

The Kerry Way

5-DAY SELF-GUIDED HIKING TOUR





The Kerry Way

The Kerry Way is Ireland's longest and most scenic long-distance walking route, winding through 214 kilometers (133 miles) of breathtaking landscapes in County Kerry. This trail provides an extraordinary journey through remote valleys, rugged mountain passes, and serene coastal paths. It showcases some of Ireland's most spectacular scenery, from the majestic MacGillycuddy's Reeks to the tranquil shores of Kenmare Bay.

HIGHLIGHTS

Dramatic Mountain Passes: The route takes you over stunning highland terrain, including Windy Gap and Caher Pass, offering panoramic views of the Kerry landscape.

Killarney National Park: One of Ireland's most famous national parks, home to lush forests, waterfalls, and historic landmarks such as Muckross House and Ross Castle.

The Black Valley: One of the most remote and unspoiled areas in Ireland, known for its isolation and rugged beauty.

Coastal Beauty: Follow the dramatic coastline of Kenmare Bay and enjoy views of the Atlantic Ocean and the Iveragh Peninsula.

Ancient Heritage: Encounter historic sites along the way, including Bronze Age stone circles, old monasteries, and famine cottages.

Charming Villages: Experience authentic Irish hospitality in quaint villages like Glenbeigh, Sneem, and Caherdaniel, where you can enjoy local cuisine and traditional music.

The Kerry Way is an unforgettable adventure, blending Ireland's natural beauty with its rich history and culture. Whether you're a seasoned trekker or a casual walker, this trail offers an immersive experience through one of Ireland's most spectacular landscapes.



Daily Itinerary

- 1 Arrive in Killarney
- 2 Killarney to Black Valley
- 3 Black Valley to Glencar
- 4 Glencar to Glenbeigh
- 5 Depart Glenbeigh



The Kerry Way 5-Day Self Guided Hike

DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1: Killarney

Arrive in Killarney, a vibrant town at the gateway to the Kerry Way. Take the day to explore this lively town, renowned for its warm hospitality, excellent restaurants, and stunning scenery. Wander through the charming streets filled with traditional Irish pubs and boutique shops or visit the historic Killarney House and Gardens for a peaceful stroll.

For those looking to stretch their legs before the hike, a visit to Killarney National Park is a great option. Explore the picturesque grounds of Muckross House, take a short walk to Torc Waterfall, or hire a boat to explore the serene Lakes of Killarney. Ross Castle, a striking 15th-century fortress on the shores of Lough Leane, provides a fascinating glimpse into Ireland's medieval history.

In the evening, enjoy a hearty meal in one of Killarney's welcoming pubs and listen to traditional live music to get a taste of Ireland's vibrant culture. Rest well in preparation for the adventure ahead.

MEALS

None

OVERNIGHT

Select guesthouse accommodations included as standard. Hotel upgrades available on request.



Day 2: Killarney to Black Valley

Your adventure begins in Killarney, where the lively town quickly gives way to the serene wilderness of Killarney National Park. As you step onto the trail, you are immediately surrounded by ancient oak woodlands, their branches forming a natural canopy over the winding path. The tranquil Lakes of Killarney mirror the sky, creating a breathtakingly peaceful setting as you follow the shoreline. Along the way, you may spot native red deer, a symbol of the park's thriving biodiversity.

The landscape soon transforms as you enter the legendary Gap of Dunloe, a glacial valley that feels like a scene from another time. Towering cliffs rise dramatically on either side, framing the winding road that snakes through the gap. This remote and rugged pass, dotted with quaint stone bridges crossing mountain streams, is one of the most photographed locations in Ireland—and for good reason. The scenery here is both awe-inspiring and humbling, a testament to the raw beauty of the Irish landscape.

Beyond the gap, the path descends into the Black Valley, a place of extraordinary solitude. Nestled beneath the imposing MacGillycuddy's Reeks, this valley remained one of the last areas in Ireland to receive electricity due to its isolation. The silence is profound, broken only by the call of birds or the distant sound of a river flowing through the valley floor. Here, you'll experience an Ireland untouched by time, a land of rugged beauty and deep tranquility.

As you arrive at your accommodation for the night, take a moment to appreciate the journey—from the enchanting forests of Killarney to the breathtaking heights of the Gap of Dunloe, and finally, into the peaceful embrace of the Black Valley.

MEALS

Only Breakfast included.
Lunch can be purchased in a local store.
Dinner recommendations will be listed in your route notes.

