

# Ireland Retreat

JUNE 7TH-14TH, 2024  
KILKEEL & CULTRA,  
NORTHERN IRELAND

**A FEAST FOR THE SENSES AND NOURISHMENT FOR THE SOUL, LED BY FRIENDS WHO ARE EAGER TO SHARE THEIR STORIES WITH YOU, AND INVITE YOU INTO A NEW WAY OF TELLING YOUR OWN STORY.**

You're warmly invited to join us on a journey of hope, healing, creativity and community - staying in historic restored rural accommodations in lovely natural surroundings with a group of friends old and new.

We'll enjoy the landscape on amazing walks, hear music and story, meet locals, experience the peace process in encountering people directly involved in activism and change, and get to know the culture of northern Ireland, immersed in a community rooted in the depths and creativity of Celtic spirituality.

Good food, inspiring art, and beautiful journeys on foot will form the heart of this soulfully unique and transforming experience. Led by warm-hearted and thoughtful guides including northern Irish writer and peace activist Gareth Higgins and educator and spiritual director Brian Ammons, with special guest Ari Weinzweig, this will be weeklong experience - for around 25 guests only - that might just last for the rest of your life.

Read on for more information on how you can join us!

## **AN INVITATION FROM OUR HOSTS BRIAN AMMONS & GARETH HIGGINS**

Many people have taken trips to Ireland, but few have wandered off the beaten path, forming communities of pilgrims who wanted to experience Ireland in authenticity rather than the more antiseptic/corporate tourist trip where feet don't touch the ground and souls might as well have stayed on the plane. Growing up in northern Ireland I (Gareth) often wished I could share with folks the beauty of our landscape, and the depth of our stories, not to mention the hard and rewarding task of peace-building.

We've been privileged to co-lead a few similar trips in the last couple of years in Gareth's home of northern Ireland, with the amazing musicians, writers and spiritual teachers Kathleen Norris, David Wilcox, Karen Moore, Brian McLaren, David LaMotte, Over the Rhine, and Eric Elnes. We're delighted to be joined on this upcoming trip next June once more with our great friend Ari Weinzweig whose gifts for expanding our stories, cherishing community, and walking through difficult journeys will animate us beautifully.

Our trip is full of surprises, but we can tell you that mornings will often feature gathered conversations, afternoons we will explore the landscape, and in the evenings there might be music, storytelling, and maybe even a touch of mischief! You'll meet friends and colleagues with whom we have been honored to travel some of the journey, peacemakers and poets and politicians, you'll walk by the sea and on mountains, and there'll be plenty of time to take by yourself to seek whatever you need.

*\*A Note on our Special Guest: Ari will be with us for the duration of the retreat, participating along with the rest of our community. He will participate in a community conversation early in the retreat.*

# FRIENDSHIP, FOOD, AND TRANSFORMATIVE STORYTELLING

## OUR SPECIAL GUEST: ARI WEINZWEIG



Ari Weinzweig is CEO and co-founding partner of Zingerman's Community of Businesses, which includes Zingerman's Delicatessen, Bakehouse, Creamery, Catering, Mail Order, ZingTrain, Coffee Company, Roadhouse, Candy Manufactory, Events at Cornman Farms, Miss Kim and Zingerman's Food Tours. Zingerman's produces, sells and serves all sorts of full flavored, traditional foods in its home of Ann Arbor, Michigan to the tune of \$68,000,000 a year in annual sales. Ari was recognized as one of the "Who's Who of Food & Beverage in America" by the 2006 James Beard Foundation and was awarded a Bon Appetit Lifetime Achievement Award among many recognitions. Ari is the author of a number of articles and books, including

*Zingerman's Guide to Good Eating, Zingerman's Guide to Better Bacon (Zingerman's Press), Zingerman's Guide to Giving Great Service, Zingerman's Guide to Good Eating (Houghton Mifflin), Zingerman's Guide to Good Leading, Part 1: A Lapsed Anarchist's Approach to Building a Great Business, and Zingerman's Guide to Good Leading, Part 2: A Lapsed Anarchist's Approach to Being a Better Leader. Zingerman's Guide to Good Leading, Part 3; A Lapsed Anarchist's Approach to Managing Ourselves. Zingerman's Guide to Good Leading, Part 4; A Lapsed Anarchist's Approach to the Power of Beliefs in Business* was released in summer of 2016. In 2017 Ari was named one of "The World's 10 Top CEOs (They Lead in a Totally Unique Way)" by *Inc. Magazine*. In 2018 he released the pamphlet, "The Art of Business; Why I Want to be an Artist." Another pamphlet, *Going into Business with Emma Goldman* came out in June, 2019. *Humility; A Humble, Anarchistic Inquiry* came out in October, 2020. *Working Through Hard Times; Life and Leadership Learnings from 2020* was published in the first weeks of 2021 and Ari's most recent work, *The Story of Visioning at Zingerman's: Four Visions, Forty Years, and a Positive Look Towards the Future*, came out in the spring of 2022. His newest work is another pamphlet, *A Taste of Zingerman's Food Philosophy: Forty Years of Mindful Cooking and Eating*.

