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All-Ireland itinerary

In association with Moloney & Kelly Travel
and Randall Baron Bridge Travel

GREM513285: 8th – 21st June 2021

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Name of Group: Randall Baron	Date of trip:
Number of nights/days: 14 days / 13 nights Place of arrival: Dublin Airport Place of departure: Dublin Airport	8th – 21st June 2021

PRICES INCLUDE

- 13 nights at suggested 4 star hotels, all rooms with private bath/shower
- Breakfast at hotels each day, days 2 – 14 inclusive

VISITS

Trinity College	St Patricks Cathedral	Powerscourt House & Gardens
Glendalough	Rock of Cashel	Blarney Castle
Muckross House	Westport House	Belleek Pottery
Slieve League	Ardara Heritage Centre	Glenveagh National Park
Giant's Causeway	Carrick-a-Rede	Titanic Belfast
Bru na Bonnie		

- Black cab city tour on day 12
- Airport transfer x 2, on days 1 & 14
- Modern motor coach with driver/guide x 12 full days, days 2 – 13 inclusive (09h00 – 17h30)
- Modern motor coach with driver x 1 evening return transfer on day 12
- Service charges and taxes at existing rates
- **Porterage included**
- **No free places included**
- **No tips included**

CONFIRMED HOTELS

Hotel	Location	No. of nights	Category
Camden Court Hotel	Dublin	3 nights	4 star
Clayton Hotel	Cork	1 night	4 star
TO BE DETERMINED	Kerry	2 nights	4 star
Falls Hotel	Clare	1 night	4 star
Clayton Hotel	Sligo	1 night	4 star
Mill Park Hotel	Donegal	2 nights	4 star
Holiday Inn City Centre	Belfast	2 nights	4 star
Camden Court Hotel	Dublin	1 night	4 star

COVID-19

At this time we don't know what the exact future effects of Covid-19 will be on tourism in Ireland and the UK. We hope that all attractions and hotels included in this offer will reopen and will continue to operate in 2021 but we may have to look for alternatives where this is not the case and we do appreciate your flexibility. We also do not know if social distancing restrictions will continue and so reserve the right to limit numbers on coaches if these rules apply.

Day 1: Tuesday 8th June 2021

Arrive at Dublin Airport, where you will meet with your private driver and transfer to your Hotel.
No other arrangements made for today.

Overnight Accommodation in Camden Court Hotel in Dublin.

Day 2: Wednesday 9th June 2021

After breakfast, you will enjoy a **private guided walking tour of Dublin City**; lasting up to 4 hours. You will be accompanied by an accredited professional tour guide, who will take you around Dublin's historic Georgian Quarter; much of which is within walking distance of your hotel. ***no coach included***

Visit **Trinity College:**
Trinity College was established by Royal Charter in 1592; during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I of England. The present buildings date from c1750. It is Ireland's oldest and indeed prestigious university. Ireland's largest collection of books and manuscripts are housed in the Trinity College Library. Its principle treasure is the 8th century hand-illuminated Book of Kells, which is generally considered to be the most striking manuscript ever produced in the Western world, and one of the greatest masterpieces of early Christian art. Trinity College was the first university in these islands to admit women –the first enrolment being in 1904. Largely seen by the Catholic Church in Ireland as a 'Protestant' university, it forbade its members from attending. The 'Ban' was lifted in 1970. Notable students at Trinity College were Oliver Goldsmith, Oscar Wilde and Bram Stoker –writer of Dracula.

Continue to **St. Patrick's Cathedral:**
St Patrick's Cathedral is the largest church building in Ireland and is also the National Cathedral of Ireland. It belongs to the Church of Ireland, which is the largest Protestant denomination on the island of Ireland. The present building was erected between 1200 and 1270 and is named in honour of St. Patrick –the Patron Saint of Ireland. It is one of two Anglican cathedrals in Dublin –the other being Christ Church Cathedral.

Spend the rest of the afternoon/evening at leisure.

Overnight Accommodation in Camden Court Hotel in Dublin.
Day 3: Thursday 10th June 2021
After breakfast, enjoy a day-tour to Powerscourt House & Gardens and Glendalough National Park.

