Tour Code
IE10

ADVENTURESABROAD

IRELAND

Best of the Republic & Northern Ireland

10 days

Created on: 15 Nov, 2026

Day 1 Arrival in Dublin

Today we arrive in Dublin, Ireland's vibrant capital.

Since its Viking origins around AD 988, Dublin has welcomed diverse waves of settlers—Norse raiders, English merchants, literary giants, and revolutionaries—all leaving their mark on this storied city. Modern Dublin pulses with energy from its recent economic transformation, yet its soul remains deeply rooted in literature, music, and the art of conversation. The Georgian terraces, medieval lanes, and riverside quays create a cityscape that feels both intimate and grand.

Overnight in Dublin

Included Meal(s): Dinner

Day 2 Discovering Dublin: City Touring

Dublin's warmth extends beyond its temperate climate—it's in the pub banter, the unhurried pace, and the genuine welcome that has drawn writers and dreamers for centuries.

This morning we delve into Ireland's complex history at Glasnevin Cemetery, one of Europe's most significant burial grounds. As we drive through Dublin, our guide introduces the city—the River Liffey, government buildings, Victorian pub facades, and the Botanical Gardens. At Glasnevin, we walk among the graves of Ireland's heroes and rebels: Michael Collins, Roger Casement, Charles Stewart Parnell, and Countess Markievicz. Their stories unfold—revolution, sacrifice, and the long struggle for independence. We ascend the O'Connell Tower for sweeping views across Dublin to the Irish Sea.

Our panoramic city tour continues through Dublin's architectural treasures. We pass Merrion Square with its Oscar Wilde memorial, Gothic St. Patrick's Cathedral, the President's House, and vast Phoenix Park. At Trinity College, we admire Ireland's most prestigious university before exploring Dublin Castle's courtyard. We see the Molly Malone statue, stroll Grafton Street, and experience Temple Bar's artistic energy.

This evening we gather at the Merry Ploughboy, a pub with two centuries of history. Over a three-course dinner, we're treated to traditional Irish music and step dancing by championship-level performers—the rhythmic thunder of feet on wood, soaring fiddle and tin whistle, the infectious energy of a culture that celebrates life through song and dance.

* We do not include a full visit of Trinity College and the Book of Kells, as it takes a considerable time investment, making it impractical for a busy city tour with many other things to see and do. A popular option for including this location in your itinerary is to add an extra hotel night/free day during which to accomplish this visit. For more info please visit: www.visittrinity.ie/book-of-kells-experience/

Overnight in Dublin.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 3 Dublin - Rock of Cashel - Distillery Experience - Cork

We depart Dublin this morning, journeying south through Ireland's patchwork countryside to County Tipperary.

The Rock of Cashel rises dramatically from the Golden Vale—a limestone outcrop crowned with Ireland's most impressive cluster of medieval buildings. This was the seat of Munster's kings for centuries, and legend claims St. Patrick himself climbed these heights to convert King Aenghus to Christianity. In 978, the legendary Brian Boru was crowned High King here, establishing Cashel as his power center. We explore the remarkable complex: a 12th-century round tower standing sentinel, the ornate Romanesque chapel with its intricate carvings, and the roofless Gothic cathedral whose stone walls frame the sky. Below, often overlooked by visitors, sits Hore Abbey—Ireland's last medieval Cistercian monastery, its weathered stones a short walk from the main site.

We continue to the Midleton Distillery Experience, an Irish whiskey museum and visitor centre. During our tour, we learn about the history of Jameson Whiskey and the distillery that operated here between 1825 and 1975. We see the old kilns, mills, maltings, water wheel, still house, cooperage and warehouse. Our visit includes a whisky tasting, sampling a dram of Jameson, Scotch, and American whiskey to become a "Qualified Whisky Taster"—a perfect introduction to Irish whiskey-making traditions.
We end our day in Cork, Ireland's second city.
Overnight in Cork

* For guests who may be combining our Ireland and Scotland programs into one trip, you'll have the unique opportunity to experience both Irish and Scottish whisky-making traditions firsthand and be able to compare the distinct characteristics, production methods, and flavours of both countries' national spirits.

Overnight in Cork.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 4 Cork - The Ring of Kerry - Killarney

A panoramic tour introduces us to Cork this morning--Victorian architecture, colourful shop fronts, and the cultural vibrancy of a city proud of its rebel spirit.

Then westward to one of the world's legendary drives: the Ring of Kerry. This peninsula route captures everything wild and wonderful about Ireland—Atlantic waves crashing against ancient cliffs, golden strands of beach, whitewashed villages tucked into hillsides, emerald pastures divided by stone walls, dark peat bogs, and mountains that brood or shine depending on the ever-changing light.

We begin in Killorglin, famous for the Puck Fair where a wild goat is crowned king each August. Skirting the Kerry coast, we stop frequently for photographs. At Waterville, once favoured by Charlie Chaplin, we gaze toward the Skellig Rocks--those jagged peaks where medieval monks built a monastery at the edge of the known world. In colourful Sneem, painted houses create perfect contrast to the wild landscape.

We continue to Killarney National Park with its stunning vistas of mountain and lake. Our circular drive returns us to Killarney, often voted Ireland's most beautiful town.

Overnight in Killarney.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 5 The Gap of Dunloe & Lakes of Killarney Adventure

Today belongs to one of Ireland's most enchanting experiences—a journey through the Gap of Dunloe and across Killarney's legendary lakes.

We meet our local guide at medieval Ross Castle before transferring to the foothills of Ireland's highest mountain range. Here we board traditional "pony and trap" carts for a seven-mile journey through the Gap of Dunloe—a glacial valley of almost mythical beauty. Our drivers guide us through this dramatic cleft carved by ice age glaciers. Towering mountains rise on either side, their slopes dotted with grazing sheep.

