

Finger Lakes Fibers presents
Spinning an Irish Yarn: Fiber Myth & Tradition in the Emerald Isles
(or In Search of the Perfect Aran Sweater)

October 9-19, 2008

This one of a kind travel opportunity will focus on Ireland, the land, history and people and how an island nation developed one of the most vibrant fiber art traditions known today. We will begin in the western part of the country in the city of Galway, spend a day in the Aran Islands then head to Westport, a gem of a town that will transport us back about forty years to experience old world Ireland. From the west we will cross the country via private motor-coach to explore Dublin.

We have carefully crafted this itinerary to show you the magic that is Ireland and to present a greater understanding of how the landscape has influenced Irish knitwear designers past and present. We will enjoy great fiber traditions, great landscapes, great food, great music and great company.

Mary Farrell Rachun, Edventures, Trumansburg, NY
Mary Jeanne Packer, Finger Lakes Fibers, Watkins Glen, NY
Tour Directors

ITINERARY

Thursday, October 9th:

Travel to Ireland via Shannon airport on your own – plan to arrive by 12 noon Friday, Oct. 10. Alternatively, a group is leaving from Rochester, NY; and people may want to fly from there together taking advantage of a package price that has been negotiated.

Friday, October 10th:

Motorcoach will meet our group at Shannon airport following our noontime arrival; and bring us to Galway via Cliffs of Moher to settle into lodging in Galway. Afternoon at leisure to rest, knit, or wander. Evening group dinner and tour overview.



Saturday, October 11th:

The three Aran Islands - Inis Mór (Big Island), Inis Meáin (Middle Island) and Inis Óirr (East



Island) - lie on the most westerly edge of Europe, across the mouth of Galway Bay. Fishing and farming are the main industries on these islands; and there is a great need for warm, protective clothing. The Aran Islands are richly unique with landscapes of limestone rock, a stretch of cliffs facing the moods of the Atlantic, large boulders, rock formations, and unusually clean beaches. It is also a place steeped in cultural heritage and history. Gaelic language is the first language of its residents. It is considered the foothold of Irish culture. The Islands themselves are an outdoor museum of artifacts of religious and cultural importance.

Our journey to Inis Meáin (Middle Island) by ferry will be weather dependent. We will visit the Inis Meáin Knitting Company and learn of their evolution to one of the premier knit design firms in the world, based on one of the remotest islands on the planet. We will visit the knitting company's island factory store which has an extensive range of their garments available at special prices for visitors. Lunch included.

In the evening, we will return to Galway. Dinner on your own followed by an evening of Irish music.

Sunday, October 12

We will depart from Galway and travel via motor coach to the Spiddal Craft Center where we will have our **first class of the tour – in Aran knitting**, of course! Drawing their inspiration from the landscape and culture of the Gaeltacht of Connemara, the crafts people who work, display and sell their products at the Spiddal Craft Center produce a range of handcrafted quality products which is representative of this area. We will be able to observe the crafts in the making and chat with the master crafts people in the individual studios. The variety of products includes pottery, candle making, leather working, woodturning, jewelry making, hand weaving, silk painting and batik.

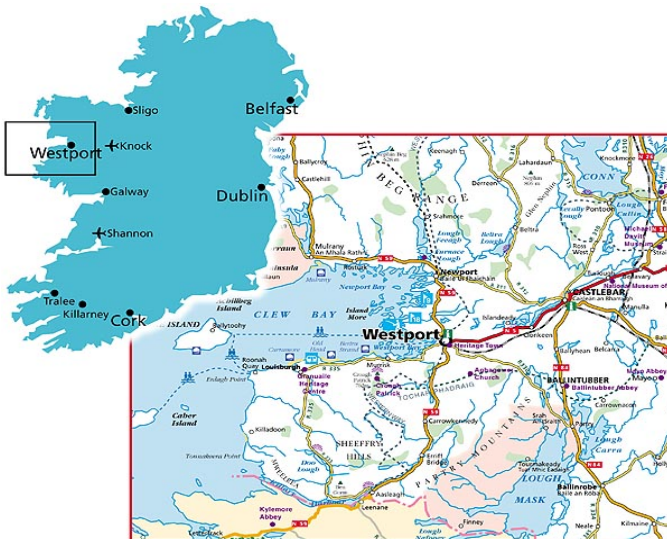
Following lunch on our own at the Café at the Craft Center, we will return to Galway. In the afternoon we will meet at Ó'Máilles of Galway, a wonderful store specializing in Aran knits. Anne O'Maille is planning to open the store exclusively for our group and she will meet with us to talk about her company and her **concept of Aran knit design**. Anne's daughter Niamh is an expert designer and knitter and she will give us a demonstration of her specialized knitting style. This is truly a one of a kind knitting experience.

