

2020

Visit Ireland with Maggie Jackson

May 13th – 24th, 2020

Receive \$100 per person off the price of your tour, when booked by 31st July 2019



The ultimate Knitting Retreat in Ireland with the International award winning Irish Knitwear Designer. Join her in her homeland visiting many of the places photographed in one of her 18 books –
“MAGGIE’S IRELAND” by Alexis Xenakis of XRX Publishing.

Maggie will accompany you on the whole trip, as we visit places that will give you an insight into the interesting history behind the small Emerald Isle...and you never know, if you're lucky, the sight of a leprechaun. You'll hear tales of folklore, to be believed or not!

Enjoy workshops in unusual places throughout the tour...depending on that Irish rain, of course! Your knit project will be unique to you and adaptable for all types of knitters. You will be working with true Irish Linen from Maggie's stash. It's no longer produced in Ireland so you have your own wee piece of Irish Heritage. Read more about Maggie at www.maggiknitsretailgalleria.com

Husbands and partners are welcome to enjoy the **'forty shades of green'** wee country..... full of Irish charm and....without having to lift a needle....just a Guinness!!

YOUR TOUR ITINERARY:

Wed-May 13th

If you are coming from North America, you will need to arrange your flight to depart today, in order to arrive in **BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND** on the morning of May 14th as this is an overnight flight. You'll need to arrive **no later than 11am** if you would like to join us on the city tour of Belfast. Two major airports serve the city of Belfast and you will find instructions for getting to the Grand Central Hotel in itinerary sent separate nearer the time. If you would like to arrive in Belfast a day early to get recovered from jet lag and time change we recommend the Grand Central so you don't have to change Hotels/rooms.

Thu-May 14th

Maggie will be waiting for you at the **GRAND CENTRAL HOTEL**....it is more than a hotel!! It's an ode to a city. Standing tall in Bedford Street, this impressive jewel fuses glamour and grandeur with a uniquely Belfast spirit. Prepare to be stunned - The Observatory is the Grand Central's jewel. An awe-inspiring cocktail lounge with spectacular, unique views of Belfast and beyond.



From pavement to panorama, this is **the highest bar in all of Ireland!!**

Early afternoon we will have a **PANORAMIC TOUR OF BELFAST CITY**. There will be a few photo stops and the tour will give you an overview of the most historic and well-known sights of the city: Queen's University, the 'TROUBLES' streets, the Ulster Museum, the City Hall, Belfast Cathedral, and the stunning Parliament buildings, just to name a few. Prior to our **WELCOME DINNER**, Maggie will be giving you an overview of the knitting project for her workshops, along with the needed supplies back at the Grand Central Hotel Observatory.



Fri-May 15th

Following a "full Irish" breakfast, we travel to Lisburn, Maggie's hometown, to visit the **IRISH LINEN CENTRE & LISBURN MUSEUM**. It's galleries are filled with colorful exhibits, priceless artifacts including a piece of linen from King Tutankhamen's tomb, prized oil paintings, and haunting audio-visual presentations.

Along our journey enjoy the Irish jokes and the behind-the-scenes stories that made Maggie's Ireland her favorite book out of the eighteen that she has now published, whilst knitting with traditional Irish Linen, a project unique to the trip. Maggie was the first Fashion Designer to set up in Northern Ireland in the height of the 'troubles' as they were called, leading on to International awards.

Next on the agenda is a **FELTING WORKSHOP** by a local textiles designer. She will have you creating a wall hanging or cushion cover as a souvenir, much enjoyed on previous trips.

After lunch in the quaint village of **Hillsborough in an award winning garden**, we continue on to **EUGENE MCCONVILLE'S FARM** in nearby



Dromore. We'll tour his flax mill, the last of its kind in Ireland, and you might even get a chance to scutch some flax! Over the creaking sound of the great hundred-year-old water wheel that once powered the mill, we'll hear Eugene's moving personal story. Dinner will be in the award winning 2AA Rosette Lewis Restaurant at **THE OLD INN**, Crawfordsburn. Part of the thatched Hotel was built in 1614!! After



dinner we have our own personal group of **Irish musicians** in the Library for a bit of foot tapping and maybe a REAL Irish Guinness!!

We return to the Grand Central Hotel to get a good night's rest before our next day's journey up the picturesque coast.

Sat-May 16th

Departing Belfast this morning we travel along the beautiful **ANTRIM COAST**, interlaced with tales of Irish Folklore and squeezing through tiny bridges!! As we head north, we will be stopping for a morning workshop in **Glenarm....**some might just pick pebbles from the beach there or dip their toes in the Irish Sea!!



Our next stop for **GROUP LUNCH** is the **LONDONDERRY ARMS HOTEL**, situated in the rural village of Carnlough, once owned by Sir Winston Churchill. The hotel was built in 1848 as a coaching inn by France Ann Vane Tempest, Marchioness of Londonderry.



