

## 6-Day Coach Trip to Southeast Ireland, Sun 18 – Friday 23 May 2014

### Tentative Programme with Outline Details- Issue 7 October 2013

#### Summary

This promises to be an unforgettable study tour, exploring Irish History, Religion, Culture, Rebellion, Famine and Gardens. We will base ourselves in the Sevenoaks Hotel, Carlow Town for all 5 nights, and have day trips by coach to a wide range of major local attractions (including many in Dublin City) as well as having short stops to see ancient standing stones, dolmen, high crosses, churches, viewpoints etc.

This updated programme has had input from members who showed an early interest in the trip, and is now fairly firm. I will send out periodic updates if anything major changes, and I will also post updates on this website. The October newsletter also has booking details.

The base cost is now fairly firm\*(see disclaimers) at £455 per person sharing, with a supplement of £70 for singles. The deposit will be £55 pp on booking, with the balance due 31 March 2014.

At the end of this document, I have included web addresses giving further information on *attractions written in italics*.

**Disclaimers.** Please note that the trip cannot yet be completely finalised, as some 2014 information is not yet available. Some minor changes to itinerary and cost are still possible.

The main risk on final cost is the euro exchange rate- a 5% change in rate would change the total cost by about £15 pp sharing, plus an additional £4 for singles. See the 'Basis of Tour Costs' towards the end of this document.

Eire is not covered by the NHS, so health insurance should be considered- at the very least, current EU health cards should be taken.

The Yorkshire Philosophical Society accepts no responsibility for any loss or injury suffered while taking part in its activities. Participants are advised to consider appropriate insurance cover.

#### The Coach

Assuming a reasonable number of us on the trip, we will have a Stephenson's 49-seater executive coach with toilet. We will drive about 400 miles in England and 600 miles in Ireland.

#### The Hotel

The Sevenoaks Hotel has AA\*\*\* designation, and was a Trip Advisor winner for excellence in 2012 and 2013. It is about 1 mile from Carlow Town Centre in a reasonable area, and only a short walk from local pubs and shops.

The hotel has good general facilities, including en suite non-smoking rooms, free broadband WiFi, multichannel TV, tea/coffee making facilities, laundry facilities etc. There is also a well equipped leisure centre including a 20m swimming pool, a bar, and a good restaurant.

Breakfasts and evening meals will be taken at the hotel. We have been offered a private dining area for the evening meal.

### Sample Menu

Oak Smoked Salmon Roulade with Cream Cheese & Chive  
*Served with Lemon & Poppy Seed Dressing*  
Tossed Bacon & Crouton Salad with Honey & Mustard Dressing  
Chicken & Mushroom Vol-au-Vent  
Homemade Cream of Vegetable Soup

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Baked Spiced Salmon Slice  
*Served with Prawn & Mushroom Sauce*  
Grilled Breast of Chicken  
*Served with Savoury Potato & Sausage Meat Stuffing*  
Prime Roast Beef with Yorkshire Pudding  
*Served with Horseradish Cream*  
Pasta with Smoked Bacon, Leek, Fresh & Sundried Tomato with a Homemade Tomato & Whiskey Sauce

Creamed & Croquette Potatoes  
Roasted Vegetables with Fresh Herbs & Garlic

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Layered Ice-Cream Gateau  
Sherry Trifle  
Profiteroles with Chocolate Sauce  
Warm Pear & Almond Frangipane Tart with Vanilla Ice-Cream

Tea or Coffee

The hotel assures me that they can cope with any reasonable dietary requests provided they know in advance. They have plenty of vegetarian options available for vegetarian guests such as Layered Vegetable Lasagne, Stir Fried Vegetables with Soy Sauce & Sherry with Noodles, Hot Brown Bread and Nut Roast and a Savoury Omelette etc

### Tentative Programme

The following programme is rather full, in order to maximise both the breadth of experience and the value that the tour can give. For those preferring a bit slower schedule, there is potential relax time on Day 1 on the ferry, on Day 2 in Waterford, on Day 3 in Dublin, and Day 6 at Dun Laoghaire and on the ferry.

#### Day 1 Programme – Sunday 18 May- Coach Travel, Walton Hall, Ferry

0800 Leave York, Leeman Rd

Tea/coffee, probably at *Walton Hall & Gardens* near Warrington

1300 arr Holyhead ferry for check in.

1410 dep Irish Ferry (the well equipped slower ferry *Ulysses*)

Own cost lunch & tea on board

1725 arr Dublin port.

1830 arr Sevenoaks Hotel, Carlow for dinner.

## **Day 2 Programme – Monday 19 May- Kilkenny, Waterford, Carlow**

0900 dep. Hotel.

