

The Great Castles of Ireland

DISCOVER IRELAND'S HISTORY THROUGH THE WINDOWS OF ITS MOST CELEBRATED MONUMENTS



A SCHOLARLY
SOJOURN

JOIN US FOR A PANORAMIC JOURNEY AROUND IRELAND AS WE VISIT TWENTY OF
ITS MOST FASCINATING MEDIEVAL CASTLES



TOUR DETAILS AT A GLANCE

2018 DEPARTURE

October 21—28, 2018

PRICE

\$3,495/person (double occupancy)

\$3,990/person (single occupancy)

TOUR BEGINS

Swords, Ireland

TOUR CONCLUDES

Belfast, Ireland

OPTIONAL AIR PACKAGE

From \$1,198/person*

*See page 10 for details

POST-TOUR EXCURSIONS

From \$199/night/person*

*See page 9 for details

TO REGISTER

Call us at 1-800-419-3443 or

Use the [online registration form](#)

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER ONLINE](#)

ABOUT SCHOLARLY SOJOURNS

Not only our name, but also what we call our flagship tours, Scholarly Sojourns are intellectually-stimulating travel programs that explore fascinating topics in history, literature, archaeology, art history, and science. Designed and guided by distinguished scholars, these engaging journeys provide the unique opportunity to explore a subject on location.



Dunluce Castle

The Great Castles of Ireland

GO INSIDE THE MOST STUNNING CASTLES OF IRELAND

Ireland has always been a land of contrasts. This is true of both its stunning, natural beauty and its political history. From the very first historical accounts – written nearly 2,000 years ago – and through its ancient poetry (some of which is thought to go back even further), we read that Ireland has been a land of petty kings and almost continual fighting and raiding. So much so that at the end of the tenth century there were up to 150 kings within Ireland – a relatively modest area roughly the size of the American state of South Carolina - that's about an average of 213 square miles per kingdom.

In the ninth century the Vikings arrived and began to colonize the land, building the first towns. These soon became cities like Dublin, Cork and Wexford. Then, in 1169, an Anglo-Norman-Welsh-Fleming force landed and began the wholesale conquest of Ireland as an adjunct of the English Crown. Yet this conquest proved abortive and by the fourteenth century the area of English control – known as the Pale – was just the area around the city of Dublin. In the outlying regions, various Anglo-Irish kings, princes and lords vied for supremacy in their small pieces of the world. To achieve this end they built numerous castles to mark their territory. These enigmatic structures – now in various stages of ruin – speckle the stunning Irish landscape and they provide a fascinating avenue by which one can discover the Ireland of today and colorful history.

Join us as we journey entirely around this beautiful emerald isle to visit these fascinating structures set amongst the wondrous natural beauty that is Ireland. Together we will piece together the fascinating story that makes up the history of this island nation as we marvel at the vistas only afforded to the lucky few who are able to spy through the windows of its most stunning historical monuments.

Day-to-Day Tour Summary

DAY 1

SWORDS TO KINNITTY

Arriving in the village of Swords—just on the outskirts of Dublin—this afternoon, you are greeted by both your Scholarly Sojourns Tour Director and your Tour Leader, author and historian Paul Remfry. Once our entire group has arrived, we visit Swords Castle which was built as the manorial residence of the first Anglo-Norman Archbishop of Dublin, John Comyn, around 1200. The castle boasts the longest perimeter walls of any castle in Ireland. Departing Swords, we make our way around Dublin to the village of Maynooth where we encounter Maynooth Castle—constructed in 1203—and enjoy the opportunity to explore its massive keep which is one of the largest of its kind in Ireland. Afterward, we drive into the very center of Ireland to reach our lodging for the night—the magnificent Kinnitty Castle Hotel—where we enjoy time to relax, unwind, and absorb the spectacular atmosphere before gathering for our welcome reception and opening dinner in the castle’s award-winning restaurant. [R|D]

