

Cycling Safaris

COPPER COAST

Supported Tour 2017

Guide in a van | 284 km | 8 days/7 nights



The Copper Coast tour blends some of Ireland's best heritage sights with a relatively undiscovered but still stunning coastline. This tour focuses on what is locally known as the "Sunny South East", the Irish Med if you will!!

The tour starts and finishes in the beautiful city of Kilkenny before heading south to the coast. Kilkenny is perhaps the most attractive Irish city. It is dominated by a spectacular castle on a bend in the river Nore and has a wealth of historic buildings knitted together by narrow cobbled streets boasting many lively pubs and fine restaurants.

Leaving Kilkenny behind, the cycle brings you towards the coast where our first stop is New Ross, whose famine ship gives a haunting reminder of a dark chapter in Irish history. Some more recent history can be experienced at the Kennedy Visitor centre before a quaint ferry will bring us across Waterford Harbour to stop at the truly special place of Dunmore East. Here there are lovely beaches and magnificent views to enjoy. The Copper Coast is a spectacular cycle where the road twists along cliffs and then plunges into and out of coves. The picturesque seaside town of Dungarvan is where we take our rest day, before heading inland to the Rock of Cashel. This is one of Ireland's most spectacular archaeological sites, standing proudly atop a limestone hill dominating the surrounding countryside. The nearby Bru Boru Heritage and Cultural centre provides an interesting insight into Irish traditional music. Some quiet country roads with lovely views will then bring us back to Kilkenny.

TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 SATURDAY

ARRIVE IN KILKENNY

The cycling safari starts with a meeting of the group at 6:30pm in the city of Kilkenny. After an introductory talk from the guide, an evening meal is organised in nearby pubs, while your luggage is transported to our guesthouse(s).

If you get there early you can leave your luggage with the hotel reception and explore this beautiful medieval city with its impressive castle. . There are also lots of bars, cafes, restaurants and shops to wander around.



DAY 2 SUNDAY**KILKENNY TO NEW ROSS****28 MILES/ 45KMS**

The first day of our cycle takes us south on quiet backroads. We pass Mount Juliet, one of Irelands most prestigious golf courses en route to Jerpoint Abbey. You have a chance to visit this 12th Century ruined Abbey before we stop off for lunch in Thomastown.

The afternoon cycle takes us further south on our journey to New Ross, a lovely town on the River Barrow. Local merchants sailed their own ships back and forth to the colonies often carrying Irish emigrants. A replica of one of those ships, the Dunbrody (www.dunbrody.com) is now berthed on the quay in New Ross and offers visitors to the ship an insight into life as a passenger during the late 19th century.

DAY 3 MONDAY**NEW ROSS TO DUNMORE EAST****35 MILES / 57KMS**

The morning starts on quiet roads, cycling further south, until we hit the South Coast of Ireland en route to the seaside village of Duncannon for lunch.

That afternoon we keep to the coast as much as possible, we take a short ferry ride across Passage East, that brings us ever closer to the beautiful seaside town and fishing port of Dunmore East where we spend the night.

**DAY 4 TUESDAY****DUNMORE EAST TO DUNGARVAN****35 MILES / 57KMS**

Today's cycle brings us along the beautiful Copper Coast, and inspiration for this tour. A stunning section of the Irish Coastline, it rolls up and down along an unspoilt shoreline. Although hilly in sections all climbs are worth the literally breathtaking views.

The last section of the cycle is on one of the few dedicated cycle paths in the area. Our nights destination is the attractive town of Dungarvan where we are spending two nights.

DAY 5 WEDNESDAY**REST DAY IN DUNGARVAN**

A chance to relax in this seaside town. There is an attractive harbour area with restaurants where you can relax and watch the world go by. There is a golf course nearby if you fancy something different.

You can visit Waterford Country Museum, or even download an app onto your phone and to discover the history of the town explore some of the historic landmarks. This easy to use audio tour features contemporary accounts from soldiers, travellers and writers from times past!

**DAY 6 THURSDAY****DUNGARVAN TO CAHIR****30 MILES / 51KMS**

As we leave Dungarvan the cycle takes us on some very quiet and remote roads between the Knockmealdown and Comeragh mountains.

We then follow the river Suir along its valley to the unique Swiss cottage, designed by the regency architect John Nash. From here it is just a few more gentle kms to the delightful town of Cahir, home to one of the largest and best preserved castles in Ireland.

