AN IRISH SOJOURN
The Wild Atlantic Way—South West

SEPT. 30–OCT. 9, 2018

JOIN US FOR A CONVIVIAL JAUNT highlighting Ireland’s Wild Atlantic Way—South West. Stunning scenery, rich history and nightly music sessions will warm your heart and soul.

We’ll stay at comfortable four-star hotels, enjoying bountiful Irish breakfasts and delicious dinners of locally grown fare. In between, we’ll immerse ourselves in Ireland’s natural beauty—its mountains, islands and lakes. Every mile on the tour, Robbie O’Connell and Brian O’Donovan will share their knowledge of the finest sights, sounds and tastes of their native land.

Best of all, we’ll be steeped in the traditional music of Ireland. Robbie and Brian will discuss Celtic music—its instruments and its players—and introduce us to their favorite songs and tunes. Special guests, including some of the most famous musicians in Ireland, will join us along the way. Your heart will be filled with the authentic sights and sounds of the Irish coastline.

This tour will fill up fast, so reserve your place now on this memorable sojourn along the Wild Atlantic Way.

SUNDAY, SEP. 30
Departure
We depart from Logan Airport on an overnight flight to Shannon Airport, where Robbie O’Connell, along with his sister Alice Rattigan, will meet us outside the customs hall.

MONDAY, OCT. 1
Green Pastures and Rugged Coastline
We board our comfortable motor coach and travel through the green pastures of Counties Limerick and Cork to our beautifully located hotel in Sneem, County Kerry. En route, we stop for a traditional Irish breakfast. Once we arrive at our hotel, you are free for the rest of the day to explore the village or get over jet lag. After dinner, we have the first of our nightly traditional music sessions and a chance to get to know one another better.

TUESDAY, OCT. 2
The Mountains and the Sea
From the colorful fishing village of Portmagee, we cross the bridge to Valentia Island and visit the Skellig Experience for a wonderful overview of the island and its history. From there, we drive to Geokaun Mountain and Fogher Cliffs where the 360-degree scenic views will take your breath away. We visit the Cromwell Point Lighthouse and hear the story of the first transatlantic cable, established in 1858. We return to Sneem with a stop at the delectable Skellig Chocolate Co. out on the Skellig Ring.

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 3
Lakes and Island Gardens
We begin in the lively town of Kenmare and see its unique stone circle before crossing the awe-inspiring Healy Pass on the Beara Peninsula into County Cork. After lunch in Victorian Glengarriff, we take a short boat trip to colorful Garnish Island with its Martello tower, arboretum and Italian garden. We pause to see families of seals before continuing to our hotel on the waterfront in Bantry.

THURSDAY, OCT. 4
To the Ends of the World
We traverse the unique landscape of West Cork to the award-winning Mizen Head Signal Station and Visitor Centre, the most south-westerly point in Ireland. Then it’s on to the seafaring village of Baltimore where we board a ferry for the short passage to Sherkin Island where we can enjoy lunch amid the peaceful winding boreens and marvelous seascapes.
FRIDAY, OCT. 5
Stone Circles and Fortified Harbors
From the stunning harbor in Glandore and enigmatic Drombeg Stone Circle, also known as the Druid’s Altar, we follow the coast road to Timoleague Abbey, founded by the Franciscans in 1240. Then it’s onto lunch in Kinsale, a medieval port that played a pivotal role in both Irish and world history. Site of the famous Battle of Kinsale in 1601, the modern town is often called the culinary capital of Ireland. We end the day in the beautiful fishing village of Ballycotton.

SATURDAY, OCT. 6
Medieval Lanes and Sacred Places
We walk the medieval lanes of Youghal, second only to Bristol as an important seaport in the Middle Ages. We see the fascinating Collegiate Church of St. Mary nestled in a corner of the ancient town walls next to the house of Sir Walter Raleigh, who was mayor of Youghal in 1588. We continue to Ardmore and the 12th century round tower and ancient cathedral at the monastic settlement founded by St. Declan in the year 630.

SUNDAY, OCT. 7
Castles, Follies and River Valleys
Lismore Castle Gardens and Ballysaggartmore Towers, a folly built in the nearby woods is our first stop. Following lunch in Dungarvan, we see the unique Hindu Gothic gate at Dromana House, ancestral home of the Villiers-Stuarts, local landlords since the 13th century. We explore the wonderful gardens at Dromana, overlooking the majestic sweep on the River Blackwater. In the evening, we dine out in the ivy-covered Ballymaloe House, a world famous restaurant run by the Allen family.

MONDAY, OCT. 8
Old Markets and Heritage Towns
Cork City and its renowned English Market, in the news when it was visited in 2011 by Queen Elizabeth, begins our day. Then we visit the heritage town of Adare, acclaimed as one of Ireland’s prettiest towns. We continue onto the bustling market town of Ennis, County Clare, where we have the afternoon set aside for last-minute shopping or exploration.

TUESDAY, OCT. 9
Heading Home
We depart our hotel for Shannon Airport. Don’t forget to leave some time for shopping at the duty-free shop.

COST
10-Day Tour Per person, double occupancy: $5,999; Single Supplement: $600
Group Airfare (round trip from Boston): Included
A deposit of $1,600 reserves your place, and includes a $600 donation to WGBH.
All sign-ups and balance due Monday, May 21, 2018

CONTACT AND REGISTRATION
Call Sandy Chin at 617.300.4400 for a registration form and to reserve your place on the tour with a credit card deposit. Or you can download the form from wgbh.org/learningtours and send it back with check or payment info for the deposit amount to:
WGBH LearningTours – Ireland 2018
Attn: Sandy Chin
One Guest Street, Boston, MA 02135

YOUR EXPERT TRAVEL HOSTS

Brian O’Donovan
To listeners of 89.7 WGBH, Brian O’Donovan is the voice of Celtic music in New England. “The Celtic traditional music scene has never been as vital and vibrant as it is today,” he says. Brian’s passion for this music is readily apparent to listeners of his weekly program A Celtic Sojourn, heard Saturdays, 3-6pm on 89.7 WGBH, or online at wgbh.org. A native of Ireland, he has narrated and co-produced documentaries on Irish politics and emigration for Irish Television and PBS.

Robbie O’Connell
Born in Waterford, Ireland, Robbie O’Connell grew up in the town of Carrick-on-Suir, County Tipperary. In 1977, he joined The Clancy Brothers, with whom he has recorded three albums. With the release in 1982 of his first solo album, Close to the Bone, Robbie emerged as an important solo artist. WUMB Boston voted his album Love of the Land the number one acoustic album of 1989. In 1991, Robbie won a Boston Music Award as Outstanding Celtic Act. He has been leading tours to Ireland and Scotland since 1996.