DAY 2

KINNITTY TO CORK

Following breakfast we travel to the nearby Rock of Dunamase which sits atop a rocky outcrop and provides stunning views across the surrounding planes. Archaeological evidence suggests a hill fort was first built in this location as early as the 9th century. Following our visit, we continue south to explore one of Ireland’s most-photographed castles—the Rock of Cashel—which was the traditional seat of the Kings of Munster for centuries prior to the Norman Invasion. The ruins that remain today are comprised of several structures, including a fortress and a cathedral. Continuing southward after lunch, we arrive at Cahir Castle—another photogenic edifice which has been used as a setting in numerous films and television serials, including *Excalibur* and *The Tudors*. One of the largest castles in Ireland, its name originates from the stone fort (or *cathair*) which was originally located on this site. Following our visit, we travel a short distance to our lodging in vibrant Cork, Ireland’s second largest city, where the evening is left free to explore and dine on your own. [B]



Cahir Castle—one of the largest in Ireland

ITINERARY OVERVIEW

DAY 1: SUNDAY

October 21

Swords—Maynooth—Kinnitty

DAY 2: MONDAY

October 22

Kinnitty—Cashel—Cahir—Cork

DAY 3: TUESDAY

October 23

Cork—Blarney—Killarney—Ring of Kerry—Tralee

DAY 4: WEDNESDAY

October 24

Tralee—Askeaton—Adare—Limerick—Cliffs of Moher

DAY 5: THURSDAY

October 25

Cliffs of Moher—Athenry—Galway—Connemara

DAY 6: FRIDAY

October 26

Connemara—Roscommon—Trim—Newgrange—Dundalk

DAY 7: SATURDAY

October 27

Dundalk—Dundrum—Dunluce—Giants Causeway—Belfast

DAY 8: SUNDAY

October 28

Tour concludes in Belfast



Ross Castle sits on the banks of Loch Leane near the colorful city of Killarney

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ Your sojourn leader, Paul Remfry, is a noted scholar, castle historian, and widely-published author who has spent his entire professional life researching medieval castles
- ◆ Extensive tours of 20 of the most significant and stunning castles in Ireland
- ◆ Travel entirely around Ireland and visit each of its provinces
- ◆ Enjoy a scenic afternoon excursion around the celebrated Ring of Kerry
- ◆ Stay in unique, historic hotels, including Kinnitty Castle Hotel and the Culloden Estate and Spa
- ◆ Visit a Neolithic burial tomb at an archaeological site near Newgrange

“Your attention to detail is way beyond any tour operator I have ever worked with!”

- Paula F., Travel Agent,
Mahwah, NJ



Blarney Castle

Day-to-Day Tour Summary

DAY 3

CORK TO TRALEE

Departing Cork this morning, we make our way to Blarney—home to perhaps Ireland’s most famous castle and location of the famous Blarney Stone. Following our tour here, you will have the opportunity to kiss the celebrated stone—an act fabled to endow one with the “gift of the gab”. Afterward, we make our way to the picturesque town of Killarney where we enjoy a generous break for lunch and exploring before visiting nearby 15th-Century Ross Castle—the ancestral home of the O’Donoghue clan—set in a picturesque position on the banks of Loch Leane. This afternoon we enjoy a highlight of the tour as we take a scenic excursion around the celebrated Ring of Kerry. Our route takes through rugged and verdant coastal landscapes and rural seaside villages as we enjoy spectacular mountain scenery and sweeping views across the sea. If we are lucky, we will catch a glimpse of the haunting Skellig Michael, a rocky island with an abandoned 7th-century Christian monastery which sits directly off the tip of the Iveragh Peninsula. Leaving the Ring of Kerry behind, we arrive in the charming town of Tralee where the evening is left free for you to relax, explore, and dine on your own. [B]