DAY 7 FRIDAY

CAHIR TO CASHEL/KILKENNY

16 MILES / 25 KMS

The terrain gently undulates as we make our way towards the town of Cashel. Cashel is home to the iconic Rock of Cashel, the ruined castle and traditional seat of the Great Munster Kings. One of the more spectacular tourist attractions in Ireland and one of the most visited, indeed it was one of the few places outside Dublin the Queen of England visited on her trip to Ireland in 2011! www.heritageireland.ie/en/south-east/rockofcashel



We keep the last day cycle short to give you a chance to visit this attraction before taking a short transfer back to the city of Kilkenny, where we have a final night together amongst the Medieval streets. An option for those not wishing to visit the Rock of Cashel is to cycle into the Glen of Aherlow (64km).

There are a number of hills on this route but you have all day to do the cycling. With the exception of the roads in and out of the larger towns, the traffic on the route should be quite light. You should however cycle carefully at all times, especially when going downhill or during any rain showers.

2017 TOUR DATES

July 8

2017 TOUR PRICE

- € 810.00 per person sharing
- € 245.00 single occupancy

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- Seven nights' accommodation with full Irish breakfast
- One evening meal
- 24 speed touring bike with a pannier bag
- Route maps and details
- Luggage transfer each day
- Guide in a back up van
- The Passage East ferry is not included in the tour price and is €2.00

Meal expenses

All breakfasts are included in the tour price. Clients buy their own lunches and 6 dinners throughout the trip. You should budget between €10 and €15 for lunch each day and an evening meal each night costing somewhere between €20 and €30.

Price of other extras (these are only approximate prices and will vary from region to region)

Coffee/tea	€2.00	Glass of Beer	€2.80 (this is half a pint!)
Soft drink	€2.00	Pint of Beer	€4.80 (this is a full pint!)
Bottle of water	€1.70	bottle of wine	€18.00

Optional Expenses

Visit to Jerpoint Abbey – no charge -	(www.heritageireland.ie/en/south-east/jerpointabbey)
Visit to Dunbrody	(www.dunbrody.com)
Visit the Rock of Cashel	(www.heritageireland.ie/en/south-east/rockofcashel)
Visit to Bru Boro Centre Cashel	(www.bruboru.ie)
Visit to Kilkenny Castle	(www.kilkennycastle.ie)

Are there facilities to change money?

There are banks and cashpoint machines in Kilkenny, Dungarvan, Cashel. Credit cards are also widely accepted.

GROUP, GUIDE AND BACK UP SERVICE

This is not a difficult route however we would recommend that you do try to do some cycling before the tour in order to make your week more enjoyable. Try to get out for a few hours cycling during the weekends coming up to your trip and if possible do it on varied terrain and include some hill climbing.

The group size varies from 10 to 20 people. A guide driving a support van leads each group. She/He will sweep during the day to check on cyclists. In the afternoon they will be gone for about two hours to leave the luggage off at your accommodation, so may not be on hand to give you a lift, but there is no rush and you have all day to complete the ride. As soon as the guide has delivered the luggage to your accommodation they will sweep back to do a final check on cyclists.

Our aim is to allow you feel like an independent traveller, free to cycle each day at your own pace while at the same time having the security of knowing that a support van is nearby just in case you might need it. Most importantly, our guide is there to help in whatever way possible so that all you have to do is leave your worries behind and enjoy the many wonderful experiences that this cycling holiday has to offer.

What happens if not enough people book on the group tour?

We require at least 8 bookings on the tour to organise a guide to accompany you. On rare occasions we may have to cancel the guide if there are not enough clients booked on, but you have a number of options in this case:

We can still organise the tour on a self guided basis. We still organise all your accommodation, bike rental, your route details, advise you on all the best places to eat and visit and we organise for your luggage to be transferred locally each day. We are also at the end of a phone line in case of any problems, but you head off without a back up guide.

Alternately on most occasions we can offer another guided tour in Ireland for you to join instead.

Or of course we will fully refund you any payments already made if neither solution above works for you.

We don't envisage this happening but always good to be prepared for every scenario!

BIKE & FITNESS

In 2017 we will be using the **GIANT CITY** bicycles for our tours.



To see the specification for this you can visit the website:

www.giant-bicycles.com/gb/escape-city (Gents model)

www.giant-bicycles.com/en-ie/bikes/model/alight.2.city/28581/99470/ (Ladies model)

Bikes come in different sizes and in gents and ladies style frames.

