



Irish
Georgian
Society

Exclusive Northern Ireland Home & Garden Tour
featuring Robert O'Byrne
August 8 – 16, 2016

Dear Fellow Irish Enthusiasts,

This summer we have the opportunity to visit some of Northern Ireland's finest gardens and Georgian mansions accompanied by **Robert O'Byrne**. A writer specializing in the fine and decorative arts, Robert is the author of more than a dozen books, among the latest being *Luggala Days: The Story of a Guinness House* (Cico Books). Much in demand as a public speaker, he writes a monthly column for *Apollo* magazine and also contributes to each issue of the quarterly *Irish Arts Review*. As well as being a trustee of the Apollo Foundation and a former trustee of the Alfred Beit Foundation, you may know Robert as Vice-President of the **Irish Georgian Society**. Founded in 1958 the society's vision is the preservation and promotion of Ireland's architectural heritage and decorative arts. We are delighted to be associated with this worthwhile organization during our trip and thanks to Robert we will call into the homes and gardens of his friends and those he has written about. You can find Robert and learn much more about Ireland's heritage at <http://theirishaesthete.com>.

Our adventure with Robert will begin in the environs of **Belfast** where we'll visit magnificent private homes and gardens. We can look forward to special lunches, cocktails and dinners with some of our hosts in their historic properties not usually open to the public. From Belfast we'll make a big swing enroute to Enniskillen to see many of the area's famous sights such as the Antrim Coast, the Giants' Causeway and the town of Derry. Upon arriving in Enniskillen, our garden and home visits continue in **County Fermanagh**. <http://www.discovernorthernireland.com>

We'll bid farewell to Robert Saturday afternoon, leaving Sunday to tour the Sligo area enroute to **Ashford Castle** and the **Connemara** Region. Ashford has just been thoroughly renovated and its grand elegance endures – Waterford Crystal, regal fabrics, dramatic artwork and high-end furnishings.

Please join us!

Geoff Robertson
President
American Travel Association



ITINERARY

August 8, Monday

Departures From Home

- Individual departures

Note: We spend only 2 nights in Belfast. Please indicate on the Reservation Form if you prefer to arrive early August 7th or 8th.

August 9, Tuesday

Arrival in Belfast

- R,D
- After clearing customs, you will be met & transferred to the Merchant Hotel, located in the city center's historic Cathedral Quarter. This former bank was recently renovated and blends Victorian and Art-Deco styling. <https://www.themerchanthotel.com>
 - Our afternoon city tour begins in the Titanic Quarter, developed on the site of the former shipbuilding docks from where vessels like the R.M.S. Titanic were built & launched. The recently opened Titanic Exhibit explains what life was like in Belfast in the early 1900s. We'll explore the shipyard, walk the decks and "travel" to the depths of the ocean in this exhibit. <http://titanicbelfast.com>
 - Welcome reception and dinner tonight at the Merchant.

August 10, Wednesday

Belfast Area

- B,L,D
- Today is filled with home and garden visits organized by Robert in Belfast's environs. Included will be Rosemount in County Down, see picture below.
 - Enjoy lunch and/or dinner in a private home or garden.

August 11, Thursday

Belfast to Enniskillen in County Fermanagh

- B,L,D
- This morning we follow the North Channel along one of Europe's most scenic drives, the Antrim Coast. Enroute we'll see castle towns like Carrick and Ballygally. Fortunately, the town of Bushmills is directly en route, where we'll stop for lunch at the Bushmills Inn. Another national landmark is here, Giant's Causeway, where 40,000 symmetrical basalt columns march from the cliffs down into the sea. <http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/giants-causeway>
 - Heading west/southwest, we stop to visit historic Derry's St. Columbs Cathedral, the *Bloody Sunday* memorial commemorating the troubled civil rights march in 1972. Murals now adorn the city walls reflecting Derry's cultural identity.
 - From here we push on to Lough Erne Resort in Enniskillen, our home for the next 3 nights.
 - We'll dine tonight at Lough Erne.