HIKE DISTANCE

21.40 km / 13.7 mi

ELEVATION GAIN

492 m / 1614 ft

TERRAIN

37% paved paths and roads,
63% trails
Mountain tracks and green roads. Can be wet underfoot – boots essential.

OVERNIGHT

Select guesthouse accommodations included as standard. No upgrades available here.

TRANSFER TIME

N/A



Day 3: Black Valley to Glencar

Today's hike takes you deep into the untamed wilderness of County Kerry, where rugged landscapes and dramatic mountain scenery unfold at every turn. Leaving behind the tranquil Black Valley, you begin a steady ascent into the breathtaking Bridia Valley, a secluded haven known for its unspoiled beauty and diverse wildlife. As you hike through this remote terrain, keep an eye out for red deer grazing in the distance, wild goats navigating the rocky slopes, and perhaps even a peregrine falcon soaring overhead.

As the trail climbs further, you reach the Windy Gap, a high mountain pass that lives up to its name. Here, the effort of the ascent is richly rewarded with panoramic views of the surrounding valleys and peaks. From this vantage point, you can see the vast expanse of Kerry's rolling hills, a landscape shaped by time and nature's raw power. The wind carries with it a sense of freedom, and the sheer remoteness of the area is both humbling and exhilarating.

The descent into Glencar is equally awe-inspiring, offering sweeping views of Caragh Lake, a shimmering expanse of water nestled among green pastures. As you make your way down, the landscape softens, and the sight of scattered farmsteads and grazing sheep signals your arrival in Glencar, a small but welcoming rural community. Known for its warm hospitality, Glencar offers a well-earned rest after a challenging day on the trail. Settle into your accommodation, then unwind with a hearty meal at a traditional Irish pub, where friendly locals and a cozy atmosphere make for the perfect end to an unforgettable day in Ireland's wild heart.

MEALS

Only Breakfast included. Lunch can be purchased in a local store. Dinner recommendations will be listed in your route notes

OVERNIGHT

Select guesthouse accommodations included as standard. No upgrades available here.

HIKE DISTANCE

17.50 km / 10.90 mi

ELEVATION GAIN

500 m / 1640 ft

TERRAIN

30% paved paths and roads, 70% trails
Mountain trails, open moorland, some road walking. Boots essential.

TRAVEL TIME

N/A



Day 4: Glencar to Glenbeigh

Today's hike follows an ancient coach road, once a vital trade route through the rugged Kerry mountains. As you leave Glencar behind, the well-worn path guides you through rolling hills and open moorlands, where the past feels alive beneath your feet. This historic route has long connected remote communities, and walking it today offers a unique sense of connection to those who traveled here centuries ago.

One of the most breathtaking features of this section is the panoramic view over Caragh Lake. Nestled among the hills, this shimmering body of water reflects the ever-changing sky, creating a scene of tranquil beauty. The surrounding landscape is rich with wildlife, and keen-eyed hikers may spot red deer, buzzards circling above, or the occasional wild goat grazing in the distance.

As the trail descends towards Glenbeigh, the landscape transforms once more, revealing breathtaking coastal views of Dingle Bay. The sight of the vast Atlantic, meeting the rugged shores of the Ring of Kerry, is a spectacular reward after a day's hike. Glenbeigh itself is a charming village, known for its welcoming atmosphere and stunning natural surroundings.

A visit to Rossbeigh Beach, just outside the village, is a perfect way to end the day. This seven-kilometre stretch of golden sand is ideal for an evening stroll, with the waves rolling in and the sun setting over the Atlantic. After a rewarding day on the trail, unwind in one of Glenbeigh's traditional pubs, where fresh seafood, lively conversation, and traditional Irish music create a warm and memorable experience.

MEALS

Only Breakfast included. Lunch can be purchased in a local store. Dinner recommendations will be listed in your route notes

OVERNIGHT

The Select guesthouse accommodations included as standard. No upgrades available here.

HIKE DISTANCE

21.30 km / 13.24 mi

ELEVATION GAIN

633 m / 2175 ft

TERRAIN

40% paved paths and roads, 60% trails

Road walking, mountain rocky tracks, grass tracks and forest paths. Boots essential..

TRAVEL TIME

N/A



Day 5: Depart Glenbeigh

This morning, savour one last delicious Irish breakfast before departing for the airport or starting your next adventure.

From Glenbeigh, there is a limited bus service to Killarney where both the train and bus stations are located. From here you can connect to all major cities and airports.

