

IRELAND
September 2024
Program for Weezie Glascock

JUST LADIES TRAVELING

Sunday 22 September
Depart US

Monday 23 September

Arrival Shannon Airport. Met by your private guide and luxury executive coach and transfer to **Dromoland Castle Hotel**.

This historic castle hotel has been upgraded for today's traveller without losing the charm that's helped make it such an iconic place to stay. You'll feel like you're traveling back in time as you make the drive from the estate gates down a winding lane, past forest thickets and a vast lake, to catch the first glimpse of stone towers and turrets. While the estate has been the ancestral home of the royal-blooded O'Brien family since the 16th century, the current castle dates to the early 1800s, and has been restored and expanded several times after; it's been a hotel since the '60s.

This evening enjoy a welcome drinks reception and dinner at the hotel.

Overnight Dromoland Castle Hotel

Day 2
Tuesday 24 September

Full day touring the Burren and the Cliffs of Moher

The Burren is a place of tradition, music, adventure and great local food. It is where the Atlantic meets Europe, its ferocity matched by its richness and its fertile rock. The vast, Karst landscape, created where limestone is dissolved by acidic rain and groundwater, makes it one of Ireland's most compelling landscapes.

The Cliffs of Moher

Visually spectacular, the Cliffs of Moher sit astride the striking landscape of the Burren on one side and the Wild Atlantic Ocean on the other. Rising out of the Atlantic waters to a height of over 700ft at O'Brien's Tower and running along the coast of Clare for almost 14 kilometres, or 8 miles, the Cliffs of Moher were formed over 320 million years ago, and today form part of the Burren and Cliffs of Moher UNESCO Global Geopark.

Their natural beauty has inspired artists, musicians and poets for generations, as well as absorbing scientists and geologists, drawn by the unique landscape in which they sit.

IRELAND
September 2024
Program for Weezie Glascock

The Cliffs of Moher, the most famous cliffs in Ireland, will leave you awestruck, creating memories that will stay with you forever.

Lunch is included en route today at a country inn or pub.

Overnight Dromoland Castle Hotel.

Day 3

Wednesday 25 September

Full day spent touring the Connemara National Park, Galway

Situated on the Gaeltacht border, Connemara's National Park is a 2000-hectare state owned conservation centre incorporating mountains, bogs and grasslands with wonderful wildlife. Four of the mountains belong to the Twelve Bens range, including the highest, Benbaun (730 metres). At the centre of the park is the valley of Glanmore where the Polladirk River flows.

Traces of ancient settlements can be seen in the park, including 4,000-year-old megalithic tombs and markings of former grazing areas.

Today we have arranged for a special visit and lunch hosted by the Earl and Countess of Roden at their beautiful and charming home in Connemara called Doonreagan (TBC).

DOONREAGAN is a beautiful old farmhouse situated in Cashel: an area of outstanding natural beauty right in the heart of Connemara on Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way.

Over the years many artists have spent time in Cashel: from Lucian Freud, Paul Newman and Claire Bloom to Bono and The Edge. Former Poet Laureate Ted Hughes is on record saying that it was whilst living at DOONREAGAN in the 1960s that he made his "big breakthrough – in his writing and in everything to do with himself".

En route back to Dromoland stopover in Galway for a brief visit. A balmy, bohemian city with a love of traditional music – Galway is hard to resist. The spirit of Ireland's west coast beats through the bustling streets, from mellow old pubs boasting turf and cosy corners, to shops selling Claddagh rings, Aran sweaters and bog-oak carvings.

Return to Dromoland Castle for overnight. Dinner at leisure in the hotel.

Day 4

Thursday 26 September

Morning check-out of Dromoland and head south for Killarney in County Kerry. En route we hope to visit:

IRELAND
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Program for Weezie Glascock

Glin Castle Gardens

On the banks of the Shannon estuary, some twenty miles in from the open sea, the bow fronted castle looks out to the rocky foreshore. On still and misty evenings, when the light falls long and low, the cry of the curlew and lapwing conjure up all the wonderful loneliness of Ireland's west coast in winter.

On the inland side, sheltered and facing south, is an entirely different world. Without heavy frosts and washed by the Gulf Stream, exotic plants thrive. Groves of Gunnera, camellia and rhododendron flourish under the Killarney oaks and Monterey pine. A Persian Ironwood tree crowns the formal parterre of clipped yew and behind it, the meadowy hill lights up in spring with a thousand pale yellow daffodils.

In the 19th century walled garden, espaliered fruit trees border the asparagus and artichoke beds. Two wooden gothic temples: one deep in the spectacular herbaceous border; the other looking out east along the Shannon, afford quiet contemplation.

The owner of Glin Castle, Catherine FitzGerald, is an acclaimed Irish landscape and garden designer.

Lunch will be included en route.

On arrival in Killarney check-in to the Great Southern Hotel.

Overnight at the Great Southern Hotel in Killarney

From its distinctive architecture to its effortless service and genuine hospitality, Great Southern Killarney has been a favorite retreat for over 160 years.

