



Tour Dates:

22nd April 2018

10th June 2018

7th October 2018

9 Night Donegal & Causeway Coast Knitting Tour

Tour Overview

Begin your knitting tour of Ireland in Dublin where you will enjoy a panoramic tour of the city and visit the Constant Knitter to meet a local craftsperson for a short demonstration and informal chat. On your second day in Dublin you will meet Lisa Sisk for a knitting workshop following the Moebius Knitting technique. Travel to Mayo via the famous Foxford Woollen Mills, you will then meet Ciara Ní Reachtnín for another workshop. The Northern part of your tour includes Studio Donegal, a hand-weaving and clothing manufacturing business, the amazing Slieve League Cliffs, Glencolmcille Folk Village and a workshop with Irish Designer Edel MacBride. Spend time in the stunning walled City of Derry and the next day discover Ireland's famous Causeway Coast, visiting the Giant's Causeway and Dunluce Castle. See Belfast City and visit the famous Titanic Belfast and visit Mourne Alpacas outside the city. Before you return to Dublin for your final overnight visit Aine Dunne's studio for a spinning and tapestry workshop and pay a visit to Thomas Ferguson Linen Factory for a guided tour.

Included in This Tour

- Transfers on arrival and departure by private coach (for arrivals prior to 11am)
- Sightseeing as per itinerary in a luxury coach with an experienced driver and accredited guide, entrance fees included if applicable.
- Accommodation in rooms with private facilities for 9 nights
- Irish breakfast daily
- 5 hotel table d'hote dinners
- 5 lunches
- 1 Farewell Meal in Dublin
- Entrance to the following attractions: Slieve League Cliffs, Glencolmcille Folk Village, The Giant's Causeway, Dunluce Castle, Titanic Belfast
- Glen Keen Sheep Farm Visit
- Mourne Alpaca Farm Visit
- Thomas Ferguson Linen Factory Tour
- Foxford Woollen Mills Factory Tour
- Studio Donegal Weaving Demonstration
- Spinning Demonstration with June Bourke of Back to Back Yarns
- Spinning Demonstration with Mary from Markree Wool Craft
- Visit Handmade Irish Sweaters in Donegal

Workshops/Knitting Activities Included in This Tour

- Spinning & Tapestry Workshop with Aine Dunne
- Knitting Workshop with Edel MacBride from Knitfield
- Knitting Workshop with Ciara Ní Reachtnín
- Knitting Workshop with Lisa Sisk from This is Knit

Overnights for this Tour

- Camden Court Hotel (or similar), Dublin, 1 Night
- Westport Coast Hotel (or similar), Westport, 1 Night
- Yeats Country Hotel (or similar), Sligo, 1 Night
- Mill Park Hotel (or similar), Donegal, 2 Nights
- Jacksons Hotel (or similar), Donegal, 1 Night
- Tara Lodge Hotel (or similar), Belfast, 2 Nights
- Camden Court Hotel (or similar), Dublin, 1 Night

Itinerary

Important Note: Attractions, Workshops and Demonstrations May Change According to Availability and Scheduling

Day 1: Dublin Sightseeing

Begin your knitting tour of Ireland with a transfer to your hotel (for arrivals prior to 11am). At 1pm enjoy a panoramic guided tour of Dublin and visit the Constant Knitter where you will meet a local craftsperson for a demonstration and informal chat about their craft topic. The remainder of the evening will be free for you to explore the city at your leisure before meeting back at the hotel for your welcome dinner. Overnight in Dublin, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 2: This is Knit Workshop & Back to Back Yarns

This morning meet Lisa from 'This is Knit' for a workshop which includes an informative talk on the developments in the Irish Hand Knitting scene over the past ten years as well as a two hour 'Moebius Knitting' workshop following the 'Glenties Cowl' pattern, designed by Lisa Sisk. For this class you will be using Soft Donegal yarn from the mills of Studio Donegal in Kilcar. After your class board your touring coach and travel to Westport, a stunning Georgian town on the banks of the Carrowbeg River. Before settling into your hotel for the night, visit June Bourke of Back to Back yarns at The Craft House. June has a flock of Suffolk and Jacob sheep at her own farm nearby and from their wool produces a magnificent homespun yarn that is available for purchase at the Craft House. Spend some time with June learning the story of this unique yarn from when it is shorn from the sheep to the finished product! Overnight in Westport, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 3: Craft in Mayo: Glen Keen Sheep Farm, Foxford Woollen Mill and Knitting Workshop