0940 arr. *Kilkenny Castle* for tea/coffee and tour. A 12thC castle remodelled in Victorian times, set in extensive parklands. Home to the Dukes of Ormonde.

Drive past *St Canice Cathedral and Round Tower, Kilkenny Town Centre*, with brief stops for photographs.

1100 leave Kilkenny;

1140 Short stop at *Alhenny High Cross* .

1230 arr. Waterford. Own cost lunch at Munster Bar or similar

1320 arr. *Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre*.

Tour of *Glass Works* 1hr 40 min + Tea /Coffee

1545 Explore Waterford town centre on foot (self directed, own cost).

Eg. *Treasures at the Granary - Viking & Mediaeval; Bishops Palace; Cathedral*

1645 dep. Waterford

Brief coach tour (photo opportunities only) of *Carlow Town. Cathedral of the Assumption-Regency Gothic. Carlow Castle*, soaring 13thC castle then a lunatic asylum, blown up in 1814 in order to remodel it! *Croppies Grave* of 640 United Irish rebels following the bloodiest fighting of the 1798 uprising. Also a *Celtic Cross* on the same site.

1830 arr. Sevenoaks Hotel

## **Day 3 Programme – Tuesday 20 May- Dublin (with Powerscourt option)**

**Notes. This is by far the most complicated day, as there are a number of options.** It appears that there will be sufficient interest (ie more than 12 members) to justify the optional trip to Powerscourt, and I will try to negotiate a group rate. Hence, the day's organisation is a bit complicated, but with flexibility and good will on all sides we should be able to accommodate most preferences.

Also, as this is a self-guided day, to suit individual interests, no tea/coffee/meals/ attraction costs are included in the basic tour price. However, I will try to negotiate group rates where this seems to make sense.

**Main Group- Full day self guided tour of Dublin.** Possible attractions include-

*Trinity College & Book of Kells , Irish Writers Museum, Dublin Castle, Kilmainham Jail, National Museum of Ireland- Viking Gold, Archaeology, Natural History etc, National Botanical Garden of Ireland, Christ Church Cathedral, St Patrick's Cathedral, Guinness Storehouse, Dublinia, Pearce Museum, Temple Bar, St Stephens Green.* And many more...Hostelworld suggest the *best 15 free attractions*, and English Heritage have just struck a deal with *Heritage Ireland* to give free entry for members to some of Dublin's attractions (as well as to Kilkenny Castle on Day 2). It is possible to walk to many attractions, but there is good public transport around Dublin. You may be interested in

the *hop-on hop-off sightseeing tour* at 18 euros, particularly if you want to be independent of the coach. If you have the energy and motivation to see a lot of attractions, you may be interested in a *VIP pass* (35 euros) to many major attractions, possibly without queuing. If there is sufficient interest in these options, I will try to negotiate group rates and order the passes in advance (not included in the basic tour cost).

**Second Group- ½ day Dublin Highlights + ½ day Powerscourt Estate.** The coach will take this group to Powerscourt Gardens in time for a late lunch, after they have had the chance to see some Dublin Highlights as above. *Powerscourt* has one of Europe's finest gardens set in 47 acres in a spectacular setting. Adult entrance (not included in basic tour cost) 8.50 euros to gardens, 5.50 euros to separate waterfall area a few miles away. Group rates would be a bit less.

**The rather complicated coach schedule** will be approximately as follows.

0845 dep Hotel. Note the slightly earlier start time.

1000 arr Dublin. **Both Groups.** The basic plan is to drive initially to Parnell Square, north of the river, which is convenient for the James Joyce Centre, St Mary's Abbey, Spire Dublin, and the excellent Irish Writers Museum. Own choice of which to see, or to split off and do your own thing for the day (provided you tell me first). However, everyone **MUST** get back to the third coach point at Castle Street (near the Castle) in time to catch the coach at 1700hrs.

1115 **Both Groups.** The coach will drive everyone that wishes to the south side of the river to Leinster Street South, next to Trinity College/Book of Kells, and also convenient for the National Museum (Viking Gold, Archaeology etc), the Irish Parliament, Oscar Wilde House, National Gallery, National Library, and St Stephen's Green. There should be just enough time for the Powerscourt Group to have a quick look at one of these attractions, unless the group decides they would like to leave earlier or later.

1230 (negotiable). **Powerscourt Group** The coach will take those that want to the Powerscourt Gardens to arrive by 1330, in time for a late lunch. Most of the house will be closed, but there will be time to tour the gardens and possibly the waterfall (which is a short coach ride away). We must leave Powerscourt by 1600hrs in order to get to Dublin before 1700hrs.

