Explore the breathtaking beauty of Sky Road in Connemara, Ireland. Take a scenic drive with stunning views of Connemara’s landscapes. Go World Travel is reader-supported and may earn a commission from purchases made through links in this piece. The old gentleman in pressed khakis and a blue chambray shirt stood outside the Clifden Bookshop, greeting passersby with a tip of his cap. It was a mellow 65 degrees that July afternoon in western Ireland with the sweet scent of honeysuckle drifting in the wind. As my family and I drew closer, a pair of bicyclists asked the man how to get to Clifden Castle. “Ah, indeed, you’ll need to take Sky Road,” he said, pointing his walking stick like a compass needle. “From there, you’ll come to a stone arch leading to the castle ruins.” Sky Road. A circular ten-mile drive outside of Clifden, I had read, with stunning views of Connemara stretching west of Galway City, from Oughterard all the way to the Atlantic. We were in the heart of Connemara now. An area of “savage beauty,” Oscar Wilde wrote, perhaps noting its barren rockscape, deep-blue lakes, and ever-changing light. “We’re only here for a couple more hours,” I said to the gentleman, explaining that my husband, two pre-teens and I were due 2 ½ hours east in Limerick by nightfall. “Is Sky Road a place you’d recommend?” “Aye, good lady, don’t miss Sky Road.” He leaned towards me on his stick, and with a knowing smile whispered, “It’ll stay with you forever.” I glanced over his shoulder at Twelve Bens’ peaks on the horizon. Divinely sculpted angles and crowns lifted me above harried thoughts of carpools, after-school soccer and orthodontal appointments in New York. Sky Road was an opportunity to fall off the map without a plan. I imagined fields of yellow-petalled silverweed accenting a coastline of coves, islands and bogland. For as long as I can remember, I’ve felt a strong affinity with the Emerald Isle. Family and friends have often asked why. After all, DNA tests show that I’m only 3% Irish, with a predominance of Scottish and German ancestry and a touch of Swedish. Maybe it was due to my maternal grandfather, who introduced me to the work of Seamus Heaney, whose passion for the Irish landscape lived in his poetry. My grandfather was also a master storyteller who often gathered family around the fireplace to spin tales. His gift to enthrall us with wit, charm and verve was, in my youthful perception, Irish in nature. I grew up reading everything I could get my hands on about Irish history, culture and the arts. Consequently, that July, when my young family and I ferried from Wales to Rosslare, Ireland, I felt a deepening kinship with the land and its people.  A place where I continue to feel most at home.