

A Pilgrimage Through Ireland

Exploring our Celtic Spirituality

September 30 – October 9, 2010

As you can see by the day-to-day itinerary, the focus of this trip will be on spiritual matters but Irish history and the natural beauty of Ireland will be an integral part of the adventure.

The guide in Ireland will be Marianne Gorman who is considered to be one of the best guides in Ireland. Marianne is very experienced, has a great knowledge of history as well as Celtic Spirituality. She is a member of the Royal Society of Antiquaries which was founded in 1849 to “preserve, examine, and illustrate all ancient monuments, manners, arts and customs of the past as connected with the antiquities, language, literature and history of Ireland”.

Accommodations have been arranged in centrally located, good first class hotels that will serve a hearty Irish breakfast each morning and the group will dine together on four of the eight nights we are in Ireland. Our guide will be happy to offer suggestions for pubs and restaurants for lunches and non-included dinners.

DAY 1, Thursday, September 30 2010 - Depart the **U.S.** for our nonstop trans-Atlantic flight on **Delta Airlines** from **New York’s JFK Airport.. Meals on board.**

DAY 2, Friday, October 1 - We arrive in **Dublin** where we meet our guide and driver and, on our way to check into the **Brooks Hotel**, we will take a panoramic tour of **Dublin** and see the statue lined **O’Connell St.**, **Georgian Squares**, and **Phoenix Park**. After check in we will visit **St. Audoen’s Church**, which is the only medieval parish church still functioning and **St. Michan’s Church** where we will have a guided tour of its famous vaults where we will see mummified remains. We will finish our afternoon in **St. Patrick’s Cathedral** for Evensong. Tonight we will enjoy a “**welcome to Ireland**” dinner in our hotel. **D**

DAY 3, Saturday, October 2 - Today we travel to **Newgrange** for a visit to the Stone Age passage graves and the **Hill of Tara** where disputes between clans were settled and new laws were passed. We will see the **Hill of Slane** where St. Patrick lit a Paschal fire as a challenge to the pagan High King of Tara and visit **Monasterboice** to see **Muiredach’s High Cross**, the finest high cross in all of Ireland. Later we will visit **Mellifont Abbey**, founded in 1142 and the first **Cistercian Abbey** in Ireland. There will be free time to visit one of the many pubs or restaurants for dinner this evening. Overnight **Dublin. B**

DAY 4, Sunday, October 3 - A full Irish breakfast followed by a visit to **Kilmainham Gaol**, this infamous gaol was used from the 1780’s to the 1920’s covering some of the most heroic and tragic events in Ireland’s emergence as a modern nation. Our exploration will take us to **Christchurch Cathedral** and the **National Museum** where we will see the many Celtic artifacts displayed there. Afterwards, we will visit **Trinity College** and see the **Book of Kells**, the most richly illuminated of Ireland’s medieval manuscripts. On the grounds of **Dublin Castle**, we will explore the **Chester Beatty Library** which contains 2 collections – “**Sacred Traditions**” and “**Artistic Traditions**”. The library is considered one of the best sources of scholarly investigation of both the Old and New Testaments. There will be some free time this afternoon for further exploration of **Dublin** on your own. Places of interest might include the **National Gallery**. Dinner on your own and overnight in **Dublin. B**

DAY 5, Monday, October 4 - We leave **Dublin** and travel to **Powerscourt Gardens**, known as the finest gardens in Ireland for their design as well as their dramatic setting at the foot of **Great Sugar Loaf Mountain**. We continue to **Glendalough**, the setting of some of Ireland’s most important monastic settlements. We will go to the visitor’s center and see a film, “**Ireland of the Monasteries**” which will give us a brief history of the monastery. We will then take a pilgrimage walk through **St. Kevin’s Monastic City** and visit the remains of **St. Kevin’s Cell**, **the Reefert Church** and **Tempall na Skellig**. Finally, we arrive at **Kilkenny**, our home for the next 2 nights. **Dinner and overnight Hibernian Hotel in Kilkenny. BD**

DAY 6, Tuesday, October 5 - After breakfast, we will visit the **Rock of Cashel**, once the seat of the Kings of Munster and then a huge religious center. The remains of much of the medieval complex are still standing. We will return to **Kilkenny** to visit **St. Canice's Cathedral** and the **Kells Augustinian Priorty**. A visit to the **Kilkenny Design Centre** is a must. Here we will see a collection of the most eminent Irish crafts and designers – all under one roof. Overnight **Kilkenny. B**

DAY 7, Wednesday, October 6 - We travel to **Clonmacnoise**, the medieval monastery by the **River Shannon** founded by St. Ciaran in 545-54. After touring the ruins, we continue to **Clonfert Cathedral**. This tiny cathedral occupies the site of a monastery which was founded by St. Brendan in AD 563. We continue to **Galway** where we will visit the **Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas**, Galway's finest medieval building. We will see the **Spanish Arch** where traders unloaded their ships. There will be some time for a stroll through the old city before we have dinner and overnight in the **Galway Meyrick Hotel on Eyre Square. BD**

DAY 8, Thursday, October 7 - Breakfast and then depart by ferry from **Rossaveel** for the **Aran Islands** where we will tour by coach and visit **Dun Aengus**, the Iron Age fort built as four concentric stone walls. The fort has been called the "most magnificent barbaric monument in Europe". We will visit **Na Seacht dTeampaill**, the **Seven Churches** which make up a monastic settlement dedicated to St. Breacan. **Dara Molloy** will be our special guest lecturer giving us intriguing information regarding the Islands. We will return to **Galway** for our overnight. You are free for dinner this evening. **B**

DAY 9, Friday, October 8 - We travel through **Connemara** to see the spectacular landscape dotted with bogs, wild coastline and rugged mountains. We will visit **Kylemore Abbey**, a lakeside castle that was later turned into an abbey when Benedictine nuns sought refuge here. We will return to **Galway** for some afternoon free time before we board the **Corrib Princess at Woodquay** for a farewell dinner cruise which includes wine, music and Irish Dancing. Overnight **Galway. BD**

DAY 10, Saturday, October 9, 2010 - We will travel to **Shannon** where we will board our nonstop return flight to the **United States** arriving back to **New York's JFK Airport** this afternoon. B and meals on aircraft.

B – Breakfast D – Dinner

Pricing

\$2,360.00 per person double occupancy
(Does not include air estimated to be \$750.00 per person)
\$460.00 per person single supplement

\$200.00 per person deposit due with application
Final payment due June 15, 2010

Cancellations

April 2, 2010 - June 1, 2010	\$100.00 per person
June 2 – July 31, 2010	\$200.00 per person
August 1 or later	No Refund