It is very important you give us your height on booking so that we can allocate the correct bike to you.

ACCOMMODATION

Accommodation list – subject to availability

<p>Day 1 & 7: Kilkenny</p> <p>Fanad House B&B fanadhouse.com</p>		<p>Day 3: Dunmore East</p> <p>The Haven Hotel thehavenhotel.com</p>	
<p>Day 2: New Ross</p> <p>Inishross House B&B inishrosshouse.com</p>		<p>Day 4 & 5: Dungarvan (Dinner included)</p> <p>Park Hotel flynnhotels.com/Park_Hotel_Dungarvan</p>	
<p>Day 3: Dunmore East</p> <p>Creaden View B&B discoverdunmore.com/Bed-Breakfasts/creaden-view-bed-breakfast.html</p>		<p>Day 6: Cashel</p> <p>Ashmorehouse B&B ashmorehouse.com</p>	

The accommodation is allocated on a twin-sharing basis. We stay in a mixture of B&Bs and small hotels. The B&B accommodation is a combination of two or three guesthouses in each night stop, where we hope to fuse the best standard we can get with the warmest welcome. We ensure en suite facilities.

We do reserve the right to change the accommodation around during the week, but we will always endeavour to provide a high standard.

What if someone needs to contact me during the week?

If you have a mobile phone which operates on the GSM 900 system, this will be compatible with the Irish system. Alternatively someone can call our office during the day and we will be able to contact anyone on the tour.

Looking for extra accommodation at the beginning or end of the tour?

We would be happy to help you organise extra accommodation in Kilkenny for the start or the end of the week. If you would prefer to organise it yourself please see the websites below. If you are planning to spend a few days in Dublin at the end of the tour, we recommend that you book accommodation well in advance as the capital is very busy on weekends. We do not actually organise accommodation in Dublin there are a huge range of websites offering a reservation service.

A good starting place is Dublin Tourism – their website (www.visitdublin.com) or www.booking.com .

WHAT TO BRING

*We would seriously recommend that you bring **padded cycling shorts and / or a gel saddle cover** that will definitely make your day's cycling more comfortable. Cycling gloves are also a very good investment. You can also bring your own saddle which we should be able to attach to our bikes.

*We provide small **pannier bags** (not waterproof) in which you can keep your day-to-day items. Otherwise you may prefer to use a daypack and there are back carriers on each bike for this purpose.

*We do not provide rain gear so be sure to bring your own light weight **waterproofs**.

*Although it is not obligatory to wear a **helmet** we strongly recommend that you wear one. If you own a bicycle helmet please bring it, otherwise there will be helmets available in the van.

*Don't forget **sun cream, sunglasses, sun hat** as well as a bathing suit for that refreshing dip in the Atlantic Ocean.

*Finally if you wish to use toe clips please bring your own pedals with toe clips which we can attach to our bikes (the pedals on our bikes do not accommodate toe clips)

Please make an effort to pack lightly. This will make your travels easier and will be much appreciated by the guide when he/she is carrying your bags up a long flight of stairs to your room! Alternatively if you are travelling for a long time and do have a lot of luggage, maybe you could consider dividing your luggage into two bags, we could leave one in your first nights B&B to collect at the end of the week and the other bag to take with you on the tour.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Weather

Because we are an island located near the gulf stream Ireland has a very mild climate making it ideal for cycling. We recommend that you bring your rain gear as well as your sun hat as a day that starts with rain can end with glorious sunshine! The temperature range during the summer is between 15 and 22 degrees centigrade (60 to 72 degrees Fahrenheit)

Visa requirements

If you hold an EU passport you only need to make sure your passport is valid for the period of your stay. You will need photo identification travelling between Britain and Ireland.

All other nationalities require a passport that is valid for 3 months beyond the intended length of stay. Most nationalities including the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand do not require visas for Ireland and receive an automatic 90 day visitor's visa on arrival. If your nationality is not mentioned here you should check with your travel agent or consular office.

Electrical current/Mobile Phone

The standard electrical supply is 220 volts AC (50 cycles). To use small appliances mainland European visitors may require a plug adaptor to fit our 3-pin flat or 2-pin round wall sockets. The mobile phone system in use is a digital GSM 900 system.

Websites on Ireland

Some recommended websites on Ireland that might help you organise your trip if you are planning to spend more time in the country before or after your holiday with us.

www.discoverireland.com - Irish Tourist Board (Failte Ireland) official website

www.heritageireland.ie info on historical sites