



10 Night Aran Islands, Donegal & Causeway Coast Knitting Tour

Tour Dates:

4th April 2020

11th July 2020

12th September 2020

Tour Overview

Begin your knitting tour of Ireland in Dublin where you will experience historic Trinity College Library and the Book of Kells before you visit the Constant Knitter to meet a local craftsperson for a short demonstration and informal chat. On your second day in Dublin you will meet Lisa Sisk for a knitting workshop following the Moebius Knitting technique. Travel to Inis Mor, the largest of the Aran Islands for a cultural and traditional knitting and crafts experience with Una McDonagh. Continue to County Mayo and the Museum of Country Life where you will meet Ciara Ní Reachtnín for another workshop. The Northern part of your tour includes Studio Donegal, a hand-weaving and clothing manufacturing business, the amazing Slieve League Cliffs, Glencolmcille Folk Village and a workshop with Irish Designer Edel MacBride. The next day discover Ireland's famous Causeway Coast, visiting the Giant's Causeway and Dunluce Castle. See Belfast City and explore the famous Titanic Belfast visitor experience as well as a chance to see Mourne Alpacas outside the city. Before you return to Dublin for your final overnight, enjoy a spinning and tapestry workshop with Aine Dunne and pay a visit to Thomas Ferguson Linen Factory for a guided tour.

Included in This Tour

- Transfers on arrival and departure by private coach (for arrivals prior to 11am on tour start date and departures on tour end date)
- Sightseeing as per itinerary in a luxury coach with an experienced driver and accredited guide
- Accommodation in rooms with private facilities for 10 nights
- Irish breakfast daily
- 5 hotel table d'hote dinners
- 5 sit down lunches
- 1 Farewell Dinner
- Entrance to the following attractions: Titanic Belfast, Giant's Causeway, Dunluce Castle, Slieve League Cliffs, Dún Aonghasa, Tullamore DEW Distillery, Guinness Storehouse, Trinity Library and the Book of Kells.
- Return ferry to Inis Mór, Aran Islands
- Inis Mór Guided Tour
- Mourne Alpaca Farm Visit
- Museum of Country Life
- Studio Donegal Weaving Demonstration

Workshops/Knitting Activities Included in This Tour

- Spinning & Tapestry Workshop with Aine Dunne
- Knitting Workshop with Edel MacBride from Knitfield
- Knitting Workshop with Ciara Ní Reachtnín
- Knitting Workshop with Lisa Sisk from This is Knit
- Meeting with local designer at the Constant Knitter

Overnights for this Tour

- Camden Court Hotel or similar, Dublin, 2 Nights
- Aran Islands Hotel, Inis Mor, 2 Nights
- Sligo Park Hotel, Sligo, 1 Night (September date Yeat's Country Hotel, Sligo)
- Mill Park, Donegal, 2 Nights
- Tara Lodge Hotel or similar, Belfast, 2 Nights
- Camden Court Hotel or similar, Dublin, 1 Night

Optional Pre Night Package

Optional pre-night packages available should you wish to spend a night or two extra in Dublin before the tour starts, please see pricing section for details.

Itinerary

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

Day 1: Dublin Sightseeing

Begin your knitting tour of Ireland with a transfer to your hotel (for arrivals prior to 11am). At 1pm enjoy a visit to Trinity College Library and the Book of Kells, followed by a chance to explore nearby iconic Grafton Street. Visit the Constant Knitter where you will meet a local craftsperson for a demonstration and informal chat about their craft topic. The remainder of the evening 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: This is Knit Workshop & Guinness Storehouse

This morning meet Lisa from 'This is Knit' for a workshop which includes an informative talk on the developments in the Irish Hand Knitting scene over the past ten years as well as a two hour 'Moebius Knitting' workshop following the 'Glenties Cowl' pattern, designed by Lisa Sisk. For this class you will be using Soft Donegal yarn from the mills of Studio Donegal in Kilcar. After your workshop we will stop at Dublin's Guinness Storehouse for a guided tour. Located in the heart of the iconic St. James's Gate Brewery in Dublin, this production site has been home to the Guinness Brewery since 1759, when Arthur Guinness signed a 9000 year lease! This evening dinner is not included so that you can sample one of Dublin's many restaurants and bars at your leisure. Overnight in Dublin, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 3: Travel to Aran Islands & Tullamore D.E.W.

