



CLASSIC
EDELWEISS TOURS

IRELAND AND THE WILD ATLANTIC WAY

“ Discover spectacular landscapes along the wild Atlantic coast and the typical Irish hospitality. ”

RIDING DAY 1 : DUBLIN - BELFAST

Standard Route (270 km / 168 miles)

Welcome to the Emerald Isle! Our first riding day in Ireland will take us out of the Republic of Ireland and into Northern Ireland. On our way we will be able to take a look at the long and varied history of this fascinating island. Our first stop Trim Castle offers us a glimpse into the long history of foreign rule in Ireland and also provides a fantastic picture stop. From here we swing north and head towards the Irish Sea and the border. Once across the border we will hug the coast as we continue on our route towards Belfast, the capital of Northern Ireland.

Highlights:

#1: Trim Castle



Trim Castle rose to fame in 1995 when Mel Gibson used it as a film set for his epic film "Braveheart". Originally constructed in the 12th century by Norman invaders, the castle offers a glimpse into the middle ages like few others. Don't forget to bring your camera!

#2: Belfast



The history of Northern Ireland's capital is long and for outsiders often difficult to understand. Once part of what was known in the tourism industry as the Four Fearsome Bs - Beirut, Baghdad, Bosnia, Belfast - the city has prospered immensely from the Good Friday Agreement of 1998. Visitors are welcomed with open arms and the combination of Irish charm with Belfast's unique history has turned the city into a destination worth visiting.

RIDING DAY 2 : BELFAST - LETTERKENNY

Standard Route (240 km / 149 miles)

Today is all about Northern Ireland. We depart from Belfast to the north along the coast of the Irish Sea as we head for the first highlight of the day. Giant's Causeway is one of the most visited sites in the United Kingdom and you will soon see why. Just a hint, bring your camera. From there we head inland and visit the Bushmills Distillery, one of the oldest Whiskey distilleries in the world and an excellent opportunity to stock up on souvenirs for the way home. Soon it is time to say goodbye to Northern Ireland, as we pass through the town of Londonderry and back over the border into the Republic of Ireland. Our final stop of the day is the small town of Letterkenny.

Highlights:

#1: Antrim Coast



One of the most beautiful coastlines of the British Isles stretches along the north coast of Ireland. This is where the Atlantic and the Irish Sea meet, causing rough seas and massive swells. Sharp rocks pierce the ocean and small hidden coves mingle with fishing villages.

#2: Giant's Causeway



Formed over 50 million years ago as the result of a volcanic eruption, Giant's Causeway is made up of over 40.000 interlocking basalt columns and was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1986. The tops of the columns form stepping stones that lead from the cliff foot and disappear under the sea. Most of the columns are hexagonal, although there are also some with four, five, seven or eight sides. The tallest are about 12 metres (39 ft) high, and the solidified lava in the cliffs is 28 metres (92 ft) thick in places. Today, Giant's Causeway is one of the most famous sites in the UK and definitely worth a visit.

RIDING DAY 3 : LETTERKENNY - BALLINA

Standard Route (320 km / 199 miles)

Today it's all about the ride, as we head for an absolute highlight of the tour: the fantastic Wild Atlantic Way! Hugging the coast wherever possible, the Wild Atlantic Way will be our companion for the next few days, as we make our way south. Make sure to have your cameras fully charged, as there are some fantastic picture stops today, first out on the windswept shores of Horn Head and later at Slieve League, the highest cliffs in Ireland, reachable only by a rather interesting section of a single lane road. Our route will take us along the Atlantic Coast and through wide open moors, past crystal clear lakes and rivers, as we make our way towards Ballina and a well deserved pint.

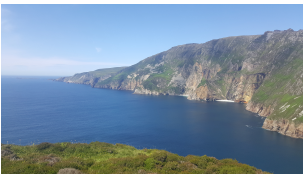
Highlights:

#1: Wild Atlantic Way



Stretching from Londonderry in the north to Cork in the south, the Wild Atlantic Way covers over 2500km. Made up of mainly small side roads the WAW features some of the most spectacular and scenic coastline in all of Europe and is a must see for anybody who wishes to experience Ireland up close and personal.

#2: Slieve League



Slieve League (in Irish "Sliabh Liag") offers some of the most impressive coastal cliff formations in all of Ireland. Rising up hundreds of feet from the wild Atlantic these rocks offer some of the best photo opportunities of the whole trip.