We cross ancient stone bridges, pass mirror-still loughs, and traverse the Black Valley—one of Ireland's most isolated corners. At Lord Brandon's Cottage, we break for lunch before boarding traditional open-top boats for a fourteen-mile voyage through all three Lakes of Killarney.

Our boatmen navigate these waters, pointing out Innisfallen Island, Bricin Bridge, Colleen Bawn Rock, Torc Mountain, Old Weir Bridge, and the Meeting of the Waters. The journey brings us to Ross Castle where we explore this magnificently restored 15th-century tower house.

Overnight in Killarney.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 6 Killarney - the Cliffs of Moher - Galway

Departing Killarney, we travel north toward one of Ireland's most iconic natural wonders.

The Cliffs of Moher—Aillte an Mhothair in Irish, meaning "cliffs of the ruined fort"—were formed over 300 million years ago. These dramatic ramparts rise 700 feet at their highest point, presenting a sheer face to the relentless Atlantic. But the true perspective comes from the water itself.

At Doolin harbor, we board our vessel for an hour-long cruise beneath these towering cliffs. As we motor away from shore, the full majesty reveals itself—layer upon layer of sedimentary rock, sea stacks rising like ancient monuments, caves carved by millennia of wave action, and seabirds wheeling: puffins, guillemots, razorbills, and kittiwakes. We pass beneath O'Brien's Tower and see the great sea stack An Bhreannan Mór and the cave featured in Harry Potter. The scale from water level is overwhelming—these cliffs command respect, ancient and immovable against the ocean's fury.

We continue to Galway, one of Europe's fastest-growing cities yet somehow retaining the warmth and accessibility of a small Irish town.

Overnight in Galway

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 7 Galway Food Trail - Slieve League Cliffs, Ireland - Londonderry/Derry, Northern Ireland

This morning we meet a local food enthusiast for a guided tour through Galway's culinary landscape. The famous Galway Market pulses with energy—fishmongers displaying the morning's catch, artisan cheese makers offering samples, bakers pulling fresh loaves from ovens. We visit award-winning restaurants and cafes, sampling 7-8 different treats: perhaps fresh oysters from Galway Bay, farmhouse cheeses, delicate sushi, crab, buttery doughnuts, strawberry tarts, craft beers. Our guide shares stories of Galway's food renaissance, and we leave with a goodie bag of local treats.

Leaving Galway behind, we journey north to County Donegal and the Slieve League Cliffs—Sliabh Liag in Irish. These sea cliffs rise nearly three times higher than the Cliffs of Moher, ranking among Europe's highest coastal precipices. The Atlantic stretches to the horizon, the rugged Donegal landscape spreads in all directions, and racing clouds create an ever-changing play of light. We walk in the footsteps of ancient pilgrims, exploring ruins of an early Christian monastic site—a chapel and beehive huts perched on these wild heights.

We continue to Londonderry/Derry in Northern Ireland, arriving late afternoon.

Overnight in London/Derry (dinner on your own this evening).

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Lunch

Day 8 Derry Touring - The Giant's Causeway - Belfast

Before we depart for the Antrim Coast, we take time this morning to explore one of Ireland's most compelling cities on foot.

Derry — or Londonderry, depending on which tradition you're standing in — wears its history openly. We walk the 17th-century city walls, among the best preserved in Europe, for sweeping views over the Bogside and across to the Donegal hills. Below us, the famous "Free Derry Corner" mural marks the entrance to a neighbourhood that became the epicentre of the civil rights movement in the late 1960s. Our walk takes in the Guildhall, the Peace Bridge spanning the River Foyle, and the broader story of a city that has navigated centuries of conflict and division to arrive at something that feels, today, genuinely hopeful.

Leaving Derry, we embark on one of Northern Ireland's most spectacular journeys—the Causeway Coastal Route.

The Giant's Causeway, Northern Ireland's only UNESCO World Heritage Site, was once attributed to the legendary giant Finn MacCool. Science offers a different story—volcanic eruptions 60 million years ago created these approximately 40,000 interlocking basalt columns, some reaching over 40 feet high. The result is otherworldly: perfectly hexagonal pillars that seem too geometrically precise to be natural, rising from the sea and climbing the cliff face.

We continue to Ballycastle, where we pause for lunch. Our final stop brings us to Carrickfergus Castle, 12th century Norman castle -- one of the best-preserved medieval structures in Northern Ireland.

We arrive in Belfast in late afternoon.

Overnight in Belfast.

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 9 Belfast Discovery

This morning our comprehensive coach tour reveals Belfast's many faces. We explore the elegant Queen's Quarter, the Cathedral Quarter with its cobbled streets, and the Titanic Quarter where the famous ship was built. Belfast City Hall dominates the city center. We drive through various neighborhoods, seeing political murals that chronicle the city's past. Our guide traces Belfast's evolution from a 17th-century settlement to one of Britain's most important ports and industrial centers.

Next we walk the Maritime Mile, hearing accounts of life in the Harland & Wolff shipyard during Titanic's construction. We see the original slipway where Titanic was built, the vast dry dock, the Administration Building, and the SS Nomadic—Titanic's tender ship.

Finally, we visit the award-winning Titanic Belfast. Through nine interactive galleries, we experience the story of RMS Titanic from conception to construction to catastrophe—the sights, sounds, and even smells of the shipyard, the opulence of first-class accommodations, the tragedy of the sinking, and the lasting impact.

Overnight in Belfast

Included Meal(s): Breakfast and Dinner

Day 10 Departure

Departure from Belfast.

SLAN ABHAILE!!

Included Meal(s): Breakfast