

Cycling Safaris

WEST CORK COASTLINE

Self Guided tours 2020

305 km | 8 days/7 nights



The tour covers all types of landscape, from rolling green fields to spectacular coastal rides. West Cork is also best known for its colourful villages, all of which are brightly painted in a wonderful array of vibrant colours, with wonderful hanging baskets brimming with flowers out the front of every pub and shop.

The self guided tour starts and finishes in Cork.

TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 ARRIVAL IN CORK CITY

Our guesthouse is located near the Western Road some 15 minutes walk from the centre of the city. We recommend that you take a taxi from the station or airport and check into the guesthouse as soon as you arrive so that you are then free to explore the city. Cork is a very lively town with plenty of music and entertainment and all the major points of interest are within walking distance. If you are arriving early the rooms may not be ready till midday but you can leave your bags here and head into town for a stroll.

We will send you on a copy of your accommodation and contact details closer to the tour start. Your bikes, route details and maps will be waiting for you in your guesthouse and our bike mechanic will meet to fit you out with your bikes.

DAY 2 CORK TO GOUGANE BARRA

45 miles / 72 kms

After fitting you onto your bicycles, you head out by the banks of the Lee and travel along quiet back roads to a lunch stop in the market town of Macroom.

In the afternoon you continue up the Lee Valley through rolling countryside to the wonderfully peaceful Lakeside retreat of Gougane Barra, the source of the River Lee and Ireland's first National Park.



DAY 3 GOUGANE BARRA TO AHAKISTA

28 miles / 45 kms



You cycle down to the coast past fields of grazing cattle and sheep to the bustling coastal town of Bantry where you can stop for lunch.

In the afternoon you head out to the beautiful Sheep's Head Peninsula and cycle along quiet coastal roads with stunning views of the surrounding landscape.

DAY 4 AHAKISTA TO BALTIMORE

39.5 miles / 63 kms

In the morning you cycle along the coast before heading inland through a gap in the mountains back to the coast once again and the village of Schull. You can have lunch in this bustling attractive seaside village.

From there you pedal along a warren of backroads to the small fishing village of Baltimore where you will spend the next two nights.



DAY 5 REST DAY IN BALTIMORE



The day can be spent in rest and relaxation or you can take part in a variety of activities including a visit to Cape Clear Island with its stunning views looking back at West Cork.

You can go horse riding or hike through the beautiful forest that overlooks the unique Lough Ine, the only salt water lake in North Western Europe. For those who want to experience a unique part of Irish rural life you can take a bus to the local town of Skibereen for the weekly cattle market.

DAY 6 BALTIMORE TO CLONAKILTY

39 miles / 62.5 kms

In the morning you cycle along quiet back roads to the peaceful Lough Ine and then follow the West Cork coast to the village of Glandore where you can have lunch overlooking the beautiful Glandore Harbour with its two islands, Adam and Eve.

In the afternoon you can visit a 3,000-year-old stone circle, one of the best examples of its kind in the country, before following another scenic coastal cycle to the bustling town of Clonakilty. You stay overnight in a family run hotel.



DAY 7 CLONAKILTY TO CORK

38.5 miles / 62 kms or 49 miles / 79 kms



In the morning you follow the coast road before heading inland to the village of Timoleague, where you can visit a 15th Century Franciscan Friary. After lunch you continue to the historic town of Kinsale, site of the Battle of Kinsale in 1601. Kinsale is a very colourful cosmopolitan town with a wide range of excellent craft shops.

In the afternoon you cycle back into Cork for your final night on the tour

2020 TOUR DATES

Our self guided trips can start any day from April to October

We also offer guaranteed set departure dates:

June 27, August 1

If there are more than 8 people on the set departure dates, we provide a guide in a support van.

2020 TOUR PRICE

- €885.00 per person sharing off peak
- €920.00 per person sharing July & August
- €255.00 single occupancy (if travelling with others)
- €395.00 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 bag carrier, mudguards, water bottle carrier and a small pannier bag, repair kit, lock
- Route maps and details.
- Luggage transfer each day
- 24 hour service hotline
- Guide in support van with minimum of 8 people on set departure date
- GPS tracks available (on request)

Not included:

Helmet rental (on request) €10

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	€2.50	Glass of Beer	€2.80 (this is half a pint!)
Soft drink	€2.50	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/cash machines in Cork City, Macroom, Bantry, Schull, Skibbereen, Baltimore and Clonakilty (banks open Monday – Friday: 10.00am - 4.00pm). Credit cards are also widely accepted.

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).

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.

*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 which we can attach to our bikes (the pedals on our bikes do not accommodate toe clips)

BIKE & FITNESS

In 2020 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.

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 route. With the exception of the roads in and out of 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. There are a few 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 (+353 1 2600749) and we will 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 Cork 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 or Dublin Tourism (www.visitdublin.com).

Other accommodation websites for Dublin/Ireland

www.discoverireland.ie www.dublinhotels.com www.irelandhotels.com www.hiddenireland.com

Accommodation list – subject to availability			
1. & 7. Tag: Cork Garnish House garnish.ie		4. & 5. Tag: Baltimore Fastnet House fastnethouse.com	
2. Tag: Gougane Barra Gougane Barra Hotel gouganebarrahotel.com		4. & 5. Tag: Baltimore Beacon Shore Guesthouse beaconshore.ie	
3. Tag: Ahakista Reenmore House reenmore.com		6. Tag: Clonakilty O'Donovans Hotel odonovanshotel.com	
3. Tag: Ahakista Bridgeview House bridgeviewhouse.com/bantr-y-bed-breakfast.html		6. Tag: Clonakilty Macliam Lodge macliamlodge.com	

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 - Irish Tourist Board (Failte Ireland) official website providing a wealth of information on all regions of the country.

www.heritageireland.ie info on historical sites