



Dromoland Castle, The Europe Hotel & Resort and The K Club: A Journey to Remember!

Trip Recap by Marie Chawke, Sales Director at Calliope Collective

Leading the Ireland FAM trip in April 2025 for [Calliope Collective](#) was an absolute dream come true—and sharing it with 12 truly fabulous, curious, and inspiring luxury travel advisors made it all the more magical. From the moment we kicked off in Kildare to our final sunset in County Clare, Ireland wrapped us in a big warm hug and never let go.

Day 1: The Ultimate Irish Welcome at The K Club

From the moment we arrived at [The K Club](#), we knew we were in for something truly special. Set on 550 acres of stunning Irish countryside—complete with rivers, islands, and two championship golf courses—this iconic estate has proudly hosted the Ryder Cup and the Irish Open and truly defines countryside luxury at its finest.

We were lucky enough to be there as they launched their brand-new Paddle Club facility, but there was no easing into this adventure—we hit the ground running (or more accurately, off-roading) with an exhilarating 4x4 @ineos-grenadier drive through the wild and rugged Wicklow Mountains.

Add to that a moment with majestic Irish wolfhounds, creamy pints of Guinness in a glacial valley, and a private lakeside serenade by the incredibly talented flautist Robert—all beneath a brilliant blue sky—and honestly, someone pinch us... it was pure Irish magic.

A huge thank you to the amazing team at The K Club and the ever-fabulous Oran Masterson (Orangeworks) for the warmest of welcomes and a day we'll never forget. We wrapped up the evening with a gorgeous dinner at [The Palmer](#) and sipped champagne on the terrace as the sun dipped below the horizon.

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Day 2: Horses, Hospitality, and Heart at Fox Covert Stables

After a beautiful breakfast in the elegant Barton Room, we set off for an unforgettable adventure into Ireland's famed "Horse Country" and the iconic home of the Irish Derby—The Curragh of Kildare.

Our morning brought a special behind-the-scenes visit to one of Ireland's top stud farms, where we had the honor of meeting the legendary Johnny and Orla Murtagh (as Johnny says himself, "there's only one Johnny!"). Orla welcomed us into their home with the kind of open-hearted hospitality that stays with you long after you leave—freshly baked scones, cakes, cookies, and that inimitable Irish warmth. As they shared their stories, the Curragh came to life—full of passion, champions, and a deep love for the sport. It was an experience that was both humbling and inspiring.



Back at The K Club, we took time to explore every corner of the magnificent 550-acre estate. From archery to falconry, fly fishing to golf, spa bliss to riverside strolls—this incredible resort offers every countryside pursuit imaginable.

One of the highlights of our stay was an extraordinary wine-tasting experience, expertly led by the wonderful Lisa, who has been the heart and soul of The K Club's world-class wine cellar for over 22 years. Her deep knowledge, genuine warmth, and clear passion transformed the evening into far more than a tasting—it became an engaging journey through regions, vintages, and stories, brought to life with grace and enthusiasm. Without a doubt, it was the most memorable wine tasting I've ever experienced and an absolute must for anyone visiting this exceptional resort.



We capped off the evening with a fun filled and delicious celebration of Irish culture—local dishes bursting with flavor, live traditional music, spirited dancing, and a few sing-alongs that brought everyone together. It was everything a great Irish gathering should be: heartfelt, lively, and utterly unforgettable.

Day 3: En Route to Killarney with Castles and Craic

After a delicious breakfast we were very sad to leave. We journeyed south westward across Ireland's lush countryside, stopping in the picturesque town of Cashel for a delightful lunch and a warm welcome from the fabulous Karen, Adriaan, and their team at Cashel Palace.



We were lucky enough to get a sneak peek of their stunning property—an elegant blend of heritage and luxury—and then stepped back in time with a visit to the legendary Rock of Cashel, once the seat of the Kings of Munster dating all the way back to the 4th century. With bellies full and hearts lifted by the ever-charming Adriaan Bartels, General Manager extraordinaire, we hit the road again toward Killarney—smiling, inspired, and already dreaming of what was next.

