



Luxury Tours - Ireland

- **Bantry House.** Originally from 1700, a beautiful location overlooking Bantry Bay. Lived in by the White family since 1739. Italian Garden in Classical Grottesque style. Rose coloured tapestries, possibly made by Marie Antoinette.



Rock of Cashel



Bantry House

- **Rock of Cashel.** A fortress dating from 400 AD. religious centre from 1100, attacked by Cromwell in 1647, and the Cathedral abandoned in the late 1700s. Much of the original complex remains.
- **Lakes of Killarney.** Beautiful scenery, tourist attraction. With three lakes the area has castles and abbeys. The waters reflect the subtle light changes – attract many artists and writers. The **Gap of Dunloe** a dramatic mountain pass with gorge and three small lakes.



Lakes of Killarney



Giant's Causeway



- **The Giant's Causeway.** A strange place; bizarre regularity of the basalt columns on the shore with grey cliffs and shrieking gulls. About 37,000 columns extend from the cliffs to the sea.
- **Kilkenny.** Beautiful city which was the capital of Ireland in the 1400s. Some streets survive from the 1400s. A town with about 80 pubs.
 - **Kilkenny Castle** was built in the 1190s and occupied until 1935 by the Butler family. Fine Long Gallery, library, dining room and Chinese bedroom.
 - **Dingle Peninsula.** Beautiful scenery with wonderful sea views. Iron age stone forts, inscribed stones, beehive huts and early Christian oratories. The drive will take more than half a day; some remote areas are Gaelic speaking.
 - **The Blasket Centre.** The Blasket Islands, uninhabited since 1953. The way of life is recorded at the centre on the mainland.
 - **Riaic** excavated monastery from 600 AD
 - **Dunbeg Fort** dating from the Iron Age
 - **Dingle** famous for the local resident Fungie the dolphin.



The Burren

- **The Burren.** A vast limestone plateau on the west coast. Few trees grow; however, it is a unique botanical environment in which Mediterranean (hot climate) and Alpine (cold climate) plants grow. Beautiful coloured plants in an austere landscape.
- **Ring of Kerry.** Very attractive coastal scenery with slate roofed villages with rugged mountains. Plan a day's drive around the Ring.
 - **Glenbeigh.** Visit the Glenbeigh bog village; reconstructed cottages from 1800s.
 - **Staigue Fort.** Iron Age, dry stone fort is the best preserved in Ireland.
 - **Killorglin.** Pretty village, famous for its Puck Fair in August. It is Ireland's oldest street festival with horse fair parade, coronation ceremony, open air concerts, fireworks, street entertainers, dancing displays.
 - **Moll's Gap.** Bleak bog land, high mountains, beautiful views.
 - **Sneem.** Charming town, brightly coloured houses.
 - **Killarney.** Base town for luxury hotels, golf courses, tours of the lakes, the Ring of Kerry, shopping until 10.00 p.m. in the Summer.
 - **The Skelligs** (islands). Isolated Christian monastery with 1000 year old stairway; inhabited until 1100. Now sea birds, storm petrels, puffins, gannets.



- **Kinsale.** Very pretty small town. Defeat of the Irish forces and their Spanish allies in 1601 was the end of the old Gaelic order; a naval base in 1600 and 1700s, now a yachting centre. Famous for its annual **Festival of Food** with great restaurants, pubs and wine bars. **Charles Fort** fortress from 1670s.



Bunratty Castle



Blarney Castle

- **Bunratty Castle.** Dates back to the 1400s. The interior looks similar to the way it was in the 1600s. Basement has walls 10 feet (3 metres) thick, a Great Hall (banqueting), entrance on first floor by wooden staircase (to deter invaders).
 - Famous for present day **Medieval Banquets**
- **Aran Islands.** Three islands the largest is eight miles by 2 miles. Beautiful coastal views, large prehistoric stone forts (protected by razor sharp pointed stone stakes), monastic settlement built between 800 and 1400, austere landscape with dry stone walls. Famous for Aran knitwear.
 - Cycles for hire. Minibuses
- **Newgrange.** Built around 3200 BC the passage graves were undiscovered until 1699, excavated in the 1960s.
 - Solar Observatory. The world's oldest. At dawn in the winter solstice, 21st December, a beam of sunlight shines through the roof box, along 62 feet (19 metres) and lights up the central recess in the chamber.
 - Chamber ceiling up to 20 feet (6 metres), with overlapping slabs has remained in place.
- **Powerscourt.** The gardens are probably the finest in Ireland in a stunning location. Chinese conifers, bamboo trees, secluded gardens, pebble mosaic, Italianate stairway, terraced Italian garden, walled gardens and a pet cemetery. Powerscourt House is being rebuilt after a fire in 1974.