DAY 4

TRALEE TO THE CLIFFS OF MOHER

We depart Tralee early this morning and make our way north. Our first stop is the village of Askeaton, home to Desmond Castle constructed in 1199. Here we see the castle’s Halla Mor (Great Hall) which is considered one of the finest examples of its kind in Ireland. Also within the castle grounds we encounter a 14th-Century Franciscan Friary with stunning cloisters still intact. Next we make the short trip to the village of Adare, home to another Desmond Castle—this one an ancient ring-fort with dual moats constructed in the early part of the 13th century. The castle was the property of the Earls of Kildare for nearly 300 years until the rebellion in 1536, when it was forfeited and granted to the Earls of Desmond who gave the castle its present name. This afternoon, we visit vibrant Limerick—Ireland’s third largest city—where we explore magnificent King John’s Castle which is located on an island of the River Shannon in the city’s center. Although parts of the castle date from 922 when the Vikings first settled the area, the majority of ruins that remain are from the castle that King John ordered constructed in 1200. After our tour here, we journey west

Day-to-Day Tour Summary

across the verdant landscape of County Clair to the rugged Atlantic coast where we experience another highlight of the tour—the opportunity to walk along the fabled Cliffs of Moher which rise up to 700 feet above the crashing surf below. From these cliffs we marvel at the stunning views north toward Galway Bay and west across the Atlantic. Afterward, we continue to our traditional country inn in the seaside village of Liscannor where we gather for a special group dinner and discussion. [B | D]

DAY 5 LIMERICK TO CONNEMARA

Departing Liscannor this morning, we make our way north through County Clare to the town of Athenry—one of the most notable medieval walled towns surviving in Ireland. Together we visit the Castle—a superb tower house with original 13th-century battlements and tall arrow loops or slits in the solid sections or merlon—and then enjoy some time to explore the atmospheric town. At midday, we continue to Galway—Ireland’s 4th largest city—where we enjoy free time for lunch, exploring, and shopping. Great food and drink can be found around 18th-century Eyre Square, a popular meeting spot surrounded by shops and traditional pubs that often offer live Irish folk music. Not far from here, stone-clad cafes, boutiques, and art galleries line the winding lanes of the Latin Quarter, which retains portions of the medieval city walls. This afternoon we take a stunning drive through the rich and evocative landscape of Connemara—with vast expanses of mountains, bogs, heathland and lakes—to reach the legendary Ballynahinch Castle Hotel, nestled in the splendor of the Twelve Bens Mountain Range. After check in, we enjoy some time to relax and savor the hotels unique atmosphere before gathering for an elegant group dinner and conversation this evening. [B | D]

DAY 6 CONNEMARA TO DUNDALK

We take another route through scenic Connemara this morning, journeying to the very center of Ireland. In County Roscommon we explore a fascinating 13th-Century Norman castle. Built in a quadrangular shape, the castle boasted four, 3-story, corner D-shaped towers and twin towers at its entrance gateway, one of which still retains its immensely sturdy vaulted roof. Afterward, we continue east to Trim Castle—the largest Norman castle in Ireland—which was begun in the late 12th Century and over a period of 30 years grew to a massive fortress of 30,000 m². This afternoon we continue to the



Bunratty Castle

BOOKING IS EASY!

1) CALL TO REGISTER OR USE OUR ONLINE REGISTRATION FORM

Call us at 1-800-419-3443. Our friendly customer service team is ready to assist you Mon—Fri, 9:00AM—5:00PM (EST). Or, you can complete the [online registration form](#) anytime.

2) WE WILL CONFIRM YOUR REGISTRATION BY EMAIL

Within 24 hours you will receive an email confirmation of your registration along with some additional information and an invoice for the deposit due.

3) RETURN THE PAPERWORK AND PAY YOUR DEPOSIT

Simply review the registration documents and pay the deposit within 14 days to finalize your booking.

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER ONLINE](#)

SAVE WITH SOJOURN COMBINATIONS!

Save \$250 per person and receive a free transfer between locations when you book two consecutive sojourns.

THIS TOUR COMBINES WELL WITH:

GREAT CASTLES OF BRITAIN
SCOTCH WHISKY CONNOISSEUR



Trim Castle

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

- ◆ See the famous Cliffs of Moher and experience their breathtaking views over the Atlantic Ocean
- ◆ Explore the celebrated Giant's Causeway—one of Ireland's most-visited natural monuments and a UNESCO World Heritage Site
- ◆ Drive through the breathtaking region of Connemara which is resplendent with mountains, lakes, heathland, and bogs
- ◆ Spend a night in luxury at the Ballynahinch Castle Hotel nestled under the Twelve Bens Mountain Range in Connemara
- ◆ Visit several of Ireland's most historic towns and cities, including Cork, Galway, Limerick and Tralee

Early Booking Savings!

