



The Best of the West Tour

Presented by Sean Fleming

October 16th – 22nd 2024

\$2,499 per person sharing Land only

\$699 Single Supplement – limit 5 per tour

Caddie Tours will be happy to handle all your flights from any US City to Shannon



TUESDAY OCTOBER 15th – UNITED STATES TO SHANNON

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

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 16th - 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/lunch in the beautiful **village of Kinvara** known in Irish as Cinn Mhara, an inlet in the south-eastern corner of Galway Bay. Leaving Kinvara, we drive just a half hour and make our way to the city of culture for the west of Ireland, **Galway City**. We'll check into our hotel on Eyre Square in the center of Galway City, The Hardiman, our home, for the next six nights. Join your fellow travelers for a welcome dinner tonight at the hotel.

DINNER AND OVERNIGHT: HARDIMAN HOTEL GALWAY (B, D)

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 17th – CASTLEBAR, KNOCK & CONG

After breakfast we will depart for **Castlebar** to visit the **Museum of Country Life**. Set on magnificent grounds, the museum is home to the National Folklife Collection with exhibits of rural life, including trade, crafts, and home life. We will have lunch at **Synge & Byrne Café** in the Courtyard at **Turlough Park House**. We will make a brief stop in **Knock**. The story began on the 21st of August 1879 when, fifteen people from the village witnessed an Apparition of Our Lady, St. Joseph, St. John the Evangelist, a Lamb and cross on an altar at the gable wall of the Parish Church. We will continue to **Cong** a charming little village, that was made famous as the location where John Ford's 1952 landmark film *The Quiet Man* (starring John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara) was filmed. We'll experience **The Quiet Man Walking Tour**, that will bring us to film locations including **Innisfree, Castletown, Pat Cohan's Bar, the Dying Man's House, and the Reverend Playfair's House**. We will return to Galway where you can enjoy one of the many restaurants or pubs in town for dinner.



OVERNIGHT: HARDIMAN HOTEL GALWAY (B, L)

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 18th - 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 Galway City's highlights:

The Medieval Quarter - the area around Quay Street, has 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.

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 - 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 - (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. Explore one of the many restaurants or pubs in town for dinner tonight and a music session.

OVERNIGHT: HARDIMAN HOTEL GALWAY (B)



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19th – ARAN ISLANDS DAY TOUR

After breakfast we will travel to Rossaveal and board the Aran Island Ferries (10:30am sailing) 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** is 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 Gabriel's family for generations.

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

Return to Galway and join your fellow travelers for a group dinner in the hotel tonight.

DINNER & OVERNIGHT: HARDIMAN HOTEL, GALWAY (B, D)

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 20th - EXPLORING GALWAY CITY



Artsy, bohemian Galway is one of Ireland's most engaging cities. Brightly painted pubs heaving with live music, while restaurants and cafes offer front-row seats for observing buskers and street theatre. Bridges arch over the salmon-stuffed River Corrib; and a long promenade leads to the seaside suburb of Salthill on Galway Bay. 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. **Sean Fleming will play with a local musician or two tonight at Monroe's Tavern at 7pm.** **Monroes** has been a cornerstone of the Westend since 1964. Originally, the

'New Manhattan Bar', John and Margaret Monroe returned from New York City to open the bar to great excitement as the first Galway bar to have table service, a 'Ladies Lounge' and a 'Singing Lounge'. The venue remains family owned and operated and has always been a ground-breaking venue for live music. It played host to the top Irish showbands in the 60's and 70's and has grown to become a leading Irish venue for national and international Irish musicians. The Tavern is 15 minutes from our hotel and has food options should you decide to dine here.

OVERNIGHT: HARDIMAN HOTEL, GALWAY (B)

MONDAY, OCTOBER 21st – RATHBAUN FARM & BURREN BACKROOM SESSION

After breakfast, we'll depart the hotel and head south to visit Rathbaun Farm for a traditional Irish farm experience. Take the opportunity to step back in time as you walk inside a 250-year-old thatched cottage complete with a turf fire and original stone walls. Enjoy a **sheepdog demonstration** gathering the sheep with the local farmer. Wrapping up our visit, we'll enjoy a hot cup of tea with homemade scones, fresh cream and jam. We'll then make our way into the heart of the Burren, one of Ireland's most compelling limestone landscapes formed millions of years ago. Here, cool grey rock etched with crevices and cracks tumbles down to the wild blue Atlantic Ocean with the result, one of nature's most extraordinary phenomena. We'll visit our dear friend, **Oliver O'Connell** and his **Burren Backroom** with the backdrop of **Mullaghmore** where we will be entertained with songs, poetry, music and storytelling followed by lunch. Return to Galway to join your fellow travelers for a farewell dinner at the hotel.



DINNER & OVERNIGHT: HARDIMAN HOTEL, GALWAY (B, L, D)

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 22nd – 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 immigration, avoiding the long lines that 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!

Slan Abhaile – Safe Home

Niall P. League

Caddie Tours - Ireland Specialists

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Inclusions

Professional Driver & Guide

6 Nights Hotel accommodation in Galway

Breakfast each day (including day of arrival)

3 dinners

2 lunches

Porterage at each hotel

Internal Transport as per the Program of Activities by private motorcoach with driver/ guide

Group Departure Transfer from final hotel to Shannon Airport

Program of activities as per the provisional schedule including entrance fees

Program of activities as per the provisional schedule including entrance fees:

The Quiet Man Walking Tour	Walking Tour of Galway
Traditional Irish Music Sessions	Sheepdog Demonstration
Aran Islands Tour	Rathbaun Farm
Goat's Cheese Making Demonstration	Burren Room Music Session

Activities are provisional and subject to change

Exclusions

International Travel to Ireland

Medical, Accident & Travel Insurance

Single room supplements

Meals not stated above

Gratuities

Additional Activities

