

CULTURAL WALKING ADVENTURE

Ireland

Killarney Lakes & Ring of Kerry



CLASSIC JOURNEYS
THE WORLD'S FINEST WALKING TOURS



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*Classic Journeys
provides unbeatable
access to experiences
around the globe.”*

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TRAVEL + LEISURE

The Best of the Emerald Isle

The Ring of Kerry. The Dingle Peninsula. The Killarney Lakes. You may have heard of them, but that's just where Classic Journeys begins. We also take easy walks on the high peninsulas and wild seashores. You'll get a not-very-useful but absolutely fascinating lesson in how farmers cut peat. There's optional golf on spectacular links. And for the name alone—MacGillycuddy's Reeks—we love Ireland's highest mountain range, and we'll show you why. Maybe you can tell: Ireland makes us happy. It's stunningly beautiful. The people are even warmer and more good-humored than the cliché. And from stately Killarney to sheep-clogged country lanes overlooking the sea, you'll get a complete and memorable taste of Irish life.

The Classic Journeys Difference

- ACTIVE HIKING & WALKING
- LOCAL WELL-CONNECTED GUIDES
- PREMIERE HOTELS
- FOODIE FOCUSED
- HANDCRAFTED TRIP DESIGN
- MORE IS INCLUDED

What's Included

- All breakfasts, 2 lunches, and 4 dinners
- Full-time experienced guide(s) who are with you throughout the trip, handle behind-the-scenes logistics and are there to help with anything
- Admissions to tastings, historic sites and other scheduled events as noted in the detailed daily itinerary
- Gratuities for hotels, meals and baggage
- All land transportation during the trip

Above & Beyond Benefits

→ PRIVILEGED ACCESS EVENTS

One-of-a-kind access to remarkable people, places and activities arranged just for you.

→ INVISIBLE CHECK-IN

When your group arrives, we whisk you and your bags to your room immediately. No waiting – no tipping.

Terrain

Easy to moderate on good trails and coastal paths. At your option, up to 2 to 4 hours of walking per day.

DAY 1 »

Killarney

We meet in Killarney at our manor house hotel, set on its own private grounds against a backdrop of mountains and the Killarney Lakes. Our first stop is at the shop of our local friends who created their own ice cream years ago with the goal of making the best in the world. People like the editors of Food & Wine Magazine have raved about their creations. We just like to order using the fun Gaelic words for the incredible flavors.

Refreshed, a short stroll leads us around the grounds and to a visit of nearby 15th century Ross Castle. Enjoy learning about the construction of the impressive structure and exploring the rooms filled with 16th and 17th century furniture while hearing the stories of how it became a stronghold of an Irish chieftain during the Middle Ages. Later this afternoon we stop for a countryside walk with magnificent views of Torc Waterfall, a 60-foot cascade tumbling over moss-covered rocks in a wooded glen.

After dinner in Killarney town, you may choose to relax at the hotel or join our guide for a visit to a local pub.

MEALS: L, D

OVERNIGHT: KILLARNEY

DAY 2 »

Killarney

Today's explorations begin at Kate Kearney's Cottage, a historic shop and pub named for the colorful character who sold her illegal homebrew to thirsty travelers in the 1800s. Following an easy-going footpath, we wind through the Gap of Dunloe, a spectacular valley filled with lakes, streams, meadows, waterfalls and the famed Wishing Bridge. Or, opt for a ride on a jaunting car along the same path. In the heart of MacGillycuddy's Reeks - Ireland's tallest mountain range at 3,414 feet - we stop for lunch at Lord Brandon's Cottage.

From here, we cruise on a wooden skiff across the fabled Killarney Lakes, enjoying vivid tales told by our boatmen amid the scenic beauty of the national park and its scattered islands. The stories give us a great introduction to Ireland and set the stage for the week ahead.

MEALS: B, L, D

OVERNIGHT: KILLARNEY

DAY 3 »

Ring Of Kerry

After a morning walk on the quiet roads and beaches at Rossbeigh, we journey a short distance to nearby Moll's Gap, where we find our friends, John and his son Sean, awaiting our arrival to show us around their sheep station. John's family is the proud owner of a flock of nearly 1,000 mountain sheep that his family has carefully bred for almost 150 years. John and Sean share with us stories of the sheep on a walking tour around the property, and introduce us to their prized sheep dogs.

