



# Tom Comerford

presents

## The Ireland Festival of Friendship

April 24<sup>th</sup> to May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022

\$1950 per person sharing land only  
\$2598 per single room limited to 5 per tour

\*Caddie Tours will be happy to organize flights from any US city to Ireland



### ITINERARY

#### SUNDAY, APRIL 24th - SHANNON ARRIVAL & GALWAY

After landing at **Shannon Airport**, complete customs and immigration formalities. Your Caddie Tours driver/guide will welcome you to Ireland and escort you and your luggage to the coach. Next, stop for breakfast at the **Inn at Dromoland**. Continue onto Gort and visit **Coole Park Estate** which was once the home of Lady Augusta Gregory who was pivotal to the Irish literary revival and was co-founder of the Abbey Theatre. Coole House was a focal point for many meetings about Irish literature which were attended by George Bernard Shaw, J.M. Synge, Sean O Casey and William Butler Yeats. Coole Park was often referred to in stories and poems eg. W.B Yeats was so inspired by the beauty and tranquility here that he wrote a poem called "The Wild Swans at Coole". Join your fellow travelers for a welcome dinner tonight at the hotel.

**DINNER AND OVERNIGHT: PARK HOUSE HOTEL GALWAY (B,D)**

#### MONDAY, APRIL 25th – KYLEMORE ABBEY & CONNEMARA REGION

Today's journey takes you to Kylemore Abbey ([11am](#) visit), one of the most photographed locations in Ireland. Originally built in 1867, Kylemore Abbey and the surrounding mountains and lakes are steeped in history, and while we're there, we recommend that you take time to revel in the famous walled Gardens. Enjoy a short catamaran cruise (2:30pm sailing) of **Killary Harbor**. Our cruise starts at Nancy's Point, just west of Leenane village, on the South side of the Killary. From there we set off towards the mouth of the Fjord. Take in the panoramic views of the surrounding landscape – hills rising steeply from the silvery sea, with frequent shifts in light and shadow creating different colors on the peaks and valleys. Deep green fields and occasional stands of trees contrast with heathery bogs. Return to your hotel and relax before dinner at the hotel restaurant.



**DINNER AND OVERNIGHT: PARK HOUSE HOTEL, GALWAY (B,D)**

#### TUESDAY, APRIL 26th - EXPLORING GALWAY CITY

Artsy, bohemian **Galway** is one of Ireland's most engaging cities. Brightly painted pubs heave with live music, while restaurants and cafes offer front-row seats for observing buskers and street theatre. Remnants of the medieval town walls lie between shops selling handcrafted Claddagh rings, books and musical instruments. Bridges arch over the salmon-stuffed River Corrib; and a long promenade leads to the seaside suburb of Salthill on Galway Bay, the source of the area's famous oysters. Today, Galway is one of the most popular tourist destinations in Ireland and was designated European City of Culture in 2020. It is a vibrant, thriving city, rich in artistic and musical culture. The old city of Galway comprises less than 50 acres and is perfect for exploring on foot. We offer a walking tour with **Brian Nolan** at 10 am, and at noon, as he wanders the streets of Galway recounting tales of war and conquest, joy and tragedy, emigration and slavery, success and folly. Walk in the footsteps of Irish revolutionaries and literary giants who have strolled the cobblestoned streets. Explore one of the many restaurants or pubs in town for dinner before we join Tom Comerford as he performs tonight in **O'Connor's famous pub** in Salthill. **O'Connors bar** in Salthill is famous for live music. This unique Irish bar have been in the O'Connor family for 77 years. This is the bar where Ed Sheeran made his Galway Girl music video.

**OVERNIGHT: PARK HOUSE HOTEL, GALWAY (B)**

#### WEDNESDAY, APRIL 27th – ARAN ISLANDS DAY TOUR

After breakfast we will travel to Rossaveal and board the Aran Island Ferries (10:30am departure) to visit the largest of the Aran Islands - Inis Mor. (meaning big island) As its name suggests, it is the largest of the three Aran Islands, and the simple act of stepping off the ferry takes you back in time into the magical world of island life on this remote rocky outcrop, where islanders speak Irish as their first language. It is also home to Gabriel Faherty, a man who has lived a colorful life, dividing his time between being a farmer, a pony and trap driver and deep sea fisherman who has sailed all over the world, Gabriel has crafted the art of being a brilliant storyteller, and he leads visitors on a fun adventure that include a visit of his goat farm with roaming Nubian and Saanen goats, a demonstration of how he makes his award winning cheese, and remarkable insights into the customs and traditions of an island that has been home to his ancestors for as long as time can remember.

##### Highlights include:

- Island Life | relaxed pace of life| Irish language | Irish culture | community | music and dance
- World Heritage Site | Dún Aonghus is the largest of the prehistoric stone forts of the Aran Islands
- History | hear about the fascinating history of the islands| historical sites
- Scenery | breathtaking landscapes and seascapes of the Wild Atlantic Way
- Local Guide | Gabriel's family have lived on Inis Mór for generations | native Irish speaker



**DINNER AND OVERNIGHT: PARK HOUSE HOTEL, GALWAY (B,D)**

## THURSDAY, APRIL 28th - EXPLORING GALWAY CITY ON YOUR OWN

As the hub of the West of Ireland, **Galway City** is one place you must not miss. Dating back to at least the 12th century, Galway takes its name from the Irish language word “Gaillimh,” meaning “a stony place.” This aptly describes Galway’s location amid rocky lands at the head of Galway Bay and the River Corrib.