Established in 1938, this shop became famous in the 1950s for outfitting the entire cast of the film *The Quiet Man* and has done a fabulous business ever since in Irish tweeds, knitwear, and Aran knits. According to owner Anne O'Maille, "Our store is famous for its selection of the highest quality, hand knitted traditional Aran sweaters, made by Ireland's best and most creative knitters". Anne O'Maille employs 170 knitters from a number of rural Irish counties.

Monday, October 13th:

We will drive via private motorcoach from Galway to Connemara to visit the Leenane Sheep and Wool Centre. The North Connemara hills are steeped in sheep and wool tradition, and at Sheep and Wool Centre this history is depicted in pictorial and live forms. Several breeds of sheep, some of them ancient western European breeds, graze in a unique setting of pleasant walks and spectacular views. These sheep are gathered by a collie dog, and we will be free to mingle with the flock, try to identify different breeds or take home a photograph of a Neolithic sheep. The use of advanced breeding programs to produce more meat and wool has played havoc with indigenous sheep breeds over the past 500 years. Efforts are now being made to conserve the existing gene pool and prevent further deterioration.

Some of the looms and spinning wheels at the Centre are reactivated as an important part of Irish culture. There is an increasing awareness of the value of the hand made materials and environmentally friendly production systems. Dyeing of wool has been practiced for thousands of years in this area and the use of plants, lichens, insects and shellfish to produce a wide range of colors is a fascinating study.



This afternoon we will travel to Westport, our home for the next three days. Westport was designated one of Bord Failte's Heritage Towns and is situated in the shadow of Croagh Patrick, Ireland's Holy Mountain overlooking Clew Bay. One of the few planned towns in the country, Westport was designed in the 18th Century by James Wyatt. It has become one of Ireland's established tourism centers, with many outstanding features, most notably the beautiful tree lined boulevard known as The Mall, running parallel to the Carrowbeg River.

After checking into our hotel, we will have lunch on our own and spend the late afternoon at leisure to explore the town or a group may want to take a three-hour hike up Croagh Patrick. Following dinner on your own, we will meet at Hoban's or Malloy's pub with our friend Olcan Masterson for a few sets of Irish traditional music.

"Ireland leaves memories – warm and indelible - with everyone who visits her. Living here in County Mayo, on the west coast, I am fortunate to be able to share those memories and search out new experiences with visiting musicians and others who pass by and often stay. Mayo has a magical quality. As a traditional Irish musician and visitors' guide, I meet many people – walkers, artists, photographers – who come here to experience that magic" - Olcan Masterson



Tuesday, October 14th

We will depart Westport in the morning and head to Castlebar where we will visit the National Museum of Ireland's Museum of Country Life – the latest addition to the National Museum of Ireland and the first branch of the National Museum to be situated outside of Dublin. The museum opened to the public in September 2001. The exhibitions portray the lives of ordinary people who lived in rural Ireland in the period 1850 – 1950. Emphasis is placed on the continuity of lifestyles, which were established for several hundred years and which lasted well into the 20th century. We will have a docent-led tour of the museum and look at clothing manufacturing and Irish fiber arts through the ages. **A special fiber arts demonstration just for our group is also being planned.**

This afternoon we will head to Kylemore Abbey, monastic home of the Benedictine order of nuns in Ireland. No visit to Ireland, and especially to the West of Ireland and Connemara, is complete without experiencing the beauty and tranquility that is Kylemore Abbey & Garden. We will have lunch here (on our own), then tour the chapel, mansion and pottery shop. The gardens were restored in 2002 and we will see the foliage in its fall splendor.