A short walk from Valentia Island is the Skelligs Interpretive Centre, and lunch in Portmagee. After lunch we'll walk The Mass Path along the shore of Derrynane Bay. Later in the day, we return to the mainland and arrive at our former hunting lodge, now a 5-star hotel.

MEALS: B, D

OVERNIGHT: KENMARE

DAY 4 »

Kenmare

You're sure to enjoy this morning's visit with our friend, Benoit. He's a Frenchman who migrated to Ireland and brought with him a passion for crafting award-winning chocolates. Led by our own personal Willy Wonka, we wander through his factory (formerly a post office), learn how he creates the chocolates, and taste some of his favorites.

Many of the treats we have at our big daily breakfasts start on local farms. We'll get a look at one next. We visit an old farmhouse where we get an insider's look at traditional Irish life, including peat cutting and moonshine making.

Later in the day we return to our hotel and beautiful estate for a guided hawk walk and falconry session. Alongside an experienced falconer, we see the unique bond that is formed with these impressive birds of prey while learning how to handle and fly these birds for yourself.

MEALS: B

OVERNIGHT: KILLARNEY

DAY 5 »

Beara Peninsula

Today we visit the Beara Peninsula, the southernmost of the peninsulas on Ireland's southwest coast. On a morning walk we explore a mysterious stone circle, dating to the Bronze Age - 3,000 to 4,000 years ago. The circles were often built for ritual and ceremonial purposes, and were orientated on solar events, such as the position of the sun on the horizon or a solstice. With our guide, we pitch in our own theories of the construction and purpose of the site, which is the largest in County Kerry.

Following lunch, everyone has the option this afternoon to explore the hidden secrets of Kenmare Bay aboard sturdy sea kayaks. Paddling among the inlets and coves, your instructor points out its teeming wildlife, including seals and seabirds that flock to the area. As an option to kayaking, enjoy a guided visit to the magnificent 19th century woodland garden at Derreen. This breathtaking estate was once the home of the Marquis of Lansdowne, a descendant of Kenmare's founder Sir William Petty. Now it has a luxuriant display of rhododendrons, camellias, tree ferns and many fine semi-tropical shrubs and specimen trees that grow and flourish even at the same latitude as Newfoundland.

We reconvene this evening as we celebrate our week in Ireland. Enjoy dinner together at one of Kenmare's landmark restaurants followed by an invitation by our guide to join at the local pub for a night of Irish song and dance. This a wonderful opportunity for us to mingle with the locals. The pub is very much a part of Irish life and community.

MEALS: B, D

OVERNIGHT: KENMARE

DAY 5 »

Killarney

This morning we visit Muckross House, a magnificent Victorian mansion completed in 1843. The elegant house with its opulent rooms also plays host to a community of craft workers who demonstrate skills such as weaving, bookbinding, and pottery making. One of the few remaining indigenous oak woods of Ireland, dating back two centuries, surrounds the property. After exploring the estate's formal gardens, we walk through the grand oak woods, to pay a visit to the remarkably preserved Muckross Abbey, a 15th century roofless ruin with commanding views of Lough Leane.

This afternoon our Irish walking adventure comes to a close and we part company at the Killarney rail station.

MEALS: B

Tour Hotels



Great Southern

Built 160 years ago, this grand Killarney hotel has hosted demanding guests from Jackie Kennedy to the Duchess of York. The gracious rooms are a modern take on classic elegance. At breakfast, you'll appreciate that the hotel has its own in-house bakery.

NIGHTS: 2 nights



Sheen Falls Lodge

Overlooking picturesque Sheen Falls and just outside the village of Kenmare, it welcomes its guests to a collection of luxury cottages and villas. Sheen Falls Lodge is rated the #1 hotel in Ireland by Conde Nast Traveler's 2014 Gold List.

NIGHTS: 3 nights

Arrival & Departure

→ ARRIVAL DETAILS

START LOCATION: **Great Southern Killarney lobby**
START CITY: **Killarney**
START TIME: **12:00 PM**

→ DEPARTURE DETAILS

END LOCATION: **Rail Station**
END CITY: **Killarney**
END TIME: **1:00 PM**