



Pre-Departure Information

TREASURES OF IRELAND'S WEST COAST



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WELCOME!

We're delighted to welcome you on this adventure! This booklet is designed to guide you in the practical details for preparing for your trip. As you read, if any questions come to mind, feel free to give us a call or send us an email—we're here to help.

PLEASE SEND US

- Trip Application:** Complete, sign, and return your Trip Application form as soon as possible if you have not already done so.
- Medical Form:** Complete, sign, and return your Medical Form as soon as possible if you have not already done so.
- Air Schedule:** Please forward a copy of your email confirmation, which shows your exact flight arrival and departure times. Refer to the Arrival & Departure section of the Detailed Trip Itinerary for instructions. Please feel free to review your proposed schedule with Wilderness Travel before purchasing your tickets if you have any questions about the timing of your arrival and departure flights or would like to confirm we have the required minimum number of participants to operate the trip.

PLEASE CAREFULLY REVIEW

- Travel Documents & Medical Information:** Carefully review the Travel Documents and Medical Information sections of this booklet to familiarize yourself with Passport and Visa entry requirements for your destination, as well as any recommended inoculations.
- Optional Travel Insurance:** Review the Trip Cancellation & Transfer Fee Schedule included in the Detailed Itinerary. We recommend that all trip members purchase Travel Insurance.
- Final Documents:** Approximately three weeks before your trip, we will send you final departure documents, including hotel and local contact information and rendezvous instructions.

QUESTIONS?

Call: 1-800-368-2794, go to our **website** (www.wildernesstravel.com) or e-mail us at: info@wildernesstravel.com.

Travel Information

PASSPORT

A valid passport is required for your trip. Be sure to check the expiration date. Your passport must be valid for six months after your date of exit from Ireland. In addition, we recommend your passport have at least two completely blank visa pages for every country you will be visiting. It is very important that the blank pages say “Visas” at the top. The last few pages of your passport, which say “Amendments and Endorsements,” and the final page of your passport, which may not have a page number, are not considered to be legitimate visa pages. The service of adding pages for visas was discontinued as of January 1, 2016. You can request a new passport through **US Passport Services Office** (<http://travel.state.gov/passport>) or use a visa service agency, which can take care of your passport renewal and expedite the process, if needed. We recommend **Passport Visas Express** (<http://www.passportvisasexpress.com/?affId=2120>). Be sure to allow sufficient time to acquire this before your trip.

It is a good idea to carry photocopies of your passport’s photo page and any acquired visa pages for your trip (if applicable) in case your passport is lost or as an additional piece of identification, as well as two extra passport photos.

VISAS

US citizens do not need a visa for countries visited on this trip. If you are a citizen of any country other than the US, check with a local consulate for entry requirements.

MONEY

The Euro is the official currency of Ireland. The most convenient way to obtain Euros is to use your debit card at ATMs in Ireland. If you plan to get cash this way, it’s wise to get a list of ATM locations in advance online or from your bank. Traveler’s checks are not recommended as they can be difficult and time-consuming to cash. Your Trip Leader will advise you where and when money can be changed. Major credit cards are accepted in most shop and restaurants in cities and larger towns.

To use an ATM internationally, you must have a four-digit PIN. If you plan to use your credit cards, inform your credit card company before your departure that you will be using the card abroad.

You will need to budget spending money for gratuities, any meals not included in the trip itinerary, international and domestic airport departure taxes, and personal items such as beverages. Meals can be expensive. Dinners in a middle-range restaurant can easily cost \$30 per person.

TIPPING

Tipping is completely discretionary, but over the years, clients have asked us for tipping guidelines to reward guides for outstanding service. A range of reference would be \$75-100 USD per trip member for the Trip Leader and \$50-75 USD per trip member for the Assistant Trip Leader, which can be given in either USD or Euros. The Trip Leader takes care of gratuities for luggage handling, waiters at restaurants, and local guides and drivers who are with the group for only a short time.

SPECIAL DIETS

We will do our best to accommodate special dietary needs, however, please keep in mind that certain cultural differences or limitations due to logistics can make it extremely difficult and at times impossible to accommodate dietary restrictions. Please inform us at least eight weeks before your trip if you have a restricted diet. It is important to bring a flexible attitude and supplemental snacks.

COMMUNICATIONS

Telephone

The international dialing code for Ireland is 353. Please contact your cell phone company for specific instructions for international use.

