

THEM EASTPORT OYSTER BOYS

March 24-April 1, 2007

Itinerary

Sat, March 24 **UNITED STATES TO SHANNON**

Depart Baltimore/Washington International Airport and catch the overseas flight out of Atlanta. You can enjoy in-flight entertainment and meal service as you cross the Atlantic overnight.

Sun, March 25 **SHANNON ARRIVAL & ENNISTYMON**

After customs and immigration formalities at Shannon Airport, your CIE Tours driver/guide will welcome you to Ireland and take you to your motorcoach. Depart Shannon and drive west through County Clare to the town of Ennistymon. Check into your hotel and have the morning and early afternoon at your leisure for rest & relaxation. Later that afternoon, depart Ennistymon and drive a short distance to the coast to view the Cliffs of Moher, which rise 700 feet above the Atlantic breakers and extend for five miles along the coast. This evening join the rest of your group for dinner in the hotel restaurant.

DINNER & OVERNIGHT: FALLS HOTEL, ENNISTYMON

Mon, March 26 **BURREN CENTER & GALWAY**

This morning drive north to the town of Kilfenora to visit the Burren Center, which explains how this unique limestone region was formed. Learn about the unique flora that thrives in the sheltered crevices and the many prehistoric monuments. Also visit Poul nabrone Dolman, one of the most dramatic stone grave markers built about 4000 years ago. Like a piece of sculpture, it is one of the most photographed in the world. Continue your drive north to the town of Clarinbridge and enjoy a stop to relax and dine on your own at Moran's Oyster Cottage on the Weir. Then travel north into Galway, a bustling city with unique Irish flavor. Upon arrival check into your hotel and enjoy some free time before dining in the hotel restaurant.

DINNER & OVERNIGHT: GREAT SOUTHERN HOTEL, GALWAY

Tue, March 27 **TOUR TO THE ARAN ISLANDS**

Today visit the Aran Islands, which are located in Galway Bay 30 miles west of Galway city. Irish is still the vernacular in this isolated setting and the islanders retain many traditional ways of farming and fishing. The land is extremely stony and the islanders have formed dry stone walls to protect the windswept fields. The popular hand-knit aran sweaters evolved from unique patterns used by each family and the oiled wool repelled the rain. Take a ferry from Rossaveal on the mainland to Aran Mor, the largest of the three islands. Travel around the island by minibus with a local driver who will explain many of the island traditions to you. At the western end of Inis Mór visit Dun Aengus. This vast fortification is perched on the side of a cliff that falls to the Atlantic Ocean 300 feet below. The site consists of three concentric enclosures and dates back to 1,000 BC or earlier. Return to Galway where you will have free time for independent activities and dining.

OVERNIGHT: GREAT SOUTHERN HOTEL, GALWAY

Wed, March 28

CONNEMARA & BODHRAN MUSIC STORE

Depart Galway and head west through the Connemara region known for its constantly changing skies and subtle colors. Drive past the gentle hills of the Maamturk Mountains and the Twelve Bens. You'll see patches of bog where people cut peat for their own use and sheep graze freely. Continue to the town of Roundstone and stop at the music store where you will find an array of traditional Irish music instruments. Continue on to the coastal town of Clifden for some time to wander on your own before motoring on through the scenic countryside to the town of Renvyle. Upon arrival check into your hotel for dinner and overnight stay.

DINNER & OVERNIGHT: RENVYLE HOUSE HOTEL, RENVYLE

Thu, March 29

KYLEMORE ABBEY, LOUGH CORRIB & CONG

Today's itinerary takes you to Kylemore Abbey, a 19th century neo-Gothic mansion overlooking Kylemore Lake. Originally a private residence, it is now a prestigious girls' school. Visit the chapel and the restored Victorian gardens, which have recently won awards. Continue on to the town of Cong, which borders Lough Corrib, where you will enjoy a short cruise on this charming body of water. This lake contains many islands with historic ruins and a wealth of wildlife. The on-board commentary will point out the highlights and the scenery is delightful as you wind through part of the lake. Check into your castle hotel and enjoy your luxurious stay. Ashford Castle dates from the 13th century but today offers every modern comfort and a full range of sporting activities, including golf and horse riding. In the evening meet your fellow travelers for a superb dinner in the castle's fine restaurant.

DINNER & OVERNIGHT: ASHFORD CASTLE HOTEL, CONG

Fri, March 30

CONG WALKING TOUR & WESTPORT

Cong was the setting for the movie "The Quiet Man," which was filmed with John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara in 1952. Take a short walking tour through the village to discover places that appeared in the production. Finish your walk at the Quiet Man Heritage Cottage, filled with memorabilia of the movie. Leave Cong and drive through the town of Leenan to view Aasleagh Falls, which marks the place where the Erriff River flows into Ireland's only major fjord, Killary Harbour. Admire the scenic falls and take some photos. Drive along the fiord and up through the towns of Delphi and Louisburgh. Then continue north to view the pilgrimage mountain of Croagh Patrick, where tradition maintains that St. Patrick fasted for 40 days. Arrive in Westport and check into your hotel. Enjoy the balance of the afternoon at leisure with dining in town. Possible golfing opportunities.

OVERNIGHT: WYATT HOTEL, WESTPORT

Sat, March 31

ENNIS AT LEISURE

Depart Westport and travel south through County Galway and via Gort to Ennis, County Clare. Upon arrival check into your hotel and the rest of the day is free for independent activities and dining in hotel that evening. Possible golfing opportunities.

OVERNIGHT: TEMPLE GATE HOTEL, ENNIS

Sun, April 1

RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES

Sadly, today your Irish vacation has come to its final day. Transfer to Shannon Airport in good time to check in for your flight. You may do some last minute shopping at the duty free stores. Then clear U.S. Immigration before boarding your aircraft and flying across the Atlantic Ocean back to the United States.