As we continue along the coast we arrive at the famous **GIANT'S CAUSEWAY**. These unique rock formations have, for millions of years, stood as a natural rampart against the unbridled ferocity of Atlantic storms. Added to the list of World Heritage sites in 1986 and run by the National Trust, you will learn about the history and the myth, with a chance to head to the water's edge to enjoy the view. Is the legend true about Finn MacCool.....judge for yourself!!!

This natural wonder will be a highlight of today's scenic drive.

The **ROE PARK RESORT** in Limavady will be our home for the next two nights.



Sun-May 17th

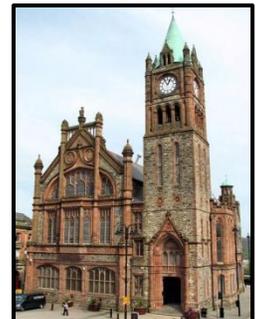
First stop today....feared by some!!! The **CARRICK-A-REDE ROPE BRIDGE** (cover of **Maggie's Ireland**). After making your way down the steep flight of stairs, enjoy the view or dare to cross the sturdy rope bridge while the waves crash onto the rocks hundreds of feet below. The scenery is magnificent and it's an experience you

won't forget with photos hopefully to show **'YOU CROSSED IT'!!**

For a wee calming 'nip' after the bridge a trip to Ireland would not be complete without a visit to **OLD BUSHMILL'S DISTILLERY**, the oldest licensed Distillery in the world. They have been producing Irish whiskey since 1608.



Our last stop is **DUNLUCE CASTLE**, located high above Mermaid's Cave. Overlooking the turbulent sea below, it precariously clings to the land and was the splendid home of the Earl and Countess of Antrim who visited the royal court in London, and entertained in their castle-on-the-sea. In 1639, part of Dunluce Castle including the kitchen, fell into the abyss. Today, the second-story chimneys defy gravity and cling to fallen walls. We return to the Roe Park for a Knitting workshop with Maggie and **DINNER** at the hotel.



Mon-May 18th

LONDONDERRY/DERRY is known as the Gateway to Northern Ireland and is the last city to be encircled by walls and the only city where the original walls are still intact.

A guided **WALKING TOUR OF DERRY** will provide us with an intriguing account of this historic city and the famous Walls of Derry. From the Diamond—the center of Old Derry—radiate four main thoroughfares that pierce the massive walls through gates bearing colorful names like Butcher's Gate, and Ferryquaygate. Nearby, just behind the Guildhall, Shipquay Gate led thousands of Irish to the New World. Afterwards some shopping time in the Craft Village.

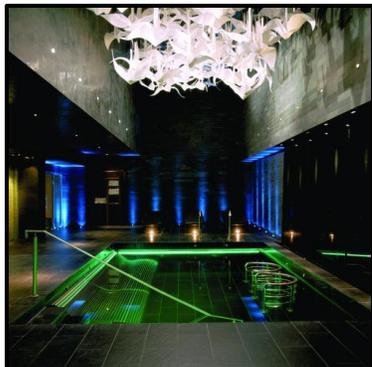
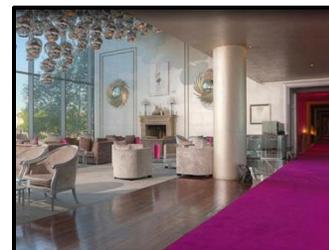
We leave **Londonderry/Derry** driving to Enniskillen for some lunch.

The breathtaking **SHEELIN IRISH LACE MUSEUM** is the next stop on our journey. It houses approximately 700 exhibits, illustrating the five main types of Lace which were made in Ireland: Irish Crochet Lace, Youghal Needle lace, Inishmacsaint Needle lace, Carrickmacross Lace and Limerick Lace. The many displays range from Wedding Dresses to Christening Gowns and much more.



We head south and cross the border into the **REPUBLIC OF IRELAND**. Our final destination today is the 5* **G HOTEL and Spa in Galway WITH DINNER AT THE THEIR AWARD WINNING RESTAURANT**.

This ultra chic Hotel has an on-site spa looking out on a bamboo planted forest. It has a Schiaparelli-pink cocktail lounge and 3 trendy lounges designed by famous Galwegian milliner to the stars - Philip Treacy. www.theghotel.ie



Tue-May 19th

The entire day is yours to enjoy **GALWAY**. You can SHOP, SHOP, SHOP or stay in bed all day or enjoy the spa!!! Galway an ancient town is the capital of the West of Ireland. On the edge of the Gaeltacht (Irish speaking area) it is the gateway to magnificent areas such as Connemara, Corrib country, and the Aran Islands. Enjoy the many attractions and the city's narrow shopping streets with NO traffic!! Optional workshop in the evening.

