

Everything You Need to Know About CIE Tours' Irish Adventure

by [Sarah Milner](#) April 16, 2025



Blarney Castle, on CIE Tours' Irish Adventure. Photo: Sarah Milner

CIE Tours has been planning vacations for 90 years. The tour operator was founded in Ireland in 1932, and even after all that time, it is still evolving. This year, [CIE Tours launched its first Spain itineraries](#), and in an interview with *TMR*, [Chief Commercial Officer Rosanne Zusman](#) revealed walking and hiking tours are coming in 2026.

Still, CIE Tours' bread-and-butter is the classic coach tours. Across its portfolio, 80% of bookings are for classic coach tours, and approximately 75% of its total business comes in through travel advisors.

CIE Tours invited *TMR* to experience its Irish Adventure tour, a seven-night itinerary that covers the entire country, including Northern Ireland. It's the tour operator's second most popular tour in the country. (Taste of Ireland, available in five- to seven-day itineraries, is first, while the eight- or nine-day Irish Gold is third.)

In many ways, Irish Adventure is a quintessential CIE Tours product, combining elegant and charming accommodations with authentic cultural experiences (including delicious, hearty meals). CIE Tours is the leading tour operator in the Republic of Ireland, and their expertise shows in the quality of their product.

Irish Adventure: Details, Highlights, and More



Blarney Castle & Gardens. Photo: Sarah Milner

Although available as a small group, Irish Adventure is a classic coach tour with group sizes up to 44 (average is 35). The coach bus is very comfortable, with plenty of storage space as well as Wi-Fi and USB chargers. There is also a bathroom for emergencies, but guests are discouraged from using it (there are ample "comfort stops" along the way).

Prices range from \$2,795 to \$4,145 during peak season (per person). This fee is all-inclusive in that there are no extra fees for “add-on” experiences, and most meals are built into the package price. Additional transportation (airport shuttle, ferry ride) is also built into the price.

The journey begins in Dublin, with a city tour and whiskey tasting at Teeling Distillery. The trip heads south from there, with stops in Glendalough, Waterford, and Killarney, before heading up to the Cliffs of Moher, Galway, and Derry, then ending in Dublin.

Highlights include: Blarney Castle and Gardens, St. Kevin’s monastic site, the Titanic Belfast museum, and Giant’s Causeway. Guests will also enjoy cultural experiences like watching a sheepdog demonstration, learning how wool is made on a traditional loom, and listening to local Irish folk music.

The CIE Tours Difference Is Real



St. Kevin's Kitchen, Glendalough. Photo: Sarah Milner

The suppliers that work with CIE Tours (many of which are independent, family-run establishments) go above and beyond to deliver exceptional service. Throughout the trip, there were perks for being a part of the tour group, like special access to St. Kevin's Kitchen in Glendalough or being allowed to skip the line to enter Blarney Castle & Gardens.

Clayton Hotel Cardiff Lane in Dublin will check in CIE Tours customers when they arrive, if possible. *TMR* arrived at 6:00 a.m. local time and we were able to get into the room—without any extra fee. Every single person on our tour was able to check in on arrival, regardless of how early their flight landed.

The tour directors are incentivized to make the experience as stress-free and enjoyable as possible. Along with making thoughtful dining and shopping recommendations, our tour director, Murt, was constantly going above and beyond for the guests—even tracing out our route on a map as a souvenir for one of our group.

CIE Tours Guests Get A Welcome Pack



The CIE Tours backpack & accessories.

A month or so before departure, CIE Tours mails out a welcome pack to guests. This includes a backpack filled with useful items for the trip: luggage tags, a luggage strap, a travel adapter (not a converter), a water bottle, and a rain poncho.

The backpack also includes a name tag and booklets of helpful information for the destination. It's a personal touch that helps build excitement before the trip—and practically speaking, the luggage tags and strap help the tour director identify what bags belong on the CIE Tours bus.