1230 **Dublin Group.** After seeing the desired attractions near Leinster Street, this group is free to chill out in a local bar or to explore other attractions, by either foot or bus. For those who want to see attractions further afield, please do this as early as possible in order to give ample time to meet the coach at Castle Street at 1700. There is an excellent bus service from the O'Connell Bridge area. No 123 goes to the Guinness Warehouse, Nos 51B, 51C, 78A, 79, 79A go to Kilmainham Jail, No 4 goes to the National Botanic Gardens, and no 46D goes to the start of Phoenix Park. There is also the *hop-on hop-off sightseeing tour*.

The **Dublin group** will have to make their own way to Castle Street (which is a short walk/ bus ride from the second drop-off point, Leinster Street), in time to meet the coach at 1700 hrs. Castle Street is convenient for Dublin Castle, Christ Church Cathedral, St Patrick's Cathedral and Dublinia.

1700. **Both Groups .** The coach arrives from Powerscourt at Castle Street, in front of Dublin Castle, to pick everyone up. **PLEASE BE THERE ON TIME.** Assuming it is not cordoned off for security purposes, we could choose either to drive back through Phoenix Park or to drive straight back to the hotel (probably to be decided on the day, and dependent on traffic and on everyone's energy level)

1830 arr. Hotel. Precise arrival time dependent on rush hour traffic, and on whether we drive through Phoenix Park.

#### **Day 4 Programme – Wednesday 21 May- Enniscorthy, Ferrycarrig, New Ross**

0900 dep. Hotel

1015 arr. Enniscorthy

Tour of the *1798 National Rebellion Centre*.

The 1798 Rebellion lasted from May to September 1798, and in County Wexford alone, some 20,000 people lost their lives in a four week period. The last major battle of the Rebellion, the Battle of Vinegar Hill, which took place on 21st June 1798, was the last major battle on Irish soil.

Tea/coffee- Heather Blazing Cafe

*Enniscorthy Castle*. Dating from 1190, the castle is steeped in Irish history.

1240 dep. Enniscorthy

1300 arr. Ferrycarrig.

Lunch at own cost

*Irish National Heritage Park* . See how people lived, worshipped, and buried their dead for over 9000 years until the Norman's arrived in the 12thC. The park occupies 35 acres and has 16 archaeological and historical reconstructions.

1530 dep. Ferrycarrig

1600 arr. New Ross

Tea/coffee.

Tour of *Dunbrody Emigrant Ship*. In the 7 years following the 1845 potato blight, 1 million people died and 1.5 million emigrated. Costumed re-enactments tell the story.

1730 dep. New Ross

1830 arr. Hotel

#### **Day 5 Programme – Thursday 22 May- Russborough House, Glendalough , & Avondale**

0900 dep. Hotel

Short stop at *Baltinglass Abbey*. Founded for the Cistercian monks in 1148 by Dermot Mc Murrough, King of Leinster, the ruins have remains of fine Gothic windows.

Short stop at *Castleruddy Stone Circle*. A late Bronze Age embanked stone circle with an earthen bank and an internal facing of contiguous boulders. Involves climbing a style and a short walk over farmland.

1040 arr. *Russborough House & Walled Gardens*. Tea/coffee, Tour, and lunch, all included in the tour cost.

Impressive 18thC Palladian-style house, with spectacular interior, furnishings, and artwork. 18thC walled garden.

1300 dep. Russborough House

Very short stop at *Blessington Lakes* for photographs.

Very short stop at *Wicklow Gap* for photographs.

1350 arr. *Glendalough Visitor Centre*.

Tour 6<sup>th</sup> C Christian settlement and monastic remains. Founded by St Kevin. This “monastic city” includes a 30m round tower.

Coach tour of the glacial valley, passing the lower lake and with a brief stop at the upper lake.

1545 arr. *Avondale House & Forest Park*. Tea/coffee and Tour of House.

Tour of the birthplace and Georgian home of Charles Stewart Parnell – “The Uncrowned King of Ireland”. There is an extensive collection of trees and shrubs in the 214 hectares estate and, although it may not be the best time of the year, we will try to have a drive through it in the coach.

1700 dep. Avondale area

Short stop at the *Brownshill Dolmen*. The dolmen has a granite capstone weighing over 100 tonnes, making it the largest of its kind in Europe.

1830 arr. Hotel.

### **Day 6 Programme – Friday 23 May- Kildare (National Stud,Gardens etc), Ferry, Coach Travel**

0830 dep. Hotel- note the early start

0915 arr. Kildare

We will have a tour of the *Irish National Stud*, which lasts a nominal 35 minutes, and have about half an hour for a quick look at the relatively small *Japanese Garden* and *St Fiacre’s Garden*, or the *Horse Museum* (all on same site, and website), to suit individual interests.

