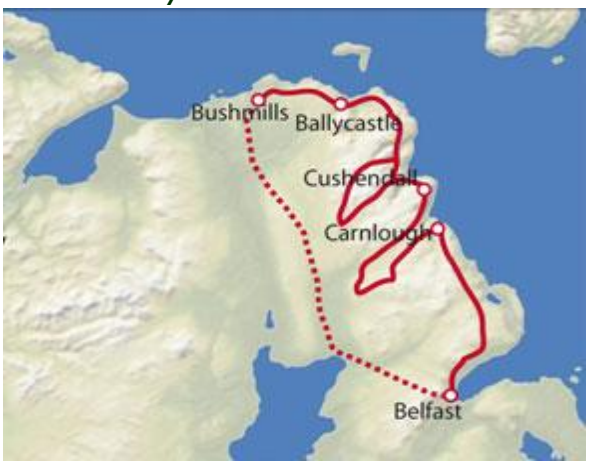
Cycling Safaris

ANTRIM COAST

Self Guided Tour 2027





This tour offers you some of the most spectacular coastal scenery in the country, with cliffs and rolling green fields sweeping down towards the Irish Sea along a coastline dotted with ancient forts and castles. We also cycle inland up into the famous Glens of Antrim with some wonderful highland cycling on quiet back roads. Other highlights of this spectacular week include visits to the world famous Giants Causeway and Bushmills, the oldest licensed whiskey distillery in the world.

The Antrim Coastline has become increasingly famous in recent years as it is the setting for much of the popular TV series “Game of Thrones”!



TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 ARRIVE IN BELFAST

On arrival in Belfast 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 City

DAY 2 BELFAST TO CARNLOUGH 40 miles / 64kms

Setting out on a Sustrans Cycle path you cycle out of Belfast along the coast to Carrickfergus and its famous 12th Century castle.
You then head inland to avoid the busy Sunday traffic and up into the mountains before descending to the first of the Antrim Glens with beautiful views of the ocean below. That night you stay in the quiet seaside village of Carnlough.



DAY 3 CARNLOUGH TO CUSHENDALL 35 miles / 56kms



In the morning you cycle up into the hills and see the Sperrin Mountain. It is here where legend has it that St Patrick spent his youth in captivity as a pig farmer before escaping back to England, only to return as a Bishop to convert Ireland to Christianity.
You then return to the coast for lunch in a seaside hotel. That afternoon you cycle along the beautiful Antrim coastline to Cushendall where you will spend the night.

DAY 4 CUSHENDALL TO BALLYCASTLE 35 miles/56kms

In the morning you explore the pretty and less visited Glen of Glenaan and then return to the coast for lunch in Cushendun. In the afternoon comes one of the highlights of the week, a breathtaking cycle along the coast road to Ballycastle passing along green fields dotted with sheep, while you look out over beautiful views of Scotland and the Mull of Kintyre, just across the sea.





DAY 5 REST DAY IN BALLYCASTLE



One attractive option on the rest day is to take the ferry to explore nearby Rathlin Island which has one of the largest bird colonies in the country as well as a small seal colony.

It is a wonderful place to spend a rest day giving you that sense of being away from it all that you can only experience on an island.

DAY6 BALLYCASTLE / BUSHMILLS / BALLYCASTLE 35 miles/56ms



You start with a cycle along beautiful coastline to view the hexagonal basalt rock formations at the Giants Causeway, Northern Ireland's most famous landmark. When you see this geographical wonder you will understand why is had been awarded World Heritage Site status. Our next stop on a day of spectacular sights is the Carrik-a-Rede Rope Bridge. This swinging bridge to Carrick-a-Rede island was originally erected by local fisherman over a 23m-deep and 20m-wide chasm to check their salmon nets.

DAY 7 BALLYCASTLE TO BELFAST 25 miles/40kms

For our last days cycle you head South back into the Glens towards the ECOS centre. From here we arrange a transfer for you back to Belfast and a last night on the tour.





DAY 8 BELFAST - HOME

You are free to make your own way home after breakfast.

2027TOUR DATES

Our Self Led tours can start any day of the week from mid April – 1st October.

2027 TOUR PRICE (priced in Sterling)

2027 SELF GUIDED TOUR PRICE
* Stg 1080 per person sharing
* Stg 345 single supplement (if travelling with others)
* Stg 70 high season supplement for July & August

Bike Rental
* Stg 120.00 24 speed touring bike
* Stg 230.00 E-bike

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- Seven night's accommodation with full Irish breakfast.
- GPS Route
- One set of maps and details per booking
- Luggage transfer each day
- service hotline
- Transport back to Belfast at tour end

NB - Northern Ireland does not use the euro so be sure to have Sterling with you when you arrive.
Payment of this tour is in Sterling. You can pay by bank transfer directly into a sterling account or via our euro stripe account where the exchange rate is calculated on the day of payment

Meal expenses
All breakfasts are included in the tour price. Clients buy their own lunches and dinner throughout the trip. You should budget between £15 - £25 for lunch each day. The guide organises an evening meal each night costing somewhere between £25 - £40

Extra expenses
The boat trip to Rathlin Island is approx £18 return and £2 extra for a bike.
The tour of Bushmills Distillery is approx £12.

Are there facilities to change money?
There are banks and cash machines in Belfast and Ballycastle. Banks are open on Monday – Friday: 10.00am - 4.00pm. Cash point machines are in Cushendall. Credit cards are also widely accepted.

BIKE & FITNESS

Hybrid Bike rental is available for £120.

We will be renting Fuji Absolute 1.7 or Trek 7.3 bicycles for our tours in Antrim.





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.

E-Bikes are also available to rent at £230

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. 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 roads are all tarmaced and the route is designed to ensure that you spend most of the week on quiet back roads. Occasionally it will be necessary to ride on busier roads, which is unavoidable as there may be no minor roads on certain stretches of the route.

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).

ACCOMMODATION

Below is a list of the accommodations that we typically use on this tour (subject to availability)

Day 1 & 7: Belfast
Tara Lodge




Day 2: Carnlough
Harbour View Hotel




Day 3 Cushendall – we stay in a mixture of Guesthouses....
Glendale B&B




Irish Cycling Safaris | 4 Harbour Square, Crofton Road, Dun Laoghaire, Ireland
Tel +353 1 2600749 | info@cyclingsafaris.com | www.cyclingsafaris.com

Day 4, 5 & 6: Ballycastle
An Caislean





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 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. 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 Belfast 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 (visitdublin.com) or 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 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.

***We strongly advice to bring your own helmets on our self led tours.**

*Don't forget **sun cream, sunglasses, sun hat.**

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

*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.

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 (60-72 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.discovernorthernireland.com – Northern Ireland Tourist Board's official website
www.heritageireland.ie info on historical sites