Cycling Safaris

The Cols of Kerry Cycle 2027

The glossy cycling magazines always manage to lure you towards the wonderful cols and mountains made famous by the Tour de France, Giro and the Vuelta. These classic climbs reign supreme on every cyclists bucket list. How about tackling some of the best climbs in Ireland instead?

The absolute height and length of Ventoux or the Tourmalet can not be replicated here, but that does not mean all climbs are easy. Neither does it mean that the scenery is not sublime and the destinations fantastic.

We can organise this tour anytime throughout the Summer and Autumn of 2027 on a self guided basis. We organise your accommodation, luggage transfer, and route details (including GPS files) .

However if you have a group that would like to do this we can also supply a back up support van with a bike mechanic and cycling guides. Please email us for pricing and details

Day 1 Arrival Killarney

On arrival in Killarney you can check into your accommodation and take your bike on a relaxing spin around the National Park

Day 2 Molls Gap / Priests Leap 120km (1745m)

The day begin easily enough meandering through the National Park. It is worth a moment to stop at the lovely Torc Waterfall before the first section of the Molls Gap climb brings you to the famous Ladies View. It is then another 7km of rolling terrain with the last 2km bringing you to the top.

It is a fast downhill to Kenmare which makes an ideal stop for a coffee before heading out to tackle Priests Leap which, according to the Irish Times, is "*a rite-of-passage route for serious cyclists through the Kerry mountains*"

This climb skirts into the border of Cork and perhaps less well known, is one of the toughest.

Over 4.6km the gradient averages 8% topping out at 463m, however it is the maximum gradient at 17% that really tests the mettle. From the top Bantry Bay and Whiddy Island lie before you along with a technical descent.



A choice can be made here to take a quicker route back to Kenmare or an inland route along a wild and remote border road. Either way the Molls Gap is tackled from the traditional Ring Of Kerry direction before descending back to Killarney.

Day 3 Killarney - Dingle 135km (1540m)

Once again the day starts gently enough allowing the legs a chance to get going before tackling any of the climbs.
The first climb of the day is the beautiful gap of Dunloe, that although not very long has some quite steep sections, especially near the top.

The road then descends quite rapidly into the spectacular Black valley. This is a wonderfully quiet road sandwiched between the National Park and Carrauntoohil. Inevitably there is a climb to leave the valley then descending a while skirting past Carrauntoohil to then cross the Macgillycuddy's Reeks using via Ballaghbeama Pass. It is only 3km long from this side but averages 6.7% with the last 500m sections plenty steeper, but another wild and wonderful landscape all the same.



The route is much flatter now heading out to Inch beach. There are then a few short pulls on the small backroads to avoid the traffic and arrive in Dingle, a town that needs no introduction.



Day 4 Slea Head Loop 60km

Today is a much easier cycle, perhaps you can consider it a recovery ride, where the truly spectacular Slea head awaits. This is a ride that is best left unhurried so as to take in the spectacular scenery. The ride is fairly flat as it passes Ventry beach, but includes a few short climbs where the road twists and turns offering fantastic views of the Blasket Islands.



Other distractions include the lasket Island visitor centre, the Gallarus Oratory and the remote and pretty Brandon Beach, where Brendan the Navigator began his epic voyages. After a short climb there is a long gentle descent back to Dingle, where the extra time can be spent in checking out the ludicrous number of pubs.

Day 5 Dingle – Killarney 75 km (1170m)



The last day includes one the better known and higher roads of the trip. Almost immediately leaving Dingle the Conor Pass climb begins.

It is a straight 7km up to the top at 410m where on a clear day spectacular views can be had. Perhaps the most unusual feature of the climb from this side is the consistency of gradient. It averages 5.7% and has no sharp steep sections or false flats.

The descent is twisty and scenic demanding concentration before the flat road ahead with its normal tailwind offers some fast riding to the passing Castlegregory (a small detour if you like) to the village of Camp.

The last of the climbs is another remote road to Caherconree. The road begins easily enough with a few short climbs and descents before emerging onto a wild mountainside. Here the climb proper begins gradually getting steeper until the last 500m that touches 20%. The view is spectacular towards the Iveragh Peninsula. There is then a descent back to the shore and some nice backroads to finish back in Killarney.

Day 6 Departure

2027 TOUR DATES

This tour can run from April to early October on a self guided basis

2027 TOUR PRICE

- €1095.00 per person sharing May to October
  €75.00 pp supplement if travelling in July & August
- €450.00 single occupancy (when travelling with others)
- €60.00 solo traveler supplement (if traveling alone)

WHAT THE BROCHURE PRICE INCLUDES

- Five night's 3 / 4 star accommodation with full Irish breakfast
- GPS Route details and maps
- 24 hour emergency helpline
- Luggage transfer on Days 3 & 5
- Cycling Safaris Gilet

Note bike hire is separated out of the tour price

- €220.00 (4 day rental) Brands include Giant, Merida and Orbea
  Mid range – aluminium frame and carbon forks

Meal expenses
All breakfasts are included in the tour price. Clients buy their own lunches and dinner throughout the trip.

SELF GUIDED TOURS & BACK UP SERVICE

On a self guided basis we organize accommodation, your route details, advise you on all the best places to eat and we organise for your luggage to be transferred locally. We are also at the end of a phone line in case of any problems, but you head off without a back up guide.

Each person will still have their own GPS route details and maps and have the freedom to cycle at their own pace each day. All your accommodation will be booked and your luggage will be waiting for you in your next destination.

Back up support van and guides are available. Please email us with your group requirement and we can send you a specific price tailor made to your group requirements

BIKE & FITNESS

Bike Rental is not included in the basic tour price but are possible to rent in Killarney



Focus, Giant and Trek with tygra gear set

Mid range – aluminium frame and carbon forks

Fully Carbon @ €55.00 per day

Note if you use Clip in please bring both current pedals and shoes

This is a challenging cycling and we would recommend that you do some cycling before the tour in order to make your trip 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.

WHAT TO BRING

This list is meant to be a guide and is not exhaustive, however it will give you an idea of the types of things you will need. Obviously you will need to take into account your personal preferences and common sense!

Bike Helmet – Everyone expected to wear one, no ifs or buts.

Pedals – please bring your own to suit your shoes or advise us of pedals needed

Rainjacket – of course rain is always a possibility!.

Bike Shorts(s) – for this type of cycling it is worth investing in proper padded shorts.

Medication – ensure you bring any medication you normally use

Cycling Mitts – these make long distance riding more comfortable and provide protection in the event of a fall (most people put their hands out to break the fall).

Bidons (cycling bottles)

Fully Charged Mobile Phone–

ACCOMMODATION

The accommodation is allocated on a twin-sharing basis. You have the choice of either 3 or 4 star hotels / guesthouses on this trip.

We do reserve the right to change the accommodation around during the week, but we will always provide a high standard.

Accommodation list – subject to availability

Day 1, 2 & 5: Killarney hotel example [Dromhall Hotel]





Day 3 & 4 : Dingle – guesthouse example [An Capall Dubh]



