



Joanie Madden's Musical Tour of Ireland The Wild Atlantic Way September 10th to September 18th, 2016

ITINERARY

SATURDAY, September 10th

Depart from your home airport to Shannon Airport in County Clare.

SUNDAY, September 11th – Morning arrival at Shannon Airport

Please plan on arriving at Shannon Airport between 6am and 9am and once you have cleared Irish Customs, you will be heartily met by Joanie Madden along with your Caddie Tours driver/guide and they will welcome you to Ireland and escort you and your luggage to the coach.

Departing Shannon, we will travel north onto the bustling town of Galway City where we will stop for breakfast and a stretch of the legs before we begin our journey into the wild and beautiful landscape known as Connemara. Leaving Galway City, we head west through the picturesque town of Oughterard, before passing the "Quiet Man Bridge" made famous by John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara. As we get deeper into Connemara, we'll discover the mountain range known as the 12 Bens before turning off at Recess and embarking on a drive considered by many as one of the most scenic in the world, the gorgeous Inagh Valley. As the road winds its way through the majestic heather covered mountains and around the cascading lakes and mountains, there is literally a photo opportunity at every turn. We then arrive into the heart of Connemara, the town of Clifden, where we will check into the Station House Hotel for two nights.

Feel free to take a nap and rest up before dinner and Joanie and her guests as they provide an evening of music and song. For those that are rested, feel free to have a swim in the leisure center, or take a quick two-minute walk to explore town and peruse the many shopping choices, boutiques, teashops or pubs.

Overnight: Clifden Station House Hotel (D)



MONDAY, September 12th - After enjoying your breakfast, we depart Clifden and head out on the Sky Road, an exhilarating 7-mile circular drive, which is justifiably famous for the views it affords. The route takes you up among the hills overlooking Clifden Bay and its offshore islands, Inishturk and Turbot. We'll then go onto the town of Letterfrack and visit Kylemore Abbey, a 40,000 square foot castle built in 1867 that took 100 men 4 years to complete and enjoy a tour of the elegant rooms in the mansion and the charming church and Victorian walled gardens all set beside a tranquil lake. After our visit, we join the main road and our journey takes us to the beautiful village of Leenane – known as the gateway to Connemara, which was made famous as the village where John B. Keane's play, "The Field" starring Richard Harris and Tom Berenger was filmed. We then travel to Cong and take the walking tour to see the movie locations of the 1952 production of the "Quiet Man". We offering an optional tour – a private one hour Hawk Walk - our instructor will introduce you to your hawk and, within minutes, you will be setting off around the magnificent woodlands to fly your hawk free. As you fly the hawks, your instructor will explain about the hawks' exceptional eyesight, their speed and agility and how the hawks were trained. The hawks will follow you from tree to tree through the woods before swooping down to land on your gloved fist. Afterwards we make our way back to our hotel in Clifden for dinner and music at our hotel.

Overnight: Clifden Station House Hotel (B,D)

TUESDAY, September 13th – After breakfast we depart Clifden and travel south from Galway to Rathbaun Farm where we see a farming family carry out every day chores. We see sheep shearing, watch the sheep dog maneuver the flock and enjoy some farmhouse scones with tea and coffee. We continue onto the Cliffs of Moher, which rise 700 feet above the Atlantic Ocean. Onwards to Miltown Malbay for our two night stay at Armada Hotel. Dinner at our hotel tonight and Joanie and friends will play music after dinner.

Overnight: The Armada Hotel (B,D)



WEDNESDAY, September 14th – After breakfast we drive south to one of the most spectacular drives in Ireland –The Loop Head Peninsula taking in Kilrush, Carrigaholt, Kilbaha, Loop Head, Cross, Kilkee and returning to Kilrush. A distance of 81km (50 miles), approximately. A scenic coastal drive along the cliff gird peninsula. Heading southwest of Ennis on the N68 you come to the maritime town of Kilrush on the Shannon Estuary. We Follow the coast road to the small fishing village of Carrigaholt where you can buy freshly caught fish from Clare's Atlantic fishermen. Stop a while in Kilbaha, the last parish before America, before heading west to the very tip of Loop Head. The lighthouse that stands at the tip of Loop Head has been flashing its warning signal for 300 years. Afterwards we make our way back to our hotel in Miltown Malbay. Dinner at our hotel tonight and Joanie and friends will play music after dinner.

Overnight: The Armada Hotel (B,D)

THURSDAY, September 15th – After breakfast depart Miltown Malbay and cross the Shannon Estuary and onto to Killarney. Visit Muckross house and Gardens where we'll take Cruise the Killarney National Park in the comfort and safety of a covered, heated and modern vessel. This beautiful Killarney lake cruise offers a spectacular experience, cruising in the scenes of gentle low land, scattered islands in the shadow of the towering ruggedness of the McGillicuddy Reeks Mountain Range. Your experienced skipper will give a full commentary on the flora, fauna and historical heritage of the area. The Killarney's Jaunting Car tour will collect you and take you back to our hotel in Killarney town. Dinner at our hotel tonight and Joanie and friends will play music after dinner.

