

Cycling Safaris

CASTLES & KINGS

Self-Guided Tour 2017

266/286 km | 8 days/7 nights



This tour takes you through some of the most historic areas in Ireland. From 5000 year old the burial chambers at Newgrange to the mansions built in the Celtic Tiger era!

The route takes you out of Dublin on quiet back roads through the farm lands that feeds the city to the beautiful and historic Boyne Valley. On roads undiscovered by tourists the route heads north through the spectacular Cooley Mountains to the medieval town of Carlingford. Returning to Dublin through the rich pasture lands of Meath and Kildare the route passes the ancient seat of the High Kings of Ireland at Tara.

There is a mixture of hilly and flat roads on this tour. Leaving and approaching Dublin the roads are largely

TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 MALAHIDE DUBLIN

The tour starts with an overnight stay in this attractive Dublin village.



DAY 2 MALAHIDE TO DROGHEDA

You leave the picturesque seaside village of Malahide following the shores of the swords estuary past flocks of wild birds into the north Dublin market gardens which provide much of the city's vegetables. Keeping to quiet undiscovered roads you return to the coast passing the towns of Laytown and Bettystown before reaching the river Boyne where you turn east and follow it upstream to the historic town of Drogheda which suffered the wrath of Oliver Cromwell in 1649. The town is a bustling place with plenty of bars and restaurants.

34 MILES / 55KM



DAY 3**DROGHEDA TO ARDEE****22 MILES /35KM**

Your route is a short one today but you will need to be up early to give some time to view the wonderful historic sites which are within the first 10km. Leaving Drogheda and continuing up stream next to the majestic Boyne Soon after this you come to the historical highlight of the tour, the Newgrange Burial Chamber. This UNESCO World Heritage site is more than a passage tomb. At over 5000 years old its design, construction and astrological complexity defies comprehension. Heading into the pasture lands with views of the Cooley mountains appearing and disappearing as you travel through drumlin country to our accommodation.

DAY 4**ARDEE TO CARLINGFORD****42 MILES / 67KM**

On pleasant, mostly flat roads through rich dairy lands, our route winds its way north through the busy town of Ardee, visiting sleepy villages. We head on to the Cooley peninsula with its stone walls and forest shaded lanes.

You climb to the Long Woman's grave and descend to the northern side of the peninsula with the spectacular panorama of Carlingford Lough and the Mountains of Mourne sweeping down to the sea (as in the famous song) before you. It is a short ride along the coast to your accommodation in the medieval village of Carlingford.

DAY 5**REST DAY IN CARLINGFORD**

Carlingford is a wonderful place for a rest day. You will deserve a rest having crossed the ridge the day before. If you are feeling energetic you can hike up on to Slieve Foyle which soars upwards from the village. In the village centre there is an adventure centre which can organise all manner of activities from gentle strolls to high wire, from a quiet paddle in a kayak to abseiling on the mountain. Or you could spend a pleasant day wandering around the villages many historic buildings, punctuating your tour with visits to some of the village's cafes, pubs and restaurants.

**DAY 6****CARLINGFORD TO TRIM****34 MILES / 54KM**

Your day starts with a transfer to Kingscourt, an unselfconscious midland Irish town. From here you head south to the heritage town of Kells or Ceannus Mor as it is known in Irish. It was here that the Book of Kells, a lavishly illustrated handmade copy of the scriptures penned by monks circa 800 ad, was found.

You travel on through rich farmland on mainly flat roads through the Irish (Gaelic) speaking region of Rachtcarin returning to the banks of the Boyne at your overnight stop in the town of Trim. Don't miss the largely intact 12th century Trim Castle which has featured in several movies.



DAY 7**TRIM TO DUBLIN****34 - 47 MILES / 55 - 75KM**

Today's ride is largely flat through stud farms and fertile fields. You leave the Boyne again take in the Hill of Tara a site of historical, mythical and religious significance where 142 kings are said to have ruled from. Crossing into county Kildare as you approach the valley of the Liffey which runs through the centre of Dublin City. Your final few kilometres are through the Phoenix Park. This is one of the largest city parks in the world. As you ride through you can spot herds of deer within 3km of the city centre. The accommodation tonight is in the city centre so that you have the opportunity to experience the buzz of the vibrant capital city. There are a number of hills on this route but you have all day to do the cycling. You will be provided with a more comprehensive route description and maps at the start of the tour. There is an option each day for a variety of longer routes. With the exception of the roads in and out of Dublin, 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

Our Self guided tours can start any day from April to mid October

2017 TOUR PRICE

- € 810.00 per person sharing off peak
- € 845.00 per person sharing July & August
- € 245.00 single occupancy (if travelling with others)
- € 350.00 single tour supplement (for solo travellers)

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
- Back up service/24 hours service hotline

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

Entrance tickets:

Newgrange (Bru na Boinne)	€6.00	Oldbridge (Battle of the Boyne)	€4.00
Hill of Tara	€3.00	Castletown House	€4.50
Trim Castle	€3.00 - €4.50	Malahide Castle Grounds	free
Tour of Malahide Castle	€7.50		

Are there facilities to change money?

There are banks and cashpoint machines in Malahide, Drogheda, Carlingford and Dublin. Credit cards are also widely accepted.

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 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. We do not provide helmets so you must bring your own.

*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)

BIKE

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.

There are a number of hills to climb on this tour so we would recommend that you do try to do some cycling before the tour in order to make your week more enjoyable, if possible do it on varied terrain and include some hill climbing.

ACCOMMODATION

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?

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).

Other accommodation websites for Dublin/Ireland

www.discoverireland.ie
www.hiddenireland.com

www.dublinhotels.com
www.booking.com

www.irelandhotels.com

Accommodation list – subject to availability

Day 1: Malahide Castle Lodge castle-lodge.com		Day 4 & 5: Carlingford (Dinner included) Mc Kevitts Village Hotel mckevitts.ie	
Day 1: Malahide Island View Hotel islandviewhotel.ie		Day 6: Trim Trim Castle Hotel trimcastlehotel.com	
Day 2: Drogheda Scholars Townhouse Hotel scholarshotel.com		Day 6: Trim Highfield House highfieldguesthouse.com	
Day 3: Ardee Woodview B&B woodviewardee.com		Day 7: Dublin Phoenix Park Hotel phoenixparkhotel.ie	
Day 4&5: Carlingford (Dinner included) Belvedere House belvederehouse.ie		Day 7: Dublin The Gate Lodge dublینگatelodge.com	

BACK UP SERVICE

As this is a self led trip you do not have the back-up of a guide and support van. 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 your luggage will be waiting for you in your next accommodation.

If for any reason you are unable to cycle please contact our Dublin office (01 2600749) so we can liaise with the luggage transfers to organise the transfer of bike(s) and person(s). Please note that you will be charged for any additional runs made on your behalf.

Our bikes are serviced after each tour so they should be humming perfectly! If you experience small problems with the bike (i.e., a puncture) you will have a spare tube, pump and tyre lever. You can of course phone our office if you experience any major problems (01 2600749).

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

If you plan to spend some extra time in **Dublin**, the following will give you some more ideas of things to see and do:

www.visitdublin.com Dublin Tourism, Tourism Centre, Suffolk Street, Dublin 2

Calling within Ireland - 1850 230 330 Calling within the U.K. - 0800 039 7000

Calling from any other country - +353 66 979 2083

www.dublinuncovered.net

www.indublin.ie

www.irishfolktours.com