



 Self-guided tour

 Bike tour

 280-380 km

 **Hard**

Duration: 7 days / 6 nights



DESCRIPTION

Discover the real Connemara with this 7-day cycling tour, designed for those who want to fully immerse themselves in this enchanting Irish region. Follow longer routes on quiet roads through mountain passes, hidden valleys, and rugged coastlines along the edge of the Atlantic Ocean. Challenge yourself to explore more, covering greater distances each day, and discover off-the-beaten-track itineraries that reveal the wild, unspoiled beauty of Connemara. Visit picturesque towns and charming villages, where each evening you can experience the true Irish spirit with music, stories, and a welcoming atmosphere in local pubs. The tour includes a stop in the historic village of Cong, famous for being the filming location of *The Quiet Man*. Relax with the authentic hospitality of Connemara in charming family-run hotels and guesthouses. This tour is aimed at more experienced cyclists who want to explore Connemara in depth, cycling an average of 70 km per day, with the option to choose shorter or longer routes according to your preferences. The tour starts and ends in the village of Leenane, County Galway.

BY BICYCLE IN THE HIDDEN HEART OF CONNEMARA

DETAILED ROUTES

Day 1: Arrival in Leenane

The starting point of your tour is the picturesque village of Leenane, nestled among the Maamturk Mountains at the head of the Killary Fjord. Despite its small size, there is always a lively atmosphere of conversation and cheer in the village's two pubs, along with a selection of restaurants serving excellent dishes made with local ingredients.

Your bike and equipment will be ready at your accommodation, giving you the opportunity to try everything out and ensure it's perfect before your cycling adventure begins the following morning.

Day 2: Leenane – Westport (approximately 60 km)

After a hearty Irish breakfast, today's route takes you from Leenane along the shores of Killary Fjord to the Aasleagh Falls and the stunning Delphi Valley, once densely populated, now deserted and empty. You will reach the Doolough Valley (the valley of the dark, deep lake). At the northern end of the valley, right next to the road, there is a memorial to the victims of the Great Irish Famine, which deeply affected this area.

The route continues along the winding road to Louisburgh. This charming 18th-century coastal town offers some of Ireland's most spectacular panoramic views, with mountains to the east and south and the Atlantic Ocean to the west and north. Continue along the coastal road, along the shores of Clew Bay, dotted with islands, with Ireland's holy mountain, Croagh Patrick, as a backdrop, stopping to visit the 14th-century Murrisk Abbey.

You will arrive in the heritage town of Westport, where you will spend the next two nights and enjoy a wide choice of restaurants, entertainment, and activities. This lively market town is a delightful mix of tradition and modernity and has been voted the best place to live in Ireland.

Day 3: Westport – Croagh Patrick – Great Western Greenway (approximately 43 km; option to extend up to 87 km)

Today you will explore the Westport area with a choice of activities and cycling routes available. For a more relaxing morning, visit Westport House, the ancestral home and estate of the Marquis of Sligo, and do some shopping in the many local craft shops in Westport town centre.

Alternatively, challenge yourself and climb Croagh Patrick. This site of ancient history and archaeological heritage has been a pilgrimage route since pre-Christian times, and at its summit sits a small chapel dedicated to Ireland's patron saint, St. Patrick, who is said to have fasted on its peak for forty days. It is a demanding hike, but the breathtaking views make it truly rewarding and a real highlight of your tour.

Another option is to follow the award-winning Great Western Greenway – a 42 km (26 miles) route through farmland and coastal landscapes, following the track of the old Westport-Achill railway line. This trail was voted one of the top three cycling paths in the world by the *New York Times*. You will pass through the picturesque towns and villages of Newport and Mulranny before reaching Achill Island, the location of the award-winning film *The Banshees of Inisherin*.

After your day of adventures, enjoy another evening exploring Westport, making sure not to miss some live traditional Irish music in one of its many pubs.

Day 4: Westport – Cong

(approximately 60 km)

After breakfast, you will leave Westport for the next stage of your tour. This is a long and wonderful cycling route

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along winding country roads, through farming villages and rolling hills, passing by stone walls and trout-filled lakes. Your itinerary will take you through Aghagower, Tourmakeady, Lough Mask, Finny, Clonbur, and finally to Cong, where you will spend the night.

This picturesque village became famous thanks to another Oscar-winning film, John Ford's 1952 *The Quiet Man*, and is home to the renowned Ashford Castle Hotel. It also boasts several notable historic sites, including a 14th-century stone cross with inscriptions and the ruins of Ashford Abbey, founded in 1128.

Cong is a lively village that attracts visitors from around the world. Its craft shops, cafés, welcoming pubs, and winding streets make it a delightful place to stroll and soak up its vibrant atmosphere. Here you will find the best of traditional and contemporary cuisine in its restaurants, as well as live music in many of its pubs.

Day 5: Cong – Leenane

(approximately 65 km; extendable up to 90 km)

Today you will cycle south from Cong along the shores of Lough Corrib, Ireland's largest lake, renowned for fishing and boating. At the end of the lake, you will reach the small village of Maam, where you will cross a mountain pass to arrive at Maam Cross. Surrounded by hills and deep valleys, this is a perfect place to stop and simply enjoy the scenery.