Email & Internet Access

Internet access is available at all of our hotels.

ELECTRICITY

Ireland has 220-volt current. Plugs usually have two or three prongs. You will need to bring a voltage converter and plug adapter for appliance use in hotels.

Medical Information

The following recommendations should be used as a guideline only; consult your physician for medical advice. It is vital that you let Wilderness Travel know of any medical problems, allergies, or physical limitations you may have. Please fill out and return the personal medical questionnaire, and feel free to consult us if you have any questions about your ability to undertake this particular trip.

Wilderness Travel is not a medical facility and has no expertise or responsibility regarding what medications or inoculations you and your physician decide are necessary for your safe participation in the trip.

Traveler's health information is available from the **Centers for Disease Control**. (<http://www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm>)
Medical travel products are available from **Travel Health Medicine** (<http://www.travmed.com>) and from **Magellan's Travel Supplies**. (<http://www.magellans.com>)

INOCULATIONS

No inoculations are required. However, it is easy to get a small cut, so a tetanus booster is strongly recommended (good for 10 years). If you take prescription medicines, be sure to bring enough for the duration of your trip.

STAYING HEALTHY

You can reduce your risk of getting a cold on the trip by washing your hands often and not touching your face with unwashed hands. If you arrive on the trip with a cold or feel the symptoms of a cold, avoid close contact with others and move away from people before coughing or sneezing. The CDC recommends coughing or sneezing into a tissue or into the crook of your elbow or upper sleeve, not your hands.

Helpful Information

PHOTOGRAPHY

Camera Recommendations

With the many advances in digital technology, a simple compact digital camera or even your smartphone is capable of taking pictures suitable for the needs of most people. For higher quality images and the ability to use long lenses for closer wildlife pictures, a DSLR camera is well worthwhile, though heavier. Most digital cameras and phones have good video options, but you may want to consider a GoPro for a lightweight, waterproof option. Always practice ahead of time with new equipment and bring your manual with you. Camera equipment is available for rent from **Borrow Lenses** (<https://www.borrowlenses.com/discount/wildernesstravel>), with a 10% discount offered to Wilderness Travel clients. This is an especially good idea for renting large zoom lenses that you may need for just one trip.

Camera Accessories

We recommend bringing at least two large capacity memory cards or a small digital storage unit (or tablet) to back up your photos, freeing space on your memory cards. Don't forget to bring a battery charger and a backup battery so one is always charged and ready to use. For trips where you may be away from power sources for multiple days, consider looking into a solar-powered battery charger or buying additional backup batteries, and check that you have the appropriate adapter for the electrical outlets in your destination.

Sharing Your Images

We would love for you to share photos from your trip, and with your permission, may even use your photos in our marketing materials or on our photo blog. We request that you send us a small sample of your best images. Please email your photos to wtphotoblog@gmail.com or tag us **@WildernessTravel** on social media.

Photography Etiquette

When taking pictures of local people, be aware of cultural considerations. Approaching people with a warm smile and using polite gestures or simple phrases to ask permission to photograph them usually works well. It is always recommended to engage people in conversation before asking to photograph them, but if people do not wish to have their photo taken, please honor their requests. We urge travelers to avoid giving money in exchange for photo opportunities, which makes it harder for future travelers to have a meaningful personal interaction with local people. Please always heed your Trip Leader's guidelines for what is appropriate.

BEING A CONSIDERATE TRAVELER

Please show respect for the cultures we are visiting by observing local customs concerning appropriate dress, particularly in sacred places. Your Trip Leader is always available to answer any questions that you may have regarding this. If it is necessary to use a cell phone during the trip, please do so privately. Smoking is rarely an issue these days, but if you do smoke, please do so only away from the group.

Packing List

THE ESSENTIALS

- Air tickets (or E-tickets)
- Passport
- One other picture ID, such as a driver's license
- Expense money

WT GEAR STORE

To help you prepare for your next WT adventure, we've put together a great collection of top brands including Patagonia, Outdoor Research, Eagle Creek, and more at our **WT Gear Store** (<http://wildernesstravel.newheadings.com>).

LUGGAGE

- Soft-sided suitcase, with a small padlock (must be unlocked for air travel).
- Daypack, large enough for a jacket or rain gear, water bottle, camera, and other items you want on the trail. Note: Very few daypacks or fanny packs are waterproof and any items that you need to keep dry should be put in a waterproof stuff sack inside your pack.
- Waterproof cover for your daypack
- (Optional) Small roll-up bag to carry home purchases.