MEALS

Breakfast

*GRADING LEVELS

Level 3

Terrain includes open mountain and bogland, uphill and downhill sections with some steep slopes, with a maximum height of around 800 meters (2,600 feet). Suitable for hikers with a good fitness level, capable of hiking up to 16 kms (10 miles) a day, and average 4-5 hours.

Elevation Graphs

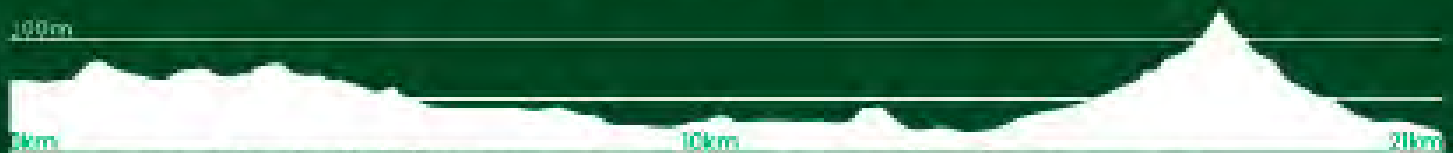
Please see below daily elevation graphs for your selected tour



Killarney to Black Valley | Max Elev: 303m | Elev Gain: 535m | Elev Loss: 537m



Black Valley to Glencar | Max Elev: 383m | Elev Gain: 821m | Elev Loss: 693m



Glencar to Glenbeigh | Max Elev: 339m | Elev Gain: 633m | Elev Loss: 760m

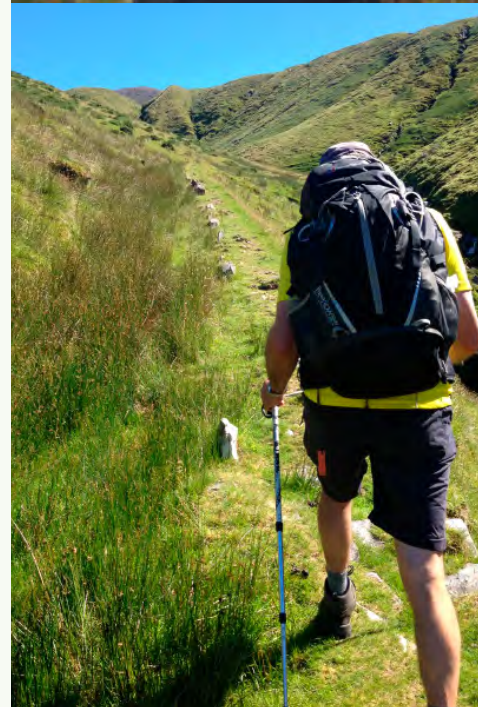
What's Included:

- Handpicked B&B (or small hotel) accommodation at each location in an en-suite room with delicious breakfast included
- Complimentary access to our app, tailor-made for your tour, containing all your documents, GPS navigation & points of interest
- Emergency telephone support
- Detailed, easy to read, digital Route Notes with marked maps of each route
- Extra days/ nights booking on request
- Full pre-departure information to help you get the most from your Irish hiking experience
- Holiday Specialist to assist with planning any additional days, additional activities, travel, airport transfers, etc.

What's Excluded:

- Airfare
- Meals not mentioned as included
- Travel insurance
- Airport transfers to/from Dublin
- Medical costs, personal expenses, gratuities
- Items of a personal nature and hiking gear
- Any items not specifically listed as included in the programme
- Extra hotel nights before or after the tour

“ I wholeheartedly recommend this company and would go with them again without hesitation. Our guide could not have been more perfect for our group, the routes we took were stunningly beautiful and the Irish people could not have been more warm and welcoming. The accommodations were very comfortable... Can't wait to go back to Ireland! ” —NICOLE L.



Accommodation



We use a selection of comfortable and welcoming bed and breakfast (B&B) accommodations that offer a homely, intimate atmosphere for our guests. These B&Bs are often family-run, providing a personal touch and excellent local hospitality. The accommodations are carefully chosen for their locations, offering easy access to walking and hiking routes, with many situated in picturesque villages or near stunning natural landscapes.

The style of B&Bs varies, but all offer cosy rooms with traditional Irish décor, comfortable furnishings, and modern amenities like en-suite bathrooms, Wi-Fi, and tea/coffee-making facilities. Some properties may have more luxurious options, while others maintain a charming, rustic charm that reflects the local culture. You can expect hearty breakfasts, typically with local produce such as Irish soda bread, smoked salmon, and eggs, served to fuel you for a day of outdoor activities.



