

# Cycling Safaris

## WEST CORK & KERRY Self Guided Tour 2018

255 km | 8 days/7 nights



This tour covers some of the most spectacular scenery that Ireland has to offer. Shortly after leaving Killarney you will find yourself cycling between the majestic lakes that have made this area so famous to be shortly followed by a climb up to Molls Gap with its wonderful views of the Macgillycuddyreeks, Ireland's highest mountain range. The rest of the week involves more of the same stunning scenery with a wonderful coastal cycle along Kenmare Bay. You then spend two days exploring the relatively unknown Beara peninsula which we feel offers some of the best scenery you will ever see in Ireland. On the rest day you relax in the fishing village of Castletownbere where you can take a boat ride to Bere Island or cycle out to the ruins of nearby Dunboy Castle. Towards the end of the week you head inland and stay at a beautiful Lakeside retreat at the source of the River Lee. On the final day you cycle up over the wild and isolated hills of the Coolea region before returning to Killarney.

The roads are all tarmaced and the route is designed to ensure that you spend most of the week on quiet backroads, away from the main tourist routes. To experience the majestic scenery of this area the route does have a number of climbs, so it is worth getting a few weekends training on a bike in varied terrain before coming thus ensuring that you can fully enjoy the week.

### TOUR ITINERARY

#### DAY 1 ARRIVE IN KILLARNEY

On arrival in Killarney you should make your way to your accommodation. If you get there early the rooms in the B&Bs will not usually be ready till midday so you can leave your luggage at the guesthouse and explore this bustling town.

We will send you on a copy of your accommodation and contact details closer to the tour start. Your route details and maps will be waiting for you in your guesthouse.

Your pre ordered bikes will be waiting for you in our near by bike hire shop.

If you have time you could visit Ross Castle a wonderfully restored 16<sup>th</sup> Century Norman Tower House overlooking Lough Leane. You can even hire a boat from here and row out to a 6<sup>th</sup> Century monastic site located on one of the nearby islands. Ross Castle is about 1.5 miles from the town.



## DAY 2 KILLARNEY TO KENMARE

23 miles / 37 km

The day starts off by following a cycle track into the beautiful grounds of Muckross House. Located on the grounds is a Franciscan Abbey founded in the 15<sup>th</sup> Century. It is now in ruins but is beautifully situated with a large yew tree rising up through the cloisters. After a stroll around the celebrated Muckross gardens there follows a wonderful cycle along a quiet path between two of the Killarney lakes before we return to the main road.

A steady climb up to Molls Gap is rewarded with a delicious lunch in a restaurant with beautiful views of the surrounding mountains. In the afternoon we sweep down to the picturesque seaside town of Kenmare. There are longer cycles available if you fancy stretching your legs this afternoon.



## DAY 3 KENMARE TO CASTLETOWNBERE

32 miles / 51 km



You follow a spectacular coast road hugging Kenmare Bay with its wonderful views of the MacGillikuddy Reeks Mountains, before stopping for lunch at a small pub overlooking the bay. In the afternoon you can visit the nearby Dereen Gardens with its amazing variety of flora. Leaving the Gardens you cycle west where you can visit an ancient stone circle or explore the



beautiful scenery and quiet back roads of the Beara Way. Castletownbere, where we will spend the next two nights, is nestled at the foot of the Cahas Mountains.

## DAY 4 CASTLETOWNBEREBERE / EYERIES / ALLIHIES

25 miles / 40 km



Today's cycle is a circular route, taking in the Beara Peninsula, one of the week's highlights, with its twisted mountainscapes and breathtaking coastal scenery. We begin by retracing our route to Eyerries; from here, to our lunch-stop in Allihies, you can really feel you are away from it all, experiencing an undiscovered part of Ireland well away from some of the bustling tourist routes.

After lunch you continue cycling around the peninsula with more wonderful views of the ocean. You can detour off the main route for a scenic bike ride to the crossing point for Dursey Island, which can be reached by catching a ride on the only cable car in Ireland. After this interesting detour you return back to the main road and continue on towards Castletownbere, passing the entrance for Dunboy Castle, which is well worth a visit.

## DAY 5 CASTLETOWNBERE TO GLENGARRIFF

22 miles / 35 km

You cycle along the shores of Bantry Bay, one of the deepest natural harbours in Europe. Glengarriff, meaning "Rugged Glen" occupies a beautifully sheltered position, surrounded by mountains which, together with its mild climate, permits a variety of luxuriant plants to grow. Located just outside Glengarriff is Garnish Island, which was transformed between 1910 and 1913 from a bare limestone rock into a luxuriant garden island, known worldwide for its huge selection of plants and its Italian Garden full of exotic plants. A local regular ferry service provides a non-stop ferry service to the island, as well as water tours of Glengarriff Harbour.



**DAY 6****GLENGARRIFF TO GOUGANE BARRA****21 miles / 34 km**

Today we head inland and cycle along quiet country roads with rolling fields dotted with grazing cattle and sheep, before arriving at the lakeside retreat of Gougane Barra, Ireland's first National Park and the source of the River Lee.

This is a beautiful peaceful place and an ideal setting for your last night in the countryside before you head back to the hustle and bustle of the great metropolis of Killarney!