NOTES ON CLOTHING

Bring clothes you find most comfortable for hiking. The weather might be warm enough for shorts on some days, but include lightweight long pants for cool weather. Remember, this is Ireland—expect cold, rainy weather at any time and prepare to layer accordingly.

Please pack everything in one piece of luggage, as this simplifies transportation of luggage en route. Although airline service to Ireland is generally reliable, it is best to wear or carry your hiking boots with you on your flights in the event that your luggage is lost or delayed. Likewise, don't pack valuables, such as travel documents, camera gear, or prescription medicines in your checked luggage.

CLOTHING

The clothing list below is provided as a guideline only.

- Above-the-ankle hiking boots with Vibram rubber lug soles and good ankle support. Good footwear is essential to enjoy the varied conditions and off-trail hiking we do on this trip. Make sure your boots have been waterproofed—this is Ireland after all!
- Good quality breathable rain gear, such as a Gore-Tex rain/wind shell jacket with hood and Gore-Tex rain/wind pants—these are critical. You may want to bring rain pants with side zippers, so that you can put them on or remove them without taking off your hiking boots. Weather conditions change very quickly.
- Lightweight fleece or wool sweater for layering
- Long-sleeved shirt. Quick-drying “travel” fabrics like nylon are recommended.
- T-shirts or short-sleeved shirts. Synthetics like polypropylene or Capilene work well.
- Hiking pants. Lightweight synthetic hiking pants are a practical choice. Jeans are not recommended because they take a long time to dry if they get wet.
- Hiking shorts. Quick-drying fabrics are recommended.
- Shade hat with a wide brim—preferably a waterproof one you can use as a rain hat as well
- Comfortable shoes for walking in towns
- Hiking socks. Some people like the thick Thorlo-type socks with padded toes and heels, or a combination of an outer sock and synthetic liner sock.
- Lightweight fleece or wool hat for cool days
- Lightweight fleece or wool gloves
- Underwear/sleepwear. Synthetics dry faster.
- Casual city/hotel attire

HIKING BOOTS

Your boots must be waterproof, comfortable, and broken in, with an excellent tread! If you are uncertain about the tread quality of your boots, buy a new pair rather than risk slipping on rocky or muddy trails. You will be hiking off-trail, along shepherd’s tracks and through long grass, which can be wet. Full hiking boots with ankle support are a must. Leather boots are preferable to Gore-Tex boots, which can soak through in rainy conditions (this is Ireland!). Hiking shoes (below the ankle) do not give adequate support for the uneven terrain. Running shoes cannot be worn on trails—they get wet and do not provide adequate support. You can pack running shoes for wearing in town and at night. Please wear or hand-carry your hiking boots on the flights to Ireland. Nearly everything else can be replaced in case of baggage loss, but not a pair of well-fitted, fully broken-in hiking boots.

EQUIPMENT

- Two reusable water bottles, 1 qt. capacity
- Good quality sunglasses with case
- Nylon or Gore-Tex gaiters to keep the lower legs of your pants dry on hikes
- Sturdy plastic garbage bags to line your luggage and protect it from rain

PERSONAL FIRST AID SUPPLIES

Every trip member should bring a small kit for personal use. Your own experience will influence your choices.

- Sunscreen SPF 30 or higher and lip balm with sunscreen. We recommend mineral-based sunscreens with zinc oxide or titanium dioxide because they do not contain harsh chemicals that are harmful to the environment. Brands such as Honest Company, Badger, and Alba Botanica are found in most sporting goods stores and drugstores.
- Aspirin, ibuprofen, or Tylenol for muscle pain or headaches, Tylenol PM for sleep
- Blister kit. Look for the long-lasting gel-type bandages that you can apply directly on blisters, such as Band-Aid
- Advanced Healing Bandages or Curad Gel Multi-Day Bandages. “Liquid band-aids,” such as New-Skin, are useful because they dry rapidly to form a tough protective cover over a blister.
- Prescription medications properly labeled
- Spare contact lenses or spare prescription glasses