[Learn more of Ari and Zingerman's here.](#)

## OUR HOSTS

**Gareth Higgins, Ph.D.** is a writer, storyteller, and community leader who grew up near Belfast during the northern Ireland Troubles, and now lives in North Carolina. Author of *How Not to be Afraid* and *Cinematic States*, and co-author of *The Seventh Story: Us, Them, and the End of Violence* and *Religion, Civil Society and Peace in Northern Ireland*, he writes and speaks about connection to the earth, storytelling and the power of dreams, peace and making justice, and how to take life seriously without believing your own propaganda. He was co-founder of the Wild Goose Festival, [The Porch Magazine](#), and [www.moviesandmeaning.com](http://www.moviesandmeaning.com). Gareth leads trips to his native Ireland every year, inviting participants to go beyond the beaten track, to experience the landscape and history through the lens of a story about people learning to live at peace with one another. You can find more about Gareth's work at [www.garethhiggins.net](http://www.garethhiggins.net)



## OUR HOSTS



**Brian Ammons, M.Ed., M.Div., Ph.D.** is an educator, spiritual director, coach, writer and ordained minister. A former faculty member in Duke University's Program in Education and for over eight years Chaplain & Director of Spiritual Life at Warren Wilson College in Asheville, NC, Brian was named Interfaith Youth Core Outstanding Educator in 2017. Brian holds a PhD in Education with a certificate in Women's and Gender Studies from UNC-Greensboro, and is a minister in the Alliance of Baptists tradition. Brian is trained as coach in an International Coaching Federation accredited program jointly sponsored by Pinnacle Leadership and The Center for Congregational Health and formed as a spiritual director through Shalem Institute's spiritual guidance program.

Brian has written and spoken widely on themes of vocational discernment; interfaith work in higher education; and the intersections of gender, sexuality, and spirituality.

Find out more about Brian's work here:

<https://www.theporchmagazine.com/coaching-spiritual-direction>

# What People Say

"I am so grateful for the incredible experiences of our Ireland Retreat. It was a deep, rich, educational, spiritual, and personally challenging time that I will hold dear for life. It was a true delight!" - *Donna, Arizona*

"Words can't express my gratitude for the experience you provided for all of us. What a gift to the world." - Sharon, Nebraska

"It was a lovely, valuable, very interesting adventure. I look forward to next time."  
- *TG, North Carolina*

"This retreat was a beautiful, creative, and transformative experience. The leaders and participants were some of the loveliest people I have had the opportunity to know. In my own nation of many divisions, it was good to hear stories of peace-making, transformation, and hope. Thank you for these meaningful, powerful, and playful days." - *Michael, Pennsylvania*

"This trip was **on the short list for best experiences of my life**. I will never forget the beauty, love, joy, and acceptance I found here."

"The **perfect combination** of vacation, retreat, education and sight-seeing."

"The Ireland Retreat is a unique and transforming travel experience. The retreat offers plenty of important Irish sights and places but the retreat gets you closer to the land and lives of "real" (not just tourist) Ireland through a well crafted balance: breathtaking nature, and powerful learning from voices and places shaped in the crucible of struggle and turmoil in Northern Ireland. The retreat brings new awareness of our common humanity and creates friends out of strangers."

"Impressed by how affordable this trip was compared to others I have looked at. Thank you for building community, feeding us, transporting us - all without any glitches and making this spiritually rich and soul relaxing!" - *Susan, Illinois*

"The spiritual immersion in Ireland was sublime. Ancient Celtic spirituality, local culture and beauty, and the combined wisdom of the leaders was soulfully transformative. I highly recommend!"

"The experience opened doorways to find my spiritual anchors at this stage of life. I discovered myself through the eyes of other loving attendees and was able to return that gift to others."

"Seekers of mystery, magic, beauty, and uncertainty... This is for you. But for those who are cynical, it's especially for you."



*Silent Valley*



*Tropical Ravine, Botanic Gardens*



"This is a fabulous opportunity to experience the physical beauty, the political culture and history and the warm, friendly people of Ireland. Also an opportunity to slow down, reflect and connect with interesting, diverse people in substantive, heart-level ways."

# Trip Details

The trip takes place Friday, June 7th - Friday, June 14th, 2024. The retreat ends in time to return to the US by the evening of June 14th, although many of our previous guests have extended their stay in Ireland before or after the retreat - we're happy to advise on itinerary.

**Applications are open now**, and places are strictly limited and expect the trip to be over-subscribed. If you're interested and ready to apply, or have any questions, visit us at [irelandretreats.com](http://irelandretreats.com). We are eager to welcome you in June!

**Cost (excluding airfare) of \$3150 per person\* includes:**

- The services of all guides and retreat leaders, support staff, and guests from the world of arts, politics and peacemaking.
- Six nights in historic restored rural accommodation including cottages in exquisite natural surroundings (plus one overnight stay at a retreat centre by Belfast Lough as part of a field trip).
- Breakfast (including traditional Irish options) every day, and lunch or dinner most days.
- Transport from Dublin Airport to accommodation, and on organized trips throughout the tour.
- All admission fees to sites such as cultural centers, museums, etc.
- The use of all accommodation facilities including lounges, gardens, etc.
- A life-changing experience of spirit, imagination, and community.

*When You Apply with a Friend or Family Member, Full Registration is discounted to \$2,975 per person.*

**Learn More & Apply at [irelandretreats.com](http://irelandretreats.com)**





*Wandering the North Coast*



*Retreat Group at Dunluce Castle*



*Belfast Peaceline*





"This retreat truly was magnificent. Beautifully planned, it filled both mind and soul with beauty, historical context and perspective and rollicking good times. It was a prescient reminder of why we must all remain vigilant and committed to respectful dialogue across seemingly unbridgeable gaps in our own lives and in our country." -  
*David, Nebraska*



A final note: In order to make the tour widely accessible, we're glad to help people raise financial support to join the retreat, including folk with continuing education and sabbatical funding. If the cost of the tour is a stretch, please let us know, we'd love to hear from you! We'd be glad to help you find ways to join us if we can. **Just visit [irelandretreats.com](http://irelandretreats.com) to be in touch or to apply.**

*Landscape photos taken on Ireland Retreat courtesy of Scott Griessel & Creatista*



[www.irelandretreats.com](http://www.irelandretreats.com)