On our return to Westport, we hope to stop in at the world-famous **Westport Pottery for a demonstration** by one of their master potters. Following dinner on your own, you may want to visit and knit or explore some of the many pubs in the area (or both!).

Wednesday, October 15th:

This morning we will travel south out of Westport to Derryaun Crafts in the Sheefry House, a tastefully restored stone-built farm cottage in Derryaun, surrounded by the Partry and Sheefry Mountains and Croagh Patrick. We are planning to break the group up for a choice of **classes with Derryaun Crafts' teachers where we will be learning dying and spinning techniques.**

In the afternoon we will visit the Foxford Woolen Mills. Over a century ago, the woolen mills were set up by the Sisters of Charity to provide employment in an area that was suffering great economic and social deprivation. The story of these mills, famous for their rugs and other woven products, is told in audio-visual form in the visitor centre, the *Foxford Experience*. The trials and tribulations of post-famine Mayo form a dramatic introduction to the tour of the mills, during which visitors can see Foxford rugs and tweeds being made. Located on the ground floor the Mill Shop stocks a wide range of Irish made giftware as well as the Foxford rugs, blankets and tweeds. Prices are very competitive across all ranges and postal delivery overseas can be arranged.

We will return to Westport for dinner on your own and an evening of leisure. We recommend the charming stone quayside restaurant - Quay Cottage Restaurant. Run by Kirstin and Peter MacDonagh since 1984, the Quay Cottage is cozy and informal with scrubbed pine tables and an appropriate maritime decor, which is also reflected in the menu (although there is also much else of interest, including steaks, honey roast duckling and imaginative vegetarian options).

Thursday, October 16th:

We will depart Westport after breakfast and take a leisurely drive across Ireland to Dublin. We will stop at Melanie's in Ballinasloe to see the vast range of yarns, patterns, accessories, tapestry, cross-stitch, embroidery, crochet, quilting, needlepoint kits, children's craft supplies, ribbons, buttons, bows, spinning wheels by Ashford, looms, dyes, and large haberdashery range.



This afternoon, we will arrive in Dublin and stop at Trinity College to see the famous Book of Kells. The Book of Kells is the centerpiece of an exhibition which attracts over 500,000 visitors to Trinity College Dublin each year. Written around the year 800 AD, the Book of Kells contains a richly decorated copy of the four gospels in a Latin text based on the Vulgate edition (completed by St Jerome in 384 AD).

We will settle in to our Dublin hotel, our home for the next three nights. Dinner on your own

Friday, October 17th

After breakfast, we will leave Dublin and travel by motorcoach about an hour south to Avoca village. Here we will tour Avoca Handweavers (established in 1723, Avoca Handweavers is Ireland's oldest business) where you can watch the handweavers who produce the lovely woven woolen rugs and fabrics which became the hallmark of the company in its early days. Avoca is a family owned craft design company which now has half a dozen branches throughout Ireland but the business originated in Avoca village.



Today, Avoca shops are known not only for the high standard of crafts sold but also for their own ranges of clothing, restaurants with a well-earned reputation for imaginative, wholesome home-cooked food - and delicious deli products and specialty foods.



After lunch on your own at the lovely café at Avoca Weavers, we will return to Dublin. You will have plenty of time to take in a show, visit one of the many wonderful galleries or shops, or tour a museum or the Guinness Storehouse.

Dinner on your own.

Saturday October 18

After breakfast we will begin our day in Dublin with a **choice of knitting classes** with local instructors. The plan is to split the group and offer one class in lace knitting, hopefully with our friend Lisa (Lisa and her mom own the This is Knit Yarn Store in Blackrock Market just south of Dublin), and another class in pattern charting with a designer from Cleo's.

Following an early lunch on your own at Kilkenny Restaurant & Cafe, there'll be time for shopping at Kilkenny - the largest emporium of Irish designed contemporary gifts in Dublin. This impressive store consists of two floors which carry a wide selection of crystal, pottery and ceramics, ladies contemporary fashions, jewelry and accessories for you and your home.