Culinary Delights

Ireland's culinary offerings are a well-kept secret, providing hearty and abundant fare—a perfect reward after a satisfying hike through the hills. Breakfast is served daily at your accommodation. Vegetarian and gluten-free options are available with advance notice. If you have specific medical dietary needs, please inform us in advance to arrange suitable meals. Recommendations for dinner spots are provided for your leisure on your free evenings.



Upgrade Options

For those seeking a more luxurious stay during your holidays we can offer upgraded accommodations in some locations. These provide additional amenities and a higher level of service, ensuring guests enjoy a more indulgent experience while still being immersed in the beauty of Ireland's landscapes.

Boutique Hotels: These are carefully selected hotels offering a blend of contemporary luxury and traditional Irish charm. They typically feature stylish, well-appointed rooms, fine dining options, spas, and additional amenities such as lounges and on-site bars. Many boutique hotels are located in scenic settings or within walking distance of popular hiking routes.

4 or 5-Star Hotels: These hotels offer a higher level of comfort and service, with spacious, well-designed rooms, gourmet restaurants, fitness centers, and sometimes pools or wellness facilities. The emphasis is on premium quality and attentive service, creating a relaxing environment after a day of hiking.

Country Houses and Manor Hotels: Set in tranquil rural locations, these stately homes and country houses offer a more peaceful, refined experience. They often come with lush gardens, elegant dining rooms, and a welcoming atmosphere. Staying in a country house can feel like being a guest in a grand private estate, with the charm of old-world Ireland.

Highend Guesthouses: These upgraded guesthouses offer a more intimate setting than hotels but still provide higher levels of comfort and service. Rooms may be more spacious with added amenities such as premium bed linens, complimentary refreshments, and en-suite bathrooms with higher-quality toiletries.

These upgraded accommodation options are ideal for those who want to combine outdoor adventures with a touch of luxury, offering guests a perfect balance of relaxation, comfort, and access to the natural beauty of Ireland.

“ Everything was perfect! Great personalized service; knowledgeable, very nice and very experienced guides. Great choice of walks, accommodations, restaurants, side visits and excellent recommendations. They treat their walkers as special guests. I have used many walking companies in Europe and I know I am a tough, demanding customer. They are in the top 1%, they excel in every area. ” —ROSA G.



Exploring Killarney

Pre-Tour Recommendations

If you plan to arrive in Killarney a few days early, below are recommendations for what to see and do.

Killarney is one of Ireland's most popular tourist destinations, renowned for its vibrant atmosphere, stunning landscapes, and deep cultural heritage. Situated at the heart of County Kerry, this charming town serves as the ideal starting point for your Kerry Way adventure. Surrounded by the majestic MacGillycuddy's Reeks, picturesque lakes, and the lush expanse of Killarney National Park, Killarney offers visitors a perfect blend of history, nature, and lively Irish hospitality.

Things to See and Do in Killarney

- **Killarney National Park:** A must-visit before embarking on the Kerry Way, this national park boasts scenic walking trails, dense woodlands, and breathtaking lake views. Highlights include Muckross House and Gardens, Torc Waterfall, and the ancient yew trees of Muckross Abbey.
- **Ross Castle:** This 15th-century stronghold on the shores of Lough Leane is steeped in history and offers guided tours that bring its past to life.
- **Jaunting Car Rides:** Take a traditional horse-drawn carriage ride through the park, a charming way to experience Killarney's landscapes.
- **Boat Tours on the Lakes of Killarney:** Explore the serene waters of Lough Leane with a scenic boat tour that offers incredible views of the surrounding mountains.
- **Traditional Pubs and Live Music:** Killarney's lively nightlife scene includes traditional Irish pubs such as O'Connor's and The Laurels, where you can enjoy authentic Irish music and hearty local cuisine.
- **Shopping and Crafts:** Browse local artisan shops for handcrafted woolens, pottery, and souvenirs unique to the region.

With its mix of outdoor adventure, cultural sites, and warm hospitality, Killarney is the perfect place to prepare for the journey ahead on the Kerry Way. Whether you explore its rich history, enjoy a peaceful boat ride, or soak in the lively pub culture, Killarney provides an unforgettable start to your Irish hiking experience.

For golf enthusiasts, perfect your game at Killarney Golf and Fishing Club, 3 time host of the Irish Open, with 2 courses available and amazing views of the Lakes of Killarney and MacGillycuddy Reeks.

Why Ireland Walk Hike Bike?

