

ITINERARY FOR IRELAND I

Haunted by History, Rich in Legends

June 24 – July 3, 2012

Cost: \$2,670 with credit. Includes airfare, ground transportation, entry fees, and all lodging with full Irish breakfast. \$2,500 without credit

Day 1, June 24, 2012 – Sunday – Leave Denver or airport of your choice – Arrive in Dublin (next day)

Day 2 – June 25, 2012 - Monday- Pick up minibuses at Dublin Airport. Drive to Glendalough Monastery, a Celtic Monastery that was established in the 6th century by Saint Kevin. Give a brief overview of Irish history and the history of Glendalough and walking tour. Have lunch and a tour of Avoca Woolen Mills. Stay near Bunratty for the night.

Day 3 – June 26, 2012 - Tuesday- Tour the Cliffs of Moher (Ailltreacha Mothair- “The Cliffs of the Ruin”) where we will have lunch - After lunch we will drive to the Burrens, (An Bhoireann _”The Stony District”) a 161 square mile expanse that is one of the Ireland’s strangest landscapes – then on through Kinvarra, a fishing village in Galway Bay and pass by Dunguaire Castle, a 7th century home of the King of Connacht, that stands on a promontory in Kinvarra Bay. (A great photo opportunity) Drive to Spiddal, *County Galway*, where we will spend the night .

Day 4 – June 27, 2012 – Wednesday -Leave Spidall at 9:30 AM - Take a ferry, Aran Islands Direct (Oileain Arann Direach) to Aran Islands leaving Rossaveal Harbor at 10:30 AM. Tour the Island, Inishmore, the Aran Heritage Center and Dun Aenghus. Dun Aenghus is a 2000 year old fort on the Island. The Aran Islands is a Gaeltacht area (an area that speaks Gaelic). To tour the Island, you can rent bikes, take a horse and carriage tour, take a van tour, or you can walk. The Island is the home of the famous Aran sweaters. All participants sleep on the Island.

Day 5 – June 28, 2012 - Thursday- Take the ferry back to mainland at 8 AM- Be on pier with luggage by 7:45 AM - Drive south to the mouth of the Shannon River – cross the river by car ferry – Killimer Tarbert Ferry – leaves on the hour. Stop at Ballybunion, a resort town with a beautiful beach and the ruins of an old castle. Drive to An Daingean(Dingle) over Connor Pass – Sleep in An Daingean.

Day 6– June 29, 2012 - Friday - Leave by 8 AM -Tour An Daingean Peninsula, the western most tip of Ireland. Scheduled tour at the Great Blasket Center at 10:30 AM where we will learn about the people that lived on the Blasket Islands. Take a 30 mile driving loop where we will see ancient archaeological wonders like beehive huts, tour Gallarus Oratory, and Kilmalkedar Church, a 12th century Irish Romanesque Church . Then back to Dingle for some shopping, pub food and some great Irish music. Sleep in Dingle. Dingle is a Gaeltacht area, also. Gaeltacht means that it is a region where the government subsidizes the survival of the Irish language and culture. Signs, menus and songs are in Gaelic. Sleep in Dingle again.

Day 7– June 30, 2012 - Saturday - Leave An Daingean by 8 AM and drive to Gap of Dunloe, stopping at Inch beach on the way. . Stop at Moriarty’s before entering the Gap for a spot of shopping. Drive through the Gap. Stop at Moll’s Gap for lunch. Drive to Kenmare where we will spend the afternoon visiting a 3000 year old Druid Stone Circle and have some great shopping. Sleep at in Kenmare.

Day 8– July 1, 2012 - Sunday - Drive to Blarney Castle where we will tour and kiss the Blarney Stone – Lunch and shopping at Blarney Woolen Mills adjacent to castle. Drive to Cashel. Tour Rock of Cashel , an awe inspiring site connected with royalty and mysticism– be there by 3:30 – closes as 4:45. – Sleep in Cashel at the foot of the Rock.

Day 9– July 2, 2012 - Monday - Leave Cashel by 8:30 -Drive to Cahir – Tour Cahir Castle at half 9 , one of Ireland’s largest and best-preserved castles, retaining its dramatic keep, tower, and much of its original defensive structure. Lunch in Cahir – go to Adare, a charming little village with thatched roofs. Drive to Navan where we will spend the night.

Day 10 – July 3, 2012 - Tuesday -Leave Dublin - Arrive back home the same day.