After lunch we will visit the Cleo shop. Cleo originated in 1936 as a very small retail outlet in a basement in Dublin selling only sweaters from the Aran Islands. Nowadays Cleo is a thriving, changing and very colorful business specializing in Irish clothing made from natural fibers. Cleo's designs are all hand-knit in various parts of Ireland in knitters own homes, from Donegal to Kerry to the Aran Islands. Each sweater has a tag with the hand-knitters name and the county it was knit in.

There are several options for later in the afternoon in Dublin - a visit to the National Museum (on your own) or a possible **exclusive guest lecture by Lainey Keogh**, internationally known knitwear designer. (We are still trying to arrange the details for this event; and there may need to be an additional fee charged to cover Ms Keogh's honorarium). Since 1984 Ms Keogh has been perfecting her unmistakable method of textural intervention. She was discovered by retailer Marianne Gunn O'Connor, owner of Otokia, Dublin's leading designer, while she was knitting in the corner of Bewley's Coffee House in Dublin. She was persuaded to present a show of her knitwear. This was unveiled to great acclaim in February 1987. Thus began her transition from homespun knitwear designer to international fashion personality, with a client list that includes Elizabeth Taylor, Isabella Rossellini, Demi Moore, Jodi Foster and Kevin Costner. She received the Prix de Coeur at the Monte Carlo fashion awards in 1989. Now she goes on whirlwind tours to New York, Egypt, and other corners of the globe, showing off the breathtaking inventiveness of her designs. Keogh works mostly with cashmere. Her pieces are handmade by expert Irish knitters.



This evening we will all gather for a farewell banquet.

Sunday October 19th

Return home from Dublin airport on your own or with the group back to Rochester (or stay in Ireland longer on your own if you want).

The following elements are included in the base price of the trip

- Three classes – Aran Knitting, Dying or Spinning, and Lace Knitting or Pattern Charting
- Several exclusive guest lectures and demonstrations
- Admission to Book of Kells exhibit and many other museums
- Accommodations at four-star hotels
- Daily breakfast, several lunches and two dinners
- Specialized tours with coach and local historians and guides
- Airport transfers
- Porterage for one piece of luggage per traveler
- Comprehensive pre-departure services, complete travel guide including in-depth articles, packing lists, and more.
- Gratuities for guides and coach drivers

Price: \$2895 per person double occupancy - land only.

If the final group size is below twenty travelers, a \$200/person small group surcharge will be added.

Trip supplements

- Roundtrip airfare from Rochester, New York.
Price: Add \$947/person. *Airline fuel surcharge costs are included in the price up to a value of \$100 per person and are subject to change until tickets are issued (usually about three weeks before the trip)*
- Single accommodations
Price: Add \$775/person for sole occupancy of a full size double room
Or Add \$695/person for a small single room

Payment Schedule:

Reservations are due ASAP. Payment in full is required when reservations are made less than 75 days before the departure date.

Down payment of \$500 per person due at time of reservation

A second payment of \$500 is due on July 1, 2008.

Final payment is due on August 1, 2008.

See the attached Conditions and Responsibilities Form for information on cancellations and refunds.

Trip Insurance

Trip insurance is a personal choice, but is recommended. Some purchase it through their local AAA office. To get the best rates, you can compare costs online through agents like Squaremouth.com, InsureMyTrip.com or Totaltravelinsurance.com, which offer side-by-side comparisons.

Questions about this trip?

Contact Mary at Edventures (607) 387-3322 or email edventures@lightlink.com.

Or Mary Jeanne at Finger Lakes Fibers (607) 535 – 9790 or email mjpacker@gwriters.com

RESERVATION FORM

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To reserve your space, please complete this form and return with your deposit of \$500 to:
Edventures, P.O. Box 99, Trumansburg, NY 14886-0099
Credit card orders may be FAXed to Finger Lakes Fibers 607 535 9794

Name as it appears on passport (please use one form for each person traveling):

Address: _____

City: _____ State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Name of roommate: _____ Or _____ please assign a roommate

_____ I prefer a full size single room _____ I prefer a small single room

Flight plans (Check one)

_____ flying with the group out of Rochester, NY

_____ flying on my own out of _____

Method of payment (Check one): Personal Check Credit card

Please make checks payable to Edventures

Credit Card (VISA or MasterCard) # _____

Expiration Date _____ Security Code _____

Credit Card Bill Address Zip Code _____

Assumption of Risk

I am aware that travel, whatever it may be and by whatever means, contains some inherent risks of injury, illness or death, which may be caused by forces of nature, negligence or actions of others, or other agencies.