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Nestled between the shimmering Lakes of Killarney and the majestic McGillicuddy Reeks, The Europe Hotel & Resort is truly a sight to behold—an elegant haven nestled in one of Ireland’s most breathtaking natural settings. Overlooking the serene Lakes of Killarney, the views are straight out of a postcard, capturing the magic and majesty of the Irish landscape.

The resort is home to a spectacular 50,000-square-foot ESPA—an oasis of calm and luxury, where panoramic vistas add to the sense of peace and indulgence. Guests can also enjoy complimentary horseback rides along the lakeshore, a unique and unforgettable way to soak in the scenery.

Perfectly positioned on the outskirts of charming Killarney—affectionately known as “The Town in the Park”—this hotel is an ideal base for discovering the wonders of Ireland’s southwest. Iconic experiences like the Ring of Kerry and the Dingle Peninsula are right on its doorstep, making it a dream destination for both relaxation and adventure.

Golf lovers will be in heaven here, with legendary links like Waterville, Tralee, Ballybunion, and Dooks all within easy reach. And right next door? The renowned Killarney Golf & Fishing Club.

Our rooms were spectacular, filled with all the modern comforts, including electric curtains that dramatically opened to reveal jaw-dropping views the moment we walked in.

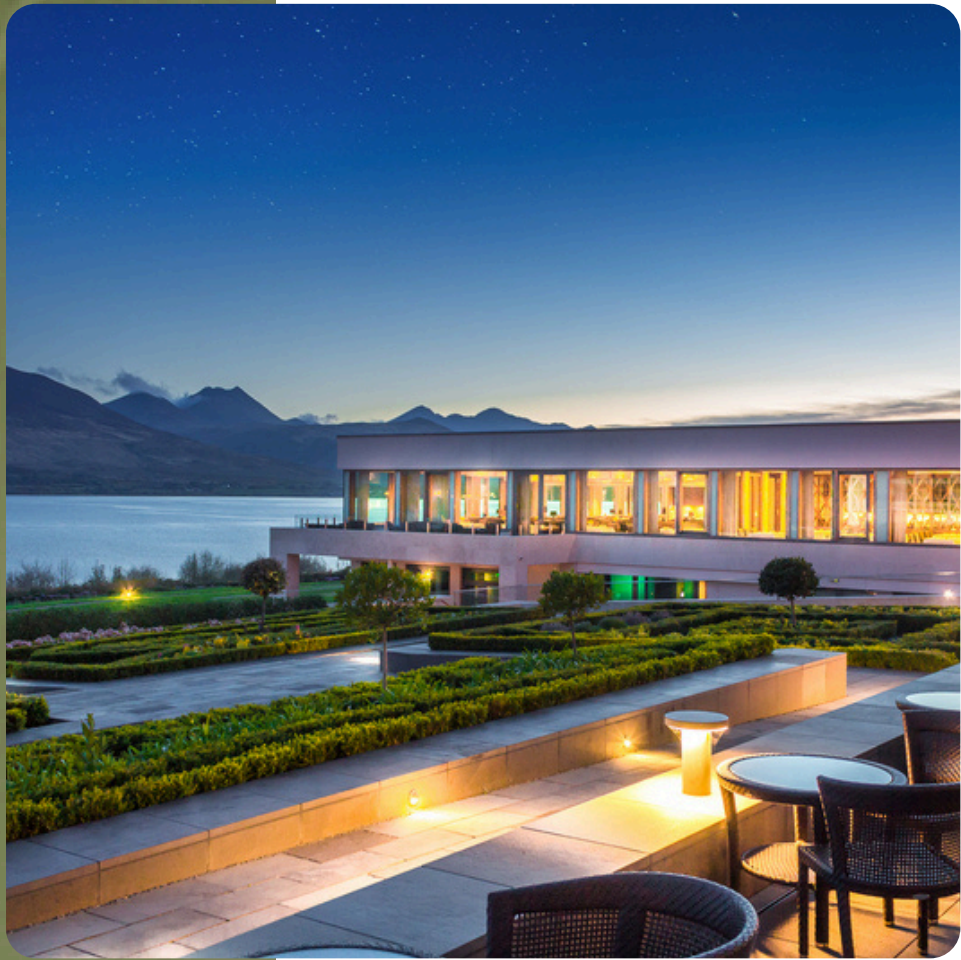
We were thoroughly spoiled with a fabulous cocktail reception in the Presidential Suite, where the sunset serenade came courtesy of surprise guest star Liam O’Connor—the world’s fastest fingers on the piano accordion, as certified by the Guinness Book of Records. Later, after a delicious dinner we joined in for a heartwarming Irish singalong in The Bar after dinner.