Your route will take you through the peaceful Inagh Valley along the shores of Lough Inagh, one of the most spectacular lakes in Connemara, surrounded by the majestic Maamturk and Twelve Bens mountains. Here, you can choose to explore the Mám Éan Geotrail. This fascinating trail through an ancient mountain pass explores the geological links between western Ireland and northeastern America, which were once connected before being separated by the Atlantic Ocean 100 million years ago!

Your cycling route ends today in the village of Leenane, where you will stay for the next two nights.

Day 6: Renvyle – Kylemore – Connemara National Park

(approximately 50 km; extendable up to 80 km)

Today you will cycle west from Leenane along the Killary Fjord, in the heart of Connemara. This spectacular journey takes you past the famous Kylemore Abbey and its gardens. This Gothic-style castle, located by the lake, has a long and fascinating history. Built in 1867, it features one of the most beautiful walled Victorian gardens in Ireland.

Nearby in Letterfrack, you will find the magnificent Connemara National Park, where you can take a walk on the looped trails with breathtaking views of the Atlantic and surrounding islands, or stop for a coffee and learn more about this ancient Irish landscape at its charming visitor centre.

Take a detour through the picturesque village of Tullycross, with its traditional thatched cottages, before reaching the Renvyle Peninsula, a charming and rugged promontory extending into the Atlantic Ocean. This area is dotted with archaeological sites, historic ruins, and hidden beaches, and is home to a vibrant and welcoming community of farmers and fishermen. Alternatively, you can choose a longer route and cycle further south to the fishing village of Cleggan and Streamstown Bay (for an 80 km route).

Enjoy the last night of your tour back in Leenane, with a refreshing Guinness in one of the village's traditional pubs!

Day 7: Departure from Leenane

After breakfast, your tour comes to an end, and it's time to continue your journey, taking with you the unforgettable memories of Ireland. "*Slán go fóill!*" – see you soon!

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GENERAL INFORMATION

- **Classification:** Self-guided tour
- **Duration:** 7 days / 6 nights
- **Distance:** ca. 280-380 km
- **Starting point:** Leenane
- **Arrival:**

By plane: Direct flights from many Italian cities (Rome, Milan, Venice, Bologna, etc.) are available to Dublin or Shannon (flight time approximately 2.5–3 hours).

By car + ferry: Drive to Calais (France) or Dunkirk, then take a ferry to Dublin or Cork.

By train + ferry: Take a train to Paris, then a train to Calais, and then a ferry to Ireland. The total journey may take 15–20 hours depending on connections.

Getting to Leenane: You will be picked up at Maam Cross, Co. Galway, and transported to Leenane to start your tour. To reach this point:

From Dublin: travel to Galway and take a connecting bus to Maam Cross. The easiest way is to take a direct bus from Dublin Airport to Galway (travel time approximately 2.5 hours). Timetables are available on Citylink or GoBus. Alternatively, there are regular trains from Dublin Heuston to Galway (travel time approximately 2.5 hours). From Dublin Airport, take the Airlink bus or a taxi to Heuston Station (travel time approximately 45 minutes).

From Galway: there are bus services from Galway city via Maam Cross to Clifden (travel time approximately 50 minutes). Timetables are available on Citylink or Bus Éireann. We will pick you up at the Maam Cross bus stop and transfer you to Leenane. Please confirm your estimated arrival time at Maam Cross at least 30 days before your arrival.

From Westport: there are bus services from Westport via Leenane to Clifden. Timetables are available on Citylink or Bus Éireann. Please note that services are limited. You can also book a taxi from Westport to Leenane (travel time approximately 45 minutes).

Private transfer: a private transfer to Leenane can also be arranged. Contact us for options and prices.

- **Accommodation:**

Accommodation: in 3*** hotels, B&Bs, or guesthouses.

Note: Any local tourist tax must be paid directly on site.

- **Rental bikes:**

- Muscle bike (already included in the package)
- E-Bike (surcharge of €125 per bike)

Each bicycle is equipped with a water bottle holder, a small handlebar bag with repair kit, and a luggage rack.

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INCLUDED SERVICES

- 6 nights in a double room with bathroom/shower and WC
- Breakfast
- Bicycle rental: Touring bike
- Bicycle equipment: helmet, handlebar bag, repair kit, lock
- Luggage transport from hotel to hotel
- Well-prepared route
- Mobile app to download before departure (informational material, vouchers, itinerary in English)
- English-speaking phone support service for the duration of the trip

Participants in a self-guided cycling program are expected to have a general knowledge of bicycle handling, i.e., how to change gears, brake correctly, replace a broken chain, repair a puncture, or change an inner tube in case of a flat tire. Any request for assistance with minor issues (e.g., puncture) will incur a charge of €70. This charge also applies to unscheduled transfers. Breakdown coverage is included in your package only in the event of a major bicycle failure, such as broken spokes. Assistance will reach you within 1-2 hours.

NON INCLUDED SERVICES

- Arrival at the starting point of the trip
- Meals, drinks, and all other extras
- Entrance fees not specified
- E-Bike rental
- Public transportation
- Printed itinerary and welcome briefing (available on request for an additional booking fee [not per person] of €125)
- Insurance
- Anything not explicitly listed under "The price includes"

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trekking bike incl. (Connemara)	0 €
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Elektrorad Aufpreis (Connemara)7/6	125 €
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