After a leisurely breakfast, 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. There will be time for some lunch before continuing to Rossaveal in County Galway for your ferry to Inis Mór (Also spelled Inishmore), the largest of the three Aran Islands. On arrival, meet with Aran Island locals for an introduction to Aran life with special attention to history of Dun Aonghasa in preparation for your visit the next day. Dinner will be served at the hotel accompanied by your hosts and after, enjoy a quick traditional Irish dancing lesson or if your tired feet are not up to the task, you can watch the instructor display some simple steps! Overnight on Inis Mor (Inishmore), Dinner, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 4: Another Day & Night on Inis Mór!

This morning, enjoy a Knitting Workshop where you will learn traditional methods and stitches the Aran Island way. Then it's off for a tour of Inis Mór with your local guide. The island has more than 50 different monuments of Christian and pre Christian history and you will pay a visit to the impressive fort of Dún Aonghasa. The fort consists of three terraced walls surrounding an inner enclosure containing a platform on the edge of a three hundred foot high cliff. Please note that the walk to the fort is up a sharp incline and suitable footwear should be worn and is not recommended for those who may have walking difficulties. The views from it are breathtakingly spectacular. On your tour you will also visit some of the local knitwear shops that are on the island and enjoy a delicious lunch at Teach Nan Phaidi! Overnight on Inis Mor (Inishmore), Dinner, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 5: Museum of Country Life & Knitting Workshop with Ciara Ní Reachtnín

Begin your day with the early ferry back to the mainland. From there travel through Connemara to the Museum of Country Life. After lunch (included), enjoy a knitting workshop with Ciara Ní Reachtnín. During your time with Ciara you will learn how to make a shawl named after Sionann (Shannon), the river goddess. According to Irish Mythology, the River Shannon was named after a woman named Sionann who was the granddaughter of Lir, the Celtic god of the sea. In this workshop, Ciara will show you how to read charts and work the cables in the unique design as well as adding beads to the shawl". Finally travel the short distance to Sligo where you will check into your hotel. Overnight in Sligo, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 6: Travel to Donegal

Leaving Sligo we journey to Donegal on Ireland's Northwest Coast. Visit Drumcliffe Church and Graveyard and visit the grave of iconic Irish literary genius, W.B. Yeats. Found in the churchyard, his grave is marked with a simple headstone with the inscription, "cast a cold eye on life, on death, horseman, pass by." This was Yeats' self penned epitaph together with the instructions that the grave consist of "no marble, no conventional phrase". The graveyard also contains a high cross and nearby is the site of a 6th Century Columbian monastery. Next it's on to Slieve League Cliffs, one of the highest cliffs in Europe to enjoy some amazing views. After lunch (included) at the cliffs we will travel the short distance to Glencolmcille, an area famous for its wealth of traditional Irish culture, music and prehistoric settlements. Take a tour of Glencolmcille Folk Village, a collection of several small cottages, called a 'clachan', resting on a hillside that overlooks the stunning Glen Bay Beach. Designed, constructed and conserved by local people, the Folk Village is one of Ireland's longest running living-history museums. Overnight in Donegal, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast Included.

Day 7: Edel MacBride Knitting Workshop & Free time in Donegal Town

Today meet one of Ireland's finest knitwear designers, Edel MacBride, for an intensive Aran knitting workshop. Enjoy a core workshop including yarn pack, working the best of Irish moss, cable and Edel's favourite Aran stitches. Learn about Edel's techniques for working cables of all sizes without needles and working blackberry without notes. Enjoy some storytelling by Edel steeped in local knitting reality from her childhood. After your class and some lunch (not included) we head towards Donegal Yarns and Studio Donegal. Edel Macbride workshop is now followed by a visit Here at Studio Donegal we will see the process of hand-weaving from start to finish including the spinning, warping and weaving of the wool. Return to Donegal where the afternoon is free for your personal sightseeing or shopping in Donegal town. Donegal has lots of nice craft shops and Magee Tweed is well worth a visit or you may like to visit Donegal Castle which was built by the O'Donnell chieftain in the 15th century. Overnight in Donegal, Bed & Breakfast Included.