Day 4: Killarney – My Hometown, My Heart

The next morning began on a high note with heavenly spa treatments—Jasmine, my therapist, was nothing short of angelic. Rejuvenated, we set off on a magical seven-mile journey through the glacial valley of the Gap of Dunloe in traditional jaunting cars. Our adventure led us to Lord Brandon’s Cottage, where the incredible Europe team had prepared a magnificent outdoor lunch, complete with silver service and crisp white linens.

From there, we took to the lakes by boat, watching for golden-tailed eagles as we glided toward the medieval Ross Castle. On our way back into Killarney town, we took a little detour—past my own home—where I couldn’t resist inviting the ladies in for a quick glass of champagne.

Then it was on to J.M. Reidy for some classic “Irish craic”, where we learned to make Irish coffees and pour the perfect pint of Guinness under the guidance of the fabulous Caroline— known to all as “Fab.” That evening, dinner at the resort’s Mediterranean restaurant, Riva, did not disappoint. And for those of us still buzzing with energy, the night ended with live Irish music and a bit of dancing in town.



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Day 5: The Wild Atlantic Way and Dromoland Dreams

After a lovely breakfast, we bid farewell to beautiful Killarney and set off on the next leg of our journey—heading north through County Kerry to the charming town of Tarbert. There, we boarded a car ferry across the mighty River Shannon, with a few dolphin sightings adding extra magic to our crossing!

Once we arrived in County Clare, the adventure truly began as we set out along the iconic Wild Atlantic Way. We were joined by the wonderful Olivia and Katie from Dromoland Castle—and to our delight, a surprise guest: our very own Irish storyteller and walking guide Cormac McGinley. As we made our way to the Cliffs of Moher, he captivated us with tales, myths, and legends of the region, bringing the landscape to life in the most enchanting way.



At the cliffs, Cormac was ready and waiting to introduce us to the awe-inspiring scenery. With his deep knowledge and passion for the area, he made the dramatic beauty of the cliffs even more unforgettable.

Next on the itinerary? A divine seven-course Michelin-starred lunch at Homestead Cottage Doolin. Every bite was a celebration of local flavors, beautifully prepared and perfectly paced— an absolute treat for the senses.