RIDING DAY 4 : BALLINA - GALWAY

Standard Route (285 km / 177 miles)

Today is another fantastic day of riding along Ireland's Wild Atlantic Way! Downpatrick Head, a small, incredibly picturesque spot of land is our first stop on a day, which not only offers curves but also features historical highlights galore. As we ride south we will visit the Stone Age, then ride some of the smallest hidden trails so far and make our way to Croagh Patrick, home to one of Ireland's most significant pilgrimages. Here we will also visit the famous Famine Memorial, then turn inland and tackle some of the most beautiful roads Ireland has to offer, before arriving in Galway, home to some of the best pubs to be found in Ireland!

Highlights:

#1: Downpatrick Head



The first highlight of the day is just a few short miles down the road. Surrounded by the waves of the Atlantic, this small spit of land was the site of one of St. Patrick's first churches in Ireland. Today a small statue stands on the foundations of the church and a World War II observation post serves as a reminder of the conflict that raged in the waters of the North Atlantic.

#2: Croagh Patrick



Croagh Patrick (nicknamed the Reek) has reputedly been a site of pagan pilgrimage, especially for the summer solstice, since 3,000 B.C. It is now a site of Christian pilgrimage associated with Saint Patrick who fasted on the summit for forty days in the fifth century A.D. Thousands of people climb the mountain every Reek Sunday, which is the last Sunday in July. The climb is led by Archbishop of Tuam every year. However the sheer volume of visitors - estimated at 40,000 per year - and the consequential erosion has caused safety concerns to both the Catholic church and local farmers who undertake safety measures. The pilgrimage was cancelled on safety grounds in 2015.

RIDING DAY 5 : GALWAY

Standard Route (240 km / 149 miles)

It's our first rest day of the trip. But this is no reason to leave the bikes in their parking lots! The Atlantic beckons so we head out of town and towards our first stop at Kylemore Abbey and its fantastic walled garden. A quick break to soak up some of the tranquil atmosphere of this unique location and soon we are back on the road, cruising along the small and twisty roads that cover so much of Galway. The town of Galway has a lot offer to as well, with the lively Latin quarter and the Spanish Arches offering an excellent mix of pubs, restaurants and shopping, as well as sightseeing, such as Galway Cathedral and the old city wall. A traditional pub crawl is the perfect way to end this truly excellent day.

Highlights:

#1: Kylemore Abbey



Built in 1871 as a private home for Mitchell Henry, a wealthy doctor from London, Kylemore Abbey is now a home to the Order of Benedictine Nuns who fled here from Ypres, Belgium, during World War 1. The abbey is rightfully famous for its beautifully restored Victorian walled garden which offers an excellent opportunity to relax and enjoy the

tranquillity of this unique location.

#2: Sky Road



One of the most beautiful roads in Ireland, the Sky Road offers spectacular views of the Connemara coastline. Even though the road is only 11km long it should be on every bikers bucket list!

RIDING DAY 6 : GALWAY - KILLARNEY

Standard Route (280 km / 174 miles)

We say goodbye to Galway as we make our way south and back onto the Wild Atlantic Way. Our highlight of the day is just around the corner, the awesome Cliffs of Moher. Rising to over 200m metres in height the cliffs are home to a large variety of seabirds and are some of the most photographed rock formations in Ireland. Bring your camera and spend some time soaking up the views! From here we head on down the coast, along roads less travelled towards the village of Killimer where we hop on the ferry and cross the river Shannon. A leisurely afternoon's ride takes us towards Tralee before we join the main road to Killarney and head to our hotel for the next two nights.

Highlights:

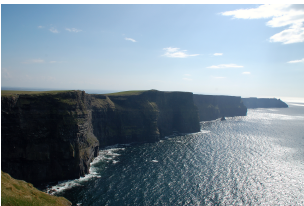
#1: Bothar nA hAillite



Gaelic is a wonderfully poetic language and the fantastically rocky coastline of the Bothar nA hAillite mirrors the phonetics perfectly. The Atlantic ocean seems to merge seamlessly with the granite coast, with huge boulders offering spectacular views of the Isles of Aran in the distance. Cutting through it all is one of the best coastal

roads on the island, full of tight corners and hidden dips. A true rollercoaster, seemingly made for two wheels.

