



9 Night Southern Ireland Knitting Tour with the Aran Islands

Tour Dates:

13th May 2018

12th August 2018

23rd September 2018

Tour Overview

This Irish knitting tour will help you experience craft in Ireland with an emphasis on knitting. Your tour will include a tour of Dublin City and some time exploring Dublin's knitting hotspots including a short knitting with wire class at Winnie's Craft Cafe and meeting up with a textile designer at another popular Dublin knitting stop, The Constant Knitter. Continue then to Galway where your exploits will include a knitting class with Anne Ó'Máille of Ó'Máille's of Galway, a traditional Irish basket making demonstration with well known basket maker Ciaran Hogan and an unforgettable two night trip to Inis Oírr (Inisheer) on the Aran Islands where you will be instructed by Aran Knitting enthusiast Una McDonagh and friends. You will also discover the unspoilt Connemara area which has scenery like no other place in Ireland! Travel onward to Kerry, the most scenic part of Ireland, home to the magnificent Ring of Kerry and Kerry Woollen Mills. Here we introduce you to Carol Feller, popular Irish knitter and author of the book Contemporary Irish Knits.

Included in This Tour

- Transfers on arrival and departure by private coach (for arrivals prior to 11am)
- Sightseeing as per itinerary in a luxury coach with an experienced driver and accredited guide, entrance fees included if applicable.
- Accommodation in rooms with private facilities for 9 nights
- Irish breakfast daily
- 5 hotel table d'hote dinners
- 4 lunches
- 1 Farewell Meal in Dublin
- Entrance to the following attractions: National Museum of Decorative Arts and History, Kylemore Abbey, Glen Keen Sheep Farm, National Museum of Country Life, The Cliffs of Moher, Blarney Castle.
- Flight or Ferry to Inis Oírr, Aran Islands
- Inis Oírr Guided Tour
- Traditional Bread Making & Brigid Cross Making Workshop Inis Oírr
- Ring of Kerry Guided tour
- Connemara Guided Tour
- Kerry Woollen Mills Factory Tour
- Basket weaving demonstration with Ciaran Hogan

- Tullamore Dew Whiskey Distillery Tour

Workshops/Knitting Activities Included in This Tour

- Knitting with wire workshop at Winnies Craft Cafe in Dublin
- Knitting Workshop with Anne O'Maille in Galway
- Aran Island Knitting Workshop with Una McDonagh
- Knitting Class with Carol Feller in Killarney (including a copy of Carol's latest book)

Overnights for this Tour

- Camden Court Hotel (or similar), Dublin, 1 Night
- Galway Bay Hotel (or similar), Galway, 3 Nights
- Quality En-suite B&B on Inis Oírr, Aran Islands 2 nights, Galway 2 Nights
- Lake Hotel (or similar), Killarney, 2 Nights
- Camden Court Hotel (or similar), Dublin, 1 Night

Itinerary

Important Note: Attractions, Workshops and Demonstrations May Change According to Availability and Scheduling

Day 1: Dublin Sightseeing

Your tour begins in Dublin Airport with a transfer to your hotel (for arrivals prior to 11am). At 1pm, meet at Hotel reception and begin your sightseeing with a panoramic tour of Dublin City. Visit the National Museum of Decorative Arts & History where you catch a glimpse of how Irish people in the past lived. Recreated rooms show typical furniture styles from the 17th century through to the high style of the 19th century. Of particular interest to you may be the textile exhibition 'The Way We Wore' which displays typical Irish clothing and jewellery worn from the 1760s onwards. After your visit, the remainder of the day will be free for you to explore the city at your leisure before meeting back at the hotel for your welcome dinner. Overnight in Dublin, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 2: Winnie's Craft Café, Constant Knitter & Travel to Galway

