



# Full Day Tours



## MEDIEVAL KILKENNY TOUR



**Kilkenny City** is the best example of a medieval town in Ireland and is attractively situated on the River Nore, which forms the moat of its magnificently restored 13th century castle. The name Kilkenny comes from the Gaelic for "Canice's Church", which nowadays is the splendid Church of Ireland St Canice's Cathedral, with its ancient stone tower and imposing Gothic interior.

You will enjoy a guided tour of the impressive Anglo-Norman stone castle, which was the former principal Irish residence of the powerful Butler family (Marquesses and Dukes of Ormonde) for almost 600 years. Avail of a lunch stop at the 14th century Kyteler's Inn, named after the infamous Dame Alice Kyteler who was burned at the stake for the alleged poisoning of four of her husbands.

The remainder of the afternoon is free to shop or sightsee. Opposite **Kilkenny Castle** are the elegant former castle stables, home to a number of local craftspeople and the **Kilkenny Design Centre**, where you can find all manner of quality Irish crafts and artwork for sale.

Also a must is a visit to **St. Canices Cathedral** - famous for its beautiful wooden hand-carved ceiling as well as effigies of the Butler Family and other famous families.

### Price per person: €50

Minimum numbers 40 people

Lunch not included

#### Tour Includes:

- Entrance to Kilkenny Castle
- Entrance to St. Canices Cathedral
- Service of a luxury coach
- English speaking tour guide/driver for duration of tour
- All local taxes

Prices for private tour for smaller groups on request, or the option to join the scheduled tour with other pilgrims, subject to minimum numbers.

## POWERSCOURT & GLENDALOUGH TOUR



Stunning scenery, a glimpse of Ireland's monastic and aristocratic past and some excellent shopping for good measure.

**Powerscourt House and Gardens** is one of Europe's great treasures and Ireland's most famous estate. Gracing the foothills of the Wicklow mountains, the 18th century mansion was partially destroyed by fire in 1974. A long restoration project ensued and an exhibition now brings its rich history to life. Also onsite is Ireland's premier shopping emporium, Avoca Handweavers.

Begun in the 1740s, 47 acres of gardens are remarkable for their grandeur of scale and comprise a sublime blend of formal gardens, sweeping terraces, splendid statuary and ornamental lakes together with secret hollows, rambling walks, walled gardens and an extensive variety of trees and shrubs. A stop will be made en route to **Glendalough** to avail of lunch at the Wicklow Heather Restaurant. Founded in the 6th century by St Kevin, Glendalough (meaning glen of two lakes) is a former glacial valley renowned for its early medieval monastic settlement. Destroyed in 1398 by English troops, the present remains tell only a small part of its story.

On the return drive to Dublin, you will pass through the two charming seaside villages of Dalkey and Killiney, home to celebrities such as Maeve Binchey, Bono, Enya and Van Morrison.

### Price per person: €55

Minimum numbers 40 people

Lunch not included

#### Tour Includes:

- Entrance to Powerscourt House & Gardens
- Entrance to Glendalough Visitors Centre
- Service of a luxury coach
- English speaking tour guide/driver for duration of tour
- All local taxes

Prices for private tour for smaller groups on request, or the option to join the scheduled tour with other pilgrims, subject to minimum numbers.

## BELFAST CITY TOUR



The North has become a must-see for any traveller and lovers of Ireland. This tour begins with a scenic transfer to Belfast with spectacular views of the **Mourne Mountains** as you cross the border. On route we stop in **Drogheda** and visit the head of Ireland's famous martyr, St. Oliver Plunkett (1681). Celtic crosses, round towers and ancient Christian ruins inspire at the Monastic Settlement of **Monasterboice**.

Once in **Belfast**, this tour enables you to focus on the city itself, the little corner of our island so ever present in world headlines since 1969 but now experiencing a new dawn. See the birthplace of the Titanic, launched in 1912 from Belfast's renowned Harland & Wolf shipyard. Drift back in time to the days of the grave robbers, the dreadful Irish famine, the poorhouses, the linen mills. Walk the streets of old Belfast, meet local characters and discover a city so unspoiled with much to offer. Van Morrison sang of his town, poets dreamt of it and politicians preached of it. Come make up your own mind, about a city so featured yet so undiscovered!

