

Go South Tour Itinerary

Monday: Arrival in Dublin, Ireland

Welcome to Ireland! You arrive in Dublin and check in to your hotel in the heart of the city center.

If you have time, check out some of the excellent tours of the city and sample Dublin's unique bars and restaurants. Then off to bed with you for a good night's sleep, for tomorrow begins what we hope will be one of your best experiences yielding a lifetime of happy memories!

Tuesday: Day 1 – Dublin to Dungarvan

Highlights: 8th Century Celtic High Cross, Medieval Norman Monastery, 6,000 year-old Ancient Tomb, Harbor Town of Dungarvan

Meet your guide and your trip participants and begin your exciting travels in Ireland. Leaving Dublin and heading south, you'll discover an incredible 17-foot Celtic High Cross, standing watch since the 8th Century. High crosses like this one and their intricately carved designs have inspired the faithful through the ages and became integral to Irish culture, history and art.

You'll then journey further south to one of the largest medieval churches in Ireland. Built in the 13th Century, this beautifully restored Cistercian Monastery was founded by the Normans at one of the most strategic points in the country along the River Barrow. This serene waterway has enabled passage inland for thousand of years and is still used today by colorful barges and river cruisers.

Lost among a maze of small farm roads in bucolic southern County Kilkenny, you'll find a 6,000 year-old megalithic tomb! This precariously, balanced structure will boggle your mind as to how the Stone Age Irish erected such large stones at this impressive site.

Onto County Waterford where your overnight stop is the lovely harbor town of Dungarvan on Ireland's southern Atlantic shore. Your beautiful Georgian guesthouse is owned and operated by one of Ireland's leading chefs and around the corner is his renowned restaurant. The night is yours to relax, eat, drink, and be merry!

Wednesday: Day 2 – Dungarvan to Schull

Highlights: 9th Century Round Tower, Kinsale, Ancient Stone Circle, Coastal Town of Schull

Amazing views as you travel along the scenic southern coast to see Ireland's finest example of a medieval Round Tower. Multi-story stone towers like this were built over a thousand years ago by pious monks and endured a long and turbulent history.

Enjoy free time and a lunch break in the town of Kinsale. Known for its excellent cafes, you'll have fun meandering streets of colorful stores, and taking in its beautiful harbor.

Continuing on, you find a tranquil Stone Circle with a mystifying solar alignment. This secluded site was of great importance to the early Irish who aligned its axis to the setting sun of the winter solstice.

You then head to your final stop for the night, the fantastic town of Schull on the glorious Mizen Peninsula. Enjoy this wonderful small town, stroll along the Atlantic coast or check out one of the local pubs. With luck, there'll be traditional Irish music in Hackett's Pub just a short stroll from your comfortable hotel.

Thursday: Day 3 – Schull to Kenmare

Highlights: Mizen Head Signal Station, Bantry, The Beara Peninsula, Colorful Town of Kenmare

A magnificent day as you travel through some of the most visually stunning parts of Ireland. First, you head to the Mizen Head Signal Station perched on Ireland's most southerly point. Stroll this rugged headland, learn about lighthouses along the coast, and visit the keeper's quarters via a beautiful arched bridge spanning a deep ravine.

Moving northwards leads you to the town of Bantry. Wander its old streets and gaze upon a statue of 6th Century Saint Brendan, possibly the first European to find America! As you leave, you'll have fine views of the beautiful bay and can spot palm trees in this unusually tropical region.

You then follow an amazing route through the Beara Peninsula over countless switchbacks and a high mountain pass for inspiring views and down to your overnight town of Kenmare. This magical Kerry town is full of quaint shops, lively bars, and great traditional Irish music, all close to your beautiful local B&B.

Friday: Day 4 – Kenmare to Dingle

Highlights: Killarney National Park, Ross Castle, Sleah Head Drive, Gallarus Oratory, Lively Dingle Town

Saying goodbye to Kenmare, your route takes you to the MacGillycuddy's Reeks, the largest mountains in Ireland, and home to the spectacular Killarney National Park. A photographer's dream...you may well wish for an extra pair of eyes! You'll make your way over the pass at Moll's Gap and work your way down by Killarney's captivating lakes, waterfalls, and panoramic vistas.

