

Texas Master Chorale

Performance Tour of Ireland 2017

Proposed Itinerary June 12-22, 2017

As of March 25, 2016

12 June 2017, Monday, Travel to Ireland

Depart Houston afternoon for connection at Newark and on to Dublin, with meal service en route.

13 June, Tuesday, Dublin

Arrive Dublin 10:25 AM on United Flt. TBD. We'll enjoy a panoramic tour of Dublin City on our way to the hotel, including the Georgian doors and the Phoenix Park. Check in to our four-star air-conditioned hotel early afternoon with time to rest and freshen up before our dinner at the hotel at 8:00 PM. Evening is at leisure. Hotel and dinner: Academy Plaza Hotel, 10-14 Findlater Place, off Upper O'Connell St., Dublin 1 Phone as dialed from the US: 011 353 1 878 0666 <http://www.academyplazahotel.ie/>

14 June 2017, Wednesday, Dublin

After a hearty Irish breakfast at the hotel, we'll depart on our morning city tour. We'll stop first at Trinity College to view the Book of Kells and the Long Room library. The Book of Kells is an illuminated manuscript Gospel book in Latin, containing the four Gospels of the New Testament together with various prefatory texts and tables. It was created in a Columban monastery in Ireland, and is considered a masterwork of Western calligraphy and Ireland's finest national treasure. We'll have lunch on our own in the area of Trinity College, and then transfer the short distance to **Christ Church cathedral**. There **we'll sing a formal concert at 1:30 PM** as part of their regular concert series. The first church on this site was established over 1,000 years ago, and in 1742 the cathedral choir together with the choir of St. Patrick's cathedral sang at the world premiere of Handel's Messiah in nearby Fishamble Street. After the concert, we return to the hotel and remainder of the day free to explore Dublin City, or you can visit the Old Jameson Distillers whiskey museum (optional). Dinner is on our own tonight, a good time to explore the well-known culinary delights of Dublin. Hotel: Academy Plaza Hotel

15 June, Thursday, Dublin

This morning after breakfast we'll visit the ancient ruins of Glendalough Abbey, a monastic settlement founded by St. Kevin in the 6th century AD,





the famous monk that lived in a tree. The churches, abbeys, and the famous round towers make this one of the most venerated sites in Ireland, and they are legendary. The present remains in Glendalough tell only a small part of its story. The monastery in its heyday included workshops, areas for manuscript writing and copying, guest houses, an infirmary, farm buildings and dwellings for both the monks and a large lay population. The buildings which survive probably date from between the 10th and 12th centuries. The drive takes us an hour south of Dublin into the Wicklow Mountains. When we return, there will be little free time for shopping on Grafton Street pedestrian area or an optional visit to the Guinness Distillery. Dinner is on our own again tonight. Hotel: Academy Plaza Hotel



16 June, Friday, Waterford Crystal and Jameson Distillery

After breakfast at the hotel, we depart Dublin for Waterford, a two-hour drive. Here we'll visit the famous Waterford Crystal Factory to see how the crystal is manufactured. In front of your eyes, you will see red-hot molten crystal take shape, in a miracle of light, heat and skill. The craftsmen are meticulous and you can watch as they transform glowing balls of molten crystal into elegant shapes with skills that have made two hundred years of perfection clearly visible in every piece. We'll enjoy lunch and a visit to the shop before we continue on to Midleton for a guided tour of the Jameson Distillery to see how this famous whiskey is made and taste a dram if you're so inclined. Some of the original buildings date back to 1795, built as a mill before being converted for use as a distillery. The water wheel, which once operated all the machinery at the distillery, still turns and operates the cogs and wheels in the Mill Building. Warehouse No.1, which boasts the largest copper pot still in the world, casks of maturing whiskey and the new micro distillery. Then we continue to Cork City and our overnight at the Imperial Hotel. Dinner is provided at the hotel



tonight. Hotel and dinner: Imperial Hotel, 76 South Mall, Cork, Ireland
http://www.flynnhotels.com/Imperial_Hotel_Cork/

17 June, Saturday, Cork to Killarney
After breakfast at the hotel, we depart for Killar-





ney, and our first stop is Blarney Castle and Woollen Mills nearby. Actually, Blarney Castle is the third to have been erected on this site. The first castle in the tenth century was a wooden structure. Then, around 1210 A.D. this was replaced by a stone structure which had the entrance some twenty feet above the ground and then in 1446 the third castle was built by Dermot McCarthy, King of Munster. The Woollen Mill is a shoppers gem with a broad selection of local products and gifts. Then we're on to Killarney, arriving early afternoon. Then we take a Jaunting Car ride through the National Park to see Ross Castle, which sits on the edge of Killarney's lower lake. While riding through the National Park, we'll watch for the herd of red deer that live there. Then we return to the hotel to check in for two nights at the four-star Malton Hotel. We have time to freshen up for dinner and prepare for our concert. At 6:30 PM, we will participate in the mass and afterward sing a **concert in St. Mary's Cathedral**. Tonight dinner is provided at the hotel. Hotel and dinner: The Malton, Town Centre, Killarney, Co. Kerry Phone as dialled from the US: 011 353 64 6638000 <http://www.themalton.com/>



