

With Richard Martin and Charlene Kenna
Saturday June 12 to Tuesday June 22 – 10 nights
\$3,460.00 CDN
Limited to 10 participants

Itinerary

We invite you to join us for an unforgettable journey along the rustic West Coast of Ireland. Our ten-day itinerary begins on the Dingle Peninsula in County Kerry. The tour will include hotel stays in several towns along our route from County Kerry in the south towards Achill Island in the north, then back through inland hill and river country to Shannon.

Along the way, participants will explore western Ireland's landscape with its rugged coast, lush greens, rocky islands, lake-filled valleys, remote castles and colourful towns. Each day we will visit some of these typical areas. While we believe the tour must have a definite outline and format, a flexible itinerary with time for unscheduled stops may be adapted. This is necessary to accommodate for the unexpected opportunities, and the serendipitous twists, which often transpire during tours. Ultimately the emphasis throughout is on seeing, and our priority is to ensure good creative photography, providing an ample amount of time each day so participants will have the opportunity to explore without being rushed. Before breakfast a morning field trip will be taken most days after which we will head out again for our daily adventure.

It is not possible to see everything on a tour. Having a quality experience is more important than frantically trying to see the whole country at one time. Transportation is provided by our experienced Irish guide and driver in a tour van, which is large enough for the group and our equipment. Lunch and dinner each day will be at various restaurants and pubs, or we can stop in town and have a picnic lunch wrapped for our daily excursions in the field.

Day 1 Saturday June 12

Arrive at Shannon Airport in the morning. Depart for the Dingle Peninsula and check into Heaton's Guest House, which is situated on the shore of the renowned fishing town of Dingle, West Kerry. We will have an opportunity to relax in the afternoon before exploring the nearby countryside at sunset.

Overnight: HEATON'S GUEST HOUSE, DINGLE, WEST KERRY

Day 2 Sunday June 13 to Day 3 Monday June 14*Sunrise: 5:10 a.m.**Sunset: 9:59 p.m.*

The next two days are dedicated completely to the Dingle Peninsula. The Dingle Peninsula was described in *The National Geographic Traveler* as “the most beautiful place on earth”, with some of the finest coastal scenery to be seen in Ireland. This peninsula is famous for its Celtic, pre-Christian monuments and Christian churches with Iron Age and early Christian rocks and ruins clustered on hillsides. It is also a ‘Gaeltacht’ (Irish speaking) area, where the Irish language and traditional ways of life are preserved. Dingle itself is a thriving fishing town and offers plenty of opportunity for simply savouring the atmosphere of a typical country Irish town, with its abundant pubs, narrow streets and busy harbour.

The road around the Peninsula is truly dramatic. It passes through a chain of Mountains, called Slieve Mish. From Dingle, drive around the coast to Sleah Head, with dramatic views to south Kerry and the Blasket Islands, deserted since 1953. In the distance are the two rocky Skellig islands, where the ruins of an early Christian Monastery can be found. The Dingle Peninsula will charm you with its villages painted in bright colours and will fascinate you with the dramatic beauty of its landscapes.

From Inch, a long beach bordered by dunes and made famous by David Lean’s movie “Ryan’s daughter”, travel to the Iveragh Peninsula and Rossbeigh Beach.

Overnight: HEATON’S GUEST HOUSE, DINGLE, WEST KERRY

Day 4 Tuesday June 15

Travel today to the Beara Peninsula for excellent photo opportunities.

We make our way through the Killarney National Park to the Beara Peninsula. Beara’s rugged and desolate landscape offers a haunting canvas for the lonely explorer; this is a place for unspoiled scenery and solitude.

The Village of Eyeries overlooks the Atlantic, with beautiful painted houses and flower displays on nearly every window. Eyeries was the location for the shooting of the film *The Purple Taxi* (1977) starring Fred Astaire, Peter Ustinov, and Charlotte Rampling, and also the 1998 TV series *Falling for a Dancer*, a dramatization of life and love in 1930s Ireland based on the novel by Deirdre Purcell.

The spectacular Caha and Slieve Miskish Mountains march down the center of the peninsula, separating the Beara’s rocky south from its lush northern shore. We will pass through some of the highest peaks, making unscheduled stops to photograph the beautiful mountain and lake views as we transverse The Healy Pass. Despite its Irish name, ‘Rugged Glen’, Glengarriff is an oasis of subtropical colors and lush woodland. There are lovely walks in the nearby nature reserve or we may take an optional ferry ride to the unusual gardens on Garinish Island.

Overnight: GLENGARRIFF PARK HOTEL, Glengarriff

Day 5 Wednesday June 16 to Day 6 Thursday June 17

Depart for County Clare via the Shannon Car Ferry. Stop at the Cliffs of Moher, portal tombs at Poul nabrone Dolmen and travel through the Burren region, a remote region near the town of Ennis, with one of the most unique landscapes in Europe. A full day will be spent exploring and photographing in this beautiful area for the wild landscapes, culminating in with mighty cliffs.

Overnight: OLD GROUND HOTEL, ENNIS

Day 7 Friday June 18

This day is dedicated entirely to Connemara. We photograph along the shores of Doo Lough and the Connemara Mountains, where we will see some of the most stunning landscapes in all of Ireland, a region encompassing rugged coastline and ancient monuments. Connemara is rich in culture and heritage. Other highlights include Sheeffrey Wood, Burrishoole Abbey, Carrigahowley Castle, and Letterkeen Forest.

Overnight: ARDAGH HOTEL, CLIFDEN

Day 8 Saturday June 19

Travel through some of the most panoramic scenery in Western Europe. Photograph Ireland's only fjord, Killary Harbour, a truly dramatic oddity with Connacht's highest mountain, Mlweelrea (817m) plunging sheer into the dark water of its north bank. A highlight is the ride through the stunning Delphi Valley with its beautiful lakes overlooked by Connemara's highest mountain Ben Bury.

Explore the picturesque village of Cong, where much of the Quiet Man, starring John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara, was filmed. Photo locations include Cong Abbey, with a path adjacent to the abbey along the river where we can wander through one of the most inspiring forests in Ireland. A short distance outside the village is the magnificent Ashford Castle, possibly the most dramatic castle in Ireland.

Time permitting we will have the opportunity to photograph an area of rolling hills, sheep, and a countless stonewalls, on a hillside flowing down to Lough Corrib.

Overnight: KNOCKRANNY HOUSE HOTEL, WESTPORT

Day 9 Sunday June 20

Today we will explore the spectacular seascapes of Achill Island, the largest island off the Irish coast. Shaped by wind and water, Achill Island and the Currane Peninsula are among the most remote and scenic areas in Ireland. Some of the local roads that follow the coastline of Achill, and which boast some of the most spectacular views of the area, have been designated 'The Atlantic Drive'. To get there, we will drive over the bridge at Achill Sound. Driving north, our first stop will be along the ocean on the Atlantic drive in Mulranny. After lunch on Achill Island we will continue photographing along the ocean and given time, wind up at the deserted famine village at Keel and the Deserted Village at Slievemore.

Overnight: KNOCKRANNY HOUSE HOTEL, WESTPORT

Day 10 Monday June 21

Summer Solstice: Sunrise: 5:10 a.m. Sunset: 10:02 p.m.

Our last full day of exploring and photographing will be spent traveling from Westport to Clonmacnoise and then onto Shannon (approximately 81 miles or 130 km). Continue in the afternoon to Shannon region.

Check into Park Inn Hotel across from the Shannon Airport.

Overnight: PARK INN SHANNON AIRPORT, SHANNON

Day 11 Tuesday June 22

Depart for Shannon Airport and your return flight home.