Another day in Dublin starts with a trip to the Constant Knitter where you will meet a local craftsperson for a demonstration and informal chat about their craft topic. After your visit, travel the short distance to Winnie's Craft Cafe, an oasis of calm and colour for those interested in

knitting, crochet and beading. Here we meet resident knitting teacher Pauline Gallagher who will give you a short knitting with wire workshop. All materials will be provided and by the end of the class you should have knit yourself a nice wire leaf pendant which you can take home with you as a souvenir of your time here in Ireland! The craft shop, which stocks a wide range of yarns, books, patterns and accessories, will also be open. After lunch (included) board your touring coach and travel to Tullamore D.E.W. Heritage Centre where you will discover how Daniel E. Williams went from stable boy to distillery manager to creating the whiskey which still bears his initials today. After sampling some of this fine whiskey continue to the vibrant city of Galway and check into your hotel. Overnight in Galway, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 3: Craft in Connemara

Set off for a tour of Connemara this morning. Situated on the most Westerly part of Ireland, Connemara is one of the most beautiful unspoilt landscapes around. Your first stop will be the Spiddal Craft & Design Centre where you will enjoy a demonstration of traditional Irish willow basket weaving techniques and an introduction to modern basket designs with traditional basket maker, Ciaran Hogan. You might also enjoy visiting other craftspeople at the centre including traditional hand weaver, Máire Ní Thaidhg. Stop also at the famous Kylemore Abbey which is one of the most visited attractions in Ireland. Thousands visit Kylemore to see the outstanding Abbey and to experience the natural beauty of Kylemore's Woodland and Lakeshore walks and Victorian walled garden. Finally visit Glen Keen Farm where you will enjoy a sheep herding demonstration followed by home baked scones and tea or coffee. Return to Galway where the evening is your own. You might decide to head into town and catch a traditional Irish Music session in any one of Galway's many pubs or simply relax in your hotel. Overnight in Galway, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 4: Museum of Country Life & Anne O'Maille Workshop

This morning travel to Castlebar where you will visit the National Museum of Country Life, an essential stop on any craft tour of Ireland. This fascinating museum houses collections of domestic goods, once used as part of daily life from 1850 to 1950. Exhibits and an informative movie explain how Irish people made a living from the soil before the machine age. After ample time to enjoy this extensive museum and grounds, travel back to Galway and enjoy an intensive Knitting Workshop with one of Ireland's best known Aran knitters and designers, Mrs. Anne O'Maille of Ó'Máilles of Galway. Established in 1938, this shop became famous in the 1950s for outfitting the entire cast of the film *The Quiet Man* and has done a fabulous business ever since in Irish tweeds, knitwear, and Aran knits. Overnight in Galway, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 5: Inis Oírr (Inisheer), Aran Islands

Depart your hotel in time to get the early morning flight or ferry (dependent on weather) to Inis Oírr (Inisheer), one of the famous Aran Islands located at the mouth of Galway Bay off the west coast of Ireland. On arrival you will be collected by your Aran Island Knitting Instructor Una McDonough and taken to the Café Una where you will be welcomed with tea or coffee and scones. Enjoy a Knitting Workshop where you will learn traditional methods and stitches the Aran Island way. In your class you will learn the Sharry Chain Link Stitch. The Sharry family, like many of the island families, has a long standing connection with the sea and the women of the family celebrate that connection in their choice of stitches when they knit traditional Aran sweaters. After some time to enjoy the Art Exhibition at the centre take a guided tour of the Island. This afternoon check into your B&B accommodation with time to relax and get to know your hosts. Your hosts can cater for most dietary needs, so please be sure to let us know of any special requirements in advance of travel. You will be collected this evening and taken to a local restaurant for a sumptuous meal. Overnight Inis Oírr, Lunch, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 6: Another day and night on Inis Oírr (Inisheer)!

