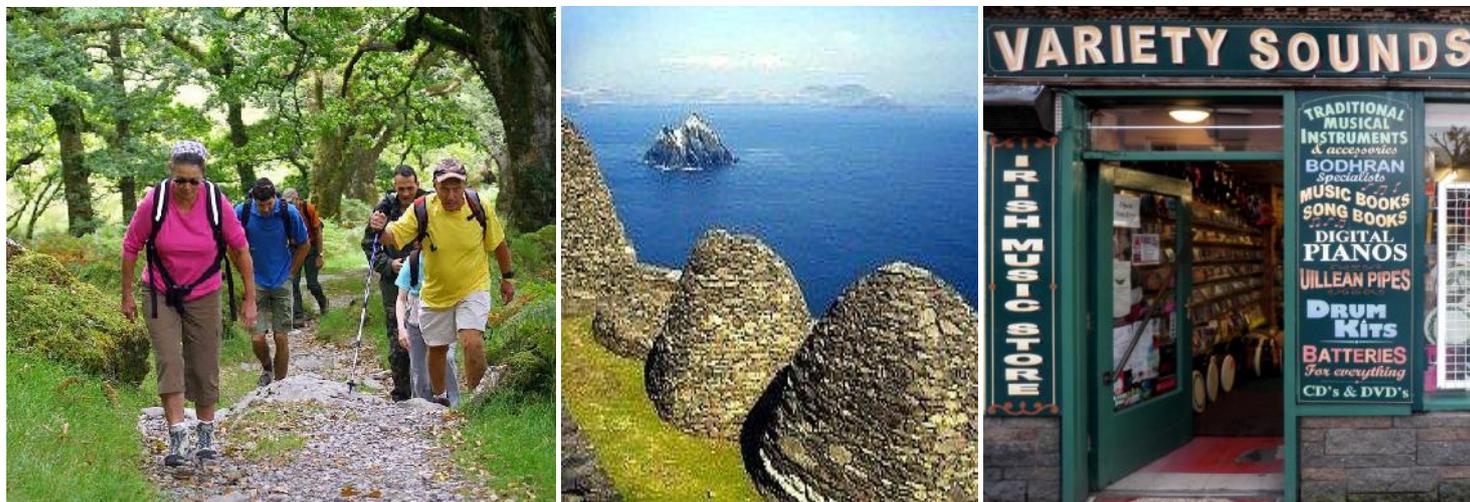


IRELAND – KERRY & WEST COAST CULTURAL HERITAGE & ISLANDS

8-day / 7-nights – two centre-based small group guided easy walking with traditional activities



This holiday combines easy guided walking with sightseeing and a host of traditional Irish cultural activities in the southwest of Ireland in County Kerry, affectionately known to Kerry people as 'The Kingdom'. It offers the convenience of just two accommodation bases (no packing and unpacking every day), with a full cooked Irish breakfast every morning to fuel you up for the day's walking or sightseeing. The programme includes gentle walking on the south-westernmost part of the Wild Atlantic Way along with walks on Valentia Island and cruising to the UNESCO World Heritage-listed Skellig Islands. Learn to play the bodhrán (a traditional Irish drum) and soak up the atmosphere and join in the *craic* (fun) at an Irish pub. There are opportunities to learn about Irish history, from medieval times through the 20th Century, to discover the unique 'sub-tropical' flora, and to come to know the distinctive Irish folklore and archaeology.

For many, the highlights of this tour are the boat trips – we cross to Great Skellig Island and, weather permitting, land on this eerie and mystical rock jutting sharply from the Atlantic Ocean to explore the medieval monastery site. We also cruise in an open-topped boat across the three Lakes of Killarney, surrounded by the lush green hills and oak forests of the national park.

We are based for four nights in Cahersiveen, a market town in a picturesque location at the foot of the Beentee Mountain on the River Fertha, with easy access to Valentia Island and the Skelligs. This is where Daniel O'Connell, the 19th Century lawyer and politician known as 'the Liberator' was born, and we visit Derrynane House, his ancestral home. We also spend three nights in Killarney, a bustling, vibrant town, with excellent shops, restaurants and traditional pubs, in the heart of the Killarney National Park. You have a free day in Killarney and options include hiring a bike for a ride in the national park, having a spa treatment, taking a day tour to Dingle, or spending a leisurely day strolling from craft shop to tea house to bookshop in town.