Overnight: The Malton Hotel (B,D)



FRIDAY, September 16th – Today we discover the glorious Dingle Peninsula made famous by two movies "Ryan's Daughter and"Far & Away which showed a lot of the wonderful scenery. Drive to Slea Head at the most western most tip for awesome views of the Atlantic Ocean and see early Christian monastic beehive huts. Back in Dingle watch the brewing processs at the Dingle Brewing Company and sample of the local brew. Return to Killarney where we will have dinner in our hotel tonight and Joanie and friends will play music after dinner.

Overnight: The Malton Hotel (B,D)

SATURDAY, September 17th – After breakfast drive through the mountains into rich farming land country on the way to visit the Cobh Heritage Center, which traces the history of emigration from Ireland to new worlds. Learn about the conditions for the many Irish emigrants on early sailing ships and steam vessels. Follow the coastal route to Midleton and the home of Jameson Irish Whiskey. Walk through the old buildings and see the largest pot still in the world while your guide explains how whiskey is made. At the end of your tour, enjoy a sampling of the finished product. Then drive to your hotel in Tipperary to check into your hotel for dinner and your overnight stay and Joanie and friends will play music after dinner.

Dinner & Overnight: Horse & Jockey Hotel (B,D)



SUNDAY, September 18th - RETURN TO THE UNITED STATES

Sadly, today your Irish vacation has come to its final day. Transfer to Shannon Airport in good time to check in for your flight. You may do some last minute shopping at the duty free stores before boarding your aircraft and flying across the Atlantic Ocean back to the United States



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HOTEL ACCOMMODATIONS:

CLIFDEN STATION HOUSE HOTEL:

On the site of the former Clifden Railway Station , Clifden Station House offers well-appointed bedrooms and self-catering apartments. There is a pool and Connemara National Park is a 15-minute drive. Rooms at the Clifden Hotel all feature a 21-inch TV with a full interactive multimedia entertainment system including movies, music and internet access. Rooms also include a private shower room. Free WiFi available in all areas of the hotel. Indulge in one of the many beauty treatments at the Renew Spa, unwind in the Swedish steam room or relax in the hot tub. There is also a gym and stunning coastal walks are just 3 miles away. The bar is located in the old Station Masters House and serves food all day and entertainment in the evenings and at weekends. The restaurant offers traditional food using the finest of local ingredients. Structures from the old railway station have been transformed into a shopping precinct, museum and 200-seat theatre. Free parking is available for guests.

ARMADA HOTEL:

With a spectacular setting overlooking the Atlantic Ocean in West Clare, the award-winning Armada Hotel offers free parking, free WiFi and fine dining. Lahinch and Doonbeg Golf Courses are 10 minutes away. The boutique bedrooms are sumptuously furnished with luxury linens and modern prints. All rooms have a private bathroom with luxury toiletries, and a plasma-screen TV with satellite channels. Tea and coffee facilities are also provided. The award-winning Pearl Restaurant offers impressive sea views and an innovative menu. The Ocean Bar serves light lunches and traditional breakfasts, and the traditional Johnny Burke's Bar offers Irish whiskies, real ales and live music. 24-hour room service is also available. Surrounded by the beautiful rugged coastline and scenic countryside of County Clare, the Armada is 20 minutes' drive from the Cliffs of Moher. Ennis is a 30-minute drive away, and Shannon can be reached in 40 minutes' drive.

THE MALTON HOTEL:

From its distinctive architecture to its effortless service and genuine hospitality, The Malton has been a favorite retreat for over 150 years. After warming by the open fire in our entrance hall, ease into a soft velvet sofa and enjoy afternoon tea. We like to think time slows down just a little at The Malton. Enjoy the light as it streams through tall windows, ramble through our gardens, and rest for a while on a secluded bench. Where else can 6 acres of gardens be found in the center of a bustling town? This is life at The Malton, a Victorian landmark, and one of Ireland's most beautiful hotels since 1854.

HORSE & JOCKEY HOTEL:

In tranquil Tipperary, Horse & Jockey Hotel offers 4-star luxury accommodations with free Wi-Fi, 2 bars and a luxurious spa. Recreational facilities include a 70-foot pool and a Technogym. Each spacious bedroom has stylish decor and comfortable beds. Room features include plasma-screen satellite TV and Elemis toiletries. Silks Restaurant serves superb traditional cuisine in a sophisticated setting. Relax with a drink in the cozy bar, with comfortable seating area. Horse & Jockey Hotel boasts an Elemis Spa with 7 treatment rooms, along with a sauna, Jacuzzi and steam room.

More information on the tour and follow us for updates of the trip:

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