August 12, Friday

Enniskillen & County Fermanagh

- B,L,D
- Today is spent visiting gardens and houses in the region.
 - Dinner in a private home or at Lough Erne is included tonight.



August 13, Saturday

Enniskillen & County Fermanagh

- B,L
- Robert's program of home and garden visits concludes this morning following lunch.
 - The afternoon and evening are free to relax, shop and explore.

August 14, Sunday

Enniskillen to Ashford Castle

- B,L
- Heading west to Sligo and the Atlantic, our first stop is the market town of Belleek famous for delicate porcelains, a craft that's been handed down for generations.
<http://www.belleekpottery.ie/home> We'll see the ancient villages of Ballyshannon and Mullaghmore before stopping in the Village of Drumcliffe, whose cemetery houses the final resting place of poet W. B. Yeats. We're in an old area of Ireland; in fact, an ancient battle was fought here in A.M. 3656 (1538 BC)
 - The evening is open upon arrival and check-in at Ashford Castle. We're spoiling ourselves as Ashford Castle is *quite* expensive; however, extensive renovation completed in 2015 has returned the Castle to its glory. Our travelers who stayed at Dromoland Castle two years ago remember that wonderful experience and wished that we had stayed two nights.
<http://www.ashfordcastle.com>

August 15, Monday

Ashford Castle & Connemara

- B,D
- The morning is at leisure to enjoy the Castle and its 350 acres.
 - This afternoon we'll explore Connemara beginning with a private boat cruise across Lough Corrib, upon whose shores Ashford resides. The Connemara region is known for windswept mountains, lakes and coastlines, as it also borders the Atlantic Ocean.
 - Farewell celebratory dinner tonight in the Castle.

August 16, Tuesday

Shannon to Home

- B
- We'll make one group transfer this morning to Shannon Airport. Shannon connects directly with some US cities, JFK being the primary U.S. gateway. Dublin is the major airport. We can certainly arrange a transfer to Dublin for those who want to visit that wonderful city. For those returning to the US, Shannon is a nice smaller airport; much easier to navigate and clear security procedures.

(B=breakfast, D=dinner, R=reception included in the tour)

Tour Package Inclusions

- Deluxe hotel accommodations:
 - Two nights Merchant Hotel, Belfast
 - Three nights Lough Erne Golf Resort in Enniskillen
 - Two nights Ashford Castle
- Hotel taxes and portorage
- Irish breakfast daily
- Lunches and dinner at some of the home/garden visits (to be determined)
- Welcome reception and dinner Tuesday night at the Merchant
- Dinner at Lough Erne Thursday
- Dinner Friday
- Farewell dinner at Ashford Castle
- Tours of Northern Ireland & Ireland per itinerary
- Arrival and departure airport/hotel transfers
- Garden and home visits per itinerary
- Guest speaker Tuesday night at the Merchant
- Services of noted author Robert O'Bryne
- Services of an ATA tour director throughout
- Tips to local guides and hotel porters
- Entrance fees
- Fodor's UK Northern Ireland (or similar) guidebook
- Final Advice Memo with trip details

Tour Package Price

\$3,995 per person based on double occupancy

\$5,640 per person single occupancy

- The tour cost includes a tax-deductible contribution of \$200 to the Irish Georgian Society **or** the sponsoring organization of your choice, for which they thank you!

Features not included: items of a personal nature, such as laundry, telephone calls, meals not specified; international airfare. *Please Note* – Coffee, tea and tap water are included with the meals, otherwise, except for the welcome and farewell dinner, wine, alcohol, soft drinks and bottled water are an individual expense.

International Air Reservations - Airfare is not included. If you need help, call Gail Shoop 706-663-4707.

Golfers – We can also organize tee times according to requests. We'll simply divide the transportation costs by the number of players.



Hotel Room Upgrades

- Upgrade costs are for the room for the length of the stay.
- Please note upgrade requests on the Reservation Form.