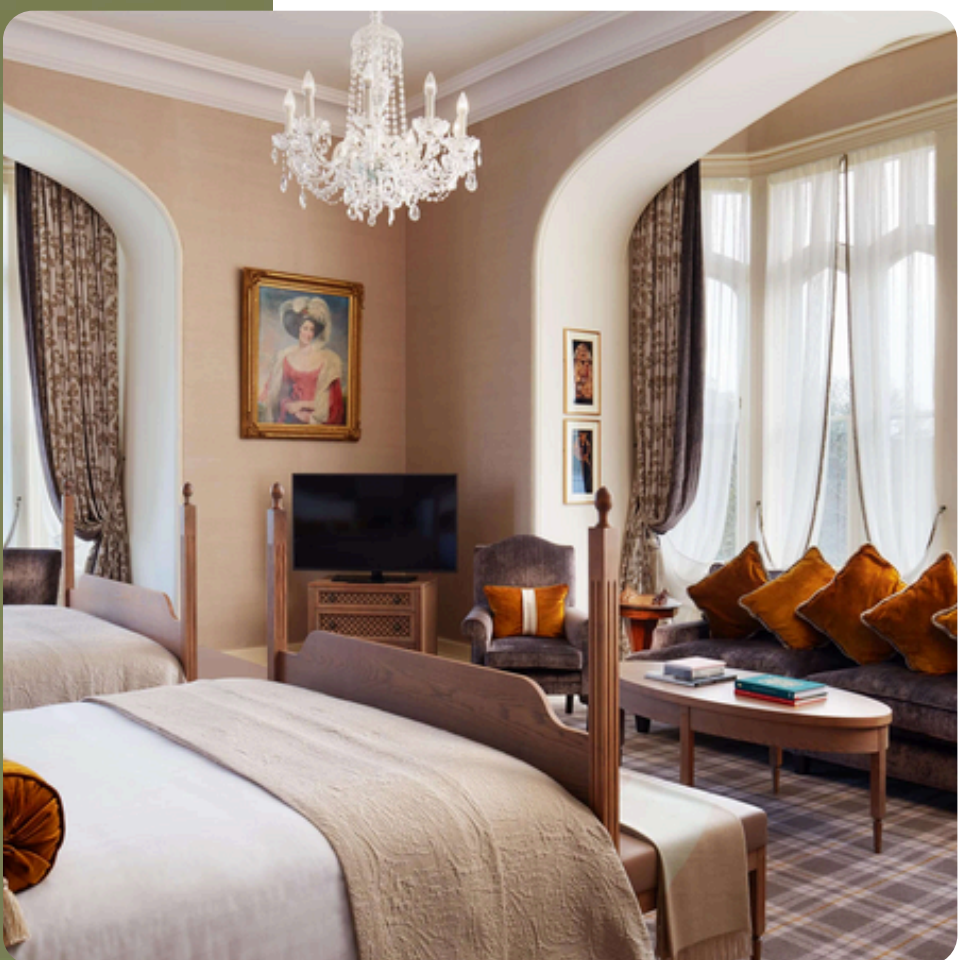
And then, the dream destination: Dromoland Castle. From the moment we arrived, we were swept up in the magic. Greeted Downton Abbey-style with horse and hounds, a full staff lineup at the private entrance, and the kind of warm welcome only the Dromoland team can deliver—it was unforgettable.



That evening, we gathered in the elegant The Drawing Room for a family-style welcome dinner. Chef David McCann introduced each course with heart and pride, showcasing the very best of County Clare's produce. Irish music and dancing filled the room, turning the night into a joyous celebration of food, friendship, and the rich culture of this incredible corner of Ireland.

Day 6: Castle Life, Falconry Magic and a River Farewell

We started off the day with a delicious breakfast in the Earl of Thomond restaurant before being greeted by the legendary David Atkinson, Dromoland's head falconer—and what a treat it was. David led us on an unforgettable hawk walk, sharing his incredible knowledge and passion for these majestic birds. We met the estate's resident owls and falcons, including the ever-charming Mr. Pickles, who completely stole the show with his big personality and even bigger eyes.



From the skies to the woods—we swapped feathers for forest bathing next, as the lovely Caroline guided us through gentle yoga and quiet reflection in the ancient woodlands. No phones, no distractions—just the peaceful beauty of nature and a moment to simply be. It was such a special experience, and exactly what we didn't know we needed.

And then came the perfect finale—a serene cruise along the River Shannon with Mark from Secret Ireland Tours.

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Along the way, we explored a privately owned island castle and dove deeper into Ireland's rich (and often heart-wrenching) history, learning more about the famine era and the stories that still echo through this land.

On the way back to the castle, we made a quick stop at [Dromoland Lodge](#), a stunning five-bedroom private residence on the estate. There, the fabulous castle team surprised us with a cocktail masterclass—thank you, Alex!—before we returned to the [Earl of Thomond](#) to dine like royalty once more.

It's honestly hard to capture in words just how special this journey was. Every stop, every host, every story shared, and every genuine connection made it truly unforgettable. Ireland absolutely showed up—and showed off—with all her magic, and we're beyond proud to share her beauty with the world.



A huge thank you to our incredible advisors who took time out of their busy schedules to travel with us. You were such a joy to be with—one of the best groups I've ever had the pleasure of exploring with. New friendships were formed, and I feel so lucky to have shared this experience with each of you.

To everyone who welcomed us so warmly along the way—thank you. Your kindness and hospitality made all the difference.

At [Calliope Collective](#), we're all about creating meaningful connections between our luxury travel advisor friends and the very best in the industry—exceptional properties, unforgettable experiences, and the amazing people behind them. This trip was everything we believe in, and it will stay with us for a very long time



Download our fact sheet to learn more about [Dromoland Castle](#), [The Europe Hotel & Resort](#), and [The K Club](#).

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