Visit **Powerscourt House & Gardens:**
The 3rd Viscount Powerscourt, Richard Wingfield, was keen to leave his mark on society. So, in 1730 he commissioned the German-born architect, Richard Cassels, to build Powerscourt House (below) –a 68-room mansion, which was completed in 1741. Considered one of the most beautiful mansions in Ireland, it was frequented by many other high-ranking aristocrats, including King George IV of Great Britain & Ireland, who visited in August 1821. The extensive gardens were commissioned by the 6th Viscount, and completed in 1880 after 20 years. They remain largely intact today. By the early to mid-20th century the political landscape had changed; so too had the Wingfield's economic fortunes. In 1961, the 9th Viscount sold Powerscourt Estate to Ralph and Gwen Slazenger, who are the present owners. However, as the 10th Viscount had married their daughter Wendy Slazenger; the estate retains some the Wingfield family lineage through their children. Tragedy hit in 1974 when fire destroyed the central part of the house. It was restored in 1996 and remains one of Ireland's most popular visitor attractions. Enjoy stunning views over homemade food in the Terrace Café or visit the Avoca Store; renowned for superior Irish-designed homewares, giftware, clothing and furniture, as well as an extensive range of high-quality artisan foods.

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Continue to **Glendalough National Park:**
Glendalough is part of the much bigger Wicklow Mountains National Park, and the name comes from the Irish language, Gleann Dá Loch, which literally means Valley of Two Lakes. It is also the location of several ancient church buildings connected with St. Kevin, who established a monastery there in the 6th century. The present buildings probably date from the coming of the Anglo Normans in 1169AD –an event which simultaneously saw the "Holy See" of Rome extend to Ireland, for the first time. The ruins of this monastic site probably date from the

"Dissolution of the Monasteries" under the reign of King Henry VII in 1536. There is plenty to see, including the ruins of the main church, and other smaller church ruins, as well as the 30-metre monastic round tour –the best preserved example in Ireland.

Afterwards, return to Dublin and enjoy the remainder of the evening at leisure.

Overnight accommodation in Camden Court Hotel in Dublin.

Day 4: Friday 11th June 2021
After breakfast, check out of your Hotel, meet with your private driver/guide, and depart for Cork City.

OPTIONAL: Visit **Irish National Stud Farm**
The Irish National Stud's Japanese Gardens, renowned throughout the world and the finest of their kind in Europe, are far more than simply a treat for the eye. They also provide comfort to the soul, achieving exactly the objective that was set out when the gardens were created between 1906 and 1910. Devised by Colonel William Hall Walker, a wealthy Scotsman from a famous brewing family, the gardens were laid out by Japanese master horticulturist Tassa Eida and his son Minoru. Their aim was, through trees, plants, flowers, lawns, rocks and water, to symbolise the 'Life of Man'. That plan was executed to perfection and Eida's legacy is now admired by the 120,000 visitors who soak up the peace of the gardens every year. ***A supplement of EUR 9.60 per person applies for this option.**

Visit **Rock of Cashel**
For several centuries, the Rock of Cashel had been the traditional seat of the Kings of Munster before, the king donated his fortress on *The Rock* to the church in 1101 –this was to curry favour with the powerful Bishop of Cashel. Work began on Cormac's Chapel in 1127 and on the cathedral in 1235. Originally Roman Catholic, it was passed to the Anglican Church of Ireland during the 16th century reformation, but eventually closed for worship in 1721 when it was replaced by the nearby St. John's Cathedral. The ruins contain one of the most remarkable collections of stone carvings and medieval architecture to be found anywhere in Europe. It remains one of Ireland's iconic national monuments and a symbol of our ecclesiastic history. Tours are guided throughout the day, and prior reservations are not required for admission.

Continue to Cork and check into your hotel.

Overnight accommodation in Clayton hotel in Cork.

Day 5: Saturday 12th June 2021
After breakfast, check out of your hotel, meet with your private driver/guide, and depart for Killarney via Blarney Castle.