The earliest printed references to the area date back to 1124 and depict it as a “Gaelic hinterland.” Although left unconquered by the Vikings, Galway was invaded by the Anglo-Normans in the 13th century and afterwards, a great medieval city emerged. Because of its position on the Atlantic, Galway became a thriving seaport for wine, spices, and fish, and developed a brisk trade with Spain and other European countries. The docks hummed with the arrival of ships from foreign lands — even Christopher Columbus is said to have landed at Galway en route to his historic voyage across the Atlantic in 1492.

Today Galway is best described as a “Renaissance city,” enjoying a rich past but constantly renewing itself. As one of Ireland’s fastest-growing and most innovative cities, Galway sets the pace for the rest of the West.

**Here are some of the city’s highlights:**

“**The Medieval Quarter**” — the area around Quay Street, considered as Galway’s Left Bank, with interesting shops and cafés reflecting the latest hip trends. Landmarks of the past include the remains of Blakes Castle, a 17th century fortified tower house; the historic Fishmarket area; and Kirwan’s Lane, one of Galway’s oldest surviving medieval streets.

**Spanish Arch** - built in 1594, this unique twin-arched structure was the focal point of the landing dock area where Spanish ships unloaded their cargoes of wine and brandy from their galleons. It is the last bastion of Galway’s early links with Spain.

**Galway City Museum**, Spanish Arch, off Flood St., is the prime showcase for historical and cultural memorabilia about Galway including the famous Padraic O Conaire statue that originally occupied a corner of Eyre Square. It is a modern and airy structure with splendid views of the city and Galway Bay from its upper floor windows. Open daily 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Free admission.

**Cathedral of Our Lady Assumed into Heaven & St. Nicholas**, University & Gaol Rds., (usually referred to simply as Galway Cathedral), dominates the Galway skyline with its huge Renaissance-style dome. It is one of Galway’s newest buildings, completed in 1965, made of limestone and marble from local quarries.

**Collegiate Church of St. Nicholas**, Lombard St. — founded in 1320 and a showcase for many medieval church furnishings. It is said that Columbus prayed at this church before embarking on his transatlantic voyage. Guided tours are conducted May-September.

**The Claddagh**, off Wolfe Tone Bridge — this is now a residential area, but it began as a small fishing village, probably older than Galway itself. It takes its name from the Irish language “An Cladach,” meaning “the sea shore.” Legend says that the people here originated the Claddagh ring, a wedding ring cast in the form of two hands clasping a heart with a crown at the top. Today this ring is a popular souvenir all over Ireland.

**Explore one of the many restaurants or pubs in town for dinner tonight.**

**OVERNIGHT: PARK HOUSE HOTEL, GALWAY (B)**

## FRIDAY, APRIL 29th – CLIFFS OF MOHER AND BURREN SMOKEHOUSE

After breakfast we’ll drive through Ireland’s stony place – The Burren, County Clare. You can find villages abandoned since famine times and green roads on which you can walk for miles without ever seeing a car. This is not the green, lush landscape captured on your typical postcard scene, but relish the contrast. There are wildflowers in Spring, giving the 560-sq-km Burren, a brilliant, if ephemeral, color, amidst its aesthetic beauty. Continuing on to the **Cliffs of Moher** (11am visit) The entirely vertical cliffs rise to a height of 203m, their edge falling away abruptly into a ceaselessly churning Atlantic. A progression of vast heads, the dark limestone marches in a rigid formation that’s gob-smacking, no matter how many times you look at it. The **Burren Smokehouse** to learn the secret of how smoked salmon is handcrafted while sampling superb cheeses, fish specialties, honeys, chocolates and other sweet treats. Return to your hotel and relax before dinner at the hotel restaurant.



**DINNER AND OVERNIGHT: PARK HOUSE HOTEL, GALWAY (B,D)**

## SATURDAY, APRIL 30th – OPTIONAL AFTERNOON TOUR OF KATIE’S CLADDAGH COTTAGE.

Step back in time and enjoy one of Galway’s most popular heritage attractions. Katie’s is a restored thatched cottage that depicts traditional life in one of Ireland’s oldest fishing villages. After enjoying our authentic turf fire, with tea, scones or homemade Irish Guinness brack, step inside our specially curated design studio at the rear of the cottage to discover some of Ireland’s best contemporary & vintage interior home accessories & unique 100% Irish gifts. With it’s own superstitions and customs, visitors to this community of artists, musicians and crafters are guaranteed a little bit of magic and intrigue. Enjoy some free time before returning to your hotel and relax before a farewell dinner at the hotel restaurant with the group followed by a final performance by Tom Comerford in the Residents Lounge.

**DINNER AND OVERNIGHT: PARK HOUSE HOTEL, GALWAY (B,D)**

## SUNDAY, MAY 1st - SAFE TRAVELS HOME

Sadly, our adventures are over and we’re very sorry to see you go!! Our coach driver will get you to Shannon Airport in plenty of time for you to check in for your flight and clear customs and emigration avoiding the long lines that you can meet you in America. There is ample duty-free shopping available at the airport for any last minute gifts or mementos. Thank you for trusting us once again with your vacation and we certainly hope you had a great time!

