

Ireland with Maggie Jackson

September 21-October 02, 2011

Join Irish International award winning knitwear designer

MAGGIE JACKSON

in her homeland for an exciting knitting retreat visiting
many of the places photographed in her book

"MAGGIE'S IRELAND"

by Alexis Xenakis of XRX Publishing.



Hear about Maggie's first collection...poppy-petal fashions for her dolls...a short lived success when her mum saw only flowers of black balls left in the centre of her garden! Maggie will accompany us on the whole trip, as we visit places that will give you an insight into the interesting history behind the small Emerald Isle...and you never know, if you're lucky, the sight of a leprechaun. You'll hear tales of folklore, to be believed or not!

Enjoy workshops in unusual places throughout the tour...depending on that Irish rain, of course! Your knit project will be unique to you and adaptable for all types of knitters. You will be working with true Irish Linen, no longer produced in Ireland. Read more about Maggie at www.Maggiknits.com

Husbands and partners are welcome to enjoy the 'forty shades of green' wee country full of Irish charm and wit...without having to lift a needle!!

YOUR TOUR ITINERARY:

Wed-Sep 21

If you are coming from North America, you will need to arrange your flight to depart today, in order to arrive in **BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND** on the morning of Sep 22. You'll need to arrive no later than 11am if you would like to join us on the city tour of Belfast. Because there are two major airports serving the city of Belfast, we will provide you with easy instructions for getting to the Europa Hotel. Contact Traveling Together if you would like to arrive in Belfast a day early and stay at the Europa Hotel. Please call Northwood Travel at 800-780-0571 or email them at info@NorthwoodTravel.com if you would like assistance in arranging your air travel.

Thu-Sep 22

Maggie will be anxiously awaiting you at the beautiful **EUROPA HOTEL**. The Europa has hosted Presidents, Prime Ministers and celebrities, including President Bill Clinton during his visits to Belfast in 1995 and 1998. Located in the heart of Belfast City Centre and next door to the famous Grand Opera House, the Europa will be our home for the next two nights.

Early this afternoon we will have a **PANORAMIC TOUR OF BELFAST**. In addition to a few photo stops around the city, the tour will give you an overview of the most historic and well-known sights of the city: Queen's University, Friars Bush Graveyard, the Ulster Museum, Belfast Cathedral, and the Parliament buildings, just to name a few.

After the tour we return to the Europa Hotel. Prior to our **WELCOME DINNER**, there will be time for introductions and Maggie will be giving you an overview of the knitting project that will be featured in her workshops, along with the needed supplies. After dinner, there will be an optional trip to the Crown Bar. The Crown is one of the most famous pubs in the UK and is conveniently located opposite our hotel. If you've ever wanted to taste a true Irish Guinness, this is the place!

Fri-Sep 23

Following a "full Irish" breakfast, we travel to Lisburn, Maggie's hometown, to visit the **IRISH LINEN CENTRE & LISBURN MUSEUM**. The stooks of flax on the steps—and the evocative painting "Flax Pullers" that hangs near by—are harbingers of the treasures inside the Irish Linen Centre & Lisburn Museum. Its brightly lit galleries are filled with colorful exhibits, priceless artifacts including a piece of linen from King Tutankhamen's tomb, prized oil paintings, and haunting audio-visual presentations.

Enjoy the Irish jokes and the behind-the-scenes stories that made Maggie's Ireland her favourite book out of the seventeen that she has now published, whilst knitting with traditional Irish Linen, a project unique to the trip. Maggie was the first Fashion Designer to set up in Northern Ireland in the height of the 'troubles' as they were called, leading on to International awards.



Next on the agenda is a **FELTING WORKSHOP** by a local textiles designer. She will have you creating a wall hanging as a souvenir, in addition to showing you some of her unusual felted pieces, which was much enjoyed on previous trips.