Merchant - The tour cost is based Victorian category rooms. To upgrade to a Jr. Suite (limited number) the supplemental cost is \$175. www.themerchanthotel.com

Lough Erne – We are booked in Courtyard Rooms. To waitlist a Lake View, the supplement is \$150. It is the same room as Courtyard except the view. They also offer stand-alone 2 bedroom Lodges which share a living room, a short walk from the main building; those en-suite bedrooms are the same as the Courtyards'; that supplement is \$20 <http://www.loughernegolfresort.com/>

Ashford Castle – We're booked in the very nice Corrib Lake View room; to upgrade to a Deluxe Room is \$214; Deluxe Lake View \$244. www.ashfordcastle.com

CONDITIONS

Reservations and Payment: Reservations are confirmed by American Travel Association (ATA), upon receipt of the Reservation Form and deposit. Reservations require a \$500 per person deposit to accompany the Coupon. Receipt of final payment is due in the office of ATA no later than June 8th. All payments must be made by check payable to American Travel Association or by Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express.

Cancellation:

Land Package: A \$250 per person administrative fee will be charged regardless of the reason for cancellation. Penalty on cancellations received up to 60 days prior to departure 50% of the tour price; 60 days or less up to 100% of the tour price depending upon the amount recoverable from the suppliers to whom payment had been sent. Cancellation penalties are required to offset non-refundable hotel and supplier payments made by ATA in advance of the tour. There will be no refunds once the tour has begun.

Cancellations must be made in writing to ATA. To avoid discrepancies, ATA will not act on information given over the phone until written notice has been received.

Health: The Participant represents that neither he nor she nor anyone traveling with him or her has any physical or other condition or disability that could create a hazard to himself or herself or other members of the tour. This program involves walking over uneven surfaces and climbing stairs at locations that are not handicap accessible. A letter of explanation of any physical or mental condition which may require medical attention or special equipment (wheelchair, for example) must be enclosed with the Reservation Form.

Trip cancellation insurance can be obtained from Allianz www.allianztravelinsurance.com either on-line or over the phone (800-284-8300). The airlines also have good insurance options. Trip cancellation insurance is a good idea because it offsets non-refundable air, hotel, and operator charges. Please note the Pre-Existing Conditions Exclusion in the Medical Conditions section. If one exists, you need to purchase the insurance within 14 days of your first payment. Allianz has a number of plans. For most, the Basic Plan is fine. However, everyone has different needs, which you should discuss with them. Also check with your insurance agent to see what is covered under your existing homeowners and medical policies. For example, suitcases and contents are probably covered under your homeowner's.

Airline Contract: The usual passage contract when the ticket is issued shall constitute the sole contract between the airline and the tour participant. ATA and IGS shall not be liable for airline cancellation penalties incurred by purchasing non-refundable tickets.

Prices: The tour price is subject to change due to land cost increases and foreign exchange fluctuation. ATA reserves the right to change the price for such reasons or changes in the number of participants (20) upon which the tour costs are based. All prices are based on rates and tariffs in effect on January 25, 2016.

Weather: Ireland and Vancouver, Canada are on the same latitude. Early August should be quite comfortable. The average August high temperature in Belfast is 62, the average low 50 and 12 days of the month average some rain. However, like anywhere we're subject to changeable conditions (Ireland is known for this). Please look at the 10-day forecast when you begin packing.

Proof of Citizenship and Visa Requirements: A valid passport is required for travel, and it must be valid for 6 months beyond our travel dates. Visas are **not** necessary for American citizens traveling to Ireland or the United Kingdom (N. Ireland).

Tax Deductibility: Current U.S. tax regulations allow deductibility for travel and subsistence expenses incurred in travel related to trade or business. It is the responsibility of the traveler to become familiar with and adhere to the specific reporting requirements imposed.

