



Walking the Sheep's Head Way – West Cork, Ireland

Duration: 7 nights

Goat guide: 2 goats

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About this trip

“Beautiful landscapes, peace, animals, walking and a great guide” We return as it was such a popular holiday - this time to cover more of this beautiful landscape and journey 72km along the Sheeps Head Way, a long distance footpath that can be completed in a week. A wonderful journey and a great achievement as we explore the beautiful west coast of Ireland. Do join us and immerse yourself in the beauty of the west of Ireland. WalkingWomen has taken over the guest house so you will be walking, connecting and reviving together.

West Cork is one of the little-known and most isolated places in Europe so you can expect walks in unspoilt and wild Atlantic scenery usually all to ourselves. Seals and dolphins can often be spotted, and occasionally we may be lucky enough to spot basking sharks and the tell-tale sign of seabirds hovering over a whale. There are stone circles, ring forts and ruined castles to find along the walks as well as more recent sites of archaeological and historical interest such as mass rocks, old military defences and the remains of the copper mining industry.

This year we go on a journey to cover 72km of the Sheep’s Head Way on the Sheep’s Head Peninsula – the narrowest of the 5 peninsulas that extend out into the Atlantic. Looking out over the ocean you can feel as if you are at the edge of the world .

Our adventure is the Sheep’s Head peninsula, or Muintir Bhaire, the smallest finger of the five south westerly peninsulas jutting out into the ocean. It is a rarely visited area and remains wild and unspoilt.

The route begins in the market town of Bantry and passes through the three little villages of the peninsula: Kilcrohane, Ahakista finishing at Durrus.

Kilcrohane is ideally placed for walking a section of the route each day and returning to Bridge View either on foot or by taxi each afternoon. The walking is mostly on good footpaths and quiet lanes but there are some more uneven, rocky or boggy paths too. Most day sections are between 11km and 13km in distance; on the first day we do a shorter 8km and the longest section is 15km on our last day. The highest mountain, Seefin, stands at just 345 metres and the maximum ascent and descent on any day will be around 500 metres.

Trip Overview

7 nights and 6 days walking

Airport pick up included approx 15.30pm and transfer back at 10am after breakfast on Saturday. It is possible to make your way to the hotel by public transport. We can advise.

Guide: Clara Fleming our local guide

Walking Grade: 2 Goats -the walking is 72kms along coastal paths and low mountain ridges and will be long days as we walk the Sheep's Head Way one of the most beautiful long distance paths in Ireland. There is quite a bit of up and down but ascents and descents are gradual. Walking poles are handy as are waterproof boots and gaiters and lots of layers as the Irish weather can be changeable.

Base: We base ourselves in the local, cosy BridgeView House in the small Irish village of Kilcrohane. We will walk each day returning to the same place each night for our evening meal together.

Bridge View House is a family-run guest house led by Ann and her team. It is in the most westerly village, Kilcrohane, which also has a village shop and post office, the Old Creamery cafe/restaurant and the popular Eileen's Bar which regularly hosts live music sessions. It is a short walk to a fresh water lagoon and Dunmanus Bay. There is a bus service into Bantry, and beyond, giving the option of taking a rest day and exploring further afield.

For any Graham Norton Fans – this is his base in Ireland and you can even try his own homemade gin!

Holiday Includes

- 7 nights ensuite bed and breakfast accommodation in your own ensuite room
- Every Evening meal together in the hotel.
- Packed lunches on your 6 walking days
- Group Cork Airport Pick up and return
- Local Transport required for walks
- Specialist local guiding for this very special trek

Not included:

- Travel to Cork
- Additional drinks

If you would like to extend your trip let us know as we can help with recommendations.

Itinerary

Itinerary – subject to change depending on the weather and at the discretion of the guide. The aim is to cover approx 72 km of the Sheep's Head Way, part of the Wild Atlantic Way, walking different parts of it each day.

DAY 1

Arrival – Pick up at Cork Airport approx 15.30pm

17.00 Arrive Bridge View House, Kilcrohane to settle in and meet Clara, your guide.

Time for a short orientation walk before your evening meal at Bridge View House around 19.00.

DAY 2

Kilcrohane to Ahakista 8km/5 miles 150m ascent and descent

A wonderful coastal view walk along the cliffs. The walk is varied with green roads, a freshwater lagoon, a bardic school, a sweat lodge and a stone circle. Clara will tell you some stories of the area.

You will return to Bridge View House around 17.00 for an evening together with dinner at your hotel.

DAY 3

Ahakista to Durrus 11km/7 miles 200m ascent/descent

Today is our Moorland walk with bogs, a ring fort, a ruined fortified house, an old grainstore as we walk to the village of Durrus. We will be picked up at the end of the day to return to Bridge House.

DAY 4

Glanlough to Seefin and Kilcrohane 13km/8 miles 400m ascent and descent.

Today's walk is a ridge walk to Seefin, the highest point on the Sheep's Head Peninsula and with terrific views over the ocean.

DAY 5

Seefin to Tooreen 13km/8 miles 200m ascent and descent.

This is a walk full of delights from Finn McCool's Seat, a Pieta, the Horseshoe Road, the Goat's Path and some cliff walking. We see mining remains, pass a Cove, visit a waterfall, a lighthouse and finally a cafe!

DAY 6

Tooreen to Kilcrohane 15km/9.5 miles 150m ascent and descent

Our final walk is the Ballyroon Mountain where you can see the look out post on top of the mountain. You will also see a signal tower, loughs, a butter road, a marriage stone and a cilleen. A lovely end to the week.

Day 7

Glanlough to Bantry 14km / 8.5 miles 200m ascent and 300m descent.

We get transport to Glanlough where our walk begins today. The walk follows a ridge to Loch na Fuilla and down to Bantry Bay passing a mass rock and holy well. We end our walk with a walk around Bantry Bay and into the lovely small town. You will have time to wander and look around the interesting shops or stop for a cuppa or perhaps a pint of Guinness! Friday is market day!

Day 8

Departure from Kilcrohane after breakfast around 10am.

Your airport transfer will return you to Cork Airport for approx 11.30am.



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