After breakfast travel the short distance to Glen Keen Farm where you will enjoy a sheep herding demonstration followed by home baked scones and tea or coffee. Continue to the town of Foxford and to the award winning Foxford Woollen Mills where your guided tour of the working mill will show master craftspeople at work on the pieces that Foxford are proud to deliver to customers all over the world. After lunch (included), enjoy a knitting workshop with Ciara Ní Reachtnín. During your time with Ciara you will learn how to make the Sionann (Shannon) Shawl pattern, one of Ciara's own Celtic Mythology Designs. According to Irish Mythology, the River Shannon was named after a woman named Sionann who was the granddaughter of Lir, the Celtic god of the sea. The Shawl is knit sideways on a background of reverse stocking stitch, with a beaded lace edge representing the hazel nuts in the water and on the opposite edge, a twisting cable mimicking the flow of the River Shannon. Finally travel the short distance to Rosses Point in Sligo where you will check into your hotel. Overnight in Sligo, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 4: Travel to Donegal, Markree Woolcraft & Handmade Irish Sweaters

Leaving Sligo our first stop is the Crafter's Basket in nearby Cliffooney. Here meet with Mary from Markree Woolcraft who will demonstrate traditional Irish spinning techniques on a Donegal Spinning Wheel and talk to you about how she dyes her yarns using hedgerow plants and lichens. Continue to Donegal Craft Village where time will be allowed for you to have lunch on your own or simply walk around the craft shops. Of particular interest to you may be the Weaving and Felting studios. After lunch we will pay a visit to Kathleen Meehan at her home on the beautiful Muckross peninsula. Here you will see a traditional Cottage industry, Handmade Irish Sweaters in action as you meet Kathleen and her small team of knitters that operate from her home producing quality handknit Aran sweaters which are sold at home and abroad. Continue to your hotel in Donegal town and check into your hotel where the remainder of the evening is at your leisure. Overnight in Donegal, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast Included.

Day 5: Donegal Sightseeing: Studio Donegal, Slieve League Cliffs and Glencolmille

Your first stop today is Studio Donegal, a hand-weaving and clothing manufacturing business committed to preserving and promoting traditional Irish hand-weaving. Here you will see the process of hand-weaving from start to finish including the spinning, warping and weaving of the wool. Next, visit Slieve League Cliffs, one of the highest cliffs in Europe to enjoy some amazing views. After lunch (included) at the cliffs travel to Glencolmille, an area famous for its wealth of traditional Irish culture, music and prehistoric settlements. Take a tour of Glencolmille Folk Village, a collection of several small cottages, called a 'clachan', resting on a hillside that overlooks the stunning Glen Bay Beach. Designed, constructed and conserved by local people, the Folk Village is one of Ireland's longest running living-history museums. Overnight in Donegal, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast Included.

Day 6: Edel MacBride Knitting Workshop & Optional Trip to Derry

Check out of your hotel and travel to Knitfield, a studio owned and run by one of Ireland's finest knitwear designers, Edel MacBride. Here meet Edel and her team and enjoy a core workshop including yarn pack, working the best of Irish moss, cable and Edel's favourite Aran stitches. After your class, there will be an optional trip to Derry where you can explore this compact city on your own. Stroll along its 17th century walls which had their 400th anniversary a short time ago and see the new Peace Bridge which curves impressively across the River Foyle. You may wish to pay a visit to the Tower Museum which tells the story of Derry through colourful and interesting exhibits or St. Columb's Cathedral which is the city's oldest and most historic building. Return to Ballybofey where the remainder of the day will be at your leisure. Why not visit McElhinneys, one of the finest department stores in Ireland. Overnight in Ballybofey Donegal, Dinner, Bed & Breakfast Included.