Departs: 18th May; 15th June; 13th July; 17th August; 14th September, 2019

Cost from: \$2780 per person, twin-share Single room supplement from \$680 (limited availability)

Includes: 7 nights' twin-share accommodation in Irish Tourist Board-approved 3-star and 4-star hotels (all rooms with ensuite bathroom facilities); full cooked Irish breakfast on seven days, four packed lunches, four evening meals; boat trip on lakes of Killarney; boat trip around the Skellig Islands (weather permitting); entry into Derrynane House & Gardens; bodhrán session; transfers to and from walks where required; arrival transfer from Killarney to Cahersiveen on Day 1; experienced local guide throughout.

Not included: Meals not mentioned, entry fees other than specified, personal expenses. Transfers to and from Killarney are not included but can be arranged from Kerry, Shannon or Cork airports at extra cost – please ask for details when booking.

Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations

Suggested Itinerary:

Day 1 Arrival

Arrive Killarney by 4pm and be transferred to Caherciveen. Killarney is well-connected by bus or train to many locations in Ireland, including Cork and Dublin, or ask us about transfers to Killarney from Kerry, Shannon or Cork airports, at extra cost. At 6.30pm meet your guide and group for dinner and a briefing on the week ahead.

Day 2 Valentia Island

walking @ 6km

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 Skellig Islands

Our first stop is the Skellig Experience Visitor Centre to learn more about this UNESCO World Heritage site. *Sceilig Mhichíl* (Great Skellig Island) was inhabited from the 6th to 12th Centuries by Irish monks, who were determined to practice their religion in one of the wildest, most isolated places on Earth. Weather permitting we cruise to the Skelligs, passing by the world's largest gannet colony on Little Skellig Island, also home to puffins and a host of other sea birds. Keep your eyes open for grey seals, dolphins, minke whales, or basking shark. There may be a chance to land on Great Skellig, if requested by the group, to climb the ancient, steep stone stairway to the monastic site 200 metres above the ocean, and walk amongst the dome-shaped stone monastery buildings. Please note all cruising and activities are weather dependent.

Day 4 Derrynane

walking @ 6km

We start our day with an unusual walk along the foreshore in Caherdaniel, foraging for edible seaweeds, guided by locals with expert knowledge of sea vegetables; then we are treated to an 8-course tasting lunch of dishes prepared with our harvest. In the afternoon we visit Derrynane National Park and House, and learn more about the 19th Century Irish politician and lawyer, Daniel O'Connell, nicknamed 'The Liberator' for his work towards Catholic emancipation. We walk along the blue flag Park Beach – where you can swim if you're game – and stroll part of the '*mass path*' with views of the beaches, then visit a 12th Century abbey on Abbey Island.

Day 5 Bolus Head and traditional Irish music

walking @ 9km

A walk on Bolus Head rewards us with superb sea views and the opportunity to visit the ruins of a military barracks. Around morning tea-time we call in at a small, family-run chocolate factory creating premium hand-made chocolates. We continue on to a friendly and informal bodhrán session, where a master bodhrán player gives us some tips on how to play this traditional goatskin frame drum. We then transfer overnight to Killarney, where there are plenty of classic Irish pubs featuring informal Irish music sessions to practice your new skills.

Day 6 Free day in Killarney

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 are also available (at extra cost).

Day 7 The Lakes of Killarney and Ross Castle

walking @ 5km

Today take a horse drawn 'jaunting car' ride through the Killarney National Park to Ross Castle on the shores of Lough Leane, one of the three Lakes of Killarney where we cruise on an open topped boat to Innisfallen Island for a short walk around the impressive archaeological ruins of Innisfallen Abbey. Cruise back before lunch, for a guided tour of Ross Castle, then explore Ross Island and take a tranquil walk on the Copper Mines trail along the shores of Lough Leane. Transfer to Killarney and celebrate a wonderful week of walking and sightseeing.

Day 8 Departure day

Tour ends after a hot cooked 'traditional' Irish breakfast. Ask about transfers to Kerry, Shannon or Cork airport.

Outdoor Travel offer other small group guided walking or cycling holidays in Ireland – including Galway, County Mayo, Dingle and the Wicklow Way and self-skippered or hotel barge boating holidays on the River Shannon. We offer guided or self-guided walking holidays in France and Spain including the **Camino de Santiago**, in Italy, Switzerland, England including Wainwright's **Coast to Coast** walk, in Scotland and most other areas of Europe.

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

KERRY & WEST COAST CELTIC CULTURAL HERITAGE & ISLANDS



Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations