

Self Drive

Trip Grade: **Self Drive**

Ireland's Surf Coast to Westport




Wilderness Ireland

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Self Drive - Ireland's Surf Coast to Westport

Perhaps the Wild Atlantic Way's least-visited region, the Surf Coast of Sligo and Mayo are as wild and dramatic as they are laid-back. Once home and muse to WB Yeats, Ireland's national poet, Sligo is also home to a plethora of ancient monuments and tombs from the Neolithic era - older than the Pyramids! Explore the mysteries and mythologies connected with Ireland's northwest as you discover this little-known but wonderful region.

Hike through the final bastion of Irish wilderness and Ireland's only roadless hills, paddle the gentle waters of one of Ireland's most breathtaking lakes and cycle along Ireland's first greenway. Your trip will end in a bustling market town reminiscent of a bygone Ireland.

Highlights

- Hike and kayak in the most remote and wild corners of the Emerald Isle
- Cycle along Ireland's first car-free greenway
- Enjoy some of the strongest bastions of traditional Irish music and food

Book With Confidence

- This is a Private Self Drive trip which means it can suit any group size.

PLEASE NOTE – The itinerary may be subject to change at the discretion of the Wilderness Ireland Guide with regard to weather conditions and other factors.



Wilderness Ireland

Planned Itinerary

Day 1 | [Explore Yeats Country - Co Sligo](#)

Day 2 | [Kayaking the Secrets of Sligo](#)

Day 3 | [Ancient Mysteries of the Ceide Coast](#)

Day 4 | [The Wilds of Mayo](#)

Day 5 | [Market Town of Westport](#)

Day 6 | [Cycle the Great Western Greenway](#)

Day 7 | [Departure](#)

Arrival Info

- Pick up your rental car at Dublin Airport (please note that all car rentals are made independently by you) and make your way to Sligo on Day 1 of your trip.

Departure Info

- You can drop off your car at the airport of the final day of your trip.

PLEASE NOTE – The itinerary may be subject to change at the discretion of the Wilderness Ireland Guide with regard to weather conditions and other factors.



Wilderness Ireland

Day 1 | Explore Yeats Country - Co Sligo

It's easy to see how the windswept landscapes of north Sligo captured the imagination of WB Yeats. Follow our recommendations to explore the hidden gems of this remote and little-visited corner of Ireland. Options include a beautiful hike at the foot of the iconic Ben Bulbin Mountain to a visit to the childhood home of one of Ireland's most famous revolutionaries and suffragettes. Great local seafood - Sligo or *Sligeach* means 'shelly place' in Irish Gaelic - and empty sand beaches are icing on the cake.

Day 2 | Kayaking the Secrets of Sligo

The inlets around Sligo Bay make for some excellent kayaking. Today you'll take to the water on a route tailored to your experience level and the conditions. First time kayakers will enjoy the experience just as much as seasoned hands. Our favourite route visits a seal colony with extraordinary picturesque views of the iconic Knocknarea Mountain topped with its enormous megalithic cairn as an evocative backdrop. But the option to explore the ancient forests and secluded islands of Lough Gill, nestled in some of Europe's most ancient mountains is equally appealing. Sligo is a hub of traditional Irish music and it is well worth venturing into town this evening to find a session. **(B, G)**

Day 3 | Ancient Mysteries of the Ceide Coast

Your journey today leaves the hub of Sligo behind and tracks along the coast towards the wilds of North Mayo. Our recommendations today include an authentic seaweed bath - complete with original cast iron tubs - which will feel all the more indulgent after a hike in the ancient hills of the Ox Mountains. Along the way stop to learn about how millennia of human interaction has shaped Ireland's landscapes as well as visit dramatic blow holes, taking in wild cliff top views in this forlorn but breathtaking part of the country. **(B)**



Day 4 | The Wilds of Mayo

Today you will meet a local guide to explore the area with a day-long hike. Pick up a delicious packed lunch and make the most of Ireland's most wild and untouched scenery. As always, there are a range of options to suit all experience levels but our favourite is what we consider to be Ireland's most spectacular coastal walk. Along the way, learn more about the fascinating flora of Ireland's blanket bog landscape and how this area is synonymous with the ancient and fascinating Irish myth of the Children of Lir, who were turned into swans for 900 years. **(B,G)**

Day 5 | Market Town of Westport

The vibrant market town of Westport lies at the edge of the Wild Nephin wilderness and on the shores of Clew Bay, known for the hundreds of tiny islands created by glaciers millennia ago. A bustling regional hub and host to some of Ireland's most musical pubs, you might like to arrive in town early to explore the colourful streets and visit some fantastic crafters. The local brewery is well worth a visit too. We will also recommend options for a more leisurely journey along the coast and into town. **(B)**