Day 8: The Causeway Coast

The Causeway Coast is rated as one of the top five road trips worldwide and when you experience it you will see why! The road meanders around a narrow strip of coastline between stunning sea views and majestic high cliffs. Visit the Giant's Causeway where around 60 million years ago, three great lava flows were laid down, cooling the basaltic plateau that makes an interesting photo opportunity today! On your journey you will also visit the remains of Dunluce Castle which is perched dramatically close to a headland that plunges directly Sea! Your day tour today ends in Belfast City where the remainder of the evening is free to check out the local bars and restaurants. Overnight in Belfast, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 9: Belfast Sightseeing, Titanic Belfast & Mourne Alpaca Farm

This morning enjoy a visit to Mourne Alpacas outside Belfast, a family managed herd of Alpaca and pedigree angora goats that produce high quality fleeces, so much so that their motto at the farm is "We breed for heat, not for meat!" Once you have been up close and cosy with the alpacas, and had a chance for plenty of photos and questions, we will move onto the fleece. While enjoying a cuppa after all your hands on with the alpacas and the fleece, you can get a chance to see, feel and purchase quality alpaca yarns and some blend yarns, in many natural colours of the alpaca and some stunning seasonal colour ranges created from natural dyes as well. Mourne Alpacas have all their fleeces processed professionally at a dedicated mill and raw fleeces are also available for purchase for anyone who is keen to take some for home spinning. Upon your return to the city, experience Titanic Belfast, one of Belfast's newest and most popular museums, built on the site of the former Harland & Wolff shipyard where the Titanic was originally constructed. Galleries reconstruct scenes from Belfast at the time of its construction, the launch, the maiden voyage, the sinking and the aftermath. This museum is extremely interactive, with technology bringing each period to life. The remainder of the evening is your own to continue to enjoy the vibrant Belfast atmosphere. Overnight in Belfast, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 10: Irish Linen Museum Lisburn & Spinning and Tapestry Workshop

Linen was an important industry in Ireland, particularly in the North of Ireland. So much so that its capital Belfast was fondly known as 'Linenopolis'! Today we will learn more about the linen industry in Northern Ireland by visiting the Linen Museum in Lisburn. On your guided tour of the museum you will learn about the collections that are housed in the old Market House, a late seventeenth century building. Leaving Belfast we travel to Drogheda to meet Aine Dunne a

tapestry weaver and artist, resident and working from the Boyne Valley. With Aine and her team, you will enjoy a Spinning & Tapestry Workshop; here you will be introduced to hand spinning sheep's wool by using a drop spindle and try your hand at weaving a sample piece on a four-sided tapestry frame loom. During your time with Aine you will gain insight into her designs, weaving methods and work schedule. Return to Dublin where this evening your final farewell dinner will be served in a local restaurant. Overnight in Dublin, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 11: End of Tour

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

4thth April 2020: €2999 per person sharing/€679 supplement if single room required

11th July 2020: €2999 per person sharing/€679 supplement if single room required

12th September 2020: €2999 per person sharing/€679 supplement if single room required

Please note we charge in Euro

Friends or family that want to come but they don't knit? We can offer a special **non knitter discount of €200** per non knitter!

Pre Tour Arrangements (Optional/Additional)

Package A

2 x Pre-Nights at Camden Court (or similar)

Arrival Transfer

2 Day Hop-On Hop-Off Sightseeing Ticket

Per person sharing one room € 349

Supplement if single room is required € 89

Package B

1 x Pre-Night at Camden Court (or similar)

Arrival Transfer

1 Day Hop-On Hop-Off Sightseeing Ticket

Per person sharing one room € 219

Supplement if single room is required € 49

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 Eur250 per person will apply. However, within 4 weeks of the tour commencement date cancellation fees will apply and postponements will not be possible.