

## RECOMMENDED EQUIPMENT LIST

### ESSENTIALS:

**WATERPROOF JACKET AND OVER-TROUSERS** - You never know when you will need protection from wind and rain so prepare for unpredictable weather by packing a breathable, waterproof jacket and over-trousers.

**BASE LAYER** - This is what you wear against your skin and the best options are breathable and wicking fabrics instead of cotton t-shirts. They will move moisture away from the skin so that you feel more comfortable when you are walking.

**FLEECE** – Will keep you warm in the cooler months and on top of the hills and will allow you to shed layers when you are working hard in the summer.

**LIGHT AND COMFORTABLE TROUSERS** - Make sure you choose trousers that are stretchy or allow enough space to move your legs freely. Jeans/Denims are not suitable for hill walking.

**WICKING SOCKS** - Choose non-cotton socks that fit well and will move moisture away from your feet to stop them feeling sweaty. Some people wear two pairs: a sock liner against the skin and wool or wool-blend socks over that. This will help to reduce the likelihood of rubbing, i.e. blisters and 'hot spots'.

***Our tip:** Apply a little Vaseline or a similar anti-blisters ointment each morning and then put on your socks, this reduces rubbing and helps to prevent blisters.*

**FOOTWEAR** – We recommend you bring comfortable, waterproof, lightweight shoes or boots, that provide good ankle support and offer good grip on rock, grass and mud. Remember that the trails in many of our regions, but especially along the west coast of Ireland, can become quite wet and muddy, after periods of rain.

If you are taking a walking tour in the **Burren**, the **Connemara & the West of Ireland, Dingle** or on the **Great Glen Way**, we recommend you choose your footwear carefully and bring something suitable for prolonged sections of hiking on asphalt or hard packed dirt.

Many walkers find hiking shoes sufficient for the **Speyside Way Whisky Trail**. And for the asphalt section of the **Rob Roy Way**, from Callander to Lochearnhead, many customers also find shoes more comfortable.

For the **South Downs Way** we recommend good soles to help with sections of exposed flint stones. Some walkers bring both light shoes AND boots to be prepared for different terrain.

***Our tip:** If you buy new boots or shoes for you holiday, make sure to try them out on one or two longer walks before your tour!*

**GAITERS** – By covering your upper boot and lower leg these help to keep your feet and trousers dry in wet grass and boggy terrain. We recommended you bring gaiters especially for our tours along the west coast of Ireland and the Cotswold Way, but they are a good thing to have on your feet wherever the ground gets especially wet.

**BACKPACK / RUCKSACK** (with Waterproof Cover or Liner) - To store all your essentials including extra layers of clothing, your waterproofs, first aid kit, camera and your lunch, snacks and drinks. A size of around 20 litres is usually good for day hikes.

***Our tip:** Don't forget how important it is to stay hydrated and bring at least 1 - 2 litres of water per person each day, depending on the weather! Also, make sure to bring some emergency snacks, to help keep your energy up!*

**WARM HAT & GLOVES** – Essential, even in summer, at higher altitudes and on exposed places.

**CASH** – Bring enough for the duration of your tour/hike as ATM & credit card services may be limited (see your Welcome Letter for more details).

## HILLWALK TOURS

*Escape to Nature!*

**FIRST AID KIT**– It's a good idea to have a small, basic first aid kit to deal with little injuries such as sprains, scrapes, cuts and blisters. Good things to bring are plasters, wound dressings, blister plasters, sterile cleansing wipes, pain killers, tweezers (for splinters & ticks), bandages, zinc oxide tape (for blisters or sprains).

**WHISTLE** – This standard piece of hiking equipment is for the very unlikely event you need to signal for help (*the standard signal is three long blasts*).

**TORCH & HIGH VIZ-VEST** (*particularly important for early or late season tours*) – These will help to keep you safe should you have to walk on roads in bad weather or if it gets dark when your walk takes longer than expected. A torch can also light your way on off-road sections.

**MOBILE PHONE** – We strongly recommend that you bring or purchase a mobile/cell phone. It will allow you to contact your accommodation and transfer providers from the trail and call for help in an emergency.

### **Visitors from European Countries:**

Most European bill pay and prepay customers can use roaming in Ireland and, for the time being, many can also do so in the UK (Scotland, England, Wales & Northern Ireland) without additional costs. But please check this with your operator before you travel.

### **Visitors from the United States, Canada and elsewhere:**

Make sure that you have a GSM/UMTS phone compatible with European networks and a roaming service / suitable phone plan for the country you are travelling to.

If your phone is unlocked and GSM/UMTS compatible, you can also purchase an Irish or UK SIM card from a variety of mobile phone stores and supermarkets and use it in your own phone. Alternatively, you can purchase a cheap pre-pay phone when you arrive. It is possible to buy a very basic pre-pay phone for as little as €20 or £15. You can then top-up with vouchers or a credit/debit card.

**Our tip:** To dial '+' (for international calls), simply hold down the 0 on the dialling screen of your cell phone.

*Make sure your phone is fully charged before you start your walk. Please note that you might not always have a phone signal on the trail but, in general, the level of coverage is quite good.*

*If you have a smartphone, we recommend you have a mapping app like Google Maps installed and your location/GPS service turned on. This will let us better help you should you need assistance while on the trail by identifying your location.*

**PLUG ADAPTER (CONVERTER)** – 3-square pin plugs are used in Ireland and the UK – voltage is 230V.

## **ADDITIONAL SUGGESTIONS:**

**SUN CREAM, SUNGLASSES AND SUNHAT** (April to Sept) – Let's hope you'll need those ☺

**MIDGE/INSECT REPELLENT** (May to September only) – Can be useful for all regions, but it is especially important for Scotland. There you might even consider bringing a **midge net**.

**CAMERA** – Vital for capturing photos of the stunning scenery, which help you brag to your friends about your holiday.

**WALKING POLES** – Assist forward movement and balance, reduce impact on your knees, and help with balance in difficult terrain. A pair is best but many hikers also just use one.

**COMPASS** – A compass (and the ability to use it), although useful, is not an absolute requirement on your walking tour.

**EARPLUGS** – We know how important it is to get a good night's rest. However, as there may be other guests in the guesthouse with different plans for their night, we recommend bringing a pair of earplugs to ensure sweet dreams!