Visit **Blarney Castle:**

Though the original castle was built sometime around 1200 AD, construction on the present castle or “Keep” began in 1446 under Cormac Mc Carthy; King of Munster –one of the 4 historic provinces of Ireland. Though there are several legends of the stone’s origin, an early story involves the goddess Clíodhna (**Phon:** Clee-on-ah). Mc Carthy –being involved in a lawsuit –appealed to Clíodhna for her assistance. She told Mc Carthy to kiss the first stone he found in the morning on his way to court [and he did so] with the result that he pleaded his case with great eloquence; and won. Thus the Blarney Stone is said to impart "the ability to deceive without offending." Mc Carthy then incorporated it into the parapet of the castle during its construction.

The ritual of kissing the Blarney Stone, according to the castle's proprietors, has been performed by millions of people, including statesmen, rock stars, and legends of the silver screen. The kiss, however, is not casually achieved. To touch the stone with one's lips, the participant must ascend to the castle's peak, and then lean backwards on the parapet's edge. This, of course, is achieved with the help of an assistant. We recommend arriving as early as possible, as queues can form at peak times.

OPTIONAL: Visit **Garnish Island**

A cruise includes a wonderful visit to seal island where you will visit the very tame seal colony. Garnish Island renowned for its gardens which are laid out in beautiful walks and it has some stunning specimen plants which are rare in this climate. The island was bequeathed to the Irish people in 1953, and was subsequently entrusted to the care of the Commissioners of Public Works. Dating from the Napoleonic Wars, the island also boasts a Martello Tower on its southern shores, which has been restored by the Office of Public Works. There is an amazing view of the bay from the battlements of the tower. (***subject***

***to availability and at local fee*).A supplement of EUR 18.50 per person applies for this option**

Continue to Killarney, and check-in to your hotel.

Overnight accommodation in Kerry.

Day 6: Sunday 13th June 2021
After breakfast, we will journey to Killarney National Park.

Visit **Muckross House:**
Muckross House was built in 1843 for Henry Arthur Herbert and his wife, Mary Balfour Herbert. It is considered to one of the finest stately homes in Ireland; not least because of its location in the very heart of Killarney National Park. Herbert himself was a senior politician and member of parliament for Kerry. During the 1850s, the Herbert's undertook extensive garden works in preparation for Queen Victoria's visit in 1861 –an event which all but bankrupt the Herbert's. As with most stately homes in Britain and Ireland, the cost of the upkeep of this fine house was too much to bear for its owners. In 1932 it was decided to present Muckross House and its 11,000 acres estate to the Irish nation. It thus became Ireland's first National Park and formed the basis of present day Killarney National Park. Today the principal rooms in the house are furnished in period-style and portray the elegant lifestyle of the nineteenth century landowning class. Tours are guided throughout the day.
The Ring of Kerry:
This is one of the most breath-taking coastal tours in Europe, encircling the Iveragh Peninsula; starting and finishing in Killarney, we recommend taking the tour in an anti-clockwise direction; heading in the direction of Killorglin and to Glenbeigh, where the coastal scenery of Dingle Bay comes into view. Every turn in the road seems to offer a unique vista, and the Ring of Kerry provides many unforgettable memories as it passes through the many picturesque villages such as Waterville and Sneem and returns via Ladies View, the famous Lakes of Killarney and through the Oakwood's of Killarney's magnificent National Park.

Return to your hotel.

Overnight accommodation in Kerry.

Day 7: Monday 14th June 2021

The Dingle Peninsula:
The Dingle Peninsula contains some of the most dramatic coastal scenery in Ireland, particularly to the western extremity, where stunning views of the Blasket Islands are enjoyed. The Dingle Peninsula – immortalised by the 1970 movie, Ryan's Daughter –is one of the most beautiful peninsulas on the Irish coastline. It thrusts out into the Atlantic Ocean to claim Ireland's most westerly point. Dingle is the chief town of the peninsula and is a thriving, colourful fishing port. The town is a jumble of attractive streets tumbling down a hillside and coming to a halt at the handsome pier. It is also home to the South-western Gaeltacht (Irish-speaking area), and you should have no problem meeting some native Irish speakers. The name Dingle comes from the Irish name, An Daingean or Daingean Uí Chúis, meaning "Ó Cúis' fort". There was recent controversy when the national government tried to change the town's name to its original form. This is evident from the road signs. Historically, Dingle was Kerry's leading port and later became a centre for smuggling. However, the town of Dingle is probably best known for its resident dolphin, Fungie. Drive around by Slea Head (previous page) located at the south-western extremity of the peninsula –the staggering splinter-slatted mass of rocks defines this extraordinary coastline. It's a place of pristine beaches and fascinating archaeological remains. The village of Dunquin, stunningly situated between Slea Head and Clogher Head, is home to the Blasket Centre which celebrates the story of the Blasket Islanders, the unique literary achievements of the island writers and their native language, culture and tradition. The islands were abandoned by the last permanent residents in 1953. The Blasket Islands are located just offshore.

