

7 DAY VAGABOND EPIC IRISH FOOD ADVENTURE TOUR

Sample Itinerary

From meat and spuds to Michelin stars; 19th century famine disaster to 21st century social gastronomy; the story of Irish food is a winding road.

On this tour you're going to experience every twist and turn. Taste the magnificent fresh produce bestowed on Ireland by our mild climate, rich soil and clean oceans. Meet our most innovative producers and chefs. See where the future is taking us, with a focus on terroir, seasonality and sustainability at every stop.

Warning: This is no sleepy food demo. You'll be doing it the Vagabond way, with fast-paced adventure and fun baked-in.

All of our tours are flexible, and your Irish Food Adventure is no different. We've included unmissable activities in the price. Where there are great options, we've left the final decision up to you. Feel free to choose your evening meals and some lunches. All additional tour options are marked clearly below.

Our Sales and Reservation team can advise you further on any aspect of the tour. Email Ciara directly at ciara@vagabond.ie

HIGHLIGHTS

- Learn the secrets of the ocean's superfood on a seaweed foraging trip by kayak.
- Meet Ireland's original female craft brewer at her 100 year old Dingle pub.
- Forage for fairy potatoes, smell Irish coconut and taste the truffle of the sea.
- Feast like lords and ladies with a night in a characterful Irish castle hotel.
- Use Irish oak to hot and cold smoke salmon in the beautiful Burren region.
- Taste Ireland's original farmhouse cheese on the remoo-te Beara peninsula.
- Sample Irish wildflower honeys and the nectar of the gods at Ireland's finest meadery.
- Experience Clare, Kerry, Cork and Kinsale, the vibrant communities at the heart of Ireland's food renaissance.
- Toast your food odyssey with a wild-brewed, off the beaten track Irish coffee!

DAY 1 – DUBLIN TO CLARE

Your food adventure awaits...

Meet your guide and fellow Vagabonds at reception of the Grand Canal Hotel, Dublin at 8.10am. Board your 4x4 Vagatron and hit the road!

We're aiming for the heart of the Wild Atlantic Way, on the very western edge of Europe.

Get into shellfish! Pull up a stool, grab a glass of wine and greet Gerry, your guide for an unforgettable, all-you-can-shuck session on the spectacular Flaggy Shore.

From Gerry's door, it's a matter of footsteps to Linnane's Lobster Bar, where the seafood couldn't be fresher. Eat your lunch beside the dock where it was landed. Recommended food pairing: a pint of creamy Guinness!

Next, we head inland. The Burren's lunar limestone landscape is bewitchingly beautiful. Ranks of dry stone walls merge with monumental dolmens. Alpine and arctic flora grow in unison. Tolkien reputedly found inspiration here for Middle Earth.

Craft beer nut? Mad for cocktails? Foodie Ennistimon is our next stop, to Pot Duggans - the McKenna Guide's Irish pub of the year 2018. Experience the fruits of a 21st century revolution in brewing and distilling while you soak up the riverside charm of Ireland's best beer garden.

Your accommodation and dining tonight are at the cliffside Armada hotel in Spanish Point.

In a single sitting, your supper will introduce you to multiple local food heroes; Birgitta from The Burren Smokehouse; Siobhán and her St Tola's Goat's Cheese; Evan and Ger's Wild Irish Sea Vegetables, to name but a few.

After dinner, sample *uisce beatha* with a fine Irish whiskey tasting (Tour Option - €20 per person).

The average driving time today is 4 hours.

Questions? Get in touch with Ciara: ciara@vagabond.ie

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DAY 2 – CLARE TO BALLYSEEDE

Through the gates of the kingdom

Hold onto your hat! It's the world famous Cliffs of Moher.

Of course we're doing things the Vagabond way, hiking the coast, avoiding the crowds and sampling foraged foods with local guru Oonagh O'Dwyer as we go.

Next, we'll zip to Lisdoonvarna. After lunch at Kieran's Kitchen, smoke and taste salmon with Birgitta before meeting her characterful husband; Peter, born in the room above the bar at his Roadside Tavern, is a genuine Clare character. Strap yourself in for tales of Bram Stoker, brewing and, well, who knows what else...