Day 6 | Cycle the Great Western Greenway

Part of a project to restore abandoned railway tracks, the Great Western Greenway was restored as a cycling track. Learn about the prophecy relating to the “carts on iron wheels that would carry the souls of islanders on the first and last journey.” Pedal past rushing waterfalls, ancient ruins, megalithic tombs and scenic bridges on a canvas of coastal and mountain views as you learn how this fascinating prophecy came to be true. Enjoy as much of the 42 km Great Western Greenway as you'd like as we'll arrange a return transfer to your starting point in town. Explore the rich culture and history of the area with our recommendations of how to best enjoy your cycle along Ireland's first greenway! **(B,G)**

Day 7 | Depart

Today, say goodbye to the wilds of the west coast of Ireland. From here, you may head straight to the airport - we will provide interesting stops along the way. Alternatively, why not combine this itinerary with **Connemara, Dingle and the Cliff Coast** and enjoy another fantastic week in Ireland! **(B)**



Trip Grading | Self Drive - At Your Own Pace

Self Drive are suitable for anyone as the trip activity can be tailored to meet your needs, preferences and fitness levels.

- Self drive trips include personal activities and experiences tailored to your own group's personal activity level.
- They allow you to experience Ireland at your own pace with one-to-one meet ups with local guides and experts who can lead you through activities at your own pace.
- They also include overnight stops at the very best local 4 and 5 star accommodations.
- Active experiences are at your own pace and can be tailored to meet green, blue or red graded levels depending on your group's preferences.
- For self-guided days, we'll provide you with suggested points of interest to visit, places to eat, local recommendations, and things to see along with maps and directions.



It is your responsibility to ensure you are appropriately fit and capable of doing the described hikes in the expected times. Please refer to the [grading section](#) on our website for more details. If you are unsure we encourage you to speak to us first.




Wilderness Ireland

Accommodation and Meals

This self drive trip is graded Deluxe, meaning you can expect 4* and 5* hotels. This itinerary features accommodations chosen for their excellent location, service, amenities and comfort. Expect comfort, character and luxury in some of Ireland's most beautiful and sought-after castles, manors, deluxe guesthouses and boutique hotels. Each traveller has a choice of double or twin rooms, all of which are en-suite with a shower.

Each morning, enjoy a hearty homemade breakfast of your choice at your accommodation. We'll provide local recommendations for afternoon and evening meals in each town or region as well as wilderness picnics for those days spent in the great outdoors.

Single Rooms

Single rooms are available upon request. If you would prefer a double room for single occupancy, a supplement will be charged depending on availability. If you require a single room, please get in touch and let us know.