Your next stop is a tour of the fantastic 15th Century Ross Castle, nestled in the heart of Killarney National Park. The ancestral home of the O'Donoghue Clan stands proud on the edge of beautiful Lough Leane.

The views keep coming along coastal roads and sandy beaches flanked by green hills as you make your way to the Dingle Peninsula. You take a trip around the dramatic landscape of the Sleah Headland. This Gaeltacht (or Irish speaking) area is rich in archeological sites including the Gallarus Oratory and is Ireland's most westerly shore.

You'll then make your way back to Dingle town. This charismatic fishing town is filled with colorful buildings and many fine places to dine or shop. Have fun discovering pubs that double as hardware or shoe stores and you'll be staying for two nights in the town's best boutique guesthouse!

Saturday: Day 5 – Free Day in Dingle

There are many interesting things to do such as shopping, biking, golfing, fishing, horseback riding, and hill walking. Take a walk to see Dingle's wild mascot, "Fungi the Dolphin" who is almost always found in the mouth of the harbor making new friends and showing off.

Or you could find a nice bar or coffee shop to while away the hours and strike up a conversation with some of the friendly characters to be found in Dingle. Enjoy another wonderful night in this enchanting town!

Sunday: Day 6 – Dingle to Ballyvaughan

Highlights: River Shannon, Cliffs of Moher, The Burren, Irish Tower House Castle, Town of Ballyvaughan

You depart Dingle heading over the Slieve Mish Mountains through northern County Kerry and on to Ireland's longest river, the Shannon. This ancient river has moved trade for thousands of years and boarding a ferry, you'll feel its gentle flow and cross to the geological wonders of County Clare.

Stopping in seaside towns, where surfers and horses stride grand beaches, you'll head north to one of the world's most spectacular sights, the Cliffs of Moher. Looming over 700 feet above the smashing force of the Atlantic Ocean, these sheer and majestic cliffs are simply not to be missed!

From the cliffs, you'll pass north to the amazing Burren landscape, designated a Special Area of Conservation. Often likened to lunar rock, the Burren's large and seemingly barren area is remarkably full of life. Once a seabed of carboniferous limestone, it rose up and eroded over thousands of years to form a vast array of cracks and fissures. These provide hidden shelter for a unique range of flora, with Alpine and Arctic plants living alongside Mediterranean plants.

You'll then break further from the road down a forgotten country lane to discover an Irish Tower House Castle hidden along the shores of the Atlantic. Moving north, you'll arrive at the small town of Ballyvaughan. Set amongst the Burren's rocky rolling hills, this harbor town is your home for the night. Try their renowned local chowder or sample one of the many varieties of whiskey available at O'Loclainn's pub.

Monday: Day 7 – Ballyvaughan to Dublin

Highlights: Birr Castle Gardens, 19th Century Telescope, Ireland's Oldest Whiskey Distillery, Dublin

Start your day meandering through the Burren hills and go through the Slieve Aughty mountains to the fantastic Birr Castle Demesne. Explore the estate's formal gardens, terraces, and the tallest box hedges in the world. While there, you'll be amazed to discover the immense Victorian telescope, Leviathan. For over 70 years it was the world's largest reflecting telescope, the Hubble of its day with many major discoveries!

You have time to linger on the Birr Castle grounds, its science center, and café or stroll around this lovely town's fine selection of shops, bars, and restaurants.

After lunch your trip takes you to Ireland's oldest licensed whiskey distillery. You'll take a fascinating tour through over 250 years of production, see its innovative old workings, and get a chance to sample their fine whiskey from the new wing.

You'll then head back to Dublin and your last night in the Emerald Isle. Enjoy a meal in one of the many fine restaurants, savor the final hours of your Go South tour, and cherish a lifetime of incredible memories!

Slán Beo!! Irish for "Goodbye, live life!"

While it is our intention to adhere to the route described above, there is a certain amount of flexibility built into the itinerary and on occasion, it may be necessary, or desirable, to make alterations. The information in the itinerary has been compiled with care and is provided in good faith. However, it is subject to change, and does not form part of the contract between the client and Inroads Ireland.

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