

# Artists' Grand Tour of Ireland 2018

**Your hosts: Irish Storyteller Batt Burns**

**Artist: Beverly Hennessy**

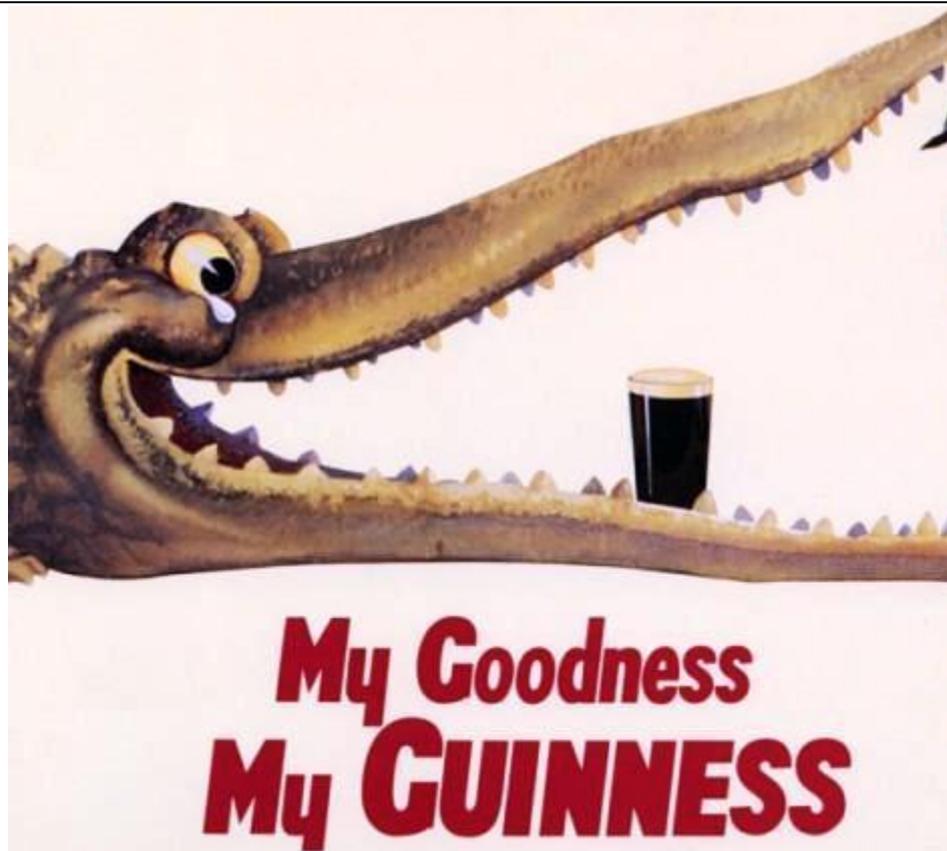


Ireland's landscape is one of emerald green countryside, rain-hazed lakes, awe-inspiring coastal bluffs, medieval castles, ancient monuments, vibrant towns and cities as well as colourful villages. The country has a proud and congenial people, rich oral traditions and music, and a strong sense of place and community. Batt Burns, a former school principal and now an international entertainer and author will be tour director and guide. He has been leading tours of Ireland since 1992.

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

### Day 1 June 19th

Depart USA for your overnight flight to Ireland



**'My  
Goodness  
My  
Guinness  
'**

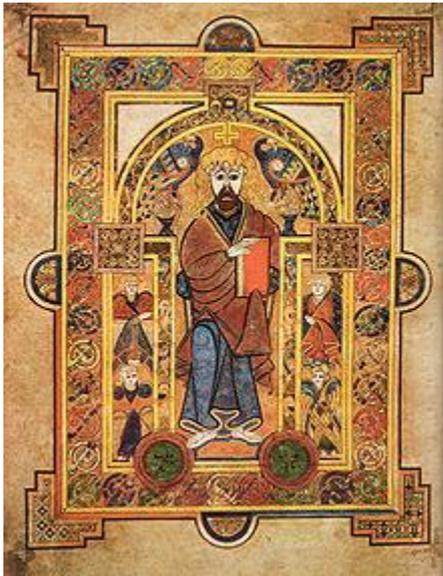
### Day 2. June 20th

Arrive at Dublin Airport where you will be met with a *cead míle fáilte* (a hundred thousand welcomes) by famed Irish storyteller, Batt Burns. He will lead you on an orientation drive around the centre of Ireland's capital city before visiting the famous Guinness Storehouse at 12.15 p.m. Here you will be led through a fascinating exhibition that uses words, music, images, sounds and smells that bring to life the rich splendour of the Guinness story. Sample a pint of Guinness in the roof-top bar as you enjoy a spectacular view of Dublin.