Watch out for low-flying dolphins this afternoon, as we take a ferry across the mighty mouth of the Shannon - the longest river in Ireland or Britain.

Mr. Higgins, resident Irish wolfhound, is here to greet you as we roll into the elegant grounds of Ballyseede Castle Hotel.

This evening, taste the Wild Atlantic Way at the O'Connell Restaurant. Delicacies such as Dingle Bay crab, Kerry lamb, and locally-landed hake are on the menu.

The average driving time today is 3 hours 30 minutes.

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DAY 3 – BALLYSEEDE TO KENMARE

Discovering Dingle

After a delectable Ballyseede breakfast, board the VagaTron to explore the stunning Dingle peninsula.

Revel in a wealth of lunch options. Wander Dingle's charming streets to explore this bustling little town. There's a pub for every 40 residents! Our VagaGuides have voted Chewy Burger food truck one of their favourites. Fish lover? The sustainably-sourced fish and chips from Reel Dingle Fish is hard to beat.

Get ready! After lunch, you'll experience one of the most beautiful drives in Ireland. Rugged beauty and knife edge drops are guaranteed on the way around Sleat Head, one of Europe's westernmost points.

Meet the first female craft brewer in Ireland at the West Kerry Brewery. Watch as fourth generation publican Adrienne draws water from St Brendan's well, then mixes yeast and local botanicals to create a uniquely unfiltered, unpasteurised beer. Hand-pumped from casks, the glorious end product awaits you next door at Tig Bhric, Adrienne's century-old pub.

Dining tonight is in the lively town of Kenmare. We've done the tough work of choosing a dinner spot for you - select from a shortlist of our favourite dining spots.

Your accommodation is at the centrally-located Coachmans Townhouse in Kenmare.

The average driving time today is 3 hours 30 minutes.

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DAY 4 – KENMARE TO WEST CORK

Wild, local and rugged

This morning, we'll climb the Cahah Pass to meet Benoît, chocolatier *par excellence*, for a short and sweet tasting of his confections.

Next, we're bound for the Beara. This peninsula is truly off the beaten track. Expect rugged roads, superb scenery and livestock-induced traffic jams a-plenty.

Cows that graze on wild mountain pastures provide the raw materials for Milleens - Ireland's original farmhouse cheese. That's where we're headed now, to meet cheesemaker Quinlan Steele. Time allowing, we'll hike to a top secret Vagabond spot by the ocean.

There's one more drive today, a coastal ride that snakes along Bantry Bay before cutting inland.

Arriving in the remote, mountainous valley of Gougane Barra, you'll be welcomed to the Gougane Barra Hotel by your hosts Neil and Katy in Irish - this is part of the *Gaeltacht* Irish speaking area, after all.

Savour a special Gougane Barra menu this evening, dotted with local delights. Taste Durrus and Cashel Blue cheeses; smoked and cured Gubbeen bacon; Clonakilty black pudding; fresh fish landed at the local fishing port of Unionhall.

Rest easy tonight in the knowledge that you're sleeping on the site selected by Saint Finbarr for his 6th century chapel.

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DAY 5 – WEST CORK

A place apart...

This morning we'll dash to the coast for a tour highlight: seaweed foraging by kayak. Learn how to identify, forage and use this wild superfood as you glide through West Cork's glittering waters.

Slipping out of your wetsuits and back into the VagaTron saddle, we'll head a wee short way inland for an ocean-themed lunch.

Time to meet Bronze Age celebrity chefs! Drombeg is an almost completely intact prehistoric monument on a wild headland. Did pagans dance around its stone circle? Was it cooks or brewers using its *fulacht fia* pit oven? The possibilities are endless...

Seafood fans rejoice. We're sticking to the gorgeous West Cork coastline to arrive in the picture perfect town of Kinsale. Enjoy a local menu of vibrant restaurants, atmospheric pubs and abundant craft shops in the gourmet capital of Ireland.