After warming yourself by the open fire in our entrance hall, ease into a soft velvet sofa and enjoy afternoon tea. We like to think time slows down just a little at Great Southern Killarney. Enjoy the light as it streams through tall windows, ramble through our gardens, and rest for a while on a secluded bench. Where else are you going to find 6 acres of gardens in the centre of a bustling town? This is life at Great Southern Killarney, a Victorian landmark, and one of Ireland's most beautiful hotels since 1854.

A 3 course Table d'Hote dinner is included this evening. Tables will be booked in the hotel restaurant for small groups of 2 or 4 at selected times. Drinks are at guests own cost.

Day 5

Friday 27 September

Full day spent enjoying the spectacular countryside and touring the Ring of Kerry

Ring of Kerry

Following the coastline of the Iveragh Peninsula, the 'Ring of Kerry' route is one of Ireland's most famous drives. Taking in the famed 'Wild Atlantic Way', the route encounters some of

IRELAND
September 2024
Program for Weezie Glascock

the country's finest landscapes, weaving around a breath-taking mosaic of storm-beaten coast, steep mountains, ancient ruins, slate-coloured glacial lakes and welcoming towns and villages.

As you might anticipate, it is a photographer's paradise and there are numerous pausing places. Perhaps pause at Ladies View where Queen Victoria's ladies-in-waiting visited in 1861. Drive along Moll's gap, a mountainous pass through bleak bogland and high mountainous terrain, offering stunning views. It takes its name from Moll Kissane; she made herself popular for her illicit home-made poitin or whiskey which she sold from an unlicensed public house in the 1820s whilst the road was being built.

In Sneem brightly painted cottages line the streets of this charming town. Set on a hill up a narrow track, the Iron Age Staigue Fort is the best preserved in Ireland. Dating back to the 17th century, Derrynane House was once the family residence of Daniel O'Connell, often called The Liberator, and the most important political figure in early 19th century Ireland. Home to the Kerry Bog Village, a cluster of reconstructed cottages dating from the 1800s. It provides a fascinating insight into how the 'Kerry' men and their families lived and worked in the 18th century.

We will stop for a pub lunch en route.

Return to the Great Southern Hotel. Dinner is at leisure this evening – in town or in the hotel.

Overnight at the Great Southern Hotel

Day 6
Saturday 28 September

Full day excursion today:

Visit Garnish Island, Innacullin

Garnish Island (Innacullin Garinish or Garnish) is located in the sheltered harbour of Glengarriff in Bantry Bay, in Southwest Ireland. Garnish is world renowned for its gardens which are laid out in beautiful walks and it has some stunning specimen plants which are rare in this climate.

Take the Garnish Island Ferry from Glengarriff Pier to visit this amazing island garden. The very sheltered ferry trip includes a wonderful visit to seal island where you will visit the very tame seal colony.

The Gardens are the result of the creative partnership of Annan Bryce and Harold Peto, architect and garden designer. The island was bequeathed to the Irish people in 1953.

IRELAND
September 2024
Program for Weezie Glascock

Stop in Kenmare. Kenmare was founded in 1670 by Sir William Petty, Cromwell's surveyor general. It nestles in a truly natural, unspoilt environment; cradled in the heart of Kenmare Bay at the foot of the Cork and Kerry mountains. It is particularly noted for its boutique craft shops and dining options, with over 30 to select from. The Kenmare Food Festival takes place mid-July and aims to showcase the very best of the town, from award winning restaurants to local producers, 5-star dining, charming cafes, delicious deli's and bustling bakeries.

A Pub lunch is included today en route.

Return to the Great Southern Hotel for a final dinner with drinks together this evening.

Overnight at the Great Southern Hotel.

Day 7
Sunday 29 September

Transfer to Shannon Airport for departure flights (2 hour transfer time). **Prices are quoted in US Dollars**

Net cost per person sharing a room:

Based on minimum 14 paying \$6675 per person
Single Room Supplement \$2700

DOUBLE ROOM OCCUPANTS MUST HAVE ROOMMATE WHEN RESERVING. WE DO NOT PROVIDE ROOMMATES FOR INDIVIDUALS.

We HIGHLY RECOMMEND Travel Insurance and must have disclaimer if not chosen.

TrravelEX or Alliance Travel Insurance can be purchased on line.

Accommodation (Bed and Breakfast)

- Dromoland Castle x 3 nights
- Great Southern Hotel in Killarney x 3 nights

Also includes:

- Luxury midi motorcoach for all coaching/touring
- Qualified/expert tour guide throughout
- Driver and guide expenses on tour
- Welcome drinks and dinner first night at Dromoland
- All visits as mentioned or similar
- 5 lunches during touring - Moher/Doonreagan/Glin/Ring of Kerry/Garnish Isle days
- One Table d'Hote Dinner at Great Southern Hotel (3 courses – no drinks)

IRELAND
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- Final night dinner and drinks in Killarney at the hotel
- Transfer to Dromoland upon arrival – ONE GROUP TRANSFER upon departure.
- Porterage
- Gratuities for driver

Not included:

- Gratuities for tour guide
- Any meals not specified.