About Adare:
Adare is noted for its 19th century thatched cottages, first and foremost, and is regarded as being Ireland's prettiest and most picturesque village. Some of these cottages are kept by local restaurants and Arts & Crafts shops, as well as private homes. It has been designated as a Heritage Town by the Irish Government. However, Adare history can be traced back to the early 1200's and is noted particularly for its ecclesiastic history. This small town contains no fewer than 3 historic churches –the ruins of the 13th century Franciscan Friary, the Trinitarian Priory –still in use as a Catholic Church –and the Augustinian Priory, which serves the small Protestant community in Adare. It is a stunning example of Irish medieval church architecture. The ruins of the 13th century Desmond Castle are also located with the town's boundaries, where public tours are available. Right: traditional thatched cottage in Adare.

Overnight in Falls Hotel in Clare.

<u>Day 8: Tuesday 15th June 2021</u>

After breakfast, check out of your hotel and journey through Connemara

About Connemara:
Connemara is a region of western Co. Galway, which is known for its rugged mountain scenery; blended on the western seaboard by stunning seascapes. It is loosely bordered on the north and east by Lough Corrib (Ireland's 2nd largest lake) and reaches the Atlantic Ocean on the western seaboard. It is also home to Ireland's only fjord at Killary Harbour, as well as the largest Gaeltacht in Ireland (Irish-speaking region). A tour of Connemara would not be complete without a visit to Kylemore Abbey (pictured on previous page), home of the Benedictine nuns, who settled there after fleeing Belgium during the First World War. Prior to that, it had been a home of Mitchel Henry –a wealthy doctor and politician –who had it built in 1871. The principle town in Connemara is Clifden.

After visit **Westport House**
Westport House is located in a magnificent setting on the shores of Clew Bay between Westport town, Westport Quay and Westport golf course. During the 16th century Grace O'Malley, the famous Pirate and "Queen of Connaught", was chief of the O'Malley Clan and ruled the seas around Mayo. Grace O'Malley had several castles in the west of Ireland and it was on the foundations of one of these that Westport

House was built. Colonel John Browne and his wife Maude Bourke built the original house in 1685. The East front (as seen today) was built in 1730 by the famous German architect Richard Cassels. James Wyatt completed the house in 1779 and his large dining room is generally regarded as one of Ireland's most beautiful rooms. Westport House and Gardens features rooms with original architecture, artwork and antiques. Visitors can also see the dungeons, four comprehensive exhibitions, extensive gardens and a tree trail.

Continue to Sligo and check into your hotel.

Overnight accommodation in Clayton Hotel Sligo.

Day 9: Wednesday 16th June 2021

After breakfast, check out of your hotel; meet with your private driver/guide visit **Belleek Pottery**
The world famous brand of Belleek pottery has its home in an imposing Victorian building in the village of Belleek on the river Erne. Awarded a 4 star visitor attraction grading in 2013 and 'Best Visitor Experience Of The Year 2014' at the Northern Ireland Tourism Awards, it features a museum, tearoom, video theatre and a showroom. The guided tour covers all of the production areas offering guests the possibility of meeting with the craftspeople, observing their craftmenship working on the different handmade pieces (no production on Sundays). As you walk through the museum you will experience the journey through the life of the Pottery from the early earthenware days to the present day fine translucent Parian China.