1030 dep. Kildare.

1130 arr. Dun Laoghaire ferry area. Everyone can choose either-

to have coffee (probably at the White Tea Rooms) and a leisurely look at the harbour area

**or** to miss coffee and or drive to the small *James Joyce Tower and Museum* for a quick visit. Joyce’s stay at this Martello tower inspired his opening to ‘Ulysses’.

The tour cost will cover either coffee or the JJT.

1245 Coach arrives back from the James Joyce Tower to pick up the coffee drinkers.

1300 arr. Dun Laoghaire for ferry check in.

1330 dep. Sail from Dun Laoghaire (*Stena HSS FastFerry*)

Lunch and tea on board at own cost. It is recommended that everyone eats as much as sea conditions allow, as we do not want a long stop on the drive to York.

1545 arr. Holyhead

Quick stop at motorway service station. 30 min- just enough for a quick sandwich at own cost.

2030 arr York

### **Basis of Tour Costs**

The general principle is to include all transport, hotel, dinner, breakfast, most attraction costs, and tips. Also included are teas/coffees on most days, and one lunch on Day 5. Entrance costs to most activities are included, except for Day 3 which gives individual choices in Dublin/Powerscourt, and for activities in other self-directed periods. The tour cost also includes the standard donation to the YPS of £3 pp per day to cover administration costs, plus any small surplus.

Excluded are most lunches, teas/coffees on the ferry and in Dublin/Powerscourt, alcoholic drinks, and personal expenditures.

The cost is based on an effective exchange rate of 1 euro = £0.86, including bank charges and this affects about 2/3 of the total. A change of 5% in exchange rate changes the total cost by about £15 pp sharing, plus an additional £4 for singles. The cost is also sensitive to the size of the group. Modest changes to numbers, exchange rate or to itinerary should be absorbed by the contingency.

### **Web Addresses**

**Hotel** [www.sevenoakshotel.com](http://www.sevenoakshotel.com)

**Day 1** <http://www.waltonhallandgardens.com>

<http://www.irishferries.com>

**Day 2** <http://www.lonelyplanet.com/ireland/county-carlow/carlow-town>

<http://www.kilkennycastle.ie>

<http://www.stcanicescathedral.com>

[www.kilkennycityonline.com](http://www.kilkennycityonline.com)

<http://www.culturalheritageireland.ie/index.php/heritage-sites-and-centres/95-the-ahenny-high-crosses-near-carrick-on-suir-co-tipperary>

[www.waterfordvisitorcentre.com](http://www.waterfordvisitorcentre.com)

<http://www.waterfordtreasures.com/>

[www.christchurchwaterford.com](http://www.christchurchwaterford.com)

**Day 3** [http://www.visitdublin.com/See and Do](http://www.visitdublin.com/See_and_Do)

[www.hostelworld.com](http://www.hostelworld.com)

<http://www.dublinpass.ie/p-5-dublin-bus-city-sightseeing-tour.aspx>

<http://www.dublinpass.ie/t-Benefits.aspx>

<http://www.heritageireland.ie/en/Dublin/>

<http://www.powerscourt.ie>

**Day 4** <http://www.1798centre.ie/>

<http://www.enniscorthycastle.ie/>

<http://www.inhp.com/park-history/>

<http://www.dunbrody.com/visitor-info/irish-emigrant-experience/>

**Day 5** <http://archiseek.com/2009/baltinglass-abbey-co-wicklow/#.UhHgldKsiSo>

<http://www.culturalheritageireland.ie/index.php/heritage-sites-and-centres/149-the-stone-circle-at-castleruddery-co-wicklow>

<http://www.russboroughhouse.ie>

<http://www.discoverireland.ie/Activities-Adventure/the-blessington-lakes/44627>

<http://visitwicklow.ie/attractions/the-wicklow-gap/>

[http://www.glendalough.ie/heritage\\_of\\_glendalough.php](http://www.glendalough.ie/heritage_of_glendalough.php)

<http://wicklowgardens.com/index.php/mid-east-wicklow-gardens/avondale-house-park/>

[www.botanicgardens.ie](http://www.botanicgardens.ie)

<http://carlowtourism.com/brownshill-dolmen-2/>

**Day 6** <http://irishnationalstud.ie>

<http://www.stenaline.co.uk/ferry/routes/dun-laoghaire-holyhead/>

[http://www.dun-laoghaire.com/profile/joyce\\_tower/index.html](http://www.dun-laoghaire.com/profile/joyce_tower/index.html)

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