The Connemara Way Guided Trail in Ireland



Trip style:	Destination:	Walking Grade	Carbon Footprint:
Guided Walking Holidays	Ireland	7	419kg CO2

HOLIDAY OVERVIEW

With the Atlantic Ocean to the west and Lough Corrib forming a watery border to the east, Connemara feels wonderfully wild and remote. Follow the full Connemara Way across the counties of Galway and Mayo, crossing a landscape of sparkling lakes, rugged coastline and purple-hued moors beneath the Maumturks and Twelve Bens mountain ranges. Guided by an experienced HF Leader, everyone walks the same route each day, tackling longer, more challenging sections together. By the end of the week, you'll have completed the entire trail on a rewarding journey through one of Ireland's most starkly beautiful regions.

WHAT YOU'LL LOVE

- Exploring sections of the Wild Atlantic Way
- Admiring the stark coastal beauty of Connemara
- Winding your way through landscapes that have inspired writers such as Oscar Wilde & W.B.Yeats
- Walking part of the pilgrimage route passing Ireland's holy mountain, Croagh Patrick
- Sharing the experience with a group of like-minded walkers
- A more personalised experience thanks to small group sizes (maximum 15 people)

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- Comfortable en-suite rooms in our partner accommodation
- Cooked or continental breakfast every morning
- Daily packed lunches
- Three-course evening meals, plus tea & coffee
- Guided walks with an experienced HF Holidays Leader
- All transport to and from walks where necessary
- Return flights from London Heathrow, including baggage and transfers

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Day 1 **Arrival Day**

Welcome to Delphi Resort. Unpack, settle in and meet your fellow group members and leader before dinner.

Day 2 **Oughterard to Maam Cross**

Our first walk provides the perfect introduction to Connemara as the scenery gradually changes from gentle countryside to wilder, more rugged landscapes that have remained largely unchanged for generations.

Starting near the south-western shores of Lough Corrib – one of western Europe's great lakes – we walk through the townland of Curraun More, cross the Owenree River and continue through Folore Forest. Joining the Maam Road, we're rewarded with our first impressive views of the Connemara mountains.

15 miles (24km) with 900 feet (280m) of ascent

Day 3 **Maam Cross to Lough Inagh**

Today's walk passes the location made famous by the film *The Quiet Man* before leading us into the increasingly dramatic and remote landscapes of the Maumturk Mountains.

We follow an ancient pilgrim path that climbs gradually through Maumeen, passing St Patrick's Church and Holy Well. According to local legend, St Patrick rested here on his journey to Croagh Patrick, Ireland's best-known holy mountain.

Crossing the spine of the Maumturks rewards us with superb views in every direction – back across the Maam Valley and ahead towards the distinctive peaks of the Twelve Bens. We then descend into the beautiful Inagh Valley, overlooking Lough Inagh and its scattered islands.

Please note: This is the most challenging walk of the holiday and is one grade higher than the overall holiday grade. Easier walking follows on the remaining days.

16 miles (26km) with 1,850 feet (580m) of ascent

Day 4 Lough Inagh to Leenane

Following the lower slopes of the Maumturk Mountains, our trail passes the remains of long-abandoned settlements. Uninhabited since the Great Famine of the 1840s, this remote landscape offers a real sense of peace and solitude.

As we descend towards Leenane, spectacular views open across Killary Harbour – Ireland's only true fjord and one of the country's most dramatic natural landmarks. We finish in the picturesque village of Leenane, nestled on the fjord's southern shore.

10 miles (16km) with 800 feet (260m) of ascent

Day 5 Free Day

Enjoy a free day to relax at Delphi Resort or explore more of the surrounding area at your own pace.

Day 6 Leenane to Drummin

Leaving Leenane, we continue towards the head of Killary Harbour before crossing into County Mayo. Our trail passes through remote countryside shaped by generations of traditional sheep farming, with the imposing Sheeffry Hills rising above us.

As we make our way through this rugged landscape, we're rewarded with sweeping views across the Erriff Valley and final glimpses of the Connemara mountains behind us.

13 miles (21km) with 900 feet (280m) of ascent

Day 7 Drummin to Westport

Our final walk takes us beneath Croagh Patrick, Ireland's holy mountain. Thousands of pilgrims climb to its summit each year – some traditionally making the ascent barefoot – but our route continues along the Western Way towards Clew Bay.