#2: Cliffs of Moher



The iconic Cliffs of Moher are one of Ireland's most visited natural attractions. Stretching for 8km along the Atlantic coast of Clare, the cliffs reach 214m at their highest point at Knockardakin. Midway you can also discover O'Brien's Tower, a 19th-century viewing tower, and access 800m of protected cliff-side pathways with viewing areas. There are many vantage points from which to admire the awe-

inspiring Cliffs of Moher. From the main platform, you can see the south cliffs towards Hag's Head, a natural rocky promontory that resembles a seated woman. From the north platform, you can spot An Branán Mór sea stack, home of guillemots and razorbills, as well as the Aran Islands and, if the conditions are right, the famous surfing wave known as 'Aileen's'.

RIDING DAY 7 : KILLARNEY

Standard Route (200 km / 124 miles)

Welcome to Killarney and our second rest day of the tour. Today is a day full of decisions. Have a lie in and explore the town? Or perhaps take the bike out and explore the Ring of Kerry or the Dingle peninsula. Whatever your decision may be, be assured that Killarney never disappoints!.

Our first route takes us through the Gap of Dunloe towards the Ring of Kerry. Famous as one of the most beautiful coasts in Europe, this mountainous peninsula attracts more visitors than any other region in Ireland.

Highlights:

#1: Gap of Dunloe



It doesn't matter which tour you're on, or which tour guide you're with, when asked the question "Which is your favourite day on this tour?", you will almost always get a different answer. Today is an exception to this rule and one of the main reasons for this is the Gap of Dunloe!. This picturesque valley in the center of the Killarney National

Park can rightfully claim to be one of the most beautiful places in Ireland. Crystal clear lakes, connected by gently flowing streams and roaring cascades, combined with one of the best single lane roads of this trip, make the Gap of Dunloe a must-see of the tour!

#2: Ring of Kerry



Rated number 1 in the "11 things to do in Ireland before you die" list, the Ring of Kerry is a 170km loop road along the coast of the Kerry Peninsula. It features some of the best roads and most beautiful scenery of the entire island and is a must do for any visitor to Ireland.

RIDING DAY 8 : KILLARNEY - WATERFORD

Standard Route (240 km / 149 miles)

Today it's all about the famous Irish gift of Eloquence.

Heading east on the main road out of Killarney we make our way to the small town of Macroom where we will make our way along the river Lee towards Blarney castle, home of the famous Blarney Stone. After a quick kiss we head inland, across the Knockmealdown mountains and along small country lanes towards Waterford, our destination for tonight.

Highlights:

#1: Blarney Castle



Home of the famous Blarney Stone, Blarney Castle is another must do on any trip to Ireland. Kissing the stone requires some fairly backbreaking contortions but the gift of eloquence awaits all who manage this feat.

The castle itself is also home to some unique features such as a poison garden and a beautiful rock close, which contains some stunning rock formations with names such as "Druids Circle" and "Wishing Steps".

#2: The Vee



Not far from our lunch stop lies the Vee, a narrow valley that cuts through the Knockmeladown Mountains heading North to South and offers one of the best roads in the south of Ireland. A delightful mix of narrow forest roads, wide open mountain sections and even switchbacks turn this ride into a motorcycle dream. The view from the top

isn't bad either.

RIDING DAY 9 : WATERFORD - DUBLIN

Standard Route (210 km / 130 miles)

It's our last riding day on this tour, but this does not mean we are going to go easy. County Wexford and County Wicklow are full of hidden treasures and small backcountry roads. Heading north we go through Thomastown and then across the Blackstairs Mountains as we head for the highlight of the day, the ancient monastic settlement of Glendalough. Famous for its beautiful Celtic architecture and fantastic scenery this is an excellent spot to give our camera a proper workout. Heading north through the Wicklow Mountains National Park we finally head into Dublin, our final stop on this tour of the friendliest island in the world.

Highlights:

#1: Glendalough



For thousands of years people have been drawn to 'the valley of the two lakes' for its spectacular scenery, rich history, archaeology and abundant wildlife. Glendalough is a remarkable place that will still your mind, inspire your heart and fill your soul.


Glendalough is home to one of the most important monastic sites in Ireland. This early Christian monastic settlement was founded by St. Kevin in the 6th century and from this developed the "Monastic City".

#2: Wicklow Mountains National Park



Wicklow Mountains National Park covers part of a mountain range that extends over most of County Wicklow on the east coast of Ireland. The upper slopes and rounded peaks are blanketed with heath and bog. The open vistas are interrupted only by forestry plantations and the winding mountain roads.

Fast-flowing streams descend into the deep lakes of the wooded valleys and continue their course into the surrounding lowlands. A fantastic area for hikers, bikers and nature lovers of all kinds.



We wish you a wonderful tour.

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