At 1.45 p.m. check in to your city hotel located in the heart of Dublin a few minutes stroll from Grafton Street. Here you may rest and relax or you might like to explore some of the city on your own.

Later you will be treated to a cocktail in the comfortable hotel bar before you enjoy your first Irish dinner.

### Day 3. June 21st



The Book of Kells



Powerscourt Gardens

After a hearty Irish breakfast, begin your city tour at 9.15 a.m. and this will include a visit to St. Patrick's Cathedral where Jonathan Swift (author of Gulliver's Travels) was once dean. Enjoy the wonderful Georgian architecture of Merrion Square and hear Batt talk about the 18<sup>th</sup> century exciting social life of this part of the city. Here also, Batt will do a short presentation at the statue of Oscar Wilde one of Dublin's many famous writers. Dublin has now been designated the UNESCO city of literature. Visit Trinity College, founded in 1592, and hear about its rich history and illustrious students. View one of Ireland's priceless treasures, the 8<sup>th</sup> century illuminated copy of the Four Gospels, The Book of Kells. In the late afternoon there will be a bus tour to the Powerscourt Estate with its wonderful gardens in Co. Wicklow.. Dinner and overnight in same hotel. After dinner Batt will be glad to give advice on some good pubs or other places of entertainment in the city centre.

#### Day 4. June 22nd .



The Titanic Exhibition

After breakfast at 8.30 a.m. head north through the rich plains of County Meath and Batt will fill you in on the historic importance of the Boyne Valley and Tara. Hear about the St. Oliver Plunkett connection with Drogheda and some of the Cuchulainn legends. Cross into Northern Ireland at Newry and you will hear the background to the troubles of the 1968 – 1998 period.

After a coffee break in Belfast at 11.00 a.m. embark on a city tour which will include The City Hall, The Opera House, The Scottish Provident Building, Queen's University, The Stormont Parliament Building and many other interesting sites including the ghetto areas of The Falls Road and Shankill. The murals here are particularly interesting. Lunch will be on your own in the heart of Belfast at The Crown Liquor Saloon, the greatest of Victorian Gin Palaces which once flourished in British cities. Dating back to

1826 it is a veritable masterpiece of bar architecture, with a red and gold ceiling, lovely burnished yellow walls and wooden Corinthian pillars with feathered motifs in gold. It was restored at a cost of £400,000 by The National Trust. [www.crownliquorsaloon.com](http://www.crownliquorsaloon.com)

After lunch visit the brand new Titanic Exhibition which has got rave reviews and which has already attracted thousands. The Titanic Exhibition  
Dinner and overnight at a hotel in the heart of Belfast.

### Day 5. June 23rd.



Explore  
the  
Giant's  
Causeway

At 9.00 a.m. leave for a tour of the beautiful Glens of Antrim and The Giant's Causeway, one of the geological wonders of the world, with its 40,000 hexagonal columns of black basalt .Return to Belfast for dinner and overnight.



The Glens of Antrim

## **DAY 6. June 24th**

Early departure to Ulster American FolkPark near Omagh . Cross into Donegal along the coast to Ardara and visit one of Ireland's famous tweed and knitwear stores: here you can also see a demonstration of hand looming. Move along to County Sligo and stop at Drumcliffe Churchyard and view the grave of William Butler Yeats, Ireland's famous poet. Batt will recite a few of his well known poems. Dinner and overnight in Sligo.

## **Day 7. June 25th**

Continue south through County Mayo and arrive in Galway City often referred to as the City of The Tribes. There will be a quick bus tour of this very vibrant city with narrow quaint streets, lively pubs and interesting craft shops. You will hear Gaelic spoken here for it is the gateway to Connemara.

Galway pubs are famous for traditional music, good drink and great company. Your city centre accommodation puts you in a position to enjoy all three!!

