

# GOTHIC IMAGE

## Tours of Ancient Britain and Ireland Enchanted Ireland

29 April – 8 May 2024

### DAY ONE: Monday 29 April

#### Dublin to Clonmel

We rendezvous at 12 noon at Dublin Airport Terminal 2 Arrivals - adjacent to the SPAR Shop where there is a seating area.



We travel by coach to Kildare, where we visit the charming St Brigid's Holy Well and gardens and the 13thC St Brigid's Cathedral, the site of a 5thC nunnery founded by St Brigid and her followers. After her

death, a perpetual fire was kept to honour her memory. From Kildare we travel to Clonmel. Eimear Burke joins us here in the evening.

#### Overnight: Clonmel

### DAY TWO: Tuesday 30 April

#### Clonmel to Lough Gur

Our day starts with a visit to the Knockroe Neolithic passage tomb



in Kilkenny. Knockroe is a megalithic burial site, which dates back more than 5,000 years. Known as the Newgrange of the south, it is unique in that it aligns with both the rising and the setting sun on the Winter Solstice.

Our day ends at the sacred and delightful lake of Lough Gur. Legend has it that the lake was formed by the goddess Aine, who appears in different forms as mermaid, young woman and hag.

#### Overnight near Lough Gur



### Your tour hosts

**Jamie George**, Director of *Gothic Image Tours* and **Linda Marson**, Director of *Global Spiritual Studies*, share a passion for providing travel experiences that connect people to the spirit of place in a relaxed, supportive environment that opens them to exploring their full potential.



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Jamie has been taking people on soul journeys through the ancient sacred sites and landscapes of Britain and Ireland since the mid 1980s. Linda, a professional Tarot reader, author and video producer, has taken people on Tarot-guided journeys to Peru and in her homeland, Australia. A working partnership quickly formed after Linda joined



Jamie's tours in England and Scotland in 2013.

### Your tour guests

**Eimear Burke** is a psychologist, celebrant and practising Druid. She is the Chosen Chief elect of the Order of Bards, Ovates and Druids. Gatherings in her Kilkenny Druid Grove celebrate Druidry as a creative way of living in balance with the natural world. As a storyteller (and harpist), she takes a particular pride in continuing



the oral tradition of Irish folklore, and focus on Irish mythology.

**Jack Roberts** is an independent researcher, publisher and author of *Sheela-Na-Gigs of Ireland and Britain: The Divine Hag of the Christian Celts* and *The Sun Circles of Ireland*. As an expert guide on the tour, his wealth of knowledge and lively mind bring the ancient sites of this megalithic wonderland to life.





### **DAY THREE: Wednesday 1 May**

#### **Grange and Tipperary**

Today we visit Ireland's largest stone circle of Lois at Grange near Lough Gur. This exquisite circle dates to around 2000BC. Its entrance aligns to the setting sun at the Celtic festivals of Lammass and Beltane. Here we hold a Druid ceremony to honour the land, the ancestors, our journey together and the start of summer at Beltane. Eimear leaves us after our visit to Grange. Free time in the afternoon in Tipperary.

**Overnight near Lough Gur**

### **DAY FOUR: Thursday 2 May**

#### **Cahergall**

Today we travel south west towards Waterville, a small coastal village on the Ring of Kerry. Along the way we visit Cahergall, a stone ringfort and national monument. The fort was built around 600 AD and the current structure has undergone some reconstruction. With walls approx 6m high and some 3m thick this dry stone wall fort is one of the best examples of an early medieval stone fort to be found on the Ring of Kerry.

After free time for lunch and shopping we continue our journey to Waterville.

**Overnight: Waterville**

### **DAY FIVE: Friday 3 May**

#### **Skellig Michael**

Today, weather permitting, we sail around the awe inspiring and otherworldly island of Skellig Michael. On the island summit is St Fionan's monastery, one of the earliest foundations in Ireland. The monks who lived there prayed and slept in beehive-shaped huts made of stone, many of which remain to this day. The monks left the island in the thirteenth century. It became a place of pilgrimage and, during the time of the Penal Laws, a haven for Catholics.

As well as the wealth of history, there is a fantastic profusion of bird life on and around the island. Little Skellig is the second-largest gannet colony in the world.

**Overnight: Waterville**

### **DAY SIX: Saturday 4 May**

#### **Ring of Kerry**

We continue along the Ring of Kerry via Kilorglin - along the edge of Dingle bay to the delightful town of Dingle. Afternoon free to explore the town and its many shops.

