

### **The area and terrain**

This is a moderate tour and suitable for experienced cyclists of average fitness. Although you will be carrying your own luggage, distances each day are not great (average of 40miles/64kms) and there is scope for taking up to three rest days. The terrain is undulating rather than hilly. We will mainly be following river valleys and the coastline. Where we do cross mountains the climbs are not long or steep. There will however be scope for cycling greater distances and an optional ascent of Mt Leinster. After a leisurely crossing with Irish Ferries from Pembroke we arrive at Rosslare harbour. From here we cycle north to the old Viking port of Wexford.

On the second day there will be an opportunity to visit the Irish National Heritage Park before cycling north along the Slaney river to the attractive town of Enniscorthy with its excellent 1798 museum. Continuing north and then west we cross through (rather than over) the Blackstairs Mountains to unspoilt Graiguenamanagh with its beautiful riverside setting and traditional pubs. Here we stay two nights.

The third day can either be taken as a rest day or for exploring the Blackstairs Mountains with optional rides of varying lengths including the challenging ascent of Mt Leinster.

On the fourth day we cycle SW to picture perfect Inistioge and down the most scenic stretch of the Nore valley to New Ross where there will be an opportunity to visit the SS Dunbrody Famine Ship. Continuing south along the river Barrow we cross by ferry to Passage East and on to Ireland's oldest city, Waterford. Highlights include several museums (including the hi-tech Waterford Treasures exhibition) and the Waterford Crystal Factory.

The fifth day sees us cycling west along the beautiful Suir valley through Sean Kelly's birthplace, Carrick-on-Suir, and the old market town of Clonmel to our hotel 6km west of Cahir. Here we stay three nights.

The next two days can be taken as rest days or for short rides to explore local sights such as Cahir's spectacular castle and the Mitchelstown Caves and the complex network of rural lanes. A ride around the Galtee Mountains and through the picturesque Glen of Aherlow (with optional extension to Tipperary) will be organised on the seventh day. The following day we head south through a gap in the Knockmealdown Mountains to the beautifully situated Lismore, home of travel writer Dervla Murphy. There will be an opportunity to visit Lismore castle and/or museum before cycling east to the coastal port of Dungarvan. From here an optional afternoon ride will explore the rugged and unspoilt Irish-speaking area of An Rinn. On the ninth day we head east along the picturesque coastline to the seaside resort of Tramore with its 5km dune backed beach.

The day will include plenty of time to explore some of the many beaches and coves.

The final day's cycling takes us back over the ferry from Passage East, through Wellington Bridge to the quaint fishing village of Kilmore Quay. From here we return to Rosslare where we overnight before catching the morning ferry back to Pembroke.