Wed-May 20th

A very popular day starts with a **ferry ride** to the shores of **INIS MÓR, THE LARGEST OF THE ARAN ISLANDS** and home to around 800 inhabitants. On the edge of Western Europe, these Gaelic outcroppings—and their namesake sweaters—have always beckoned to knitters. Weather permitting an informal workshop with

the remainder of the day free to shop and sightsee or enjoy the Irish Beef and Guinness Pie...yummm! Your tour includes a **PONY AND TRAP RIDE**

around the island and ends at the Aran Sweater Market and Museum. Learn the history of these beautiful sweaters. Information may be found at: <http://www.aransweatermarket.com/history-of-aran-sweaters>

At the end of the day we'll return to our hotel in Galway and knitting.

Thu-May 21st

We head north to **NEWCASTLE**, just south of Belfast on the eastern shore, and home to the **SLIEVE DONARD RESORT AND SPA**. This Victorian hotel is located on six acres of private grounds with spectacular panoramic views of the County Down coastline and Mountains of Mourne. It is one of Northern Ireland's most popular hotels.



Knitting workshop in the afternoon. **DINNER TONIGHT** - hotel's stunning **Oak Restaurant**.

Fri-May 22nd

We head to the beautiful **MISTY MOUNTAINS OF MOURNE**—dear to the hearts of the Irish—and the dry stone hedges that crisscross the heart of **SILENT VALLEY**. The Mourne Mountains are the highest in Northern Ireland and tower above the Silent Valley reservoir. Nestled at their feet, the reservoir gathers the mountain's runoff, and supplies all of County Down and Belfast with pristine drinking water.



We drive through a countryside dotted with cottages, sheep, stone walls, and winding roads, we enjoy panoramic views of the valley below as we reach Silent Valley, where the stillness will surround us. **We will return to Newcastle in time for you to have lunch and explore the shopping streets of Newcastle, within walking distance of our hotel.**

A **Maggie Jackson Retreat** would not be complete without a **FASHION SHOW**. As in the past, it will be spectacular, featuring Maggie's signature designs from her current collections, and maybe a sneak peek of things to come! Maggie with 43 years' experience will share her tips from a fashion designer's point of view and meet **Nuala**, our local model from most of Maggie's books and of course Maggie's Ireland book.



Sat-May 23rd

Sad....it's our last full day in Ireland and there is still a lot left to see and do! Many of you may not know it, but the Titanic was conceived, designed, built and launched in Belfast and... As they proudly say locally, "She was alright when she left here!"



We'll take a **BOAT TOUR OF THE HISTORIC HARLAND & WOLFF SHIPYARDS AND THE FAMOUS TITANIC SITES AROUND BELFAST HARBOUR**. The harbor area itself is full of interesting sights.

This afternoon you will be free to do some last minute shopping in the Belfast City center, or you may choose to visit the new *Titanic Belfast* which is the World's largest *Titanic* visitor *experience* and must-see attraction in Northern Ireland! Please note that admission is **NOT** included. Takes 2-3 hrs.



You may have met **CHEF STEVIE FROM THE PAGES OF MAGGIE'S IRELAND?** On our final '**GALA DINNER**' you will savor the fruits of his passion for food and

culinary education. As this is our Titanic Day, Chef will cook the last 7 course meal the Upper Class had on the fateful ship before it sank but with a modern twist!!!

"My passion for food was born in my family's kitchen," Chef Stevie says. "In all Irish families, the credit for cooking goes to Mother and grandmother."

After fabulous workshops with Maggie, seeing the best of what Ireland has to offer, and making new friends, it's time to check-in to the **EUROPA BELFAST** for your last night on the Emerald Isle.



Sun-May 24th

Whether your flight departs from **BELFAST CITY AIRPORT** or **BELFAST INTERNATIONAL**, there will be a transfer to each airport this morning. In order to take advantage of these transfers, your flight will need to depart 11:00am or later, from either airport. Should your flight depart earlier than 11:00am the hotel can assist you in scheduling your taxi.

YOUR TOUR INCLUDES:

- All hotels and welcoming drink in the 'Observatory'
- All breakfasts, 2 lunches and 6 dinners (inc 2 Gala)
- All workshops with Maggie, class materials, & fashion show
- All group tours & activities
- All group ground transportation within Ireland
- Airport transfer on Sun, May 24th
- Hosted by Maggie Jackson
- Escorted by a Professional Tour Leader

Tour Price (Does not include RT air to Belfast):

\$4520 per person, double occupancy
\$699 single

First instalment to book a place \$1500 due now (deposits \$500 already paid will be deducted from this)

2nd Instalment \$1000 due Sept 2019;

3rd instalment \$1000 due Dec 2019;

Final Instalment due end Jan 2020

Please note: In order to fully enjoy this trip and the walking Tours offered, you will need to be able to walk up to 5 city blocks at a moderate pace in a "limited" amount of time, and climb several flights of stairs. (Read Terms/Conditions)

PLEASE NOTE THAT SPACE IS LIMITED!

Receive \$100 per person off the price of your tour, when booked by 31st July 2019

We require that all travelers departing the U.S. be in possession of a current passport that does not expire until at least 6 months from the date of your scheduled return to the U.S.

Go to "**Maggie's Ireland Retreat Sign Up Form**" and READ "**Maggie's Ireland Terms/Conditions**"