Having watched many travelers flash through Ireland, founder Linda Woods wanted to provide a more slow-paced, immersive approach to experiencing the country. "My aim was to slow people down so that they could really sink their feet into the soul of the country, meet the locals and discover what makes Ireland and the Irish tick."

Whether you're looking to walk, hike or bike, or a combination, our team of local travel specialists and guides are here to ensure that you have a most delightful and memorable trip to Ireland.

- Irish Owned & Operated
- More Than 25 Years in Business
- Highly Knowledgeable Local Guides
- 4.9 Stars on Google Reviews
- Exceptional Customer Service
- Handpicked Accommodations

We've designed our Tours to maximize every moment of your holiday. Every detail is taken care of so you can just show up, unplug and relax.

- **Personalised Tour app** with GPS navigation functionality, all your documents and important information in one place
- With our Self-Guided Tours you can book your tour **start date to match your travel plan** (subject to accommodation availability)
- **Select accommodations** with genuine local hospitality
- **Luggage transfer** each day with some **private transfers** to the start of your hike to remove unnecessary, unscenic road walking to ensure you are getting the best out of each hiking day
- An expert, local **holiday specialist** during the planning process to help with any questions you may have in the build up to your trip
- **Pre-Tour briefing**, either in person or over the phone before you set off on your first hike
- **Emergency contact** number for any issues while you are on the trails



Travel Insurance

We highly recommend that you obtain suitable travel insurance before your departure date to protect yourself throughout your trip. This coverage should include comprehensive medical insurance for illness and injury, trip cancellation, and should cover for your other travel arrangements such as flights, pre and post-tour arrangements and your personal possessions.

Our travel insurance partners are World Nomads.

Visit www.irelandwalkhikebike.com/questions/travel-insurance-partner to get a quote, or you can contact your own insurance provider.

Getting to Killarney

There are four primary international airports in Ireland: Dublin, Shannon, Cork and Belfast (Aldergrove) International. In addition, there are several smaller airports which provide access to Ireland from mainland Europe and the UK: Kerry, Knock, Donegal and Belfast City (George Best).

Most of our guests on this tour arrive at Dublin Airport and transfer to Killarney by bus or train. You can also fly into Kerry Airport, which is the closest airport to Killarney. We recommend arriving at least one day prior to the start of your tour.

Dublin Airport (www.dublinairport.com) is located 10 km from Dublin City and is accessible by over 1,000 buses daily. From the airport, you can reach many areas in proximity to Dublin, as well as various towns and cities across Ireland. These buses pick up passengers outside arrivals. Taxis and car hire are also available.

Shannon Airport (www.shannonairport.ie) is located about 125 km north of Killarney and receives a good number of trans-Atlantic flights in the summer months. It is served by bus, car hire and taxi. By bus, the transfer takes about 3.5 hours.

Kerry Airport (www.kerryairport.ie) is located between Killarney and Tralee in the village of Farranfore, 13 km from Killarney and 15 km from Tralee. Two daily flights arrive here from Dublin. It is served by bus, car hire, taxi and the train station is a 10-minute walk away.

We advise confirming your tour reservation with Ireland Walk Hike Bike before making flight arrangements.

Booking Details

ENQUIRIES

For questions about this hiking tour, reach out to our Ireland Travel Specialists at info@irelandwalkhikebike.com.

RESERVATIONS

To book your tour email us at info@irelandwalkhikebike.com

PAYMENT CONDITIONS

A deposit of €150.00 per person is required at the time of booking. Balancing payments are then required no less than 8 weeks prior to the tour start date.

Our full terms and conditions can be found at www.irelandwalkhikebike.com/terms-conditions

CANCELLATIONS

Should you need to cancel, cancellation charges will apply. These are calculated from the day written notification is received by the company or our agent as a percentage of the total tour price, including surcharges as follows:

More than 56 days from start date: Deposit only

35 to 55 days from start date: 30%

15 to 34 days from start date: 50%

14 days to departure day: Nil Refund

To book your place on a Dingle Way Self-Guided Hike, sign up online [HERE](#) or email us at info@irelandwalkhikebike.com.

We look forward to helping you plan an amazing adventure in Ireland — one you'll remember for years to come!

—Ireland Walk Hike Bike

Interested in exploring Ireland beyond your chosen hiking tour?

Ask us about our cycling and self-drive tours. Book two tours back to back, or add a pre or post-tour adventure.

Ireland Walk Hike Bike has got you covered!

Ireland Walk Hike Bike

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