

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.

Note: this is no ordinary food tour. We're doing things the Vagabond way, with fast-paced adventure and fun baked in, as well as plenty of time to breathe and reflect.

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 unique sea kayaking trip to forage Atlantic seaweed. Identify and harvest, then dine on your finds!
- Meet Ireland's original female craft brewer at her family's remote, 100 year old pub on the Dingle peninsula.
- Feast like lords and ladies with a fantastic night of local food and elegant accommodation in a genuine Irish castle hotel.
- Explore Ireland's hidden foodie haven, Kinsale, with two nights to try out the very best of seafood, pub grub and craic.
- Taste the nectar of the gods and grasp the importance of bees to our wider food system, with a guided tour of Ireland's only meadery.
- Experience a walking food tour of Cork, the vibrant city at the heart of Ireland's food renaissance.
- Toast your food odyssey with an Irish coffee like no other - brewed on the beach with the waves crashing around you.

DAY 1 – DUBLIN TO CLARE

Your food adventure awaits...

Meet your guide and fellow Vagabonds at reception of the Grand Canal Hotel, Dublin at 8.30am. 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 inside shellfish! Pull up a stool, grab a glass of wine and greet Gerry the oyster guru for an all-you-can-shuck session on the spectacular Flagggy Shore.

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

Next, we head inland. The Burren's lunar limestone landscape bewitches with a weird beauty. Ranks of dry stone walls stretch over the horizon. Alpine and arctic flora grow in unison. And the archaeological treasures here are older than the pyramids.

Spanish Point is our next stop. Take a trip into Irish whiskey at the stunningly-located Armada Hotel. Dive into the history of Ireland's national spirit, learn how to taste, and sample some favourites.

Your accommodation and dining tonight are also at the Armada. 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.

The average driving time today is 4 hours.

Questions? Get in touch with Megan: 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, arriving with an awe-inspiring, coast-hugging hike.

Try not to be charmed by The Little Fox, a diminutive bistro with big ideas. Meet proprietor and food champion, Niamh Fox, who will talk you through her lunch menu.

Fancy a wander? Ennistymon is worth a postprandial stroll. Pot Duggan's is no ordinary Irish pub, mixing turf-scented olde worlde charm with an artisanal edge. Unglert's Bakery serves up excellent strudels and sourdough.

Next, we'll tour nearby Moyhill. Learn how a group of local surfers are transforming this parcel of the Wild Atlantic Way into a haven for heritage Irish fruit, vegetables and seed varieties.

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.

Tuck into a special meal of fantastic locally sourced food at the elegant Ballyseede Castle Hotel. Afterwards, unwind at the bar, explore the beautiful gardens or meet Mr. Higgins, the resident Irish wolfhound.

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 all-island favourites. The fish and chips from Reel Dingle Fish are also 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, Europe's westernmost point.

Meet the first female craft brewer in Ireland at the West Kerry Brewery. 4th generation publican Adrienne will show you how she draws water from nearby St Brendan's well, adds yeast and local botanicals to create a uniquely unfiltered, unpasteurised beer. Taste it in next door *Tig Bhric*, a century-old, family-owned pub with hand-pumped casks.

Your VagaGuide will take the 4x4 VagaTron down onto the golden expanse of Inch Strand. There may even be a surprise up his/her sleeve for coffee lovers.

Dining tonight is in the lively town of Kenmare. Your VagaGuide will recommend 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 Caha 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. Time allowing, we'll hike to a top secret Vagabond spot by the ocean.

Meet Dexter... The smallest European cattle breed is only the start of the story at a hillside organic farm near Glengariff. Andrew, from local gourmet food outlet Mannings Emporium, is your guide for a farm tour with a difference. We'll hike the land, meet the farmer and try some tasty aperitifs.

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 menu dotted with local delights. Taste Durrus and Cashel Blue cheeses; smoked and cured Gubbeen bacon; Clonakilty black pudding; fresh fish from Unionhall; and the star of the show: grass-fed, organic Dexter beef from your earlier farm visit.

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

The average driving time today is 3 hours.

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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 faster than James Bond, we'll zoom back to the small fishing port of Unionhall for an ocean-themed lunch.

One of our favourite pastimes is dancing around stone circles. Now you can join in, at Drombeg, an intact Bronze Age monument where mysterious pagan rituals may or may not have happened (use your imagination!). Nearby, we'll see an example of a *fulacht fia*, where prehistoric celebrity chefs cooked supper and brewed beer.

Seafood fans rejoice! We're sticking to the coast, to explore 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.

The average driving time today is 3 hours.

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DAY 6 – KINSALE

Delicious day in the foodie capital

Today is yours to design. We have a host of amazing food and culture experiences to try out. Or kick back, relax, and just wander Kinsale's colourful, winding streets in an evocative maritime setting.

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.

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.

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). Weather allowing, we'll hike out along Kinsale's harbour edge, stopping for the odd photo and - maybe, just maybe - a swift pint in one of the characterful Irish pubs we meet along the way.

You're spoilt for choice at mealtimes in Kinsale. Bastion recently won a Michelin Bib Gourmand. Black Pig is the trendsetter in town, while Fishy Fishy is the old faithful. The pub grub at The Bullman, close to Charles Fort, would outdo the menus of most mortal restaurants. Even the fish and chip vans are great!

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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 an unforgettable walking tour of Cork City. Before you depart the *real* capital of Ireland, you'll have experienced the famous English Market, tasted local tripe delicacy *drisheen*, and discovered why Cork sits firmly at the epicentre of Ireland's evolving food story.

Heading north, afternoon tea is on the menu amid the elegant setting of 18th century Castle Durrrow. Refresh yourself with fresh scones, sandwiches and pastries, served with a pot of traditional Irish black tea. While you dine, learn about the Protestant Ascendancy, the 'Big House' system and their domination of Irish rural life for centuries. Mixing history and food, savoury and sweet; it's a fitting end to our Irish food odyssey.

Last stop! We'll climb the dramatic Rock of Dunamase to kiss Ireland's rolling green landscape goodbye in style. The story of all food is a tale of invasions and, later, fusion. This spectacularly-sited hilltop castle has had lots of visitors, some more welcome than others; Viking, Norman and Cromwellian.

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?

- ✓ Included experiences: all-you-can-shuck oysters, Armada whiskey tasting, West Kerry Brewery tour, Moyhill Farm tour, Lorge chocolate tasting, Dexter Farm tour, Atlantic seaweed kayaking, Cork city food walking tour and 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
- ✓ 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
- ✓ Loads of laughs and fun along the way!

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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
Charles Fort, Kinsale	€5
Black's Brewery Tour and Beer Tasting	€12
Kinsale Mead Company Tour	€12

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