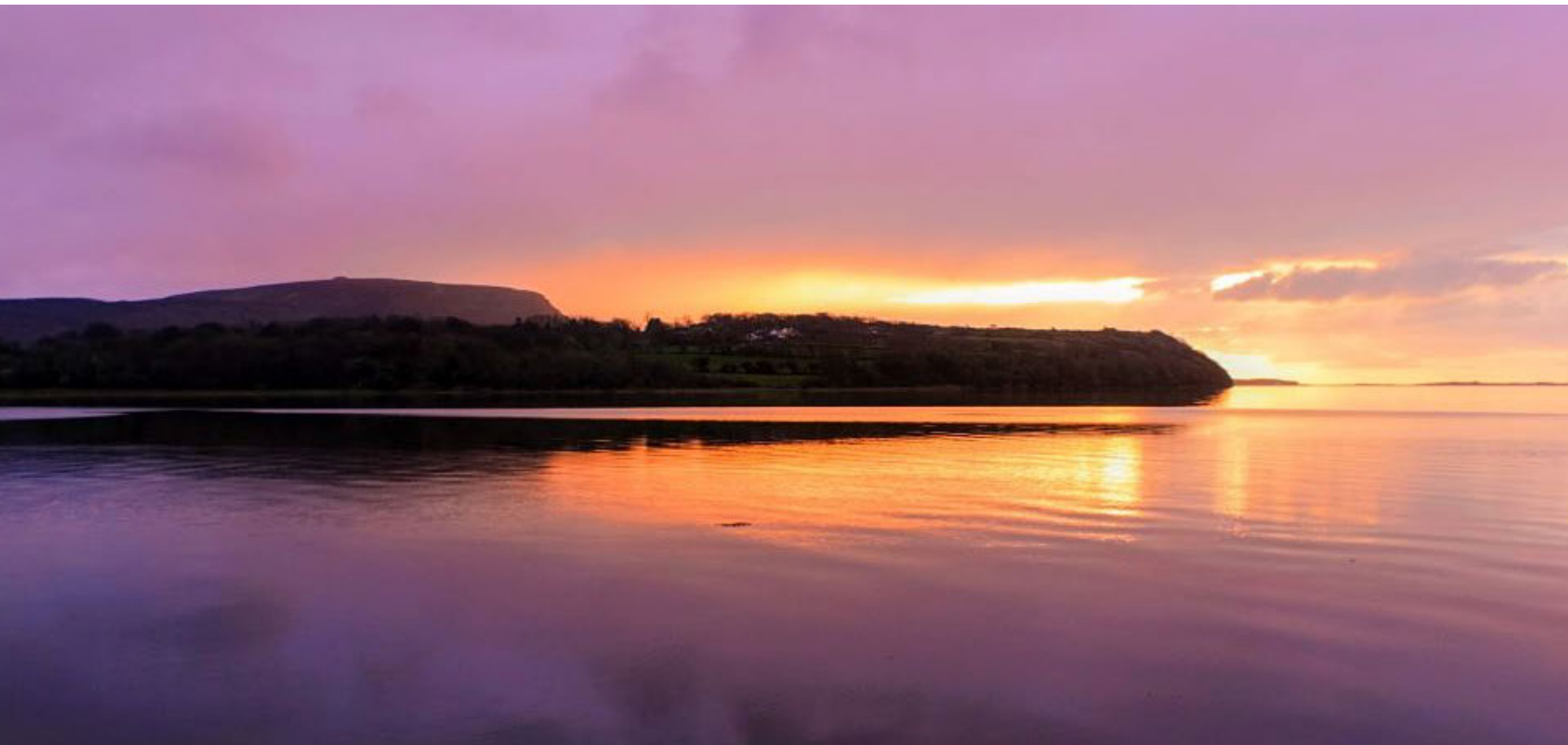


Inclusions

This trip includes the following:

- 6 nights accommodation in a hand-picked 4* and 5* accommodations
- A detailed itinerary and map outlining your itinerary, accommodations and stops
- Breakfast every morning at your accommodation (**Meals included indicated as B=Breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner**)
- The services of experienced and knowledgeable guides or local experts at various stages in the trip as stated in the itinerary (**marked G**)
- Recommended stops, hikes and points of interest along the way

This trip includes all accommodation, all full day guided experiences and activities, as well as breakfast. It does not include other meals, entry fees and activities while self-guided, car rental or any gratuities you may choose to leave.



Our holidays reviewed in your words...

“

We are happy we found and contracted with Wilderness Ireland. This was an experience that we wouldn't have had otherwise. We saw and did things that were amazing. It was a great trip!

Carol Penne - Tailor Made Ireland Trip - 11/09/2018 ★★★★★

”

[All Trip Reviews Here](#)

Guided Activities

This is a Self Drive trip, meaning that it you will not have a guide for the entire trip duration. However, you will benefit from certain guided activities as stated in the itinerary. Our guides are among the most highly experienced and qualified in the country as well as passionate about Ireland's history, culture, nature and traditions. For more info and to meet the team please see our [Guide Pages](#).



Sustainable Travel

Wilderness Ireland is committed to the development of Ireland's sustainable tourism sector. We focus on developing sustainable operational practices and we endeavour to support the local tourism economy in each of the areas in which we work.

We are a proud partner of the Burren Beo, which enhances our commitment to responsible activity in Ireland's wild lands, particularly in the Burren region of County Clare.

Wilderness Ireland is an active, participating member of Leave No Trace Ireland, an outdoor ethics programme designed to inspire responsible outdoor recreation through education, research and partnerships.

Thanks in part to the generosity of our clients by participating in our voluntary Conservation Contribution Scheme, we are able to provide financial support to a range of environmental and nature conservation charities and rural communities.



Equipment List

Check out our guide on what to wear when adventuring in Ireland.

wildernessscotland.com/blog/hiking-in-scotland-what-to-wear



Eat | Stay | See

Looking for accommodation for before or after your adventure with us?
Check out our list of where to stay and what to do

[Eat – Stay – See – Inverness.pdf](#)



Wilderness Ireland

Travel Insurance

It is your responsibility to take out appropriate travel insurance to cover you during your trip. This should include cover for cancellation prior to the trip*, the activities undertaken (i.e hiking), curtailment, and adequate medical insurance for sickness/ injury and medical repatriation. We also strongly recommend you have cover for your other travel arrangements such as flights, and your personal possessions.

