



CELTIC QUEST

Tara O'Grady's Wellness Tour in Ireland

September 10th – 19th 2022

\$2999 per person sharing land only
\$3698 for single traveler land only - limit to 4 per tour

Experience Ireland with singer-songwriter Tara O'Grady, author of *Migrating Toward Happiness*, the inspirational memoir that reveals how to awaken your soul's blissful state of being. This will be a wellness tour for those who feel they need to rejuvenate in a mystical place that inspires their spirit. Discover how Ireland can ignite your imagination, creativity, and purpose. Nurture yourself in restorative spas. Stay in luxurious castle accommodations in tranquil settings. Awaken your senses through journaling, nutrition, meditation, yoga, sound healing, animal encounters, nature walks, the arts, and visits to Japanese gardens and sacred grounds. Learn to bring balance back to your life. Connect with the land, the lakes, and the local wildlife on a deep level. Ireland is a place where the veil between worlds is thin, where the energy of the earth can transform your entire being, where ancient stones whisper their secrets, where you feel like you have finally come home. Caddie Tours will be happy to organize flights from any US city.

ITINERARY

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 10th - UNITED STATES TO DUBLIN

Depart the US for Dublin. Enjoy in-flight entertainment and meal service as you start your vacation.

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 11th - DUBLIN ARRIVAL & CABRA CASTLE

After landing at Dublin Airport, complete customs and immigration formalities. The group will meet at Dublin Airport at 10 AM where you will be welcomed by your Caddie Tours driver/guide will welcome you to Ireland and escort you and your luggage to the coach. We'll drive north to Kells to have breakfast at the Headford Arms Hotel. Continue north to Kingscourt for the overnight at **Cabra Castle**. Castles, with their nooks and crannies and ancient histories, are made for exploring, and you'll chance upon amazing secrets at the gorgeous Cabra Castle. Wander through the magnificent reception rooms, find a quiet corner or fireside to relax with a book, or just enjoy the atmosphere in one of the best-known castle hotels in Ireland. Period features and furnishings create an authentic, old-world charm and a long tradition of warm and friendly service make Cabra Castle the perfect retreat from the pace of modern living. Set on 100 acres of parkland and gardens, with the magnificent backdrop of Dún an Rí Forest Park, there is much to explore, both indoors and out. Relax and explore the grounds before we meet for dinner in the **Courtroom restaurant**.



DINNER AND OVERNIGHT: CABRA CASTLE (B, D)

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 12th - MARKREE CASTLE, SLIGO

After breakfast, we will make our way to **Markree Castle**. Your royal adventure begins when you enter through the grand stone gates of Markree Castle in County Sligo, known as Yeats' County. Markree Castle is an extraordinary place, and that's why we are staying on the grounds of this fairytale location all day. Upon our arrival, we will feast on a scrumptious, decadent afternoon tea service with finger sandwiches, scones, and sweet pastries. Between meals, Tara will conduct a creative experiential workshop that involves writing, drawing, connecting with nature, meditating, and also mining your memories. All activities enhance healing opportunities on multiple levels. Johnny Cash rented this estate for his entourage, and there's even a suite called the Johnny Cash room. His photos and album covers can be found around the castle. The country singer wrote the song 'Forty Shades of Green' about his time in Ireland, and he even named one of his daughters Tara after the sacred hill in County Meath that we are visiting later in the week. We will find out why Johnny Cash was so mesmerized by Ireland. Maybe you too will be inspired to write a song, or create a poem or painting like the Yeats brothers. Be open to possibilities and you may surprise yourself. (Workshop supplies will be provided, however, it is recommended you bring a writing journal/notebook on this tour to capture daily thoughts, ideas, and memories. Join your fellow travelers for dinner tonight in the restaurant.

DINNER & OVERNIGHT: MARKREE CASTLE, SLIGO (B,D)

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13th - YEATS TOUR & LISSADELL HOUSE

After breakfast, we meet **Damien Brennan** who has a lifelong interest in the Yeats family, both the artist and the poet. The landscape of Yeats' Sligo is spectacular, pitted with blue lakes, megalithic remains of early man, and at every turn a line for the poet that captures the essence of the place. William Butler's brother Jack captured the magic in his line drawings. "No one creates," Jack wrote. "The artist assembles memories." They wrote and painted in the late 1800s but we will see what they saw, untouched by time in the natural setting. The half-day usually begins with a tour through Carrowmore Megalithic Cemetery, then an overview of Lough Gill, a visit to Glencar Waterfall, Rosses Point and finishes at Drumcliffe cemetery where WB Yeats is buried in the shadow of the mighty and majestic Benbulbin



Mountain. We then visit **Lissadell House** for the afternoon, having lunch and a house tour. Lissadell is famous as the childhood home of **Constance Markievicz**, her sister Eva Gore-Booth and her brother Josslyn Gore-Booth. Constance was one of the leaders of 1916 Rising and was the first woman to be elected to Dáil Éireann, where she served as Minister for Labour (thus becoming the first woman minister in a modern Western European democracy) and was also the first woman to be elected to the House of Commons at Westminster, London (where she declined to take her seat). Eva was a poet of distinction and an active suffragist, clashing with the young Winston Churchill over barmaids' rights in 1908. Josslyn created at Lissadell one of the premier horticultural estates in Europe. This horticultural enterprise has now been recreated at Lissadell. The great poet WB Yeats was friendly with the Gore-Booth sisters and stayed at Lissadell in 1892 and 1893. He immortalized Lissadell and the Gore-Booth sisters in his poetry. Join your fellow travelers for dinner tonight in the restaurant.