After time for lunch, we continue on to **EUGENE MCCONVILLE'S FARM** in nearby Dromore. We'll tour his flax mill, the last of its kind in Ireland, and you might even get a chance to scutch some flax! Over the creaking sound of the great hundred-year-old water wheel that once powered the mill, we'll hear Eugene's moving personal story.

We will continue on to Aghalee and the 300-year-old **CLENAGHAN'S PUB**. In addition to **MAGGIE'S FIRST WORKSHOP**, we'll enjoy a good **IRISH DINNER** and maybe a pint or two of Guinness to wash it down, as we listen to traditional Irish music 'round a log fire, before returning to the Europa Hotel for the night.

Sat-Sep 24

We depart Belfast this morning and travel along the beautiful **ANTRIM COAST**, interlaced with tales of Irish Folklore. As we head north, we will be stopping for a morning workshop before arriving at the **LONDONDERRY ARMS HOTEL**, situated in the rural village of Carnlough and once owned by Sir Winston Churchill. The hotel was built in 1848 as a coaching inn by France Ann Vane Tempest, Marchioness of Londonderry. Our main meal of the day will be in the **FRANCIS ANNE RESTAURANT**, a founding member of the Taste of Ulster and recipient of the AA Rosette award for culinary excellence.

As we continue along the coast, passing the towns of Cushendun and Ballycastle, we arrive at the famous **GIANT'S CAUSEWAY**. These unique rock formations have, for millions of years, stood as a natural rampart against the unbridled ferocity of Atlantic storms. Added to the list of World Heritage sites in 1986 and run by the National Trust, you will learn about the history and the myth, with a chance to head to the waters edge to enjoy the view and knit a few stitches, weather permitting. This natural wonder will be a highlight of today's scenic drive.

The **RADISSON BLU ROE PARK RESORT** in Limavady will be our home for the next three nights. Several of your hotels will have on-site spas and the links for those are provided. You may contact them directly if you would like to pre-arrange their services, to avoid finding that they are fully booked by the time we reach the hotel. Roe Park Spa www.RadissonRoePark.com

Sun-Sep 25

There will be time for more knitting instruction from Maggie today, so have your needles and yarn ready as we head out for a day of sightseeing!

A trip to Ireland would not be complete without a tour of **OLD BUSHMILL'S DISTILLERY**, the oldest licensed distillery in the world. They have been producing Irish whiskey since 1608 and there will surely be a chance for some taste-testing.

Then it's on to **CARRICK-A-REDE ROPE BRIDGE** (cover of *Maggie's Ireland*). After making your way down the steep flight of stairs, you may simply enjoy the view or dare to cross the sturdy rope bridge while the waves crash onto the rocks hundreds of feet below. The scenery is magnificent and it's an experience you won't soon forget.

Our last stop is **DUNLUCE CASTLE**, located high above Mermaid's Cave. Overlooking the turbulent sea below, it precariously clings to the land and was the splendid home of the Earl and Countess of Antrim who visited the royal court in London, and entertained in their castle-on-the-sea. In 1639, part of Dunluce Castle including the kitchen, fell into the abyss. Today, the second-story chimneys defy gravity and cling to fallen walls. But even among the ruins, the romance of Dunluce Castle remains.

We return to the **RADISSON BLU FOR DINNER** this evening at the hotel.

Mon-Sep 26

LONDONDERRY (Derry) is known as the Gateway to Northern Ireland and is the last city to be encircled by walls and the only city where the original walls are still intact.

Our day begins with a guided **WALKING TOUR OF DERRY** that will provide us with an intriguing account of this historic city and the famous Walls of Derry. From the Diamond—the center of Old Derry—radiate four main thoroughfares that pierce the massive walls through gates bearing colorful names like Butcher's Gate, Bishop's Gate, and Ferryquay gate. Nearby, just behind the Guildhall, Shipquay Gate led thousands of Irish to the New World. You will also have the chance to visit the 1600s Gothic Cathedral of St Columba.