Irish Adventure Is Excellent Value for Your Clients



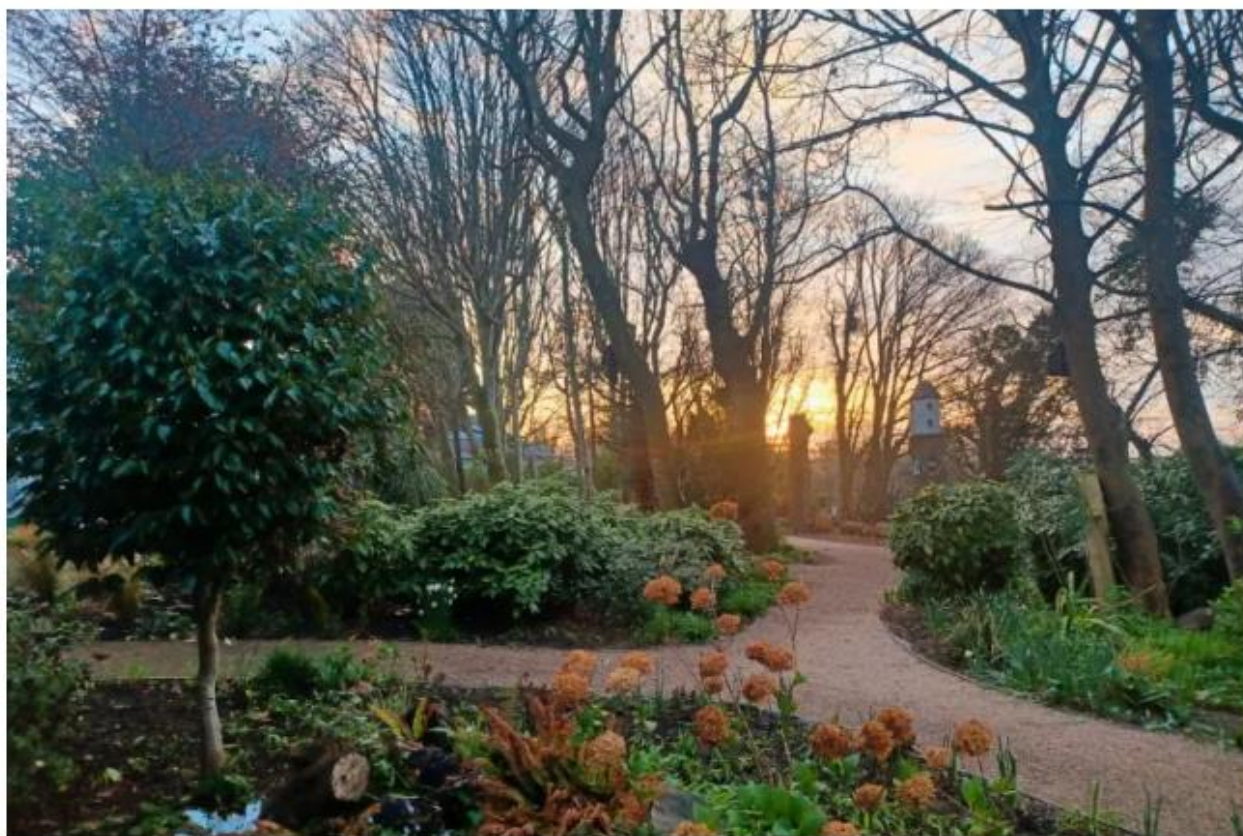
The CIE Tours coach bus. Photo: Sarah Milner

It's always interesting to see what kinds of travellers are attracted to a particular trip. On this itinerary, *TMR* met people from all walks of life—from a retired elderly couple checking off a bucket list trip, to a woman celebrating her 40th birthday, to a State Supreme Court judge just enjoying some time off with his university professor wife.

