

IRELAND – BEARA WAY, WEST CORK INDEPENDENT WALK 2008

This is a one centre independent walking tour on the Beara Peninsula which is a rural gem. You are based in the fishing town of Castletownbere which is one of the country's premier fishing ports. The town has a selection of pubs and restaurants and for the culturally minded there is an Art Trail around the numerous galleries and studios in the area. The walks on the peninsula are very varied with magnificent views of the rugged Beara Peninsula and the Kenmare and Bantry Bays. Choice of 2 island walks and the others are along the Beara Way.

Beara Way Self Guided Walk: \$1105 per person (twin share). Single supplement on request (limited)
Departs: Every day, year round (min 2 people) Starts & Ends in Castletownbere

Includes: 7 nights in Irish Tourist Board approved guesthouse with en-suite facilities, 7 Full Irish Breakfasts, Detailed notes and maps of the route, Day trip (by ferry boat) to Beara Island.

Day 1 Arrival in Castletownbere

Day 2 Beara Way - Park Lough to Castletownbere

Distance 13.5km

In the morning you are dropped out to Park Lough, you then walk back to Castletownbere at your leisure. You walk along bog roads past a megalithic tomb and down into the valley of Ahakista and into Castletownbere.

Day 3 Stone Row to Allihies.

This walk takes you to the village of Allihies where reputedly the first people to arrive in Ireland, the legendary Milesians first landed over a thousand years ago, appearing out of the Atlantic mist in the west. The walk is mostly along mountain tracks and bog roads where you will see rocky mountain heath, old copper mines, old standing stones, incredible views of Kenmare and Bantry Bays as well as some coastal islands. (Drop off one way)

Day 4 Dursey Island

Distance 14 kms

(Get the bus at 09.00am from the town – cable car to Dursey and return bus at 2.30pm.) The outward route follows a track and path to the end of the island linking a few inhabited farmhouses on the way and the return route is partly along the rugged moorland crest of the island.

Day 5 Eyerics to Ardroom

Dropped to Eyerics and getting bus back at 4.50 from Ardroom.

You walk from the colourful village of Eyerics overlooking The Atlantic. A coastal walk around Coulagh Bay includes sight of the rock known as the Hag of Beara, you end your walk in the delightful village of Ardroom from where you get the bus back to Castletownbere.

Day 6 Dunboy Circular Walk

This is a short walk around the town of Castletownbere but can be lengthened – You can laze around the town of Castletownbere (haven) or take a gentle stroll or cycle to visit the local castle ruins of Dunboy Castle 3km south – west of the town, which dates back from the 15th century. Puxley Hall is also just a short distance from the castle and was involved in the Copper Mines at Allihies. The general area around Castletownbere and west of there has a very strong archaeological heritage. Shore fishing, golfing and shopping are options

Day 7 Bere Island

Distance 13km or 28 kms

This island offers 2 scenic loops exploring the roads, hills and coast. Perhaps a coastal walk from the pier to Ardnakinna Point lighthouse and up to Coomastooka to enjoy the views over Castletownbere at the cross then follow the Beara Way back to the pier along the Northern Road should satisfy all. Access to the island is by ferry

Day 8 Departure.

Fitness: This is a 'two boot' moderate walking trip: It has moderate walks of 6-9 miles (10-15km) per day with gradual ascents of up to 900ft (275m).

Getting to Castletownbere: By public bus transport from Cork Bus Station to Castletownbere. See website: www.buseireann.ie
A private minibus by Harringtons (Tel: +353 27 74003) operates daily from Mulligans Bar, Parnell Place, Cork departing Cork at 18.00hours and returning in the mornings from Castletownbere at 08.00am.



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