Reaching the characterful harbour town of Westport brings our walking journey to a fitting close. There should be time to raise a glass together and celebrate completing the trail.

14 miles (23km) with 1,350 feet (420m) of ascent

Day 8 Departure Day

Enjoy a leisurely breakfast before making your way home.

DAILY WALK OPTIONS



Moderate walking grade 7

The most active moderate grade. Longer distances and short but steep ascents and descents possible throughout the day. Hill walking experience desirable. Typically, 11-12 miles (18-19km) with around 1,800ft (560m) of ascent.

ACCOMMODATION

Delphi Resort

The 4-star Delphi Resort is perfectly located for our walking holidays. Surrounded by rugged mountains in 300 acres of magnificent scenery, it sits in the heart of the Delphi Valley, near Leenane, Connemara. Comfortable rooms each feature tea & coffee making facilities, iron & ironing board, flat screen tv, telephone, hairdryer and toiletries. Elsewhere, the hotel has a Spa & Wellness resort complete with hot tub, steam room, sauna and treatments available, perfect for unwinding after a good day's walk (all payable locally).

VACCINATIONS & HEALTH

Vaccinations & health information

Before booking, you should check with your doctor to see whether any health precautions are needed for your trip. Health advice and requirements can change, so we recommend doing this in good time before travel.

As a general rule, travellers should ensure they are up to date with routine UK vaccinations and boosters, including, for example, MMR and diphtheria, tetanus and polio. Some countries may require you to have specific vaccinations such as Malaria, Rabies and Yellow Fever. Please check with your GP if you are unsure.

Please note that the use or possession of some common prescription or over-the-counter medicines is restricted or banned in certain countries. If you will be carrying medication, you should check with the relevant embassy or consulate before travelling. As an extra precaution, we recommend keeping medication in its original packaging, carrying a copy of your prescription, and, where possible, asking your pharmacist to provide the medication name in the language of the country you are visiting.

For further country-specific health advice, visit www.fitfortravel.nhs.uk or www.traveldoctor.co.uk. If you are travelling from outside the UK, please consult your own doctor and check local entry requirements.

PASSPORTS & VISAS

Passport & Visa information

This information is for those travelling with a full 'British Citizen' passport; for all other nationalities or passport holders, please check with your local consulate for advice.

Passport Requirements

This information applies to travellers holding a full British Citizen passport. Entry requirements vary by destination and can change at short notice. For most EU and worldwide destinations, passports must be valid for the entire duration of your stay. Some countries also require a minimum period of validity remaining on your passport (often up to 6 months beyond your return date), even if you are not staying that long.
We strongly recommend ensuring your passport has at least six months' validity remaining at the time of travel to avoid any issues.

If you hold a different type of British passport or a passport issued by another country, you must check the requirements with the relevant embassy, consulate, or official government website.

Visa Requirements

Visa rules depend on your nationality, destination, length of stay, and purpose of travel, and they can change frequently. It is your responsibility to check whether you require a visa before travelling.
British passport holders should check the latest entry, passport validity and visa requirements for their destination on the UK government's Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) website:
https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

Packing list

It's best to be prepared for all weather conditions. To make it easier, here is a list of items you should consider packing.

Essentials

- Walking boots
- Waterproof jacket
- Waterproof trousers
- Insulated jacket/top
- Walking clothing
- Walking socks (plus spares)
- Sunhat
- Gloves/mitts and warm hat
- Water bottle (minimum 2 litre capacity)
- Headtorch
- High-factor sunscreen (minimum SPF 30)
- Swimcap (compulsory in Itialian resorts)
- Sunglasses with a dark lens
- Rucksack (15-30 litres)
- Mobile phone
- Personal first aid kit (containing your medication, blister plasters, etc.)
- Passport
- Visa (if applicable)
- Copy of your travel insurance policy
- UK Global Health Insurance Card (**formerly known as EHIC**)

Recommended

- Collapsible walking poles
- Swimwear and travel towel
- Snacks
- Dry bags

- Rubbish bags
- Insect repellent

Optional extras

- Camera
- Sit mat
- Flask for hot drinks
- Durable lunch box
- Gaiters
- GPS device (excluding Bhutan, Georgia and India)

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITH FLIGHTS)

With flights

If you choose to book your flights with us, we automatically include return transfers between the destination airport and hotel.