Day 7: The Causeway Coast

The Causeway Coast is rated as one of the top five road trips worldwide and when you experience it you will see why! The road meanders around a narrow strip of coastline between stunning sea views and majestic high cliffs. Visit the Giant's Causeway where around 60 million years ago, three great lava flows were laid down, cooling the basaltic plateau that makes an interesting photo opportunity today! On your journey you will also visit the remains of Dunluce Castle which is perched dramatically close to a headland that plunges directly Sea! Your day tour today ends in Belfast City where the remainder of the evening is free to check out the local bars and restaurants. Overnight in Belfast, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 8: Belfast Sightseeing, Titanic Belfast & Mourne Alpaca Farm

This morning enjoy a panoramic tour of Belfast and visit Titanic Belfast, one of Belfast's newest and most popular museums, built on the site of the former Harland & Wolff shipyard where the Titanic was originally constructed. Galleries reconstruct scenes from Belfast at the time of its construction, the launch, the maiden voyage, the sinking and the aftermath. This museum is extremely interactive, with technology bringing each period to life. Time permitting, we will also pay a visit to Mourne Alpacas outside Belfast, a family managed herd of Alpaca and pedigree angora goats that produce high quality fleeces, so much so that their motto at the farm is "We breed for heat, not for meat!" Once you have been up close and cosy with the alpacas, and had a chance for plenty of photos and questions, we will move onto the fleece. While enjoying a cuppa after all your hands on with the alpacas and the fleece, you can get a chance to see, feel and purchase quality alpaca yarns and some blend yarns, in many natural colours of the alpaca and some stunning seasonal colour ranges created from natural dyes as well. Mourne Alpacas have all their fleeces processed professionally at a dedicated mill and raw fleeces are also available for purchase for anyone who is keen to take some for home spinning. Return to Belfast where the remainder of the evening is your own. Overnight in Belfast, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 9: Thomas Ferguson Linen & Spinning and Tapestry Workshop

Linen was an important industry in Ireland, particularly in the North of Ireland. So much so that its capital Belfast was fondly known as 'Linenopolis!' Today we will learn more about the linen industry in Northern Ireland by the Thomas Ferguson Linen Factory. On your guided tour of the factory you will witness first hand all elements of Linen production from the design, weaving and hemming to the final finishing touches and ornamentation. Leaving Belfast we travel to Drogheda to meet Aine Dunne a tapestry weaver and artist, resident and working from the Boyne Valley. With Aine and her team, you will enjoy a Spinning & Tapestry Workshop; here you will be introduced to hand spinning sheep's wool by using a drop spindle and try your hand at weaving a sample piece on a four-sided tapestry frame loom. During your time with Aine you will gain insight into her designs, weaving methods and work schedule. Return to Dublin where this evening your final farewell dinner will be served in a local restaurant. Overnight in Dublin, Bed & Breakfast included.

Day 10: End of Tour

After your final Irish breakfast depart the hotel for Dublin airport arriving in time to complete check-in formalities and that last minute duty free shopping.

Prices

22nd April 2018:

€2199 (\$3277 CAD) per person sharing/€499 (\$744 CAD) supplement if single room required

10th June 2018:

€2275 (\$3389 CAD) per person sharing/€519 (\$773 CAD) supplement if single room required

7th October 2018:

€2199 (\$3277 CAD) per person sharing/€499 (\$744 CAD) supplement if single room required

Note: The CAD Dollar rate is an indication only and is based on the rate of exchange Euro 1.00 = CAD Dollar 1.49.

All payments will be taken in Euro.

Booking Requirements & Cancellation Information

A deposit of 20% of the total tour price is required to hold your booking. The balance of the tour is due 60 days before arrival. Mastercard and Visa accepted with no additional charges.

Cancellation Policy:

- 29 days or longer deposit will be forfeit and non-refundable.
- 28 days to 15 days 50% is forfeit
- 14 days or less 100% of all money paid is forfeit.