Irish Adventure is an attractive option for many because of its value. Of the company's three most popular Ireland tours, Irish Adventure is the only one that includes Northern Ireland. The itinerary features several bucket-list experiences, like kissing the Blarney stone, stepping foot on the iconic rocks at the Giant's Causeway, and driving the Ring of Kerry.

Unlike some other tour operators, CIE Tours includes most meals. A full Irish breakfast is provided every morning, followed by either a hearty lunch or a three-course dinner. All experiences are already included in the price—tour directors don't upsell optional excursions at CIE Tours.

Irish Adventure Requires Endurance: Early Starts & Late Dinners



Sunrise at the Ardilaun Hotel gardens in Galway. Photo: Sarah Milner

One of the main selling points of Irish Adventure is also its main drawback. The tour covers a lot of ground in just nine days.

Tracy Pfleging, a travel advisor for [NACTA Travel](#), told *TMR* she always recommends Irish Adventure to customers because, "You get the most bang for your buck."

However, Pfleging won't recommend this tour to older clients because of its pace, telling *TMR*, "If they're older, I don't recommend the Irish Adventure unless they start the conversation by saying, 'I am very active.'"

Tour Director O'Shea joked that the tour could be called "Irish Endurance."

On our tour, the days started early. Luggage often had to be placed outside the hotel room by 7:15 a.m. and the bus left as early as 8:00 a.m. some mornings. For those who want to spend their evenings enjoying Guinness at local pubs, the early starts could pose a problem.

There was also a strict schedule we needed to adhere to, which limited the time spent at each stop. Other than the free evening in Killarney, there aren't many opportunities to just explore the cities on one's own. And with so much packed into each day, dinner was often at 6:00 p.m. or later.

Pfleging told *TMR* she warns her clients about the structured nature of classic coach tours. If the budget allows, she'll suggest a custom or private driver itinerary instead.

"Sometimes people don't want to be told what time to get up, what time we have to be on the bus," she explained.

“All-Inclusive” But Clients Need Spending Money



Horse-drawn carriage in Killarney, Ireland. Photo: Sarah Milner

Although CIE Tours’ classic coach trips are “all-inclusive,” there will be additional costs that clients should be prepared for.

The first is additional snacks and meals. On most days, the tour director brought the group to specific restaurants for the optional lunches, and while we theoretically could have opted out, no one did. The meals ran between approximately 20 to 25 euros per person, not including drinks. (As a bonus, the optional lunches were some of the best meals on the trip.)

The second main additional cost is tips. Tipping is heavily encouraged on the Irish Adventure trip, and guests do need to have cash. CIE Tours includes information on tipping in its information booklet (included in the complimentary backpack) as well as [online](#).

The tour director may also recommend experiences; however, these are not upsells. The tour director does not make a commission. On our trip, O’Shea recommended a horse-drawn carriage ride, which was offered at a discounted rate of 12 euros per person, paid cash—less than half of what it would cost to get it independently (35 euros).

Irish Adventure Is Great for Groups (Not for Kids)



The CIE Tours group being led by a tour guide in Glendalough, Ireland. Photo: Sarah Milner

The Irish Adventure itinerary is a great choice for group bookings because it is so diverse. There's something for everyone: historical sites with cultural and religious significance, a whiskey distillery, shopping, museums, city tours, nature-based experiences, and even live entertainment. [CIE Tours does offer group discounts](#) for bookings with a minimum of 10 passengers.

During our trip, there was a large group (17 people) who had booked through Christian Tours. The agency brought their own tour guide who led devotionals and otherwise helped out.

Pfleging told *TMR* that in her experience, the shared tours are a great option for [family travel](#) as well, particularly when there's [Irish ancestry](#). However, this tour is (understandably) not a great fit for young children because of the long stretches of driving each day, and the adult nature of some experiences (namely the distillery and Waterford Crystal).

<https://www.travelmarketreport.com/destinations/articles/everything-you-need-to-know-about-cies-irish-adventure-tours>