

Kerry Camino



*Walk in the steps of
St Brendan, The Navigator*



St.JohnsChurch,Tralee



Windmill at
Blennerville



FoxglovesatAnnagh

During the years 512AD to 530AD it is told that Saint Brendan went forth from here to spread the word of God.

He trekked by foot with some of his fellow Monks west along the foot of the Slieve Mish Mountains which lie to the south of the path which he walked. This was a journey of fasting, prayer and contemplation. It is said that he sailed in a small craft to the Island of Iona from where he journeyed for seven years, a voyage which would lead him and his followers to the shores of what was later described as the New World and which are now known as The Americas. This voyage was later recreated by the great adventurer Tim Severin. He voyaged in a leather-clad boat fashioned in the manner of such crafts used in the 6th century. The stories of Brendan's Voyages caused pilgrims and students to flock from all over Europe to his abbey in Ardfert.

We invite you to go as a walker or pilgrim on this journey of contemplation. We invite you to "walk in the steps of Saint Brendan."

The Kerry Camino is such a journey and is so named because of its links to the Camino De Santiago (The way of Saint James) in Spain.

The shells which we have as our emblem are those found in Kerry and are similar to the shells which are the symbol associated with The Camino De Santiago. Walking this route will see you complete your journey at the Church Of Saint James, Dingle, which is believed to be one of the starting points for the Camino De Santiago, where pilgrims sailed out of Dingle Bay to the port of Corona in Spain where they joined The Way of Saint James.

DAY 1 - TRALEE TO CAMP

Distance: 18km | Ascent: 200m | Time: 5 - 7 hours

The Kerry Camino starts in Tralee at the Church of St. John the Baptist. A sign for the official start can be found at the church entrance. A quick stroll through the park will lead to Princes Street where a left turn continues through Princes Quay and on to a busy roundabout. Turning right here will set the Kerry Camino in motion as the trail quickly escapes the town traffic by joining the gentle curve of the canal path for 2km to Blennerville.

The walk along the canal comes to an end upon reaching a bridge opposite the Blennerville Windmill. At this point, the Kerry Camino branches off from a second trail called the 'North Kerry Way' and crosses the canal to approach the village.



Tralee Bay



Sliabh Mish Mountains

The Kerry Camino follows the main N86 road to Dingle for a short distance when passing through Blennerville. After crossing the canal and bridge, the trail takes the second left turn and follows some quieter country back roads that gradually start to rise up into the flanks of the Slieve Mish mountain range. After around 3km, the trail eventually reaches Tonevane and sharply turns west and out into the open mountainside.

The following section of the Kerry Camino can get quite marshy and is dotted with large red sandstone rocks which have been laid for use as stepping stones. A pair of gaiters is of great advantage as it's almost inevitable that at some point a foot will go astray and end in bog that could be ankle deep.

As the Kerry Camino passes the entrances to several impressive glacial valleys, a number of streams make their way towards the

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The final section of the walk comes down into a valley, crosses the Finglas River and takes in a short uphill stretch before meeting a minor road. The turn to the right leads downhill for around 1km to Camp Village. The road straight ahead continues in the direction of Dingle. This village is ideal for your first overnight and whether it is simply resting over a pint and sharing the experiences of the day or enjoying some of the local characters and eateries you are sure not to be disappointed.



Kerry Camino



DAY 2 - CAMP TO ANNASCAUL

Distance: 17km | Ascent: 270m | Time: 5 - 7 hours

Leaving Camp Village, the terrain over the next section of the Kerry Camino is a lot more negotiable than the previous stage as it follows minor roads that are so rarely used it would come as a surprise to see a car on one. Re-joining the trail to the west of the Finglas River crossing, the Kerry Camino follows a straight south-westerly direction for 2km, gradually rising out from the valley. Views of Caherconree Mountain (835m) and the impressive premonitory megalithic fort perched close to its top are behind, to the east of the valley, and provide the main focal point of interest.

Small stacks of cut turf dot the landscape as the trail gradually starts to descend towards a small plantation of coniferous trees. This is the



