

Exploring Ireland's Culture, History & Archaeology.

Date: August 6th to 14th 2012.

Areas explored: The Burren, Aran Islands (Inishoirr), Connemara, Westport, Roscommon, Sligo.

**With Maeve Kelly Director of Walking Boots Tours.
Assisted by Louise Dillon.**

Joined by Michael Gibbons Archaeologist & Historian.

Suggested Itinerary:

Day 1(6th): Arrival to Shannon

Day 2(7th): Arrival to Shannon, collected by Maeve & Louise at 9.00am. We will drive through the spectacular limestone landscape of the Burren. Our first walk will take us along a beautiful green trail along the shores of Galway Bay to the village of Fanore.

Our first guesthouse is in the bustling village of Doolin, home to traditional music of Clare.

Overnight & Evening meal included in Doolin.

Day 3 (8th): After breakfast Maeve will give a short history of the Aran Islands and its inhabitants. We will then take the ferry to one of the Islands for a day trip, Inishoirr. This is a beautiful peaceful island as we explore its many lanes and paths and coastal cliffs are breathtaking.

Hike: Along cliffs, asphalt paths, limestone.

Distance: 4-5 miles.

Overnight in Doolin, Meal Not included.(explore on your own)

Day 4 (9th): We will explore some of the archaeology of this landscape. This landscape has been inhabited for thousands of years and the marks of this can be clearly seen in the most interesting sites. So much to see you will not be disappointed.

Hike: over uneven ground at times to various sites.

Distance: 2-3 miles.

Overnight in Doolin meal **Not** included.

Day 5 (10th): Later Today we will be joined by Michael Gibbons, archaeologist & historian. Michael is a wealth of knowledge about the landscape of Connemara it being his home turf for many years. As we hike along ancient pathways we will hear stories of famine, hardship, triumph, battles and much more. We will drive from Doolin via Galway to the heart of Connemara.(Drive 2-3 hours approximately)

Hike: 2.5 hours along the shores of Killary Fjord.

Terrain: Track, muddy/wet trail in places, stony path by sea.

Distance: 5 miles approximately.

Overnight in Clifden and meal included.

Lecture & slideshow with Michael.

Day 6: (11th) We will join Michael today just outside Clifden to walk on Omey Island. This island is joined to the mainland by a tidal causeway. Walking on this wild island on the fringes of the wild atlantic gives you a real flavor of the harshness of life in the west of Ireland.

Hike: On sand dunes, uneven at times. Island trails.

Distance: 4-5 miles.

Overnight in Clifden meal **Not** included.

Day 7: (12th) With Michael we will hike along a section of the western way a long distance walking trail through some of the most spectacular mountain scenery in Ireland under the slopes of Croagh Patrick and close to the shores of Clew Bay. Michael excavated extensively on the summit of Croagh Patrick to discover an fascinating past and more...

Hike: Along boggy wet uneven ground, trails at times,

Distance: 6-7 miles.

Overnight in Westport and meal **Not** included.

Day 8 (13th) .Optional days rest in Westport town, stroll the streets, gift shop, follow the town river trail or go for a days hike with Maeve & Louise in the majestic Nephin Beg hills along the bangor trail for 4-5 hours.

Overnight in Westport meal included.

Day 9 (14th): Time for farewell and return to Shannon for mid morning arrival 10.30am
Drop off in Ennis or Galway.

N.B. Plan to fly out the 15th.

What's included: All accommodation, breakfasts,most lunches,boat trip,some meals as stated, services of guides and guests, all transport.

Not Included: Airfare, some meals, first lunch, gratuity to principal guide Maeve,laundry.