### Price per person: €55

Minimum numbers 40 people

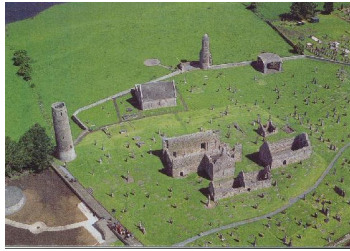
Lunch not included

#### Tour Includes:

- Entrance to Ulster Folk Museum
- Service of a luxury coach
- English speaking tour guide/driver for duration of tour
- All local taxes

Prices for private tour for smaller groups on request, or the option to join the scheduled tour with other pilgrims, subject to minimum numbers.

## CLONMACNOISE & BIRR CASTLE TOUR



This tour will take in **Clonmacnoise** a remarkable 6<sup>th</sup> C. monastic site overlooking the River Shannon in County Offaly. The extensive ruins include a cathedral, castle, round tower, numerous churches, two important high crosses, and a large collection of early Christian grave slabs (the last two on display in the excellent site museum). This great monastery was founded by St. Ciaran. Clonmacnoise was a great centre of learning, and many manuscripts, including the Annals of Tighernach (11th century) and the Book of the Dun Cow (12th century), were written here. The site is entered through the visitor centre, where a number of cross-slabs are displayed and the centrepiece in the Interpretative Centre is the 9<sup>th</sup> century Cross of Scriptures.

A stop will be made en route in **Birr Heritage Town**, one of Ireland's best examples of a Georgian Town. It is a virtually intact 18/19th century town, formal, spacious and well-planned, with Georgian houses along its tree-lined malls and avenues. From here you will travel to **Birr Castle Demesne**, home to the Earls of Rosse since 1620, Birr Castle is the Private Home of Brendan, the 7th Earl and his Family. The **Award winning Gardens** and buildings in the grounds of Birr Castle house an array of unique plants, not to mention a detailed insight into the History of the Parsons family. The Great Telescope, designed by the 3rd Earl of Rosse, was the largest in the World for 70 years and is now fully restored in the grounds. Ireland's Historic Science Centre offers a fascinating insight into the History of this pioneering Family, with particular emphasis on Astronomy, Photography and Botany.

### Price per person: €55

Minimum numbers 40 people

Lunch not included

#### Tour Includes:

- Entrance to Clonmacnoise
- Entrance to Birr Castle
- Service of a luxury coach
- English speaking tour guide/driver for duration of tour
- All local taxes

Prices for private tour for smaller groups on request, or the option to join the scheduled tour with other pilgrims, subject to minimum numbers.

## KILDARE, NATIONAL STUD & JAPANESE GARDENS, & NEWBRIDGE SILVER



**Kildare Town** dates from the 5th century when it was the site of the original Church of the Oak and monastery founded by St. Brigid. This became one of the three most important Christian foundations in Celtic Ireland. The Curragh plains lie nearby. Flat and green for many square miles. Today, Kildare Town is regarded as the capital of Ireland's bloodstock industry. There are numerous riding schools as well as the famous Curragh Racecourse.

Kildare's major attractions and our first stop is **The Irish National Stud**. Established in 1946, the Irish National Stud combines an active role in the development and promotion of Irish bloodstock with its role as one of the country's major tourist attractions and it is the only Stud farm in Ireland open to the public. Located on the grounds of the National Stud, the significance of the **Japanese Gardens** is not only artistic and horticultural but also philosophical, religious and historical. Now, internationally renowned and acclaimed as the finest Japanese Gardens in Europe, they are a living monument to the meeting of Eastern and Western cultures in a Western setting.

A lunch stop in Kildare town itself followed by an afternoon of shopping in the Kildare Village Outlet nestled within landscaped grounds and presented in an authentic village environment, a couple of hours spent browsing over 55 exclusive brands, offering luxury for less in a chic and casual open-air environment. On return to Dublin, one final stop will take in **Newbridge Silverware**. For 70 years, Newbridge Silverware has been designing and producing quality giftware and tableware. The evolution of the Newbridge Silverware brand from that which was associated with cutlery to a premier name in the design and manufacture of quality jewellery and lifestyle products is indeed remarkable and today the brand is widely regarded as Ireland's premier giftware brand. At the heart of the brand's success have been the Newbridge Silverware showrooms, located at the company's headquarters in Newbridge, Co. Kildare.

### Price per person: €60

Minimum numbers 40 people

Lunch not included

### Tour Includes:

- Entrance to Irish National Stud & Japanese Gardens
- Entrance to Newbridge Silverware
- Service of a luxury coach
- English speaking tour guide/driver for duration of tour
- All local taxes

Prices for private tour for smaller groups on request, or the option to join the scheduled tour with other pilgrims, subject to minimum numbers.