



## Irish Castle & Monastic Ruin ride Itinerary

Enjoy a combination of visiting the ancient Irish castles and monastic ruins with lovely guided trail rides through Irish bogs, fields and local farmland.

On this 4 day ride you will visit the impressive Portumna Castle which was the seat of the Earl of Clanricarde and Pallas castle - one of the best preserved tower houses and castle grounds of the 14th century. You will also take a boat ride to Holy Island on the river Shannon to explore the ruins of one of Ireland's most important monastic settlements, and you will ride to a 5000 year old Celtic tomb.

**Day 1 - Saturday** - Arrival in Shannon Airport and transfer (if booked) to our An Sibin Riding Centre. Transfer from Shannon to Whitegate approx. two hours. You will be staying here for 5 nights. On the arrival day you can just relax and recover from your journey, or take a stroll on the well sign-posted nearby walking trails. In the evening, you will get to know all your fellow riders for this week. You will have dinner in the tastefully restored 300 year old farmhouse in the An Sibin Riding Centre by candlelight and open turf fire.

**Day 2 - Sunday** – After breakfast we will go out to the horses and every rider can then get used to their own horse for the next days by brushing and tacking up themselves - don't worry there are always lots of helping hands around you! Our first ride (2 hours) takes us along forest tracks and country lanes, passed abandoned farms of the 18<sup>th</sup> century famine times. After lunch you will be driven to nearby Mountshannon harbour, from where you will visit Holy Island by boat. Pilgrims travelled to this island until the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. You will see the ruins of five churches, early monastic cells, a pre-12<sup>th</sup> century cemetery and a round tower. After this visit you will have time for a stroll through the village and drop into the pub for a glass of porter ;))

Back to the riding centre for a delicious dinner.

**Day 3 – Monday** – On today's ride (2 and ½ hours) you will ride into the hills of the Slieve Aughty Mountains and enjoy fascinating views over the majestic River Shannon. In the afternoon you will get to visit the Portumna workhouse museum, where the poor and destitute took shelter many years ago during the famine times.

You will also visit the impressive Portumna Castle of the 17<sup>th</sup> century with it's beautifully restored walled garden. The 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Clanricade built this Renaissance castle and lived a lavish life here.

You will also have time for shopping in the town or enjoy another Irish pub.

Relax by the peat fire and a traditional home cooked dinner back at the riding centre.

**Day 4 – Tuesday** - This morning's ride (2 and ½ hours) will take you on quiet tracks through Ireland's beautiful rural countryside. This afternoon's visit will bring you to the secluded ruins of Pallas castle, one of the best preserved tower-houses and walled castle grounds of the Irish gentry in the 14th century.

In the evening you will enjoy your dinner again at the riding centre.

**Day 5 - Wednesday** - Today is a full day ride. The 2 hour morning ride brings us across the magical landscape of bog and heather. We will have our lunch picnic out on the trail, where we meet our minibus with all the supplies for horses & riders. On the 2 hour afternoon ride we will pass by a typical Celtic dolmen, which is believed to be 5000 years old!

The ride will finish on a field where the horses are happily turned out.

Tonight is the final dinner in the comfy atmosphere of the riding centre.

**Day 6 – Thursday** - After breakfast it is time to say “slan abhaile” and to get ready for the transfer (if booked) back to Shannon.

*The itinerary might change due to weather conditions or circumstances beyond our control without prior notice...*