

Cycling Safaris

CASTLES & KINGS

Self-Guided Tour 2024



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.

TOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 ARRIVAL TO DUBLIN / DUN LAOGHAIRE

Typically, you will stay in the harbour town of Dun Laoghaire, a well known South Dublin seaside suburb. The cost of a taxi from Dublin airport to Dun Laoghaire is approx. €50. Alternatively, there is blue coloured Air Coach, departing from just outside the Arrivals Hall at Dublin Airport, which will take you to Dun Laoghaire. The return ticket costs €16 and the journey should take around 50 minutes.



Once you have checked into your accommodation, you can then spend the rest of the day exploring Dublin's beautiful coastline or else take a 20 minute train journey into Dublin city to see the sights and sounds that have made Dublin such a lively and popular destination.

DAY 2 MALAHIDE TO DROGHEDA

31 MILES / 50KM

You collect your bikes from our shop in Dun Laoghaire after which we transfer you to the seaside village of Malahide on the Northern shores of Dublin .

You leave the picturesque village 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.



DAY 3 DROGHEDA TO CARRICKMACROSS/KILLANY

35 MILES/56KM



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, 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 CARRICKMACROSS TO CARLINGFORD

42 MILES / 67KM



On pleasant, mostly flat roads through rich dairy lands, our route winds its way north, 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.



You can 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 Racthcarin 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 - 76KM



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.

We will collect you in Phoenix Park and bring you to your nights accommodation with is typically in the Harbour Town of Dun Laoghaire in the south coast of Dublin 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.

2024 TOUR DATES

Our Self guided tours can start any day from 16th April – 1st October

2024 TOUR PRICE

- € 1145.00 per person sharing off peak
- € 50.00 per person sharing July & August
- € 350.00 single occupancy (if travelling with others)
- + €300.00 single tour supplement (for solo travellers)

Note that bike hire is separated out of the tour price

€100.00	24 speed touring bike with water bottle cage, lock, helmet and a small pannier bag
€250.00	Electric - bike

WHAT THE TOUR PRICE INCLUDES

- Seven nights' accommodation with full Irish breakfast
- Route details are provided as GPS tracks
- Luggage transfer each day
- One set of printed route details and maps per booking
- Back up 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 €15 and €20 for lunch each day and an evening meal each night costing somewhere between €20 and €30.

Optional Expenses / Entrance tickets:

Newgrange (Bru na Boinne)	€18.00	Oldbridge House (Battle of the Boyne)	€5.00
Hill of Tara	€5.00	Castletown House	€4.50
Trim Castle	€5.00	Malahide Castle Grounds	free
Tour of Malahide Castle	€14.00		

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 provide helmets on request only.

*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

Bike Rental is not included in the basic tour price

In 2024 we will be renting **GIANT CITY** bicycles for our Castle & Kings 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.

Sample Accommodation list - subject to availability

Day 1 & 7 : Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin

[The Haddington Hotel](#)



Day 2: Drogheda

[Scholars Townhouse Hotel](#)



Day 3: Carrickmacross

[Riverbank Country Pub & Guesthouse](#)



Day 4 & 5: Carlingford

[Mc Kevitts Village Hotel](#)



Day 4 & 5: Carlingford

[Belvedere House](#)



Day 6: Trim

[Trim Castle Hotel](#)



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.dublinhotels.com

www.irelandhotels.com

www.hiddenireland.com

www.booking.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 (+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).

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. UK travellers also have easy access to Ireland with a valid passport.

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,

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