

Ireland



2
DAY
ITINERARY

A landscape photograph showing a river flowing through a field of tall, golden-brown grass. In the background, a large, rounded hill or mountain rises under a clear blue sky with some light clouds. The text 'SAINT PATRICK'S TRAIL' is overlaid in large white letters on the river and grass.

SAINT PATRICK'S TRAIL



SAINT PATRICK'S TRAIL

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Soaring cathedrals, crumbling monastic ruins and magnificent landscapes, all united by one incredible story. Trace the tale of St Patrick and his intriguing journey from slave to patron saint of Ireland on a trip that explores his legacy across Northern Ireland.

SAINT PATRICK'S TRAIL

DAY 1

MORNING

Commemorate the humble foundations of St Patrick's first church in Northern Ireland, the towering cathedrals named in his honour and the memorial that marks his final resting place.

We're entering Downpatrick in County Down, where St Patrick first started his mission to spread Christianity in Ireland. Captured as a slave in Wales and brought to Ireland, young Patrick initially escaped and fled these shores but found himself called back here in a dream. Returning to Ireland, he set about his quest to convert pagans by the thousands. So effective was Patrick that one new convert, a local chieftain, donated a barn in which Patrick could hold his services. It was here, just outside Downpatrick, that Patrick lived until his death in 461AD. **Saul Church** was built to honour this sacred site in 1933.

AFTERNOON

Poignantly, Downpatrick is also where St Patrick is believed to be buried – under a memorial stone, a short walk from the soaring crenulations of **Down Cathedral**. Pay your respects to the man who shaped Christian Ireland, or wander through the inspiring halls of **The Saint Patrick Centre**, which celebrates his life with interactive exhibits and stories that bring you closer to this extraordinary figure.

EVENING

As you walk the narrow streets of Armagh, keep watch for hidden gargoyles, chimeras and angels that linger in nooks and crannies and peek out over windows on buildings. However, the real stars of the city are the **twin cathedrals** – one Church of Ireland, one Roman Catholic – dedicated to St Patrick that sit atop Armagh's two hills. St Patrick founded his main church here in 445AD on the spot where the Church of Ireland cathedral now stands. Explore the glorious edifices and then refuel at **Uluru Bar & Grill** with some well-earned and award-winning food.

2 DAY ITINERARY



SAINT PATRICK'S TRAIL

DAY 2

MORNING

It's time for serene landscapes and tranquil lakes as you move from the mountains of County Antrim to the glassy waters of Lough Derg in County Donegal, all imprinted with St Patrick's legacy and legend.

Rising like a behemoth from the gently undulating landscape of County Antrim, **Slemish Mountain** is where everything began for the teenage Patrick. Brought over as a slave from Wales, Patrick spent six years tending sheep here, and it feels like the landscape has barely changed since. It was on these slopes that Patrick found consolation in prayer, and you can walk the 2km trail up to the summit of Slemish and enjoy the same views that Patrick would have gazed upon over a millennium ago.

AFTERNOON

In the middle of **Lough Derg** in County Donegal, surrounded on all sides by crystalline waters and gently lapping waves, sits St Patrick's Purgatory. Named for the cave where St Patrick spent time praying, this island is now a haven for pilgrims from all over the world, and a sanctuary of retreat, reflection and serenity. Two tales permeate these waters. One sees Patrick hunting the last snake in Ireland and turning the lake red with its blood, while the other has Christ revealing the entrance to Hell to Patrick inside a cave.

EVENING

Treat yourself to a relaxing evening at **Finn Lough**, a luxury hideaway in County Fermanagh. Finn Lough sits on a 50-acre peninsula on the shores of Lough Erne. A place of quiet seclusion, the accommodation ranges from the traditional to the highly unique with lakeside houses, luxury guest rooms and Forest Bubble Domes. After reconnecting with nature at the Elements Trail Spa and the Shoreline Spa, enjoy dinner at The Barn, where the kitchen team prepares small plates with locally sourced, seasonal produce and creates a dining experience that highlights the provenance and quality of Irish fare.



**SAINT
PATRICK'S
TRAIL**

**TWO MORE
FOR THE ROAD!**

Escape the hustle and bustle of modern life on a unique journey of mind, body and soul in St Patrick's country – County Down, Northern Ireland. Walk **St Patrick's Camino** with your guide, following in the footsteps of Ireland's patron saint. Stay in an Irish monastic foundation and learn about meditation, journaling and Celtic spirituality (4-5 days).

Where better to celebrate Ireland's patron saint than the very place he called home? Armagh and Down are where Patrick founded his first churches way back in the 5th century. And it's here that the **Home of St Patrick Festival** takes place every year in March, with a lively showcase of the best culture, music, song and dance from Northern Ireland.

*This is a sample itinerary to offer suggestions and ideas for planning trips.
You can contact your local Tourism Ireland representative for further information.*