**Overnight: Dingle**

### **DAY SEVEN: Sunday 5 May**

#### **Dingle area**

A place of unfading beauty, Dingle has a cornucopia of sacred sites including the remarkable and beautifully constructed 8thC Gallarus Oratory. We also visit the site of 7thC Kilmalkedar Monastery with its ogham and sundial stones and the ruins of St Brendan's Oratory with the nearby enigmatic Keeler stones.

**Overnight: Dingle**

### **DAY EIGHT: Monday 6 May**

En route to Drogheda we visit the Hill of Tara, the womb of Mother Ireland and the traditional burial place of Tea, ancestor queen and goddess of the Celts. Tara is the site where the sacred marriage took place between the new king and the goddess who held power over the fertility of the land. With this union the people would enjoy prosperity and plenty. We also visit one or two holy wells known for their healing power.

**Overnight: Drogheda**



**Druid ceremony at Grange**



**Cahergill stone ringfort**



**Gallarus Oratory near Dingle**



**The Lia Fail on the Hill of Tara**

## DAY NINE: Tuesday 7 May

### Newgrange and Knowth

As our journey begins to come to a close, our day is spent exploring the Boyne Valley where lie the most revered and eminent of all the sacred sites in Ireland - Newgrange and Knowth. These sites represent the flowering of the megalithic age and reveal astonishing examples of some of the finest megalithic art in the world. Newgrange was the abode of Aengus og and Daghdha gods of the faerie race of the Tuatha de Danann. Here a beam of light of the rising sun penetrates the mound on the shortest day of the year at the winter solstice illuminating the wondrous art in the back chamber. At Knowth, the largest of the monuments, the sun sends its light through the passageway at the spring and autumn Equinoxes.

Overnight: Drogheda

## DAY TEN: Wednesday 8 May

### To Dublin airport

We travel to Dublin Airport for international flights and transfers arriving **9am** for flight departures from **NOON** onwards.



Knowth passage tombs

### Cost

**Early bird: £2,850** per person twin share.  
To qualify for this price, you must book and pay your deposit by **31 December 2023**.

**Full price: £2,950** per person, twin share.  
(from 1 January 2024)

**Single supplement: £550** per person. Single rooms are few and on a first come first served basis.

**Deposit: £500**, payable upon booking

Final payment is due by **28 February 2024**.

#### Price includes:

- fully escorted tour throughout
- excellent, comfortable accommodation
- quality coach travel
- full English breakfasts **and** dinners each day
- entrance fees to sites
- guide fees, taxes and gratuities (excl. driver).

#### Not included:

- international airfares and travel insurance
- gratuities for the coach driver
- lunch and services not specified.



Newgrange

### Dublin

If you have time, consider spending a day or so in the lively city of Dublin either before or after the tour. Highlights of the city include

- ◆ Trinity College, with its magnificent Book of Kells,
- ◆ the National Museum, repository of many stunning treasures of Ireland's past, such as the beautiful golden torques of the Celtic period and the Ardagh Chalice.



### Payment options

Payment is in UK pounds sterling only. This can be done online through PayPal using a debit or credit card. Registration and payment of deposits can be made at <http://www.gothicimagetours.co.uk/sacred-sites-scotland/tour-registration/>

### Cancellation policy

If you cancel your booking by **27 February 2024**, your deposit minus a £75 administration fee will be refunded. If you cancel after that date, your full tour payment can only be refunded if you find someone to take your place.

If *Gothic Image* cancels a tour due to insufficient numbers, your deposit will be refunded in full. If cancellation is due to a pandemic or event beyond our control, we reserve the right to offer alternative arrangements.

We **strongly** recommend that you take out travel insurance to cover unforeseen circumstances that could lead to you cancelling your place on the tour.



## The Gothic Image approach

We always spend a good amount of time at each site so that you benefit fully from the ambience and subtle magic of the experience. Ours are not 'now you see it - now you don't' tours. Our focus is on experiencing the 'spirit of place' and the peculiar enchantment that each site offers, and learning something from it.

We visit inspiring locations where the ancient spirits of each place still reside. In addition, some of you will be returning to the homes of your ancestors. This can raise spiritual and emotional issues. On our tours we seek to build a supportive atmosphere, and your fellow travellers tend to be of a supportive and understanding disposition. At different sites that we visit, you will be given opportunity for reflection and peace. This inner dimension is what makes our tours especially memorable - a pilgrimage and nourishment for the soul.

The pace is not rushed. There are some areas where we climb steps or hills, but otherwise each site is easily accessible and within walking distance from the coach. Nevertheless, you will get some physical exercise! We reserve the right to vary the itinerary as necessary, to provide the best possible experience under the circumstances prevailing at the time.