You save \$200 per person when you register by 1/31/18

"I already had very high expectations based upon my previous tour with you, but you even exceeded those expectations!"

—Tallien P., Santa Monica, CA



Carrickfergus Castle

Day-to-Day Tour Summary

amazing archaeological site near Newgrange—a UNESCO World Heritage Site—where we see a Neolithic burial chamber constructed in c.3,200BC. This evening we arrive in the town of Dundalk and after checking into our lodging, the remainder of the night is free to dine and explore on your own. [B]

DAY 7

DUNDALK TO BELFAST

We depart Dundalk this morning and take a short trip to visit nearby Castle Roche. The 13th-Century fortress sits atop a large rocky outcrop and affords extensive views of the surrounding countryside. Continuing north, we cross into Northern Ireland to visit Dundrum Castle which offers spectacular views south over Dundrum Bay and the Mourne Mountains. This afternoon, we reach one of the northernmost points in Ireland to visit Dunluce Castle—a mighty fortress which is dramatically set upon the edge of a basalt outcropping over the Atlantic Ocean and is only accessible via a bridge connecting it to the mainland. Before departing this remote location, we visit nearby Giant's Causeway—a UNESCO World Heritage Site and one of Ireland's most visited and breathtaking natural monuments. This evening we arrive at the opulent Culloden Estate and Spa in Belfast. Following check in we have time to relax and explore before gathering for a special closing reception and final dinner together in the estate's award-winning restaurant. [B|R|D]

DAY 8

BELFAST

Following breakfast, we enjoy a final morning briefing in the lounge of our hotel. Afterward, we travel around Belfast Lough to visit Carrickfergus Castle. The mighty Norman Irish fortress was built by John de Courcy in 1177 as his headquarters after he conquered eastern Ulster. In the centuries that followed the castle was besieged by the Scottish, Irish, English and French and continued to play a military role until the early 20th Century. After our visit to the castle we return to Belfast's city center and assemble with Paul Remfry and fellow sojourn members for the closing presentation and to say our farewells. An optional shuttle will be available for those wishing to travel to Belfast International Airport. [B]

Select Lodging



Kinnitty Castle Hotel—Kinnitty

Set at the foot of the haunting Slieve Bloom Mountains and dating from 1209, this impressive Gothic castle hotel is set within a stunning 650 acres of parkland and forests. Each of its individually decorated rooms features classic decor and unique, original features and furnishings. The overall atmosphere at the hotel will sweep you to a bygone era whether you relax in one of the stunning lounges or enjoy a drink next to the fire in the wood-paneled library bar.



Ballynahinch Castle Hotel—Connemara

One of the finest castle hotels in Ireland, Ballynahinch is set on a private 450-acre estate of woodland, rivers and walks in the heart of Connemara, Co. Galway. The authentic and unpretentious castle hotel stands proudly overlooking its famous salmon fishery, with a backdrop of the beautiful 12 Bens Mountain range. Ballynahinch Castle Hotel is the perfect base for relaxing and enjoying this spectacular region.



Culloden Estate and Spa—Belfast

Standing high on the slopes of the Holywood Hills, overlooking Belfast Lough and the County Antrim Coastline, the magnificent Culloden Estate and Spa was originally built as an official Palace for the Bishops of Down. Set in 12 acres of secluded gardens and woodlands the hotel's palatial surroundings, exquisite decor, fine antiques and exceptional service combine to give the Culloden an unmatched elegance.

For a complete list of lodging on this tour, please visit www.scholarlysojourns.com.



YOUR TOUR LEADER

Paul Remfry is arguably one of the greatest living castle scholars of our era. He is a meticulous researcher who has spent over 30 years studying medieval history, genealogy, and architecture. As a historian with a passion for telling the stories of castles and the people who once lived in them, Paul lectures throughout the United Kingdom and also frequently appears as an expert on television documentaries exploring the history of castles. He has also written extensively about castles, abbeys, and battles and his list of published works now includes some 20 books and over 50 booklets and scholarly articles for academic and archaeological journals. His scholarship is widely praised as superlative and his research approach to the study of castles has garnered widespread acclaim from the academic community.