I recognize that such risks may be present at any time before, during and after the trip in which I am participating, arranged by Edventures and Finger Lakes Fibers. I am aware that medical services or facilities may not be readily available or accessible during some or all of the time during which I am participating in the trip.

I have read the schedule of activities and other information provided, and recognize and accept risks thereof. I understand and agree on behalf of myself, my dependents, heirs, administrators, and assigns to abide by the conditions set forth under the "Conditions and Responsibilities" and to release and hold harmless Edventures and Finger Lakes Fibers and any of its officers, employees, agents, or representatives, from any and all liability for delays, injuries, or death, or for the loss of or damage to property, however occurring in relation to the trip.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

CONDITIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

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DEPOSITS, CANCELLATIONS, AND REFUNDS

Payment in full is required when bookings are made less than 75 days before the departure date.

Notification of cancellation must be made in writing, with the cancellation date being the postal service postmark date. At the time we receive your notification, the following charges apply: (charges are per person)

90-74 days before departure: \$150 plus Edventures costs and charges by suppliers
75 days before departure \$200 plus Edventures costs and charges by suppliers
After this point, you will be refunded whatever amount we can recoup from all of the suppliers who have been paid. Trip cancellation insurance is available and is recommended. Refunds for services that are voluntarily not used will not be made.

TOUR AND AIR RATES

The right is reserved to change any route or arrangements should conditions necessitate, to offer substitutes of equal value, or to cancel the operation of any scheduled excursion. Individual transfers for those arriving or departing independently are not included in the land cost unless otherwise stated. **Air fares may be increased because of tariff changes or fuel surcharges.** All rates quoted are based on current tariffs and on the current value of foreign currencies in relation to the United States dollar, and are subject to adjustment in the event of changes before the departing dates.

RESPONSIBILITY

Edventures of Trumansburg, NY and its agents act *only as agents for the various companies whose facilities are made available through the program.* Edventures and Finger Lakes Fibers assume no responsibility or liability in connection with the service of any hotel, lodge, aircraft, vessel, carriage or other conveyance that is used wholly or in part in the performance of their duty to the passengers; neither will they be responsible for any act, error, or omission, or for any injury, loss, accident, delay, or irregularity that may be occasioned by reason of any defect in any vehicle or accommodations or for any reason whatsoever, or through the neglect or default of any company or person engaged in carrying out or performing any of the services involved in the tour.

The right is reserved to decline or retain any person as a member of any tour at any time, in which event an equitable amount will be refunded. The right is reserved to cancel any tour before departure, in which case full refund will constitute full settlement to the participant.

Although every care is taken, Edventures and Finger Lakes Fibers, its agents and suppliers cannot be held responsible for loss or damage to baggage. It is therefore advisable to effect separate baggage insurance.

Edventures and Finger Lakes Fibers can accept no responsibility nor liability for any monetary, physical, or psychological injuries of any nature whatever arising from or caused by acts of terrorism, civil strife and disturbances, war, insurrection, or other upheaval and unrest of whatever kind and nature that may occur during the tour.

Edventures and Finger Lakes Fibers, its agents and suppliers can accept no responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, terrorism or other causes. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger, as tour rates provide for arrangements only for the time stated. All tickets, coupons, and orders are furnished and issued subject in all respects to the foregoing and to any and all terms and conditions under which the means of transportation and/or other services provided thereby are offered and/or supplied. The airlines providing air transportation are not to be held responsible for any act, omission, or event during the time the passengers are not on board their aircraft or conveyances. The passage contract in use by the carriers concerned, when issued, shall constitute the sole contract between the transportation companies and the purchaser of these tours and/or passengers.

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