**DAY 7****GOUGANE BARRA TO KILLARNEY****35 miles / 57 km**

For the last day you cycle up into the Coolea region via remote, peaceful mountain roads where you can really feel you are away from it all.

You can stop for a cup of tea at Irelands Highest Pub before descending back down into Killarney for a final night on the town.



There are a number of hills on the route but you have all day to do the cycling. You will be provided with a more comprehensive route description and map 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 Killarney, the traffic on the route should be quite light. You should however cycle carefully at all times, especially when going downhill.

Please note that due to limited accommodation options in Gougane Barra area we may offer you a reverse tour of West Cork and Kerry. This gives us more flexibility to accommodate you on your selected dates. The reverse route follows the same roads but in the opposite direction.

**2018 TOUR DATES**

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

**2018 TOUR PRICE**

- €810.00 per person sharing off peak
- €845.00 per person sharing July & August
- €255.00 single occupancy (if traveling with others)
- €395.00 single tour supplement (for solo travelers)

**WHAT THE BROCHURE PRICE INCLUDES**

- Seven nights accommodation with full Irish breakfast.
- One evening meal (Gougane Barra)
- 24 speed touring bike with bag carrier, mudguards, water bottle carrier and a small pannier bag.
- Route maps and details.
- Luggage transfer each day.
- 24 Hour service hotline
- GPS tracks available (on request)

## Meal expenses

All breakfasts are included in the tour price. Clients buy their own lunches and dinner 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+

## Are there facilities to change money?

There are banks and cash machines in Killarney, Kenmare and Castletownbere.

Banks are open on Monday – Friday: 10.00am - 4.00pm. 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** which will definitely make your days cycling more comfortable. Cycling gloves are also a good investment. You can also bring your own saddle which should be possible 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.

\***We do not provide helmets on our self led tours. It is very important you wear one, so please 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.

\*Our rental bikes don't have **lights** – no problem on the long summer evenings, but if you are travelling in May or September, please bring your own light or high-visibility vest.

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

## 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 (+353 1 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 (+353 1 2600749).

## BIKE & FITNESS

In 2018 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](http://www.giant-bicycles.com/gb/escape-city) ( Gents model )

[www.giant-bicycles.com/en-ie/bikes/model/alight.2.city/28581/99470/](http://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, 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 tour, but we will always endeavour to provide a high standard.

### **What happens if I am delayed on the first night?**

Please contact the guesthouse to let them know if you are arriving late.

### **What if someone needs to contact me during the tour?**

If you have a mobile phone which operates on the GSM 900 system, this will be compatible with the Irish system. We will send you a full list of where you are staying on the tour before departure

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

We would be happy to help you organise extra accommodation in Killarney 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 but there are a huge range of websites offering a reservation service. A good starting place is [www.booking.com](http://www.booking.com) or Dublin Tourism ([www.visitdublin.com](http://www.visitdublin.com)).

Other accommodation websites for Dublin/Ireland

[www.discoverireland.ie](http://www.discoverireland.ie)

[www.dublinhotels.com](http://www.dublinhotels.com)

[www.irelandhotels.com](http://www.irelandhotels.com)

[www.hiddenireland.com](http://www.hiddenireland.com)

**Accommodation list – subject to availability**

<p>Day 1 &amp; 7: Killarney</p> <p>Killarney Inn <a href="http://www.killarneyinn.ie">www.killarneyinn.ie</a></p>		<p>Day 3 &amp; 4: Castleownbere</p> <p>Seabreeze B&amp;B <a href="http://seabreez.com">seabreez.com</a></p>	
<p>Day 1 &amp; 7: Killarney</p> <p>Parkfield House <a href="http://parkfieldbb.com">parkfieldbb.com</a></p>		<p>Day 3 &amp; 4</p> <p>Cottage Heights <a href="http://cottage-heights.com">cottage-heights.com</a></p>	
<p>Day 2: Kenmare</p> <p>Brass Lantern <a href="http://brasslanternkenmare.com">brasslanternkenmare.com</a></p>		<p>Day 5: Glengarriff</p> <p>The Arches Guesthouse <a href="http://archesglengarriff.com">archesglengarriff.com</a></p>	
<p>Day 2: Kenmare</p> <p>Cahas B&amp;B <a href="http://cahaskenmare.com">cahaskenmare.com</a></p>		<p>Day 6: Gougane Barra (Dinner included)</p> <p>Gougane Barra Hotel <a href="http://gouganebarrahotel.com">gouganebarrahotel.com</a></p>	

---

## 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.

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](http://www.discoverireland.com) - Irish Tourist Board (Failte Ireland) official website providing a wealth of information on all regions of the country.

[www.heritageireland.ie](http://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](http://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](http://www.dublinuncovered.net)

[www.indublin.ie](http://www.indublin.ie)

[www.irishfolktours.com](http://www.irishfolktours.com)

### Recommended Reading & Listening

Ireland has a rich literary and musical heritage, some of which you will experience first hand on our tours. Should you like to do a little advance research the following websites should help you...

[www.kennys.ie](http://www.kennys.ie) is a long established Galway bookshop with an enormous online catalogue of books of Irish interest.

[www.celticnote.com](http://www.celticnote.com) is the perfect place to carry out your acoustic research!