DINNER & OVERNIGHT: MARKREE CASTLE, SLIGO (B, D)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 14th - YOGA, CINEMA CLASSIC, & ASHFORD CASTLE, MAYO

After breakfast, we go to a yoga class at **Ard Nahoo Yoga Studios**. All equipment will be provided in class. No worries if you are a beginner. Then we head to Cong in County Mayo where the 1952 film 'The Quiet Man' was made, starring John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara. We will take a tour with a local to see all the filming locations from the famous movie. Afterward, we will retire at **The Lodge at Ashford Castle**, a remarkable 800-year-old castle. Discover their delicious cuisine, passionate team, a wealth of estate activities, and a state-of-the-art spa. As a National Geographic Unique Lodge of the World, Ireland's top hotel destination and former home of the Guinness family, they are exceptional in every sense. Here we will have dinner in **Wilde's restaurant** followed by a private screening of 'The Quiet Man' in the castle's cinema.

DINNER & OVERNIGHT: THE LODGE AT ASHFORD CASTLE (B, D)

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 15th - LOUGH CORRIB CRUISE & HAWK WALK

After breakfast, we set sail at 11 am from **Ashford Castle Pier** and take a pleasure cruise on **Lough Corrib**. Lough Corrib is the largest lake in Southern Ireland and archaeologists are only just beginning to piece together how important this lake was in terms of trade and connectivity in the area with the recent discovery of several perfectly preserved 5000-year-old boats on the lake bed. Historians already knew of its religious significance with the renowned holy island, Inchagoill, recorded in the Annals of Inishfallen in 1193 where St. Patrick built a church, but first, you have to take in the magnificent backdrop of the Twelve Bens Mountains in Connemara and the fabled Hill of Doon, the last stand of original evergreen oak forest in Europe. In the afternoon we participate in the **Hawk Walk**, a private nature tour. 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 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. The hawk spirit animal helps you develop your spiritual awareness, as well as your power of observation. Hawk symbolism encourages you to see situations from a different and higher perspective. They teach us to focus and remove distractions from our lives to discover our higher purpose in life. The evening is yours to explore the grounds, go to the spa, or relax and reflect.

OVERNIGHT: THE LODGE AT ASHFORD CASTLE (B)

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16th - IRISH NATIONAL STUDD AND JAPANESE GARDENS, KILDARE

After breakfast, we will journey to County Kildare to visit **The National Stud**. Here you'll see immaculately bred stallions alongside protective mares, frolicking foals, and athletic yearlings. The horse spirit animal symbolizes freedom, power, stamina, going on a journey, and overcoming obstacles. You work hard, you face many challenges daily, but it is important to learn how to balance your life and take care of your emotional, mental, and spiritual well-being. That's what horses teach us. Now is the time to set your soul free!

After we connect with these majestic animals, we will stroll around the delightful grounds to explore St. Fiachra's Garden, including the miniature Japanese Gardens. **The Irish National Stud's Japanese Gardens**, renowned throughout the world and considered the finest of their kind in Europe, is far more than simply a treat for the eye. They also provide comfort to the soul, achieving exactly the objective that was set out when the gardens were created between 1906 and 1910. Devised by Colonel William Hall Walker, a wealthy Scotsman from a famous brewing family, the gardens were laid out by Japanese master horticulturist Tassa Eida and his son Minoru.

Their aim was, through trees, plants, flowers, lawns, rocks, and water, to symbolize the 'Life of Man'. Eida's work traces the journey of a soul from oblivion to eternity and portrays the human experience of its embodiment as it journeys by paths of its own choice through life. Birth, childhood, marriage, parenthood, old age, death, and the afterlife are all brought to mind as the gardens, a seamless mixture of Eastern and Western cultures, are explored. After a tranquil afternoon, we then make our way to **The Johnstown Estate and Spa**, where we will stay for the next three nights. Enjoy and relax at the spa, or take a nap before we meet for dinner in **the Fire & Salt Restaurant**.