Your accommodation is at either the Blue Haven or Actons Hotel in Kinsale.

You're spoilt for choice in this secret foodie haven so we've run down our favourite spots to eat. Bastion recently won a Michelin Bib Gourmand. Black Pig is the trendsetter in town, while Fishy Fishy is the old faithful. Even the pub grub would outdo the menus of most mortal restaurants!

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DAY 6 – KINSALE

A delicious day in Ireland's food capital

Today is yours to design. Try a mix of amazing food and culture experiences. Or kick back, relax, and just wander Kinsale's colourful, winding streets.

Taste the nectar of the gods, with a guided tour of Kinsale Mead Company (Tour Option - €12 per person). Mead is the world's oldest form of alcohol. Dive into its rich history, learn about bees, taste Irish honey and understand the unique flavour profiles of modern mead on this fun-filled tour.

Perfect your skills and learn exciting Irish recipes during a hands-on cooking session with chef David Rice (Tour Option - €99). Kinsale Gourmet Academy is located on the grounds of stately Ballinacurra House.

Savour authentic, locally-brewed craft beer and spirits on a tour of Black's Brewery and Distillery (Tour Option - €12 per person). Meet husband and wife team Sam and Maudeline, masterminds of boutique booze: *poitin* moonshine, gin distilled using local heather flowers, Ireland's only rum, as well as their award-winning range of beers.

History buff? Imagine bloody battles of the past with a self-guided tour of the dramatic, star-shaped Charles Fort (Tour Option - €5 per person). Maybe, just maybe, we'll hike there, stopping in for a swift pint in one of the characterful pubs we meet along the way.

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DAY 7 – KINSALE TO DUBLIN

One for the road...

Before we say goodbye, there's still time to pack in some of Ireland's best grub.

Kickstart your final morning with a foodie walking tour of Cork City. You'll experience the famous English Market, sampled local delicacy *drisheen*, and discovered why Cork sits firmly at the epicentre of Ireland's evolving food story.

Afternoon tea is on the menu amid the elegance of 18th century Castle Durrrow. Refresh yourself with black tea, buttered scones, and fresh sandwiches; all served up with a slice of times past. Mixing history and food, savoury and sweet; it's a fitting end to your Irish food journey.

Heading north, you'll disembark your VagaTron back at the Grand Canal Hotel in Dublin between 5-6pm.

Farewell hugs all round for your new foodie friends.

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TOUR PRICE: EURO €1,999 (PER PERSON SHARING)

Single supplement: EURO €315

What's Included?

- ✓ All-You-Can-Shuck Oyster Experience
- ✓ Pot Duggans Beer/Whiskey/Cocktail Tasting
- ✓ Foraging with Oonagh
- ✓ Burren Smokehouse/Roadside Tavern Tour
- ✓ West Kerry Brewery Tour
- ✓ Lorge Chocolate Tasting
- ✓ Atlantic Seaweed Kayaking
- ✓ Afternoon Tea at Castle Durrow

- ✓ A journey of discovery in a 4x4 rugged Mercedes Benz VagaTron mini-coach

- ✓ The services of a highly-trained and professional VagaGuide

- ✓ 7 full days on tour

- ✓ 6 nights' accommodation

- ✓ 6 delicious and filling hot Irish breakfasts (see lunch and dinner Tour Options below)

- ✓ Most daily activities and visits (see Tour Options below for extras)

- ✓ Shannon ferry tickets

- ✓ All relevant taxes

- ✓ Guaranteed tour departure and price from the moment you make your deposit

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TOUR OPTIONS

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Feel free to choose your evening meals and some lunches - we'll recommend the very best insider spots in foodie towns such as Dingle, Kenmare and Kinsale - you can't go wrong!

All additional tour options are marked clearly below. Your guide will discuss options with you throughout your tour and plan accordingly.

Details	Cost pp
Armada Whiskey Tasting	€20
Charles Fort, Kinsale	€5
Black's Brewery Tour and Beer Tasting	€12
Kinsale Mead Company Tour	€12
Kinsale Gourmet Academy	€99

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