
Reading and Movies

We do carry a portable library on tour, but you may also be interested in the following books. Be sure to check out the blog portion of our website at www.experienceplus.com/blog for additional suggestions and to read reviews.

Guidebooks

We recommend any of the standard, current guidebooks such as Fodor's, Frommer's, Lonely Planet, or Rick Steves. We like the *Cadogan Guide* series for how they're written and for fun historic anecdotes. Some of these may be out of print, so don't use them for hotels, or restaurants, but they are fine as general guides.

For encyclopedic history and art, we recommend the "Blue Guide" series of guidebooks, available for the country.

Literature on Ireland

- J.M. Synge. The Aran Islands, (Penguin 20th Century Classics). Recounts Synge's travels to the Aran Islands in the 1930s.
- William Trevor (Editor). The Oxford Book of Irish Short Stories. Good traveling companion as it is an easy, yet very enjoyable read.
- James Joyce. The Dubliners (Modern Library).
- Thomas Cahill. How the Irish Saved Civilization: The Untold Story of Ireland's Heroic Role from the Fall of Rome to the Rise of Medieval Europe (Hinges of History). Big title and tall order for a short book but still interesting reading if you are interested in the Medieval period of Irish history, how Saint Patrick came to "save Ireland" AND western civilization!
- Leon Uris. Trinity. A "Michneresque" historical novel about the terrible divide between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland. An interesting way to review your Irish history.
- Anne Chambers. Granuaile: The Life and Times of Grace O'Malley (Wolfhound Press, 1998, revised).
- Hawks, Tony. Round Ireland with a Fridge. An entirely silly, heartwarming tale told in a rollicking funny and refreshing style about an Englishman who finds himself hitchhiking in Ireland with a fridge after a late-night bet.

Tim Robinson, philosopher, geographer, cartographer, and wanderer, has spent 28 years walking, exploring, and mapping the Aran Islands and Connemara by hand. It is rare in the computer age to find a Merriwether Lewis or William Clark figure who combines the philosophical perspective of a Michel de Montaigne. But Tim Robinson does this in three fascinating volumes on the west of Ireland. Difficult to find.

- Tim Robinson. Stones of Aran: Pilgrimage, (Penguin Books, 1986); Stones of Aran: Labyrinth, (Penguin Books, 1995); Setting Foot on the Shores of Connemara & Other Writings, (Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 1996).

Literature by Irish authors

- Maeve Binchy. Evening Class; Circle of Friends; Tara Road. Binchy has written several novels based in Ireland. Her books have appeared on the New York Times Best Seller list. Pleasurable, entertaining reading.
- Angela's Ashes or Tis' by Frank McCourt: Irish-American author Frank McCourt recounts his childhood growing up in Brooklyn during the Depression his parents immigrate from Limerick, Ireland. This book is written in a brutal tone about the hardships of McCourt's childhood.
- Murphy, Dervla. A touring cyclist and walker, Dervla Murphy has written travel adventure stories of her travels in the Balkans (published April 2004), SE Asia, Africa and India, she is a delight to read as you prepare for your adventure to her home.

- Enjoy all the “Irish Country” novels by Patrick Taylor. He writes of two doctors in the colorful town of Ballybucklebo.
- C.S. Lewis and Samuel Beckett are both Irish authors as well with multiple books.

Literature on Cycling

- *The Cyclist's Training Bible* by Joe Friel.
- *Miles from Nowhere* by Barbara Savage. One of the best-written bicycle adventure stories available.
- *Bicycling Magazine* regularly carries articles on training and technique. Visit your local library on a Sunday afternoon and peruse their collection.
- *Effective Cycling* by John Foresters. Tells you everything you could possibly need to know and more, including safety, maintenance, technique and the physiology of cycling.

Movies About or Set in Ireland That We Have Enjoyed

- *The Secret of Roan Inish*, directed by John Sayles. Starring Jeni Courtney, Mick Lally, and Eileen Colgan. A family story that portrays life and folklore on a small Irish island. Beautifully filmed with a lilting Celtic soundtrack.
- *Ryan's Daughter*, starring Sarah Miles, Robert Mitchum, John Mills, Trevor Howard, Leo McKern. In 1916 Ireland, a rural schoolmaster's wife falls in love with a British major and is ostracized for betraying her country.
- *Barry Lyndon*, directed by Stanley Kubrick; starring Ryan O'Neal, Marisa Berenson, Partick Magee, Hardy Kruger. Thackeray's satirical novel brought to life in one of the most visually stunning movies ever made. A roguish Irish peasant rises from obscurity to wealth and position during the period of the Seven Years War between England and France.
- *Waking Ned Devine*, directed by Kirk Jones III, starring Ian Bannen, David Kelly, Fionnula Flanagan. A comedy about what happens when a local is found dead and has the winning lottery ticket is discovered next to him.
- *The Quiet Man*, directed by John Ford, starring John Wayne and Maureen O'Hara about an American boxer who returns to his hometown in Cork, Ireland and falls in love. This classic story, released in 1952, has its elements of drama mixed with heroism & small town deceit. Check out John Wayne's alleged 'favorite film,' and see why it garnered 7 Academy Award nominations and 2 wins.
- *Once*, a drama about a Dubliner busker and Czech flower girl who share a love of music. Take a trip into the back streets and beautiful landscapes of Ireland and enjoy the soundtrack that is brilliantly weaved through the film.
- *My Left Foot*, directed by Jim Sheridan and nominated for 5 Academy Awards in 1989. Tells the true story of cerebral palsy victim Christy Brown, who grows up in Dublin with his family and only has the use of his left foot, as the rest of his limbs were paralyzed. Daniel Day Lewis plays the adult Christy Brown, and won the Academy Award for best actor for his performance. This film tells a heart-wrenching yet inspiring story about an accomplished and afflicted man set in 1930-era Ireland.
- *The Field*, directed by Jim Sheridan and starring Richard Harris. It tells the story of the hardened farmer “Bull” McCabe and his love for the land he rents. The filming occurred in Connemara, particularly Leenane.
- *Michael Collins*, directed by Jim Sheridan. The story of Michael Collins as he led the IRA against British rule in 1920's and established the Irish Free State.
- *Bloody Sunday*: A movie about January 30, 1972, better known as Bloody Sunday. A good luck at the attempts to organize a peaceful protest after Catholics imprison Protestants without a trial.
- *In America*: A look at an Irish family immigrating to the United States of America.
- *In the Name of the Father*: A movie starring Daniel Day-Lewis about a man wrongly convicted of taking part in and IRA bombing.
- *Philomena* (2013), starring Judi Dench and Steve Coogan tells the story of a woman's search for the son that was taken from her when she was forced to live in a convent as a young pregnant unmarried woman.