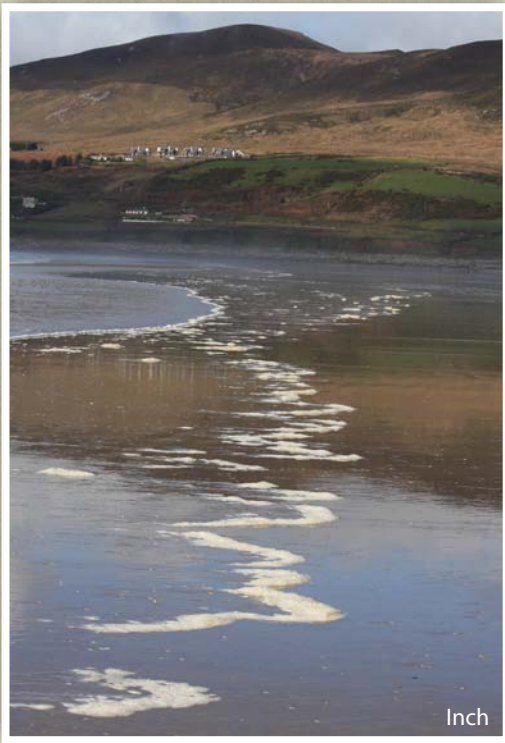
Road near Annascaul



Meet the locals on The Kerry Camino



Kerry Camino - Inch Strand



only sizeable forest on the entire Kerry Camino and continues for 2km before emerging and joining a minor back road heading south. Keep an eye out for cars coming along this road as the noise from the Emlagh River might drown them out. The Kerry Camino briefly follows the course of this road until it crosses the Emlagh River whereupon it exits up a rough track with a short ascent. The trail gradually swings around to the west and reveals a spectacular view of

Inch Beach where the continuous stream of frothing waves come crashing ashore. There is a welcome opportunity to take a break at Inch Beach with a café, shop and a pub nearby serving lunch. This famous setting is where parts of Ryan's Daughter were filmed at the end of the 1960s.

After regaining some strength and starting back on the trail, the Kerry Camino starts to ascend behind a line of houses that face out towards the bay. The walk gradually edges its way inland aiming for Maum at a height of 180m above sea-level. Between Inch and Annascaul the majority of the route is on small roads, with the exception of a small excursion across a field.

Rounding the small summit of Knockafeehane, there is a spectacular view of Lough Annascaul as it rests in the arms of a dramatic u-shaped glacial valley. In some of the fields in the more immediate foreground, keep a watchful eye for some ancient standing stones. The road stretches out in a perfectly straight line which is very uncharacteristic of the area, with the final 2km bringing the walker into the heart of Annascaul. This village is most famous as the birthplace of Tom Crean the great explorer and his home lies on the site where the South Pole Inn is now located (aptly named). This village has excellent accommodation and a number of hostels that will see you fed and watered at the end of your day. The walker will also experience the wonderful culture and heritage that associates itself with this famous west Kerry town. The Kerry Camino reaches a height of 235m as it crosses a saddle between the peaks of Corrin and Knockbrack. The trail then follows an equidistant line between the long mountain ridge of Moanlaur and Knockmore on the left and the main Tralee - Dingle road across the valley to the right.



DAY 3 - ANNASCAUL TO DINGLE

Distance: 22km | Ascent: 340m | Time: 5 - 7 hours



Departing Annascaul, the Kerry Camino briefly joins the busy Tralee-Dingle road before finding a quieter road that twists and turns for a little over 4km before finally descending to sea level beside the magnificent ruin of the 16th century

Minard Castle. This lonely beach makes a great break for enjoying the views across Dingle Bay towards the Iveragh Peninsula.

Leaving the strand, the Dingle Way rises steeply up a narrow path and goes on to follow some classic Irish bothairins (boreens) and minor roads that weave around the surrounding farmland for the next 6km. Walkers should be particularly careful in following the directions from the Ordnance Survey Map along this section as there have been reports of people getting confused with signposts for the Tom Crean Trail.

Before reaching Lispole, an awe-inspiring vista of the mountain range to the north comes into view with Croaghskearda (608m) and An Cnapán Mór (649m) being the more dominant peaks. Having crossed the main N86 road the trail heads north in the direction of Croaghskearda Mountain.



TobarEoin,Minard



St. James Church, Dingle

After following a minor road for around 2km the path cuts across farmland and rises onto the lower mountain slopes. This part of the Kerry Camino lasts for around 5km and can get quite mucky. Walkers would be well-advised to wear a pair of gaiters. Also, expect to be passing farm animals such as sheep and cows.

A bridge crossing the Garfinny River sees the Kerry Camino re-aligning itself in a south-westerly direction and heading straight for the town of Dingle. The trail traverses the popular motorist drive through Conor Pass heading to the north. The Kerry Camino finishes at St. James Church on Main Street. However this final 4km downhill road section will seem to draw out for an eternity for those with tired legs as the town is visible from such a distance. The wait however is well worth it as you will be entering one of the great towns in West Kerry famous for its dolphin, pubs and restaurants. This will prove a fitting end to what will have been a unique and enjoyable three day experience.

The Kerry Camino Walk Information Pack can be picked up at Tralee Tourist Office. Please follow signage, as illustrated below. Certificates of Completion are available at Dingle Tourist Office. For further information, please see our website.



1. Green on left/yellow on right
- straight ahead
2. Green on top/yellow below
- right turn ahead
3. Yellow on top/green below
- left turn ahead.

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