



UNIVERSITIES TRAVEL CONFERENCE 2010

IRELAND: A Literary Expedition to Dublin and the Aran Islands



Christchurch Cathedral in Dublin

The capital of Irish literature, Dublin has produced more great writers than any other city of its size in the world, including four Nobel Prize winners in the last 80 years. We'll spend five nights in Dublin enjoying the rich literary heritage of the city and the fine art and architecture. We will take full advantage of Bloomsday, a kind of literary Holyday celebrated around the world, and especially in Dublin. It is a celebration of James Joyce's novel *Ulysses*, in which Leopold Bloom, a Dublin Jew, goes about his life in the city of Dublin on June 16, 1904. We will hang out with local actors, writers, and musicians.

Then we decamp to the wildly beautiful and mystical Aran Islands, where we will make our home in Kiltonan village, right beside the pubs and the shops and the music sessions. The subject of fable and song for thousands of years, these islands are strange looking, with a ring of rocks around their outer edges and, inside, small farms layered in soft green grass and wildflowers. The dramatic landscapes on the western sides have huge cliffs plummeting dizzily into the frothing sea below.

FACTS:

- Best time to go:** June for Bloomsday
Spring or Fall for a general program
- Size of group:** 15 – 25 participants
- Number of days:** 10 days
- Accommodation:** Heritage hotels
Bed and Breakfast on Aran
- Meals:** Pub style and fine Irish cuisine

SIGNATURE MOMENTS:

- Getting into Irish literature
- Touring libraries with the curators
- Enjoying musical interludes in local pubs
- Dining with fine Irish cuisine
- Walking the stunning countryside of Aran

APPROX COST:

\$2,995 CAD per person + air

INCLUDED FEATURES:

- Our full time literary guide
- Accommodation in heritage hotels
- Most meals
- Entrance fees to all sites
- Full time specialist guide
- Gratuities

ITINERARY IN BRIEF:



Day 1: Arrive in Dublin

Meet in Dublin today — guided walk in the neighbourhood getting to know Upper Merrion Street, Merrion Row (home of the famous Donoghue's Pub), St. Stephen's Green and the Grafton Street pedestrian walkway — our welcome dinner is in a delightful local pub.

Overnight: Dublin / Meals: D

Day 2: Dublin

Start the day in southwest Dublin with visits to St. Patrick's and Christchurch Cathedral — special curator visit of Marsh's Library founded in 1701 with over 25,000 books relating to the 17th and 18th centuries — then to Dublin Castle with special visit to the Chester Beatty Library with a breathtaking array of illuminated Middle Eastern and Asian manuscript — lunch at the Castle with a special talk on the history of Irish Theatre in the gardens — this evening we're at the Abbey Theatre for a performance.

Overnight: Dublin / Meals: B, L

Day 3: Dublin

To the National Gallery to see the mesmerizing works of Jack B. Yeats, brother of the poet and other fine works of European art — to Trinity College numbering Bram Stoker, Jonathan Swift, Oscar Wilde, and Samuel Beckett, and an array of rebels and revolutionaries among its alumni — a tour of the cobbled squares and picturesque buildings with a visit to the Book of Kells — lunch in one of the campus eateries — afternoon at the Dublin Writer's museum to see Joyce's typewriter, letters from Brendan Behan and scrawled notes from Beckett.

Overnight: Dublin / Meals: B, L

Day 4: Dublin

A day out of the city — visit to Newbridge House, a country mansion dating from 1740 with one of the finest Georgian interiors in Ireland — to pretty Dalkey with its lovely medieval streetscape and two tiny castle towers — lunch in a lovely country pub.

Overnight: Dublin / Meals: B, L

Day 5: Dublin

Bloomsday! — off by DART to Sandycove and the Martello Tower where Stephen Dedalus woke up on the morning of June 16, 1904 for readings at the tower, music, and merriment of the area — a special Bloomsday lunch in a Joycean pub — to the James Joyce Cultural Centre for special activities — evening in Monto, the red light district that was the Nighttown area in Ulysses — bring some costume pieces such as a hat or Edwardian blouse to add to the gaiety and re-creation of the period.

Overnight: Dublin / Meals: B, L, D

Day 6: To Aran

By coach to Galway and then through the Connemara countryside to Rossaveal ferry dock — the 35 minute ferry ride to Inis Mor, one of the three Aran Islands — to our comfortable guesthouse overlooking the pier.

Overnight: Inis Mor / Meals: B, D

Day 7: Aran

A free morning to poke about — afternoon visit to the magnificent Dun Aengus, a vast 2000 year old stone fortress with spectacular views of Galway Bay, the Burren, and Connemara — this evening we take in a local show that deals with life on Aran called "Ragus," which is performed in Halla Ronan in Kilronan (schedule permitting).

Overnight: Inis Mor / Meals: B, D

Day 8: Aran

By ferry to explore the other islands of Inis Meain (Inishmaan), and Inis Oirr (Inisheer) — spend the evening at a local musical pub celebrating our island stay.

Overnight: Inis Mor / Meals: B, D

Day 9: Galway

Return by ferry and by coach onward to affluent, artsy Galway — explore the city centre on foot strolling through the Spanish Arch and Spanish Parade, through Eyre Square to the medieval quarter — a farewell dinner at the Malt House.

Overnight: Galway / Meals: B, D

Day 10: Depart Shannon

By coach to Shannon Airport for departure flights.

Meals: B

Itinerary subject to change.