We continue south to Enniskillen for a visit to the **SHEELIN IRISH LACE MUSEUM**. The Museum houses approximately 700 exhibits, illustrating the five main types of Lace which were made in Ireland: Irish Crochet Lace, Youghal Needlelace, Inishmacsaint Needlelace, Carrickmacross Lace and Limerick Lace. On display are Wedding Dresses, Wedding Veils, Shawls, Parasols, Collars, Baby Bonnets, Christening Gowns, Flounces, Jackets and many more items.

As we depart Enniskillen we drive further south and cross the border into the **REPUBLIC OF IRELAND**. Our final destination today is the **RADISSON BLU HOTEL & SPA IN GALWAY WITH DINNER AT THE HOTEL RESTAURANT**.

Tue-Sep 27

You will have the entire day to enjoy the city of **GALWAY**. Galway is the capital of the West of Ireland. The streets and buildings of this ancient town have many interesting features, and its position on the edge of the Gaeltacht (Irish speaking area) makes it the gateway to magnificent areas such as Connemara, Corrib country, and the Aran Islands. The city itself is a continuing centre of growth with its University, Institute of Technology, Theatres, Cathedral, Castle, as well as other interesting attractions. Recently, the city centre of Galway has been closed to traffic in order to allow for the enjoyment of the city's narrow shopping streets.

The Radisson Blu Hotel is located within an easy walk from Eyre Square (site of the historic John F. Kennedy Memorial Park and scene of his celebrated visit to the city, as one of Ireland's most famous sons) and Quay Street, where you will find shops, pubs, restaurants and theatres. Radisson's Spirit One Spa www.spiritonespa.com

Wed-Sep 28

Today we begin our journey with a ferry ride to the shores of **INIS MÓR, THE LARGEST OF THE ARAN ISLANDS** and home to fewer than a thousand inhabitants. On the very edge of Western Europe, these Gaelic outcroppings—and their namesake sweaters—have always beckoned to knitters. Maggie will conduct an informal workshop at some time today, with the remainder of the day free to shop and sightsee in the beautiful village port. You may even choose to take a pony and trap ride around the island and be sure to stop at the Aran Sweater Market and Museum to learn the history of these beautiful sweaters. Information may be found at: http://www.clanarans.com/asm/catalog/sweater_history.php At the end of the day we'll return to our hotel in Galway.

Thu-Sep 29

We depart Galway this morning for **NEWCASTLE**, located just south of Belfast on the eastern shore, and home to the **SLIEVE DONARD RESORT AND SPA**. This Victorian hotel is located on six acres of private grounds with spectacular panoramic views of the County Down coastline and Mountains of Mourne, making it one of Northern Ireland's most popular hotels. **DINNER TONIGHT** will be in the main dining room of the hotel's Oak Restaurant. Visit the hotel's spa website at <http://sparesorts.hastingshotels.com/slievedonardspa/brochure.html>

Fri-Sep 30

Be sure to bring your knitting project today! Maggie will be teaching among the **MISTY MOUNTAINS OF MOURNE**—dear to the hearts of the Irish—and the dry stone hedges that criss-cross the heart of **SILENT VALLEY**. The Mourne Mountains are the highest in Northern Ireland and tower above the Silent Valley reservoir. Nestled at their feet, the reservoir gathers the mountain's runoff, and supplies all of County Down and Belfast with pristine drinking water.

We'll drive by "Maggie's Cottage," home to the crew during the Maggie's Ireland shoot, while on the lookout for falcons that sweep down from the Mourne Mountains. Through a countryside dotted with cottages, sheep, stone walls, and winding roads, we enjoy panoramic views of the valley below as we reach Silent Valley, where the stillness will surround us. Late afternoon finds us back at the Slieve Donard, where you will have time to relax and knit in front of a roaring fire at one of the many lounges or cozy bars.



Sat-Oct 01

The last full day in Ireland and there is a lot left to see and do! Many of you may not know it, but the Titanic was conceived, designed, built and launched in Belfast and... as they proudly say locally, "She was alright when she left here!" We'll take a **BOAT TOUR OF THE HISTORIC HARLAND & WOLFF SHIPYARDS AND THE FAMOUS TITANIC SITES AROUND BELFAST HARBOUR**. The harbour area itself is full of interesting sights, sounds and history, an exciting place which reeks of adventure and far off places!

