

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 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 an app with detailed route notes and maps and information about the many places to discover along the way.

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 Monday from April to October

Starts: Leenane **Ends:** Inishmore, Aran Island

Cost from: **\$2125** per person (twin share) Single supplement \$425, Solo Traveller supplement \$1545
High season supplement from \$195 per person for departures in June, July & August

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 City; transport to the start & end of the walks; return ferry tickets to Inishbofin and Inishmore Islands; downloadable app with full route notes and maps.

Not included: Lunches, dinners and other meals, drinks, public bus from Rossaveal to Galway City, optional activities; printed route notes & maps (at extra cost) and any personal expenses.

Grading: Easy to moderate walking mostly over level terrain with a few ascents and descents 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 if your arrival time is known well in advance. 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)

Transfer with your luggage to Cleggan to take the ferry to Inishbofin Island, one of three islands off the coast of Connemara, for an overnight stay. Inishbofin is an ideal spot for hill walking and cycling with far-reaching coastal views. Traditional Irish music is at the heart of life there 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 sea birds, seal colonies and possible sightings of dolphins, whales and sharks. Depending on accommodation availability, you either spend the night on Inishbofin, or return to Cleggan with the 5pm ferry and your taxi will drive you to stay in Clifden.

Day 4 Inishbofin Island to Clifden

walking @ 6km (1 - 2hrs)

If you stayed on the island, 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 with a choice of great seafood restaurants, authentic Irish pubs and the atmosphere of this vibrant little town.

Day 5 Clifden to Inishmore Island

walking @ 8 to 25km (1 - 6hrs)

After breakfast a taxi transfers you (taking your luggage with you) to Rossaveal for the morning ferry to Inishmore, the largest of the three Aran Islands. There are many antiquities on the island, including the fascinating pre-historic stone forts of Dun Aengus and Dun Eoghasa, early Christian monasteries and much more. You may want to discover them on foot, or alternatively there are bicycles for hire at the pier. Spend two nights in a guesthouse on the island. There are several dining choices available.

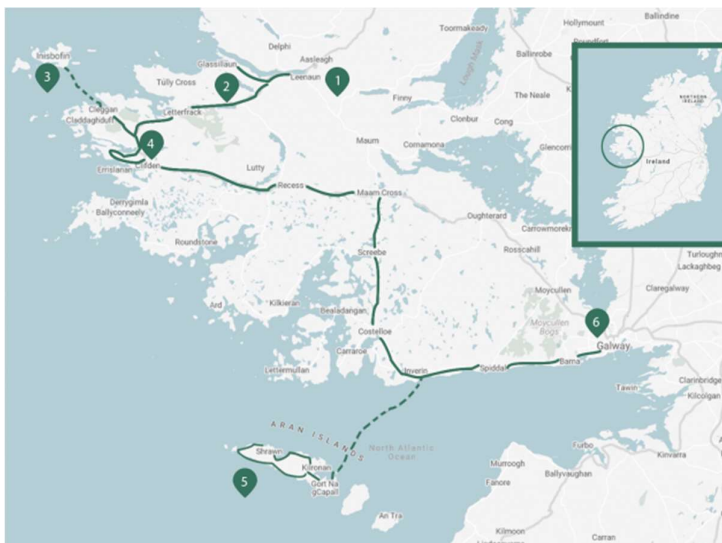
Day 6 Inishmore Island

Enjoy a second day on Inishmore Island to visit all the sites you didn't get to on the day before. With more than 50 different monuments of Christian, pre-Christian and Celtic origin on the island, there is plenty to explore.

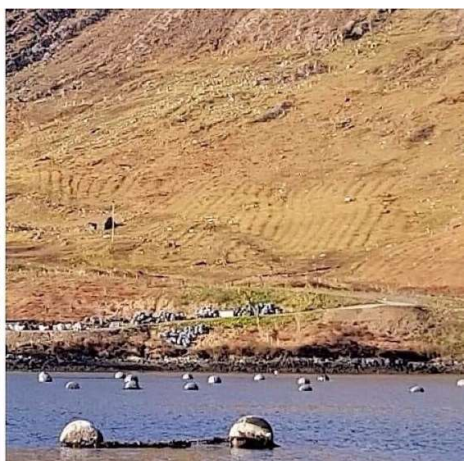
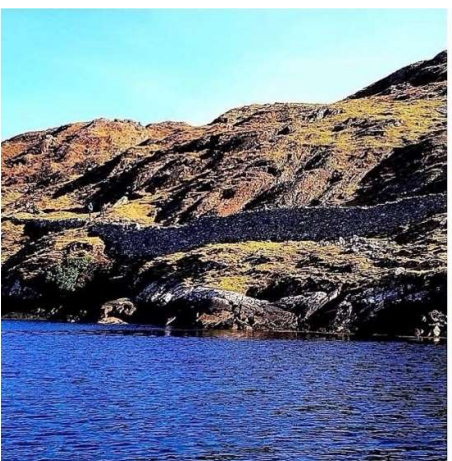
Day 7 Inishmore Island to Galway City & departure

After breakfast, to the mainland on the morning ferry and catch the public bus (paid locally), taking your luggage with you, from Rossaveal into Galway City where your tour arrangements end.

We suggest booking a night in Galway City, to enjoy the restaurants and pubs of this bustling, historic town.



Call OUTDOOR TRAVEL on 1800 331 582 for details or reservations



Contact Outdoor Travel direct for more details and reservations

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