OPTIONAL ITEMS

- Money belt or neck pouch. Always carry your passport, credit cards, and cash with you in a money belt or neck pouch tucked down inside your shirt or blouse.
- Hiking Poles. Hiking with a collapsible hiking pole, such as those by Leki and REI, helps to distribute your body weight, takes pressure off your knees, and improves your balance. Some hikers like using one pole, and others prefer hiking with two poles.
- Voltage converter and plug adapter for appliance use in hotels. Europe has 220-volt current. Plugs usually have two or three prongs.
- Tevas or other sturdy sandals
- Flashlight and extra batteries
- Lightweight synthetic long underwear if you tend to get cold; it can also double as sleepwear
- Waterproof stuff sack to keep items dry inside your daypack
- Umbrella
- Washcloth, if you like to use one (most European hotels do not provide them)

Reading List

ESSENTIAL READING

Eyewitness Guide Ireland

Eyewitness Guides

2015, 396 PAGES

This superb guide is a wonderfully illustrated introduction to the country, featuring photographs, maps and short background essays on history and culture.

A Traveller's History of Ireland

Peter Neville

2009, 288 PAGES

From the Celts to the Norman invasions to modern-day Ireland, this short history is highly recommended for those who would like a brief overview of the Emerald Isle through the centuries.

Dubliners

James Joyce

1992, 317 PAGES

James Joyce's unsurpassed collection of short stories depicting ordinary life in Dublin among the lower middle class -- a milestone in the history of prose fiction.

Ireland Map

Michelin

2013

A colorful map of Ireland at a scale of 1:400,000, featuring insets of the road approaches to major cities, as well as an index to cities, towns and villages.

The Aran Islands

Tim Robinson

1992, 208 PAGES

A much-loved turn-of-the-century account of the islands (as contrasted with mainland Ireland), drenched in the Celtic soul of the Irish.

ALSO RECOMMENDED

For the Love of Ireland

Susan Cahill

2001, 458 PAGES

Organized geographically, this rich anthology introduces Ireland through the words and lives of such luminaries as James Joyce, W.B. Yeats, Frank McCourt and Samuel Beckett.

The Book of Kells

Bernard Meehan

1995, 95 PAGES

Written by the keeper of manuscripts at Trinity College, this book features 110 color illustrations, including enlargements, of some of the more spectacular decorations in this most famous of medieval manuscripts.

Dublin Map

Borch Maps

2014

A laminated, folded map of the city center of Dublin, at a scale of 1:12,000.

In Search of Ancient Ireland

Carmel McCaffrey

2003, 304 PAGES

This spirited, illustrated history, the companion to a PBS documentary series, traces the foundation, archaeology and legends of ancient Ireland from 9000 B.C. to 1167 A.D. with style and substance.

Ireland, In Word and Image

Jay Adlersberg

2013, 276 PAGES

Jay Adlersberg's visual celebration of Ireland is accompanied by literary excerpts and poetry from Oscar Wilde, W.B. Yeats, James Joyce, Samuel Beckett and many others. With 75 gorgeous color photographs.

A Course Called Ireland

Tom Coyne

2010, 320 PAGES

Not just a quest to play every seaside course in the Emerald Isle (60 by the time he got to Ulster), Tom Coyne's entertaining portrait of Ireland, its people, pubs and quirks illuminates "Uncommon Acts of Irish Hospitality."

McCarthy's Bar, A Journey of Discovery in Ireland

Pete McCarthy

2003, 352 PAGES

A droll account of McCarthy's encounters on a bar-hopping jaunt from Cork along the west coast to Donegal. His motto, assiduously followed, was never to pass up a bar with his name on it!

How the Irish Saved Civilization

Thomas Cahill

1995, 236 PAGES

This bestselling history tells the generally unknown story of Ireland's preservation of classical learning in the Dark Ages, revealing how the saints and scholars, monks and scribes labored to reproduce the important texts that spread as they evangelized Europe.

Ireland Unhinged, Encounters With a Wildly Changing Country

David Monagan

2014, 300 PAGES

Seeking the essence of Irish identity, American transplant David Monagan travels the length and width of Eire to explain the people's mirth, soulfulness and eccentricities that endure despite the country's recent economic collapse.

Celtic Art

Venceslas Kruta

2015, 290 PAGES

A beautiful sourcebook that profiles the art of the entire Celtic world -- not just Britain, but also France, Italy, Hungary, Czech Republic, Germany and Austria. The collection spans the fifth century BCE to the eighth century and includes items like sculpture, manuscript, jewelry and housewares.