This afternoon we will have a **GUIDED TOUR OF THE ULSTER FOLK AND TRANSPORT MUSEUM**, voted "Irish Museum of the Year". It illustrates the way of life and the traditions of the people of the north of Ireland. Set in over 170 acres of rolling countryside, the outdoor Folk Museum tells the story of life in early 20th century Ulster. Almost 50 exhibits have been acquired by the Museum from all over Ulster and restored and authentically furnished. The Open Air Museum is complemented by the Folk Galleries which show how food, farming, everyday occupations and lifestyles have changed through time.

You may have met **CHEF STEVIE FROM THE PAGES OF MAGGIE'S IRELAND?** If you didn't have a chance to try any of his recipes yet, at this evening's '**GALA DINNER**' you will savor the fruits of his passion for food and culinary education. "My passion for food was born in my family's kitchen," Chef Stevie says. "In all Irish families, the credit for cooking goes to Mother and grandmother. While the other kids in school had peanut butter sandwiches for lunch, I would open my lunch box to find a hearty sandwich of cured ham drenched with the rich juices of homegrown tomatoes, accompanied by a fresh wheaten scone, spilling with my Gran's rhubarb jam. I gained a sincere appreciation for good eating, and I never swapped lunches with anyone!"

A Maggie Jackson Retreat would not be complete without a **FASHION SHOW**. As in the past, it will be spectacular, featuring Maggie's signature designs from her past and current collections, and maybe a sneak peek of things to come! Maggie will share her tips from a fashion designer's point of view, with the new seasons trends and colors from the catwalks of Milan, New York, Paris, and London.

After fabulous workshops with Maggie, seeing the best of what Ireland has to offer, and making new friends, its time to check-in to the **BELFAST STORMONT HOTEL** for your last night on the Emerald Isle.

Sun-Oct 02

Whether your flight departs from **BELFAST CITY AIRPORT** or **BELFAST INTERNATIONAL**, there will be a transfer to each airport this morning. In order to take advantage of these transfers, your flight will need to depart 11:00am or later, from either airport. Should your flight depart earlier than 11:00am the hotel will assist you in scheduling your taxi.

PLEASE NOTE THAT SPACE IS LIMITED!

YOUR TOUR INCLUDES:

All hotels
All breakfasts, 1 lunch and 6 dinners
All workshops, class materials, & fashion show
All group tours & activities
All group ground transportation within Ireland
Airport transfer on Sun, October 02
Hosted by Maggie Jackson
Escorted by a Professional Tour Leader

Tour Price (Does not include RT air to Belfast):
\$4337 per person, double occupancy
\$ 587 single supplement

Please note: In order to fully enjoy this trip and the walking tours offered, you will need to be able to walk up to 5 city blocks at a moderate pace in a "limited" amount of time, and climb several flights of stairs. (See Terms & Conditions)

DIRECTIONS FOR GETTING TO THE EUROPA HOTEL IN BELFAST:

(Information and costs in effect as of September 2010)

From the Belfast International Airport:

Bus- Airport Express 300: at the bus stop located just opposite the terminal exit. Service to Europa Bus Terminal (next door to the Europa Hotel) is £7.00, with a journey time of 30-40 minutes, depending on traffic conditions.

Taxi- approx. £30 to the Europa Hotel

From the Belfast City Airport:

Bus- Airport Express 600 is a bus service from the Airport terminal to the Europa Bus Terminal (next door to the Europa Hotel). Cost is approximately £2, with a journey time of 15 - 25 minutes, depending on traffic conditions.

Taxi - Approved taxis operate from the airport taxi rank directly outside the terminal building. The approximate cost to Belfast City Centre is approx. £8.00.

A valid PASSPORT is required for this tour.

Go to "**Sign Up Forms**" for Terms & Conditions and Registration Form