JOINING INSTRUCTIONS (WITHOUT FLIGHTS)

Without flights

If you are travelling independently to join us at Delphi Resort, please see their website for details of how to get here: https://delphiadventureresort.com/plan-your-visit/

USEFUL INFORMATION

Safety Information

Walking Safety

Walks may be changed for safety reasons and are subject to a maximum and minimum number of guests.

Leaders always consider the safety of the group as a whole and may need to alter or curtail the walk if the conditions dictate. Your leader may refuse to accept a guest where clothing, equipment or behaviour is unsuitable. In the event of a problem all leaders carry a mobile phone, first aid kit, group shelter, spare maps and a compass.

Please note: If you choose to leave the group your leader is no longer responsible for you.

In the event of a problem

If you become separated from your group, please stay where you are. Your leader will retrace their steps to find you.

All our walk leaders carry a mobile phone, group shelter, spare maps and a compass. In the unlikely event your leader is incapacitated, please use any emergency kit in their rucksack and call the emergency services (call 999 in the UK, or 112 overseas).

Please then try to call the hotel where you are staying to let them know there is a problem.

We advise you carry a copy of these trip notes or note down the contact phone number for your accommodation (details in the travel section) should you need them in case of emergency.

If you have any cause for complaints regarding accommodation, you should notify your leader who can then attempt to rectify the problem.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is a condition of booking. Therefore, if you have not already arranged insurance, it is imperative that you do so before you travel.

For more information about healthcare and its costs, please visit: https://www.nhs.uk/using-the-nhs/healthcare-abroad/

Drinking Water

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Standards for drinking water vary widely around the world. In many destinations, tap water may not be safe to drink, brush your teeth with, or use for making ice. Where advised, you should drink only bottled or treated water and ensure that bottle seals are intact before use. If bottled water is unavailable, water should be boiled or filtered.

Staying well hydrated is particularly important in hot climates and during active holidays. Carry water with you and drink regularly.

If you are unsure about local water safety, check official country-specific health advice before travel, or ask your accommodation or local guides for guidance once you arrive.

Ticks

Ticks are tiny creatures that live in vegetation and can attach themselves to passing animals or walkers and may carry a risk of Lyme Disease. Please refer to NHS advice and guidelines for information prior to your holiday.

Useful information

The terrain consists of quiet roads, bog roads, open moorland, forestry tracks, mountain paths and about 3km of timber bog bridge: some parts of the route can be very wet and boggy, particularly after a rainy period, when there is a fast run-off from the Connemara mountains.

Your fitness

Having a solid base of fitness before your holiday will ensure you've the best chance of completing the holiday and enjoying it to boot. Here's a few simple tips to help you get fit and ready for your challenge:

· Get out walking - whether the weather, get out there, and start building your fitness months before your

holiday

· Build your distance gradually and get a number of 6-8hr hill days in

· Ideally, try and do two consecutive days training if possible

· Take the stairs every time

· Train on different terrain

· Train with your day pack and your walking boots too, to ensure they're well worn in before your holiday

· Other sports help improve your walking fitness too. The best ones are jogging, cycling, swimming, which will

build your stamina, and yoga which will help strengthen your core and improve balance

· Time training will help ensure you enjoy your holiday to the max.

Please be sure you can manage the daily mileage and ascent as listed. The walking day is normally 7-8 hours. It is important for your own enjoyment, and that of your fellow guests that you can maintain the pace.

TRIPNOTE VALIDITY

TRIP NOTE VALIDITY These Trip Notes are valid based on the date printed at the bottom of the page. They will occasionally be updated post booking and pre-departure. We will send you the latest trip notes prior to departure through a link in your pre departure documents or we can send you a copy in the post if preferred. In booking this trip you should be confident in your ability to participate in all activities described in these Trip Notes. If you have any doubt about your suitability you should call HF Holidays and ask to speak to one of the team about this itinerary. The information in these Trip Notes is given in good faith. Where differences exist between the Trip Notes and our current brochure, the Trip Notes supersede the brochure. All holidays can be subject to unexpected changes; so please be prepared to be flexible where necessary. At times, it may not be possible to follow the itinerary as planned due to weather conditions, political, physical or other factors. In these circumstances we will make the best possible alternative arrangements to maintain the integrity of the original itinerary.

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