Today we make bread! The making of homemade soda bread was once a common sight in all Irish kitchens. There are now many variances in the recipes but traditionally Irish soda bread was made from just four main ingredients: flour, buttermilk, bicarbonate of soda and salt. From these humble beginnings, Irish soda bread has come to be known worldwide as a celebrated symbol of Irish cuisine. After lunch enjoy a St Bridget's Cross Making Workshop & learn about "Brideog", a doll traditionally fashioned out of straw and dressed in white usually First Holy Communion dress and veil. This evening return to your B&B accommodation and after having some time to relax, you will be collected and taken for another delicious meal. Overnight Inis Oírr, Lunch, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast Included.

Day 7: Aran Islands to Killarney

Check out of your accommodation after breakfast and take the early morning ferry directly to Doolin in County Clare. Take a scenic drive around Clare to the Cliffs of Moher to admire the astonishing views. Travel onward to Kerry visiting Kerry Woollen Mills along the way. This 17th century establishment has been crafting fine fabrics and yarn from wool for over 300 years and on your tour you will see truly skilled craftspeople at work. Afterwards, check into your hotel in Killarney where the remainder of the day until dinner will be free for personal sightseeing. Overnight in Killarney, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast Included.

Day 8: Ring of Kerry & Carol Feller Knitting Workshop

After breakfast enjoy a Knitting Workshop with Carol Feller, popular Irish knitter and author of the book Contemporary Irish Knits. After lunch (included) take the Ring of Kerry Tour. The road

winds between the Macgillicuddy's Reeks, Ireland's highest mountains, and the varied Atlantic coast. You will be amazed at the breath-taking views and you will stop for photos at the most dramatic scenes. On the return pass through the colourful village of Sneem and pause at Moll's Gap to view the Three Lakes of Killarney before returning to Killarney. Overnight in Killarney, Bed & Breakfast Included.

Day 9: Blarney Castle, Hedgehog Fibres & Return to Dublin

Check out of your accommodation and travel Cork to visit Blarney Castle & Woollen Mills Store. Cormac McCarthy, a great Irish chieftain constructed Blarney Castle nearly 600 years ago and since then this remarkable fortress and its 'stone of eloquence' has been attracting thousands of curious visitors every year. Legend has it that if you kiss the stone you will never be lost for words and have as the Irish say, 'the gift of the gab'. Built in 1823, Blarney Woollen Mills was originally known as Mahoney's Mills and provided valuable employment to the people of Blarney and nearby areas. Today Blarney Woollen Mills is Ireland's largest Irish Gift & Craft Store. Next travel to Hedgehog Fibres, an Irish artisan yarn and fibre dyeing studio located in Co. Cork. The studio was started by Beata Jezek after she saw a gap in the market for soft yarns in vibrant colours. Staff will be on hand to talk to you about the yarn and you may purchase some if you wish before we move on. Travel onward to Dublin stopping along the way for lunch (included). On arrival in Dublin the remainder of the afternoon is free for your own personal sightseeing. This evening enjoy a farewell dinner and say your goodbyes to new friends. Overnight in Dublin Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 10: Tour Ends

After your final Irish breakfast depart the hotel for Dublin airport arriving in time to complete check-in formalities and that last minute duty free shopping.

Prices

13th May 2018: €2199 per person sharing/€499 supplement if single room required

12th August 2018: €2359 per person sharing/€549 supplement if single room required

23rd September 2018: €2199 per person sharing/€499 supplement if single room required

Please note we charge in Euro

Booking Requirements & Cancellation Information

A deposit of 20% of the total tour price is required to hold your booking. The balance of the tour is due 60 days before arrival and can be made in instalment payments on request.

Cancellation Policy:

- 4 weeks or longer prior to start date deposit will be forfeit and non-refundable.
- 4 weeks - 2 weeks prior to start date 50% is forfeit
- 2 weeks or less prior to start date 100% of all money paid is forfeit

Postponements:

Should you wish to change your tour to one of our other tours or to a different date, an amendment fee of €250 per person will apply. Within 4 weeks cancellation fees will apply.