## **Day 8. June 26th**

At 9.00 a.m. take a short tour of the Gaelic-speaking Connemara along the northern coast of Galway Bay. Go cross country to Maam Cross and Moycullen village where a unique showroom displays some exquisite Irish designs worked on to crystal glass. Mary Munnely has exhibited her glass in many parts of the USA and has won major international awards. A skilled craftsman will give a demonstration. This particular product is not available anywhere else in Ireland.

[www.connemara.celticcrystal.com](http://www.connemara.celticcrystal.com)

Return to Galway for dinner at 6.30 p.m. and overnight in the same hotel.



Connemara

### Day 9. June 27th



Cliffs of Moher

Leave Galway at 8.30 a.m. and travel to The Burren in County Clare, a one hundred square mile of lunar-like limestone landscape with rare species of Arctic and Lusitanian flora. Stop off for a short while to walk the limestone pavements before moving on to The Cliffs of Moher which rise 600 feet up from the Atlantic Ocean.



View from Sneem Hotel

Drive on to Limerick City and the pretty village of Adare, where lunch will be provided for you at the lovely Woodlands Restaurant. Move along over the Limerick/Kerry border to Killarney and complete your journey to the colourful village of Sneem which won the award for the best-kept village in Ireland some years ago. Here for three nights you will sample life in a remote rural village at the foothills of The Macgillycuddy Reeks on the famous Ring of Kerry. Batt will be delighted to welcome you to his native village. Dinner at 7.00 p.m. and overnight in the new Sneem Hotel beautifully located on the estuary of Sneem River.



Sneem Village

## Day 10. June 28th



After a hectic eight days of travel it is time to relax and unwind for a day. Have a leisurely breakfast, after which Batt will give a short talk at 9.30 a.m. on the " The Stories and Folklore of The Sneem Area" in the meeting room of the hotel Later, a traditional musician will share some of his background and music and will teach the group a traditional dance.

Batt will lead a walk around the colourful village, which has some interesting pieces of public art, and people are then free. You might like to take one of the hikes close to the village, shop a little, play a round of golf at nearby Parknasilla or visit one the local art galleries.

### Possible Change

If you wish to do the Dingle Peninsula instead of taking a day off in Sneem it is quite possible on this day.

Dinner and overnight in Sneem Hotel.



Eagles Nest Killarney, Ring of Kerry

**Day 11. June 29th.**

Leave for a tour of the famous Ring of Kerry which includes the beautiful Killarney National Park, where an ancient breed of Red Deer still roams. This is a botanist's Paradise with rare species of fern and wild flowers. Visit the grounds and gardens of beautiful Muckross House. You will have the options of touring the house, taking a jaunting car (horse and buggy) ride into the Killarney National Park or simply enjoying the lovely gardens. The group will continue through Killorglin and Glenbeigh and enjoy great views of Dingle Bay. Batt will share the folklore of the Iveragh Peninsula as you head towards Coomakista Pass and Derrynane Bay. Dinner in a village restaurant and overnight in the Sneem Hotel. Tonight Batt will host a traditional evening of music, song and dance in one of the village pubs. Top class entertainers will be invited in to perform and a group of village set dancers will dance an ancient Sneem Set Dance. Many villagers will join in the fun and you will have an opportunity to chat with them. *(Full Irish*

## Day 12 . June 30th

Travel over the Cork/Kerry border to Blarney Castle with its famous Blarney Stone. We will have ample time here to rest, kiss the Blarney Stone if you so wish, and to shop in the extensive Blarney Woollen Mills which houses gifts and crafts from throughout Ireland. After lunch we visit the Rock of Cashel, one of Ireland's most important ancient religious sites and a spot where St. Patrick preached. This massive limestone outcrop, which dominates the Tipperary countryside, was originally the seat of the kings of Munster but later it was handed over to the Church in the 10<sup>th</sup> century. You will see a perfectly preserved Round Tower, the magnificent Cormac's Chapel (1127), the 14<sup>th</sup> century ruined cathedral, the bishop's residence and the well-restored Vicar's Choral. **Travel through the Irish Midlands. Dinner and**



**overnight in Dublin.**

## Day 13. July 1st

Transfer to Dublin Airport for return flight home