Dunamase Castle

“The absolute most amazing vacation I’ve ever been on...”

-Jessica H., San Francisco, CA

CASTLES YOU SEE

SWORDS CASTLE

MAYNOOTH CASTLE

KINNITTY CASTLE

THE ROCK OF DUNAMASE

THE ROCK OF CASHEL

KNOCKGRAFFON CASTLE

CAHIR CASTLE

GLANWORTH CASTLE

BLARNEY CASTLE

ROSS CASTLE

ASKEATON CASTLE

ADARE CASTLE

NENAGH CASTLE

KING JOHN'S CASTLE

BUNRATTY CASTLE

ATHENRY CASTLE

ROSSCOMMON CASTLE

TRIM CASTLE

CASTLE ROCHE

DUNDRUM CASTLE

DUNLUCE CASTLE

CARRICKFERGUS CASTLE



The Cliffs of Moher

See Ireland's Stunning Natural Beauty

While the primary focus of our journey is the stunning castles that pepper the Irish landscape, we also make time to take in some of the most magnificent areas of Ireland's natural beauty. These are the sites that bring millions of visitors to Ireland each year.



The Ring of Kerry (or Iveragh Peninsula to give it its correct name) is part of the mystical & unspoiled region of Ireland that has attracted visitors for hundreds of years. The Ring of Kerry has some of the Europe's finest beaches, and it provides an amazing insight into the ancient heritage of Ireland.

The Cliffs of Moher—Ireland's most spectacular natural wonder at the heart of the Wild Atlantic Way—are located just south of the Village of Doolin. They ascend over 700 feet and stretch south for nearly five miles to Hags Head. At the Cliffs of Moher you will encounter nature in its wildest, purest form.



Connemara—Inlets of the Sea—is a district in western Ireland, facing the Atlantic. Its coastline has tiny coves, bays and fishing villages. Connemara's beautiful interior is a kaleidoscope of rusty bogs, lonely valleys and shimmering black lakes. At its heart are the Maumturk Mountains and the pewter-tinged quartzite peaks of the Twelve Bens mountain range.

The Giant's Causeway is an area at the heart of one of Europe's most magnificent coastlines and is made up of over 40,000 interlocking basalt columns, the result of an ancient volcanic eruption. The rugged symmetry of the columns never fails to intrigue and inspire our visitors.



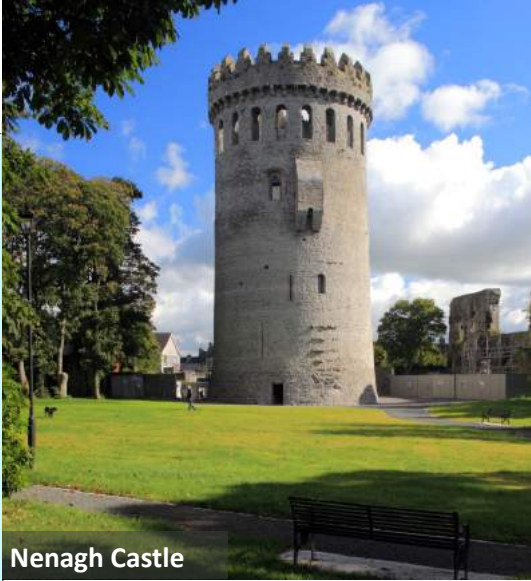
We were somewhat apprehensive to try an organized tour, but this experience was phenomenal."

-Barbara B., Annapolis, MD

Tour Map

Legend

- Journey by coach
- Overnight stop
- Castle Visit
- Site of interest
- 📍 Tour beginning point
- 📍 Tour concluding point



Nenagh Castle

OPTIONAL EXCURSIONS

Extend your stay and see even more of Ireland with one of our custom excursions. We list some popular options below, but are also able to create unique itineraries to match your travel wishes.

