

IRELAND & ENGLAND: Enchanted Islands

(Note: This is only a sample tour)

Day 1: Depart for Dublin, Ireland.

Day 2: Arrive **Dublin**. Transfer to Waterford with visit to the Waterford Crystal Factory.

Day 3: Transfer to Blarney to visit the medieval **Blarney Castle** where you will climb the castle's rampart and kiss the stone that promises eternal eloquence. Continue to **Kilkenny**, Ireland's medieval city. The town was the capital of the kingdom of Ossory in pre-Norman times. Several old buildings remain in this most interesting of towns. A visit to Kilkenny wouldn't be complete without a bit of shopping. Fine sweaters are available in the shops along John Street or at the Kilkenny Design Centre.



Day 4: Travel to Dublin. Sightseeing tour of historic Dublin. **Trinity College**, originally offered free education to Catholics as long as they accepted the Protestant faith. Until 1966, Catholics who wished to study at Trinity had to obtain dispensation from their bishops or face excommunication. Today more than 70% of Trinity's students are Catholic. Ireland's largest collection of books and manuscripts is housed in Trinity College Library. Among the volumes is the principal treasure the Book of Kells, a beautifully illustrated manuscript of the Gospels dating from the 8th Century. St. Patrick's Cathedral, the largest church in Ireland dates back to 1190. Visit Dublin Castle. Visit the State apartments, formerly the residence of the English Viceroys and now used when a new President of Ireland is inaugurated. This evening enjoy a play at the Abbey Theatre.

Day 5: Discover the **Temple Bar** area and Grafton Street. Temple Bar with its medieval street pattern and cobbled streets is promoted as Dublin's cultural quarter. Grafton Street is one of Dublin's principal shopping streets, the other being Henry Street. Be sure to cross Ha'penny Bridge and O'Connell Bridge. See Merrion Square with its reclining statue of Oscar Wilde and its 3 sides lined with Georgian redbrick townhouses and fascinating doorways. Wander along the River Liffey to Kilmainham Goal. The goal is one of the largest unoccupied goals in Europe. The goal's attractions include a major exhibition detailing the political and penal history from 1780 – 1924 of the prison and its restoration. Learn about the leaders of the rebellions of 1798, 1803, 1848, 1867, and 1916 who were detained here.



Day 6: Depart Dublin for Dun Laoghaire to board ferry for **Holyhead**. Upon arrival at pier meet coach for transfer to Chester, a city which is rich in architectural and archaeological treasures. One of its specialties is the Rows – a double row of shops one on top of the other. They first appeared around 1485, but the oldest surviving ones are Tudor and Stuart. Archaeologists have spent many years digging up what they left behind, and Chester is riddled with Roman buildings, foundations, inscriptions and artifacts.

Day 7: Morning transfer to **Stratford** in Warwickshire is where **Shakespeare was born** in 1564. There is still an aura of Old Elizabethan England among Stratford's timbered inns and 16th century houses with their oddly protruding upper story. Guided town and to visit Anne Hathaway's thatched roof cottage in Shottery on the edge of the town, the early home of the playwright's wife. Later can visit more Shakespeare locations on own if desired. Tonight a play at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre.



Day 8: Morning in Stratford. Continue to **Bath**. Visit the remains of the Roman Baths. To this day, these springs gush from the earth at a constant temperature of 46 – 50 C. The town is a perfect 18th century city, perhaps the best preserved in all of Britain. It is a compact place and easy to explore on foot.

Day 9: Depart for **Stonehenge**, the most famous of the great prehistoric monuments of the British Isles. No one knows the exact combination of purposes for which Stonehenge was built, but it is thought that its purpose was broadly religious and perhaps for worshipping the sun gods. What remains very mysterious is the great sophistication which enabled the stones to be put in place. Later depart for London. Tonight a Jack the Ripper evening walking tour.

Day 10: Meet guide for tour Meet guide for your sightseeing tour. Visit **Westminster Abbey, see Buckingham Palace, Big Ben and 10 Downing Street**. Later visit some of London's notable street markets such as Petticoat Lane, Portobello Road and Camden Market or one of London's numerous world renown Museums. Tonight enjoy a **West End theatre performance**. Enjoy Covent Garden tonight after your show.

Day 11: Make your way to Buckingham Palace to catch the changing of the guard. Later cross the Thames to the Southbank Area, home to attractions, theatres, restaurants, exhibitions, festivals and all sorts of family fun activities. As you explore the **Southbank**, be sure to stop at Borough Food Market for some delectable lunchtime eats. This afternoon visit the **Tower of London**. The tower has a notorious history of murder, confinement and intrigue and has served as a castle in wartime, a king's residence in peace, and as a prison and execution site and houses the best display of crown jewels on earth. Evening shopping or optional London Eye ride.

Day 12: Cheerio London. Transfer to London airport for your flight home.

TOUR INCLUSIONS

- Return airfare to Dublin return from London
- Ferry transfer Ireland to England
- Transfers
 - o 3 days Dublin to Waterford, Blarney, Kilkenny with stops according to itinerary
 - o Coach transfer Dublin to Dun Laoghaire
 - o 5 days coach transfer Holyhead to London with stops according to itinerary
 - o London airport transfer
- Assistance upon arrival in Dublin
- 10 nights hotel accommodation with private facilities
- 10 Breakfasts
- 5 dinners
- Guided tours:
 - o Dublin
 - o Stratford
 - o 2 in London – orientation and Jack the Ripper
- Entrances/visits:
 - o Waterford Crystal Factory
 - o Blarney Castle
 - o Dublin Castle
 - o Trinity College
 - o St. Patrick's Cathedral
 - o Kilmainham Goal
 - o Abbey Theatre performance
 - o Anne Hathaway's House
 - o Royal Shakespeare Theatre performance
 - o Roman Baths
 - o Stonehenge
 - o Westminster Abbey
 - o Tower of London
 - o 1 West End Theatre
 - o Entrance to Museum of choice
- 2 day tube pass for London