DINNER AND OVERNIGHT: THE JOHNSTOWN HOUSE HOTEL (B, D)



SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17th - FREE DAY TO EXPLORE DUBLIN CITY

After breakfast, we head to Dublin. There's no better way to explore **Dublin City** than on the Hop on Hop off double-decker tour bus which will bring you to many of the sites throughout the day (we provide your tickets). Most visitors to Dublin want to visit attractions like the **Guinness Storehouse, Trinity College Library and the Book of Kells, Kilmainham Gaol prison, Temple Bar, and The Wax Museum**. But Tara recommends you see some of the city's hidden gems like **St Stephen's Green, The Dublin Writers Museum, The Museum of Literature, The James Joyce Centre** on one of Dublin's most beautiful Georgian streets, **Irish Film Institute, Bewley's** on Grafton Street for a coffee, the Little Museum of Dublin, **EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum** (A must-see if you have Irish roots!),

The Irish Rock and Roll Museum Experience, Marsh's Library beside St. Patrick's Cathedral, and many more. Shop for souvenirs, there are plenty of Irish woolen shops and bookstores. Explore the diverse and wonderful restaurants and pubs the city has to offer for lunch and fun. We will return to the hotel and meet for dinner in **the Fire & Salt Restaurant**.

DINNER AND OVERNIGHT: THE JOHNSTOWN HOUSE HOTEL (B, D)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 18th HILL OF TARA, NEWGRANGE & SOUND HEALING

After breakfast, we head to Ireland's Stonehenge, a 4,500-year-old structure at the **Hill of Tara** in Co Meath, which has been re-created by archaeologists and computer-graphics experts. They have built a representation of a huge, wooden monument that appears to have been used for inauguration ceremonies and pagan burials of Ireland's high kings. In prehistory and historic times, 142 Kings are said to have reigned in the name of Tara. The coronation stone called The Lia Fail or Stone of Destiny has rested here down the ages. And it was here that the most powerful of Irish Kings held their great inaugural feasts and were approved by Earth Mother Goddess Maeve. In ancient Irish religion and mythology, Tara was revered as a dwelling of the gods and an entrance place to the otherworld of eternal joy and plenty where no mortal ever grew old. In the legends of St. Patrick's mission to Ireland, he is said to have first come to Tara



to confront the ancient religion in its most powerful sight. Tara is one of the largest complexes of Celtic monuments in all of Europe.

In reading its landscape we are transported back in time to when the first settlers came here 6000 years ago. They and the Celts who followed them chose Tara as a very special site. **Newgrange** is a Stone Age (Neolithic) monument in the Boyne Valley, County Meath, it is the jewel in the crown of Ireland's Ancient East. Newgrange was constructed about 5,200 years ago (3,200 B.C.) which makes it older than Stonehenge and the Great Pyramids of Giza. Newgrange is a large circular mound 85 meters (93 yards) in diameter and 13.5 meters (15 yards) high with a 19 meter (21 yards) stone passageway and chambers inside. The mound is ringed by 97 large kerbstones, some of which are engraved with symbols called megalithic art. Archaeologists classified Newgrange as a passage tomb, however, Newgrange is now recognized to be much more than a passage tomb. Ancient Temple is a more fitting classification, a place of astrological, spiritual, religious, and ceremonial importance, much as present-day cathedrals are places of prestige and worship where dignitaries may be laid to rest. Newgrange is best known for the illumination of its passage and chamber by the winter solstice sun. Above the entrance to the passage at Newgrange, there is an opening called a roof-box. This baffling orifice held a great surprise for those who unearthed it. Its purpose is to allow sunlight to penetrate the chamber on the shortest days of the year, around December 21st, the winter solstice. At dawn, from December 19th to 23rd, a narrow beam of light penetrates the roof-box and reaches the floor of the chamber, gradually extending to the rear of the chamber. As the sun rises higher, the beam widens within the chamber so that the whole room becomes dramatically illuminated. This event lasts for 17 minutes, beginning around 9 am. The accuracy of Newgrange as a time-telling device is remarkable when one considers that it was built 500 years before the Great Pyramids and more than 1,000 years before Stonehenge. We will return to our hotel to experience a **Sound Healing session**. It is a practice that uses vibrations (vocal or instrumental-like gongs, Tibetan singing bowls, and tuning forks) to relax your mind and body. Some proponents also believe it can relieve certain ailments, including anxiety and insomnia. It has been used by cultures like the Aboriginal peoples in Australia and Tibetan monks for centuries. You can expect to feel very calm after a session, with a profound sense of well-being. We will lie on the floor back at our hotel spa while the vibrations of an improvised concert wash over us. Sound healing adherents say that listening to percussive instruments like gongs, Tibetan singing bowls, and tuning forks reduces stress and can place the listener in a meditative state. Practitioners offer their services as an alternative treatment for problems like anxiety, chronic pain, sleep disorders, and PTSD. You are in for a treat! Join your fellow travelers for your farewell dinner tonight in the **Fire & Salt Restaurant**.

DINNER AND OVERNIGHT: THE JOHNSTOWN HOUSE HOTEL (B, D)

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19th - DEPART FROM DUBLIN AIRPORT

Our coach driver will get you to Dublin Airport in plenty of time to check-in for your flight and clear customs and immigration. There is ample duty-free shopping available at the airport for any last-minute gifts or mementos. Tara especially likes the Chocolate Bar at the airport where you can order a salad, soup, or sandwich with all sorts of chocolate items, including hot chocolate.



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