DUBLIN IN DEPTH

Spend two or more days exploring Ireland's celebrated capital city which offers world-class museums, entertainment, dining, and shopping. Enjoy a literary tour, participate in a pub crawl, or relax in the city's open, green spaces. You can also take an easy day trip to Newgrange. 2 days/2 nights including transfers, lodging, breakfasts, and entrance fees from: \$199/night/person.

WATERFORD & WEXFORD

Travel south from Dublin to explore two of Ireland's most historic cities. 2 days/2 nights including transportation, lodging, breakfasts, and entrance fees from: \$249/night/person.

BELFAST IN DEPTH

Spend one or more additional days and nights in Northern Ireland's capital where you explore the sites of your choice—including the Titanic Belfast—as well as enjoy an array of museums, shopping, dining, and nightlife options. 2 days/2 nights including transfers, lodging, breakfasts, and entrance fees from: \$199/night/person.



Adare Castle

Tour Details & Registration Information

THE GREAT CASTLES OF IRELAND

2018 DEPARTURE

October 21-28, 2018 (Sojourn #1241843)

PRICE

\$3,495/Person (double occupancy)

\$3,990/Person (single occupancy)

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER ONLINE](#)

TOUR BEGINS

Swords, Ireland

TOUR CONCLUDES

Belfast, Ireland

OPTIONAL AIR PACKAGE:

From \$1,198/Person*

*Includes round-trip, economy airfare, airport transfers in Ireland, and 100% travel assurance. Price subject to change until booked.

REGISTRATION AND PAYMENT INFORMATION

TO REGISTER

Call us: 1-800-419-3443 - We are ready to assist you Monday to Friday from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM (EST).

Visit us at: www.scholarlysojourns.com - Here you will find an online registration form as well as a printable version.

PAYMENT SCHEDULE

Due within 14 days of registration: \$500/person deposit

Due 90 days prior to departure: Balance

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Scholarly Sojourns highly recommends that all of our tour participants purchase travel insurance to protect their trip. We will send further information once you have been confirmed on a sojourn.

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PRICE INCLUDES

Eight-day travel program of sightseeing, castle tours, presentations, and discussions led by Paul Remfry; 7 nights accommodations; 7 breakfasts, 4 dinners, 2 receptions; the services of a dedicated Scholarly Sojourns Tour Director who accompanies the group; ground transportation; entrance fees; gratuities (except for hotel porters); all other activities described in the day-to-day summary. **Included meals are indicated in brackets following each daily description: B = Breakfast; L = Lunch; D = Dinner; R = Reception.**

PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE

Airfare; airport transfers; meals not indicated in this detailed itinerary; beverage options other than water, wine, beer, or soft drinks with group meals; local transportation by bus, taxi, metro or light rail; passport or visa fees and necessary photos; immunizations; travel insurance; excess baggage charges; airport taxes; medical, hospitalization, or evacuation costs; gratuities for hotel porters; laundry; other personal items, including incidental hotel charges; any other item not specifically indicated.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE INFORMATION

MEETING LOCATION AND TIME

The meeting point for this tour is Swords Castle in the Village of Swords, just on the north side of Dublin. Swords is easily reached from both central Dublin and Dublin Airport by public transport or a modest taxi journey. Participants should plan to arrive here by 2:00PM on Sunday, October 21, 2018.

CONCLUSION AND DEPARTURE

Your sojourn concludes at approximately 12:00 PM on Sunday, October 28th in Belfast. An optional shuttle will be offered for those wishing to go directly to Belfast Airport or connect (via train) to Dublin Airport. If making your own flight/travel arrangements, please allow for enough time to travel to the airport after the program ends. Belfast Airport is approximately 30-minutes and Dublin is a 2-hour journey by train.

EARLY ARRIVAL OR LATE DEPARTURE

Scholarly Sojourns is happy to assist you with booking additional nights prior to the start of your tour or following its conclusion. Often we are able to secure better rates than are available to the public. We are also happy to provide itinerary suggestions should you wish to do additional travel in Ireland.



SCHOLARLY SOJOURNS | www.scholarlysojourns.com

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