After, visit **Slieve League**
Europe's highest sea cliffs, although less famous than the Cliffs of Moher in County Clare, Slieve League's Cliffs reach almost three times higher, but you won't really notice. The site is largely untouched by tourism and walks through a largely unspoilt landscape give visitors a spectacular view of the coast and the cliff face. Road access is a bit of a challenge for drivers not used to heights, not easy to get to. There is a minibus service from the visitor centre. No private buses are allowed. FIT Clients in a car can carry on from the Visitor Centre to the Cliffs' Car Park, however note there is a narrow and quite bumpy road that leads to there. At the definite end of the road another, smaller car park can be found. To enter, need to open a farm gate and more important they need to close it themself. For FIT Clients or Walking Tour Groups there is much more to see besides the cliffs. Cars/coaches can park at Visitor Centre and walk the 2-3 km to the cliffs so as not to miss the exciting scenery of the area. There are terrific views of the sea and the Sligo Mountains. Donegal Bay can be clearly seen as you walk towards the terrifyingly high top of Slieve League and there is a small lake at eye level. A short walk will take you to the right of the amazing cliff face of Bunglas (which literally means end of the cliff). One Man's Path will take you to the summit of Slieve League but the climb must be approached with extreme caution as it is very dangerous. The ruins of a church with some early Christian hermitages lie near the pass. Returning from the summit by foot, one will pass the ruin of a watchtower at the end of Carrigan Head. Walking on the eastern side of Slieve League there is a magnificent wilderness of rocks, streams and a deep rugged valley to your left.

OPTIONAL: Cruises on the Atlantic Coast and view Slieve League from below.
***A supplement of 19.70 per person applies for this option**

Continue to Donegal and check-in your hotel.

Overnight accommodation in Mill Park Donegal.

Day 10: Thursday 17th June 2021

Enjoy a full day tour in County Donegal. This breath-taking county promises wild landscapes blanketed in bog and heather, isolated white sandy beaches and a roughly hewn coastline.

Ardara has long been a centre for weaving. Visit to **The Ardara Heritage Centre** which tells the story of Donegal tweed from the shearing of sheep to the manufacture of the woven cloth. Old photographs, displays and models recall the history of tweed production in the Ardara region. Weavers at work show how a loom operates and the different stitches which make up Aran knitwear can be examined.

Continue North and visit **Glenveagh National Park**
A spectacular 16,500 hectares (40,000 acres) of scenic mountains, lakes, glens and woods, with a herd of red deer, Glenveagh is one of Ireland's protected natural parks managed by the State. A Scottish style castle within the estate is surrounded by one of the finest gardens in Ireland, which contrast with the rugged surroundings. The last private owner was Mr Henry McIlhenny of Philadelphia who bought the estate in 1937. Henry McIlhenny was an Irish American whose Grandfather John McIlhenny grew up in Milford a few miles north of Glenveagh. After buying the estate Mr McIlhenny devoted much time to restoring the castle and developing its gardens. In 1983 he bestowed the castle to the nation along with its gardens and much of the contents.

Return back to your hotel.

Overnight accommodation in Mill Park Hotel Donegal.

Day 11: Friday 18th June 2021
After breakfast, check out of your hotel, meet with your private/driver and depart for Belfast.

Enjoy a photo stop at **Dunluce Castle**

Continue to **Giant's Causeway:**

At the Giant's Causeway, there are about 40,000 interlocking basalt columns resulting from a volcanic eruption. However, legend has it that the Irish giant **Fionn Mac Cumhaill** (Phon: Fyun Ma Cool) built the causeway to walk to Scotland to fight **Benandonner**. Legend tells that Fionn fell asleep before he got to Scotland. When he didn't arrive, the much larger Benandonner crossed the bridge looking for him. To protect Fionn, his wife **Úna** (Phon: oo-na) laid a blanket over Fionn and pretended he was Fionn's baby son. When Benandonner saw the size of the 'infant', he assumed that Fionn must be gigantic indeed! He fled home in terror, ripping up the Causeway in case he was followed by Fionn. The Scottish side of the causeway on the **Isle of Staffa** has similar basalt formations at the site of Fingal's Cave. The Giant's Causeway was declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO in 1986 and is owned and managed by the National Trust.