Connemara Mollie, An Irish Journey on Horseback

Hilary Bradt

2012, 146 PAGES

Hilary Bradt (publisher of Bradt Guides) recalls her journey across rural Ireland among the people of Galway, Mayo, Clare and Kerry in the 1980s in this sweet -- and sublimely affecting -- memoir.

Irish Fairy and Folk Tales

W.B. Yeats

2004, 380 PAGES

Edited by the Nobel Prize-winning poet who spearheaded the Celtic Renaissance in the early 20th century, these enchanting stories introduce a cast of changelings, ghosts, mermaids, demons, saints, priests and fairies.

The Celtic Myths, A Guide to the Ancient Gods and Legends

Miranda Aldhouse-Green

2015, 208 PAGES

A vivid introduction to Irish and Welsh folklore.

Aldhouse-Green outlines recurring motifs and characters alongside quotes, full-text stories, notes on the region's archaeological finds and plenty of two-color illustrations.

Wild Decembers

Edna O'Brien

2001, 272 PAGES

A haunting novel of clan enmities and forbidden love in rural Ireland. Few writers have as sure a sense of place as Edna O'Brien, whose lyrical prose builds inevitably toward final tragedy.

Real Irish Food, 150 Classic Recipes from the Old Country

David Bowers

2014, 312 PAGES

Lavishly photographed and chock full of simple Irish recipes, this book by an Irishman food writer abolishes long-held ideas about what really is "native" Irish cuisine. Eschewing tired recipes of corned beef and cabbage and fish and chips, Bowers features hearty breakfasts, rich stews and subtly sweet desserts.

Magnum Ireland

John Banville

2005, 256 PAGES

This evocative collection of 250 photographs captures the people, landscapes and changing face of Ireland from the 1950s to the 21st century.

The Hill Bachelors

William Trevor

2001, 256 PAGES

No one writes better short fiction than William Trevor.

This collection of 12 stories captures the life and people of rural Ireland.

Dublin, A Cultural History

Siobhan Kilfeather

2007, 300 PAGES

This literary guide to Ireland's capital, organized by definitive events and personalities, covers Dublin's beginnings as a 10th-century Norse trading center to the establishment of Trinity College and the election of Mary Robinson.

Dublin, The Making of a Capital City

David Dickson

2014, 736 PAGES

Dickson's expansive, magisterial work covers 1,400 years of Dublin history, reminding us of the unique importance of Ireland's capital.

The Pirate Queen, In Search of Grace O'Malley and Other Legendary Women of the Sea

Barbara Sjoholm

2004, 355 PAGES

Tales of plucky female pirates and explorers in the North Atlantic. Long interested in women and seafaring, Sjoholm journeyed from Ireland out to the Shetland and Faroe Islands, Iceland and Norway collecting folk-tales, stories and historical accounts of these remarkable seafaring heroines.

**Seafaring Women: Adventures of Pirate Queens,
Female Stowaways, and Sailors' Wives**

David Cordingly

2007

A fascinating survey of women who went to sea, as wives, crossdressing cabin boys or even lighthouse keepers, during the age of sail.

Stones of Aran, Labyrinth

Tim Robinson

2009, 528 PAGES

In the second volume of Robinson's journey through Ireland's Aran islands, the poetic mapmaker turns inward to follow the labyrinthine coast of the largest of the islands.

The Gathering

Anne Enright

2007, 260 PAGES

The Hagerty clan gathers in Dublin to mourn the loss of a son in this family saga, winner of the 2007 Booker Prize. Enright draws you in with raw emotion, unblinking prose and promise of redemption.

Revised: May 23, 2019

**Seamanship, A Voyage Along the Wild Coasts of the
British Isles**

Adam Nicolson

2007, 192 PAGES

Nicolson offers an engrossing account of a coastal voyage from Cornwall, along the western coast of Ireland, out to the Faroes and to Orkney in this brief hymn to the sea.

Stones of Aran: Pilgrimage

Seamus Heaney

2008, 395 PAGES

A richly layered hymn to Arainn, largest of the Aran Islands, Robinson's adopted home.

TransAtlantic

Colum McCann

2014, 336 PAGES

National Book Award-winner Colum McCann penned this profound meditation on identity and history that focuses on three Atlantic crossings that connect the US and Canada with Europe.