18 June, Sunday, Ring of Kerry.

After breakfast, we leave for the Ring of Kerry tour. The Ring of Kerry is considered one of the finest drives in the world. From rugged cliffs to golden beaches, small villages and pastures green to peat bogs and picturesque mountain ranges, it's a circular tour of the Iveragh Peninsula. We will stop for coffee at the Bog village and a little further along, we stop to enjoy the Sheepdog demonstration with Brandon Ferris, a highlight of the tour. Lunch will be on our own but arranged at the spectacular viewing point at the Scarriff Inn. The small towns we drive through are delightful: Killorglin, Glenbeigh, Kells, Caherciveen and the southern shores of Dingle Bay. The tour continues to Waterville and along the coast via Coomakista Pass and Derrynane and on to Sneem. From Sneem we travel up the mountain road to Molls Gap, then via Ladies' View and back to Killarney. We arrive back at our hotel late afternoon. Tonight dinner is on our own. Hotel: The Malton



19 June Monday, Killarney to Galway

After breakfast at the hotel, we head north. We'll stop at the picturesque village of Adare and on through Limerick City for our visit Bunratty Castle and Folk Park. At Bunratty Castle everywhere is open for you to explore! You will be charmed as you visit the farm houses and cottages and watch the tasks of rural Irish families. Make sure you see the baking of the griddle bread next to the fire and tasting it hot with fresh creamery butter. The castle itself is the most complete and authentic medieval fortress in Ireland. Built in 1425, it was restored in 1954 to its former medieval splendor and now contains mainly 15th and 16th century furnishings, tapestries, and works of art. After lunch on our own at Durty Nellie's Pub or the Bunratty Woollen Mill and shopping centre, we



drive to Galway City to check in at the 4* Meyrick Hotel on the Green in Galway. Dinner is provided at the hotel. Tonight we expect to sing a **concert at the Galway Cathedral**. Hotel and dinner: Hotel Meyrick, Eyre Square, Galway Phone as dialled from the US: 011 353 91564041 <http://www.hotelmeyrick.ie/>

20 June, Tuesday, Aran Islands.

After breakfast at the hotel, we depart for a full day excursion today to visit the largest of the Aran Islands, Inish Mor. It's about an hour travel to the ferryport to board for the trip across Galway Bay to the island. Located in the heart of Galway Bay, the Aran Islands offer visitors a glimpse into a way of life that has long since disappeared from most of the country. The Islands' raw beauty and charm leaves visitors longing to return again and again. Here we will be met by the local mini-bus drivers who will take us on a tour of the island with the highlight a visit to the cliff top fortress of Dun Aengus. The view, the crashing waves—all spectacular. We'll have lunch on our own at a pub on the island or buy sandwiches etc for a picnic on the beach! Mid-afternoon, we return by ferry to the mainland and then by bus to Galway. Dinner is on our own tonight, and our guide will be happy to show us the best pubs in town. Hotel: Hotel Meyrick



21 June, Wednesday Connemara.

The 'Figure of Eight' tour as it's called as we travel in a figure of eight direction and visit Kylemore Abbey on the itinerary today, exploring to wild and rugged countryside of west Galway called Connemara. Green marble is a feature here and is highly valued. This is Irish panorama at its best, so be prepared to take many memorable photos. We'll enjoy our visit to Kylemore Abbey. At the Gothic chapel you have an opportunity to **sing informally**. In addition, there is the estate house to see and extensive Victorian gardens. Lunch is good here prepared by the Nuns and their staff! In the afternoon we make our way back by the coast to the hotel for our final Gala Dinner: an Irish Night of song dance and music at the renowned 'Trad on the Prom' at Salthill.

(<http://www.tradontheprom.com/>) Hotel: Hotel Meyrick

22 June, Thursday, Fly home from Shannon.

We depart after breakfast for a 90-minute drive to Shannon Airport where we board for our flight home in the mid-morning, flight to be determined. Here you can catch up on last minute shopping at the 'duty free' at the airport. Arrival in Houston is expected mid-afternoon.



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