After, visit **Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge**
Carrick-a-Rede, on the Antrim Coast, is a spectacular rope bridge, which spans a chasm, 30 metres deep and 20 metres wide. Originally a seasonal working bridge for fishermen, it connects a small island to the mainland.Its construction once consisted of a single rope handrail and widely spaced slats, which the fishermen would cross to bring ashore salmon caught off the island. The single handrail was subsequently replaced by today's two-handed railed bridge. Visitors bold enough to cross to the rocky island are rewarded with fantastic views. Underneath the bridge are large caves, which often served as a safe haven for fishing trawlers escaping from winter storms. ***Please note that Carrick-a-Rede Rope Bridge can only be confirmed one month prior to arrival. If unavailable, group will spend time in Derry in the morning before Dunluce Castle***

Check in to your hotel.

Overnight accommodation in Holiday Inn City Centre Belfast.

Day 12: Saturday 19th June 2021

After breakfast, Visit **Titanic Belfast:**

The Titanic Museum is an iconic landmark building; located at Titanic's original construction site. Opened in 2012 to mark the centenary of the ship's sinking, it is the world's largest Titanic visitor experience and the most popular visitor attraction in Belfast. It is a self-guided multimedia visitor experience charting the history of the city, and of course the world's most famous ocean liner through a range of interactive exhibits. The Titanic Museum also explores the political history of the city and the role it played in shipbuilding.

Enjoy a **black cab city tour**
Paddy Campbell's Famous Black Cab Tours is a Belfast based taxi tour company with over 28 years taxiing experience and over a decade of that offering Belfast political murals tours. They have a specially selected fleet of drivers who will take you around the city on your tour in a range of licensed 6 and 7 seater London-styled black taxis. They provide an escorted *tour* of greater Belfast's historical sites, including the Political Murals and Peace Lines, Crumlin Road Jail and Court House, the City Hall, Albert Memorial Clock, Crown Liquor Saloon and Titanic.

Enjoy an evening **with Irish entertainment and dinner** in a local pub

Return back to y our hotel.

Overnight accommodation in Holiday Inn City Centre Belfast.

Day 13: Sunday 20th June 2021

After breakfast, check out of your hotel, and depart for Dublin.

Visit **Newgrange**
Newgrange is Ireland's best-known prehistoric monument, and is one of the archaeological wonders of Western Europe. Built as a burial mound more than 5,000 years ago; it is classified as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO and predates the Great Pyramids and Stonehenge. Fascination with Newgrange reaches its peak at the winter solstice, when sunlight pierces the inner chamber with an orange-toned glow for about 17 minutes after sunrise. Such is the extent of national interest in Newgrange at the winter solstice; that admission on 21st December by lottery only. ***Please note that Newgrange just recently changed their visiting tours. All internal visits are strictly subject to availability at the definite time of booking. If we are unable to secure the internal visit, an external visit may be offered. The Irish government have placed restrictions on visits to Newgrange in order to preserve and protect the site. Therefore visits to Bru na Boinne – Newgrange and Knowth are strictly subject to availability at the definite time of booking.***

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Check into your hotel.

Overnight accommodation in Jurys Inn Hotel Parnell.

Day 14: Monday 21st June 2021

After breakfast, check out of your hotel, meet with your private driver/guide one last time and depart for Dublin Airport, where you will bid farewell to Ireland.

This is a suggested itinerary, which can be refined, as required; where there are no pre-booked reservations made.

Every effort will be made to ensure that clients arriving on early morning flights will be accommodated for prompt check-in at their hotel. However this is subject to your room being ready and/or not occupied on the night before your arrival. Normal check-in time is otherwise at 3pm approx.

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Please note that due to the temperate Irish climate, air-conditioning does not feature in most Irish homes or public buildings, as it is generally not necessary; even in mid-summer. By that same token, it is not provided as standard in most hotels across Ireland.

Please note that day-touring with your private driver guide is up to a maximum of 8 consecutive hours per day with little room for flexibility –as set down by government legislation. Your private driver guide will be delighted to make any suggestions for lunch stops, as appropriate.