

Achill Island Experience

in the footsteps of Heinrich Böll

13 – 20 July 2026



Accommodation:



Stella Maris B+B



Achill Isle House

Both houses are located close to the beach, have friendly labdladies and offer a delicious Irish breakfast, some rooms have sea views. Achill Isle House is a little less luxurious than Stella Maris and therefore a little less expensive.



Keel Beach



Deserted Village



Böll's Cottage



Cliffs of Achill

We will be staying at beautiful Keel Beach and explore Achill on easy hikes and by E-bike, take a boat trip to Clare Island and cruise through the numerous islands of Clew Bay, listen to readings from Böll's «*Irishem Tagebuch*» accompanied by Catherine Rhatigan's harp playing, enjoy traditional music sessions in the pubs and there will be plenty of time for your own discoveries.

**with Elizabeth Zollinger: Ireland expert
and Catherine Rhatigan, musician**

**Registration: as soon as possible, by 1 May 2026 at the latest
to Elizabeth Zollinger, Neumarkt 11, 8001 Zürich
0041 77 5200136/ 044 2520918
info@irish-culture.ch/ www.irish-culture.ch**

**Information and registration:
Elizabeth Zollinger, 044 2520918
info@irish-culture.ch/www.irish-culture.ch**

Programme:

Day 1: Individual arrival in Westport, 6.15 p.m. meeting at the train station and transport to Achill, dinner en route. Overnight stay in two beautiful B&Bs.

Day 2: Morning: hike to the Deserted Village with Gerard Mangan, afternoon free, evening reading from Böll's «Irisches Tagebuch» with harp music by Catherine Rhatigan. (walk: 1-2 hrs.)

Day 3: Boat trip to Clare Island, the story of pirate Grace O'Malley, hike on the Green Road and visit to hand weaver Beth Moran, dinner in «Guities» (walk: 2 hrs.)

Day 4: Morning: free time, afternoon: walk along the beach and turf cutting with Pat Jack, who still cuts turf by hand, and fascinating information about the bog by Kevin Toolis, dinner and traditional session in the beautiful Valley House. (walk: 2 hrs.)

Day 5: Hike (Coastal Walk Adventure) with fascinating information about history, flora, and fauna with Gerard Mangan (walk: 3-4 hours, can be shortened).

Day 6: Discover the island by e-bike (or bus transport): ancient burial mound, Heinrich Böll Cottage, beautiful beaches and the Colony Tour with Kevin Toolis, farewell dinner at the Cliff House Hotel.

Day 7: Transport to Westport, Clew Bay Cruise through the 365 islands, seal colony, John Lennon's Island, Croagh Patrick, evening session in one of Westport's famous pubs, overnight stay at the ****Castle Hotel and Spa.

Day 8: Return to Dublin by train and onward or return journey.

The hikes are easy, lasting 1-3 hours, and if you don't like hiking, there are plenty of other activities to choose from:

Swimming and other beach activities, Beach Sauna, Seaweed Bath, Achill Aquarium Experience, Sea Salt Visitor Centre, hiking on your own trails, drinking a Guinness in a pub or coffee in the village, and many more.

We will be staying in two different B&Bs with very friendly hosts, both located close to the beach.

Achill Isle House: a cosy and friendly B&B, run by our guide Gerard Mangan and his wife Sheila, some rooms with sea views.

Stella Maris: a more luxurious house with beautiful rooms, some with sea views. (therefore slightly more expensive).

Costs: with 14-16 participants in a double room: **CHF 1350.- in the Achill Isle House/ CHF 1540.- in Stella Maris.**

Small group supplement for fewer than 14 participants.

In the event of significant exchange rate fluctuations, prices will be adjusted upwards or downwards.

Travel costs: Flight Zurich-Dublin-Zurich: from CHF 400.- (as of Nov. 2025), train Dublin-Westport-Dublin: CHF 30.-. Flights are booked individually online or at a travel agency. This allows you to extend your trip or arrive earlier.

Included: 6 nights with Irish breakfast in B&Bs in Keel, 1 night in a double room at the Castle Hotel in Westport, 3 dinners, all shared transport and activities as per the programme.

Not included: Travel: flight and train, lunch, other dinners, drinks and tips..

Surcharges: Single room for 6 nights **in Keel: CHF 150.-** (Achill Isle House)/ **CHF 250.-** (Stella Maris).

Rooms, single rooms and sea view rooms will be allocated in order of registration.



Clew Bay