

Lost In Ireland: Enchanting Walking Journey Across the Emerald Isle

Led by Kirsten Cahoon, Director of the Piper Center for Vocation and Career

July 19–27, 2025

Dear Travelers,

I am delighted to share that our 2025 Ireland tour is an official GO. It's time to start your planning.

FLIGHTS

Feel free to purchase your flights. We strongly recommend you consider adding flight cancellation insurance to that purchase, and that you also check the details of that coverage. Here are some additional notes:

- The tour starts in Killarney and ends in Ennis.
- You should plan to be at the group hotel in Killarney by late afternoon on Sunday, July 20th. We will start the tour with a welcome meeting around 6 pm, followed by a group dinner. (See below for some arrival options.)
- Feel free to depart from Ennis any time on Sunday, July 27th. Our hotel in Ennis is conveniently located about 20 minutes from Shannon Airport. Hotel staff can help arrange a taxi to the airport.

There are several different options for joining the tour, depending on your needs and preferences.

1. Fly directly to Kerry Airport (KIR), which is only about 20 minutes from Killarney by taxi. Or if you fly into Dublin Airport, for example, there are several flights a day to Kerry. You might also find flights from the U.S. that go through London or Shannon. You should strongly consider booking the leg to Kerry on the same ticket as your international flights, not separately unless you plan to stay in Dublin or London for a couple of days.
2. Fly into Dublin airport and, whether you spend a night or two in Dublin before traveling onward, you can either
 - a. take an Airlink bus or taxi from Dublin airport to Heuston station, where you can catch a train to Killarney (about 3 hours). There are around 9 trains each day, some requiring changing trains in Mallow. In Killarney you would catch a taxi to the hotel.
 - b. arrange a private car transfer from the airport (or staff at your hotel can, if you decide to stay a few days in Dublin prior to the tour) directly to the hotel in Killarney. Although expensive, the price per person can be reduced considerably if you have 4 or more people with luggage. There are several online companies who specialize in these transfers.
3. Fly into Shannon airport and either
 - a. arrange a private transfer directly to the hotel in Killarney (about 2 hours). This transfer can be pre-booked online as well.

- b. take a taxi from the Shannon Airport to the Limerick Bus Station, then take a bus from Limerick to Killarney, then taxi from the Killarney Bus Station to the hotel. This is a less direct route, but also less expensive.

You might also find it helpful to look at our [Booking Your Flights](#) page for some helpful tips.

PREPARE FOR YOUR ADVENTURE

You'll get the most out of study travel if you research what to do during your free time. This allows you to reap the benefits of group travel, while also customizing the tour to your interests and activity level. Read more about [How to Be an Independent Group Traveler](#).

There are a bunch of other general resources, tips, and suggestions [on this page](#).

WHAT TO EXPECT FOR THE HIKING PORTIONS OF THIS TOUR

Finally, start thinking in earnest – if you haven't already – about the activity level required on this tour. You have signed up for an exciting hiking adventure! Now you need to make sure you are ready for the physical aspects of the trip well before you go, and not a few weeks before you depart.

You can see detailed notes on the hikes on the [itinerary](#). Each day that includes a hike has a description of the distance, elevation gain and loss, trail surface, and any other relevant information to help you understand the difficulty of the day. Also, each hike has a difficulty rating: EASY, MODERATE, or CHALLENGING. Obviously, what one person considers easy may be dramatically different than what another person considers easy. That is why it is important to read the following information to understand what our tour operator, Go Get Lost, considers EASY, MODERATE AND CHALLENGING.

The hikes on this tour:

3 EASY

3 EASY/MODERATE

It is not uncommon for someone to have an inaccurate and overly optimistic idea of their own level of physical fitness. Reading the information below may re-orient you to what you need to be prepared for in order to have fun and participate in all the great hikes with your group.

Go Get Lost's on-site hiking guides set a moderate pace in order to enjoy the trail but still complete it in a reasonable length of time. If a hiker is too unsteady or walks far slower than the pace set by the hiking guide, it prevents them – and the entire group – from completing a hike in a reasonable length of time. That's why it's your responsibility to read each day's hiking description, understand the ratings, apply it honestly to your own abilities, and then make sure you prepare yourself physically in the months leading up to the tour.

If you lag behind or seem to be struggling, the hiking guide will open up a conversation with you. If the guide deems that participation in the day's activities will present a safety hazard to

you and/or your traveling companions, the guide may, at their discretion, advise you that you will not be able to participate in the activity. Although the tour leaders may be able to arrange for an alternate activity, it is not guaranteed, and it may not be included in the tour price. No refunds can be given for any activities missed because of non-participation, whether by your choice or by guide decision.

Some routes that we walk are more challenging than others due to length, steepness, trail surface, or the amount of food you consumed at lunch. Generally speaking, the steeper the path, the slower we go. And, these ratings apply to the routes that we walk in the countryside. On the days when we are exploring towns, you can walk as much or as little as you desire. Even some countryside walks can be shortened for those who wish to have an easier day.

So, onto the rating descriptions. These ratings are for people who are fit and are accomplished walkers/hikers. The ratings apply to an average middle-aged walker/hiker, not beginners and not experts. For example, a MODERATE rating means that a fit hiker will enjoy the route but not be challenged by it. If you do not have a history of fitness or hiking – you're a total couch potato – then the MODERATE route will be more like the CHALLENGING route to you. Likewise, the CHALLENGING route may be more than you can manage. The hiking guide will assess your fitness level on the first day or two of the trip. They will then be able to counsel you on what the best route for you may be on certain days, or when a particular walk may be more than you can manage.

EASY: We will walk between 3 and 6 miles per day, with mostly flat or gently rolling terrain. Although steps and steep stretches may be encountered, they are not frequent. Surfaces are generally solid but can have occasional stretches of loose stones or uneven surfaces. Walking times will vary between 2-4 hours. To prepare for this level of hike you should be walking 3-5 miles at least twice a week, with some occasional hills or steps. You will need to get off the paved trails on at least half of your training hikes.

MODERATE: We will walk between 4 and 8 miles per day, with some moderate to steep inclines or steps. Paths will vary from cobblestones and pavement to dirt, rocks, or grass. Surfaces can be loose and uneven, requiring normal balance skills. Some easy scrambling over boulders may be required. Walking times will vary between 2-6 hours. To prepare for this level of hike you should be walking 4-6 miles at least 2 times per week prior to the trip. You will want to find some longer hills, steps, and various trail surfaces, too (not just paved trails).

CHALLENGING: You should be prepared to be able to walk 5-12 miles per day over occasional steep inclines and declines. You should be able to negotiate any type of trail surface i.e., loose gravel and fist-sized stones to coarse ash (on volcanic surfaces). Surfaces can be loose and uneven, requiring good balance skills. Paths may be exposed to heights, sunny with no shade, or windy and cold. Walking times will vary between 4-7 hours. To prepare for this type of hike, you should be hiking 5-7 miles at least twice a week prior to the trip. You will want to have some steep uphill and downhill, various trail surfaces, and be able to keep up a steady pace.

I also think [this article](#) from AMA Travel out of Alberta, Canada is really helpful. It mentions issues that can affect your stamina that you might not be thinking about (like excess heat) and lays out an easy plan to follow to get ready for being more active than most of us are in our daily routines at home.

As ever, I encourage you to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Heidi Quiram". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

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