Responsibility: American Travel Association (ATA), the Irish Georgian Society (IGS) and/or their employees

or agents, act only on behalf of the owners and contractors providing means of transportation or other services such as hotels and restaurants to purchasers of this tour and their travel companions (Participants), subject to any and all items and conditions under which any transportation or any other services whatsoever are provided by such owners and contractors. ATA and IGS their affiliates and their employees and agents (collectively ATA and IGS shall not be liable or responsible to Participants for the acts or omissions of the aforesaid owners, contractors and employees thereof supplying transportation or other services hereunder, including but not limited to breach of contract, intentional or negligent delay or bodily or property loss, injury or damages. All services and accommodations are subject to the laws of the country in which they're provided. ATA and IGS shall not be liable or responsible to Participants for any loss, injury or death, or other damages caused by or resulting from acts of God, fire, breakdown or defects vehicles, machinery or equipment, acts of governments and other authorities, wars, strikes, riots, thefts, epidemics or quarantines, monetary crisis, diseases, terrorism or novel conditions. Participants shall have the responsibility to be aware of and determine the validity of any travel advisories, which may exist. Unless the term "guaranteed" is specifically stated in writing on any invoice or reservation itinerary, ATA and IGS do not guarantee any of such suppliers' rates, bookings or reservations. The Participants' retention of air tickets, reservations or bookings after issuance shall constitute consent to the above terms and conditions. In addition, Participants shall be responsible for conveying the terms and conditions hereunder to travel companions. If, due to weather, flight schedules or other uncontrollable factors, you are required to spend additional nights before or after the tour, participants will be responsible for your own hotel, transfers, meals and related costs. Baggage and personal effects are the sole responsibility of the owners at all times. ATA and IGS reserve the right to cancel any itinerary or any part thereof and to make such alterations in the itinerary they deem necessary or desirable.

Travel Advisories/Warnings: A Warning is not in existence at this time; however, it's the responsibility of the Participant to become informed about the most current travel advisories and warnings by referring to the U. S. State Department's travel website at www.travel.state.gov or by phone at 1-888-407- 4747. In the event of an active State Department Travel Warning against travel to any of the specific destinations included in the tour, should the Participant still choose to travel, notwithstanding any travel advisory or warning, the Participant assumes all risk of personal injury, death or property damage that might arise out of the events like those advised or warned against. The State Department's travel information will be sent by American Travel with the welcome letter

For Information Contact:

Geoff Robertson
American Travel Association
Office: 706-663-2171
Cell: 706-681-3329
e-mail: travelata@aol.com



Rosemount, Grey Abbey, County Down

**Reservation Form *for the* Irish Georgian Society
Northern Ireland Tour 2016**

Name(s) as they appear on your passports _____

Please correspond to the following office home address:

Company (if applicable) _____

Name _____

Street _____ Apt/Suite _____

City _____ State _____ Postal Code _____

Cell phone _____

Other Preferred Phone Office or Home _____

e-mail _____

First or preferred name/s _____

Emergency Contact name/s _____

Emergency Contact e-mail address _____

Phone # _____ Relationship _____

Hotel Rooms I/we prefer 1 bed; if no kings available, queen is OK

If no king, need two beds

I/we prefer a two-bedded room

(preferences will be requested, but cannot be guaranteed)

Room Upgrades (costs per room for length of the stay)

Merchant Hotel Belfast Yes to Jr. Suite \$175

Lough Erne Resort Yes to Lake View \$150 Yes to Lodge \$20 sharing with _____

Ashford Castle Yes to Deluxe \$214. Yes to Deluxe Lake View \$244.

Arrival I/we plan to arrive in Belfast earlier on August _____

Deposit A deposit of \$400 per person is due with the Reservation Form. Payments can be by check, Visa, MasterCard or American Express credit cards. Please note amount of attached/enclosed check (payable to American Travel Association) or credit card charge authorization here- \$_____.

** If you wish to wish to use Visa, MasterCard, Discover or American Express card:

Number _____

Expiration date _____

Name on card _____

Security Code _____

Billing address of cardholder **if different from above:**

Signature _____

I have read and understand the conditions set forth in this brochure. Reservations will not be accepted without signature here.

Return form to: American Travel Association, 2126 Piedmont Lake Road, Pine Mountain, GA 31822

Secure Fax: 706-225-2551, or email: travelata@aol.com

Questions? Contact: Geoff Robertson- office (706-663-2171), cell(706-681-3329), travelata@aol.com