

Return to the cradle of Celtic civilization and celebrate Samhain Halloween in Ireland with Ken O'Malley this year. We are adding some extra amazing sites, including Newgrange Passage Tomb over 5,200 years old and Dublin's "Dead Center", Glasnevin Cemetery, resting place of our heroes, writers, poets and celebrities, an intriguing tour...

Samhain Halloween is the pagan religious festival originating from an ancient Celtic spiritual tradition. In modern times, Samhain (a Gaelic word pronounced "sow-win") is usually celebrated from October 31 to November 1 to welcome in the harvest and usher in "the dark half of the year." Celebrants believe that the barriers between the physical world and the spirit world break down during Samhain, allowing more interaction between humans and denizens of the Other-world. The days when the veil between the dead, undead and the living was at its thinnest.

Around the 6thC, Pope Gregory had the bright idea to fuse the old Celtic customs and beliefs with Christian celebrations and it actually worked for the missionaries in Ireland at the time. Samhain became All Hallows Eve, hallowed meaning sacred, and the next day became All Saint's Day. Halloween had arrived.

Tens of thousands of people have lined Derry's streets and riverfront to watch the city's Halloween parade and fireworks finale.

Derry City's four-day festival is billed as one of the biggest Halloween parties in Europe.

The council estimates more than 100,000 people visited the city during the festival's run in 2022. For more info look at :

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-northern-ireland-63416602>

October 27th,

Our group will meet in the morning at our Dublin hotel, the Harding Hotel on Fishamble St, adjacent to Temple Bar in the city center. We suggest travelers arrive in Dublin the day before the tour begins, you might try booking the Harding or an adjacent hotel for your first night. Our tour this time will be a little different as we are spending the first three nights in Dublin. We will board our luxury coach and have a tour of Glasnevin Cemetery followed by a visit to Kilmainham Gaol. Paul, our driver, is a terrific character and a gentle giant of a man. I am waiting for information on the 2023 Bram Stoker Festival which has not yet been announced.

October 28th, Our second day will be a drive to the legendary Newgrange Passage Tomb in Co. Meath on a hill overlooking the river Boyne. Built 5,200 years ago. It is an exceptionally grand passage tomb built during the Neolithic Period, around 3200 BC, making it older than Stonehenge and the Egyptian pyramids. It is aligned on the winter solstice sunrise. Newgrange is the main monument in the Brú na Bóinne complex, a World Heritage Site that also includes the passage tombs of Knowth and Dowth, as well as other henges, burial mounds and standing stones. I am delighted that the tomb burial chamber is now open and we may enter this wonder of the world. Definitely one of the highlights of our tour.

As we are staying in the city center, we will do some walking to some of the nearby historic sites, one thousand year old Christchurch Cathedral, across from our hotel, and the beautiful Saint Patrick's Cathedral, only 830 years old, once led from 1713 to 1745, by famous author Dean Jonathan Swift of "Gulliver's Travels".

We will also visit St. Michan's across the river Liffey and see the famous mummies. Lots of shopping areas near our hotel for browsing later that day.

October 29th, We will board our luxury coach and drive to the town of Kilkenny, the once upon a time medieval heartland of Ireland and a self proclaimed Capitol of Ireland was set up here in defiance of the English in Dublin in 1642, for several years by the Irish nobles, clergy and military leaders of the Rebellion of 1641. We will visit Kilkenny Castle, once the stronghold of the famous Anglo Irish Butler family, now open to the public in all its splendor. After lunch we will drive out to Jerpoint Abbey, founded in the early 12th Century. Beautiful stonework and unique carvings in its tower and cloister. Return to our hotel for dinner.

October 30th, Our tour will take us north for our primary event, the City of Derry in British Northern Ireland and its famous Halloween Festival, for three days through Halloween night and the extravaganza of events while we are there.

October 31st, We will drive into Donegal in the morning and visit a 6thC stone ring fort built by the Clan O'Neill overlooking Derry and Donegal Bay. The view is spectacular and the fort is really impressive. Afterwards, back to our hotel to relax and wait for the evening's festivities, plenty of time to stroll around and see the sites.

November 1st, We will again drive into Donegal and visit the Glenveagh National Park, a beautiful wilderness surrounding the lakeside Glenveagh House. The house and gardens are spectacular.

November 2nd, Our journey continues with a drive across the northern coast of Ireland into Belfast, the second largest city on the island of Ireland. We will check into our hotel, the beautiful Europa Hotel, famous for being the most bombed hotel in the world during the Troubles of the 1970's.

November 3rd, We will visit the Titanic Museum, a must see for any fans of the great liner's story. Built and launched in Belfast, the museum holds many original artifacts and a look into the history of shipbuilding in Belfast's past. In the afternoon, I will have a friend of mine join us on the coach and give us a guided tour of the City, and it's troubled history, visiting the Peace Walls historically dividing neighborhoods. We will visit a Nationalist Social Club in the late afternoon. A very "road less travelled" experience.

Nov 4th, We will drive back to Dublin for one final night before many of us will travel home to the US. This tour promises to be a very exciting and spiritual return to the All Hallows Eve and All Saints Day (Day of the Dead) that were the celebrations of the ancient Celts and their Druid priests. There will be more trick or treats on this tour than you can imagine. I doubt if we will have any time for a single dull moment !!! Join me, Ken O'Malley, once again "on the road less travelled" if you dare !!!

Nov 5th, Return to the US for those not traveling further or staying on in Ireland.

Ken will be happy to assist with questions regarding traveling to Ireland prior to the beginning of the tour or any travel plans after we return to Dublin at the end of the tour. Hotels, destinations, travel arrangements etc. As is usual on our tours, site visits may change, usually to increase the benefit of our tour and experience. Ken will have scheduled and unscheduled shows throughout the tour.

Our 2022 Halloween tour was fantastic, weather was great, with very little rain and we will add some of our travelers' comments on Ken's website soon.

Feel free to call Ken with any questions 310 569 1062

Website www.kenomalley.com

"Great trip! The perfect combo of "must see" locations along with the immersive local cultural experience you gave us was a memory we will cherish. Loved every leg of the trip! As for the complaints you received (probably about the Harding), the hotel was historic, in a perfect location, and had a famous pub attached to it. No complaints from us.

Derry and the Halloween fest was amazing. Belfast and the eye opening peek into the "troubles", and the history of it all from the guide was unique and thought provoking.

All of it was totally worth it! We'll be telling everyone we know!"

Pi B.

"You know I loved the tour. No complaints. I especially liked the Glenveagh Castle and gardens, the tour of the murals and the wall, having your sister Brenda along (she's great!), the celebration and parade in Derry, and most of all the opportunities to hear you play in pubs and at the social club. Even eating at that gas (petrol) station was more fun than I thought it would be.

Don't change a thing."

Maureen O'C

"I enjoyed the trip over all. I especially liked the intimate live music. The food was better than I expected. My favorite part was the time in Derry."

Jeff D.

"I really enjoyed the trip and had an amazing time. Lots of great hotels and meals and locations. Paul was amazing as usual and your planning and excursions were all wonderful. Thanks for organizing and designing such a lovely holiday, friend."

Kristi C.