If you cancel your trip, charges will apply. Please see section 2 of our terms and conditions for a breakdown:

<https://www.wildernessireland.com/make-a-booking/booking-conditions/>

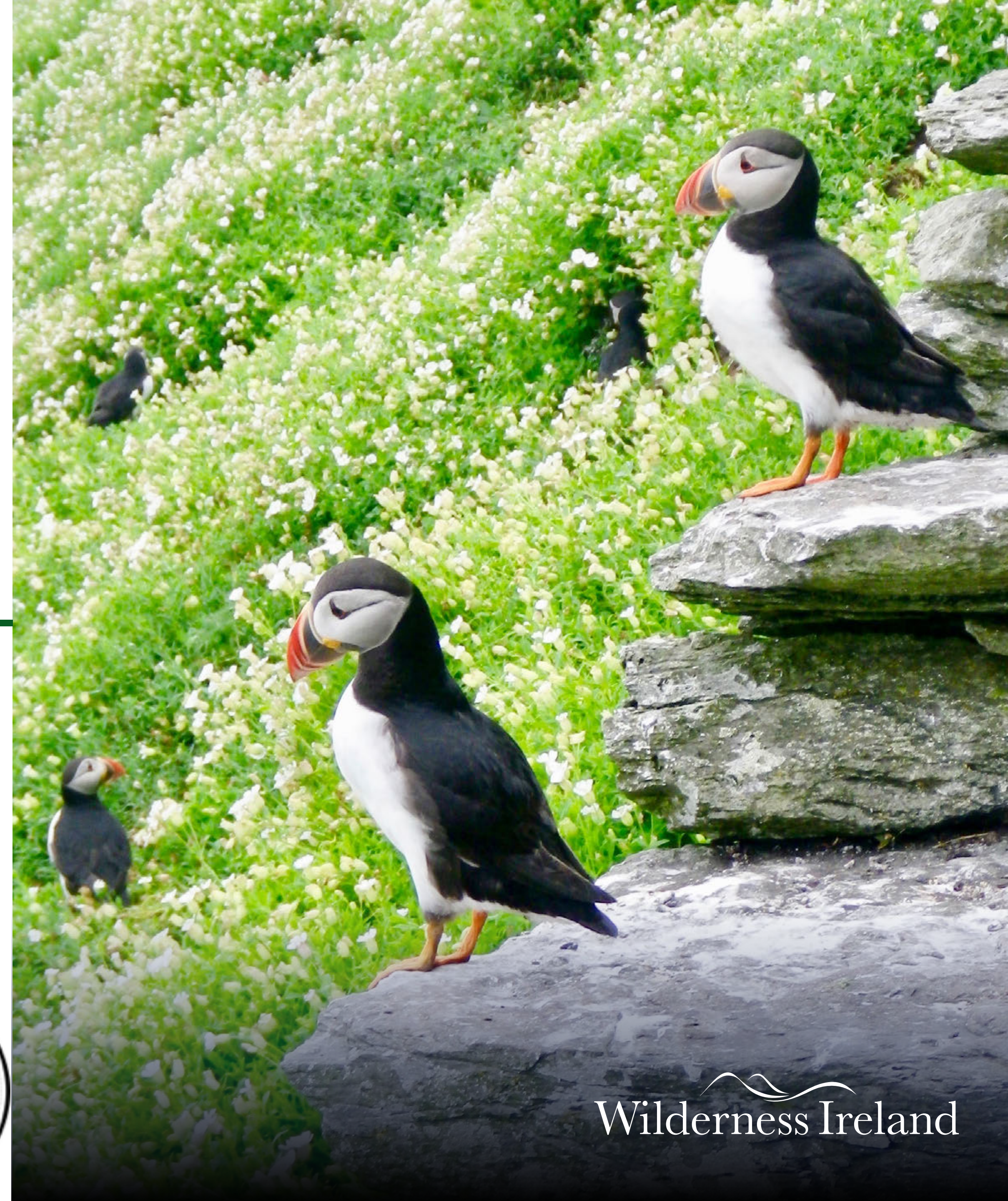
Your Satisfaction, Guaranteed

At Wilderness Ireland, we believe our tours are top notch. To back that up, we're the only Irish travel company offering a no-strings-attached 100% Satisfaction Guarantee.

If you're not completely satisfied with any aspect of your trip, then let us know. If the issue was not resolved by Wilderness Ireland during your trip, then we'll invite you back to experience another Wilderness Ireland tour of similar value, FREE OF CHARGE to prove you can have a world class vacation in Ireland. See details more here.



Wilderness Ireland



FAQs

Looking for more information? Check out our frequently ask questions page.

wildernessireland.com/faq

Questions To Ask? Ready to Book?

If you want to get in touch please send us an email or give us a call. We accept bookings online, by email, or over the phone. A deposit of 25% is required at the time of booking to secure the trip with the balance payable 8 weeks (56 days) before departure. If booking less than 56 days before the trip start date, full payment of the trip price is required immediately.

We accept payment by credit or debit card, or bank transfer.

email: info@wildernessireland.com

Tel (EU): +353 (0) 91 457 898

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