



nileGUIDE

ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



infomatique

Best way to spend St. Patrick's Day

Dublin, 1 Day

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Guide Description



AUTHOR NOTE: Dublin is home to the largest and most popular St. Patrick's day festivities on the planet. 675,000 tourists and Irish people lined the streets of Dublin last year to witness the parade and celebrate the feast day of St. Patrick on March 17th.

It's the only time of the year where everyone is expected to wear green, and party like a leprechaun for 6 days straight. The festival begins on 12th and runs until 17th of March and with each day brings a new experience whether it be a treasure hunt, a walking tour of Dublin, a stiletto heel dash, a dance at a traditional ceilí or following an art trail through the city.

Itinerary Overview

things to do
restaurants
hotels
nightlife

Day 1 - Dublin



St Patrick's Cathedral

Where St Patrick baptised converts



St. Patrick's Day Parade

2010's Parade theme is 'Extraordinary World'



Temple Bar

Bustling, vibrant and cultural area of Dublin day or night.



Light House Cinema

The Light House Cinema is located in Smithfield and has four-screens with a capacity for 600 people.



Merrion Square

Georgian elegance



Guinness Storehouse

Take the tour to learn everything you ever wanted to know about Guinness, then enjoy a pint with stunning 360-degree views

contact:

tel: +353 1 453 9472
fax: +353 1 454 6374
<http://www.stpatrickscathedra.lie/Default.htm>

location:

St Patrick's Close
Dublin 8

hours:

Year-round Mon-Fri
9am-6pm; Nov-Feb Sat
9am-5pm, Sun 10-11am
and 12:45-3pm; Mar-Oct
Sat 9am-6pm, Sun 9-11am,
12:45-3pm, and 4:15-6pm

1 St Patrick's Cathedral

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

There is a playground and park adjacent to the Cathedral which is great for kids to play in.

DESCRIPTION: St Patrick's is one of two Anglican cathedrals in Dublin. It is built on the site where St Patrick is said to have baptized converts to Christianity. St Patrick's Cathedral, in its present state, was constructed in 1192, replacing an original wooden chapel. The main attractions in St Patrick's are the tombs of Jonathan Swift and his lover in the nave. The cathedral also contains the longest medieval nave in Ireland, and a stone slab, engraved with a Celtic cross, that covers the well from which St Patrick baptized the converts. The adjoining garden is a welcome oasis in this densely built-up district of the city. © wcities.com

MY NOTE: EVENT: SUNG EUCHARIST
DATE: 17TH MARCH '10.45AM

A Sung Eucharist will take place by the famous St. Patricks Cathedral Choir in the Cathedral at 10:45 am on St. Patrick's Day. This religious festival is celebrated by many by attending mass on the day. Where better to do this than in the cathedral built in honour of the Patron Saint of Ireland – St. Patrick.



wcities

contact:

www.stpatricksdays.ie

location:

O'Connell Street
Dublin

2 St. Patrick's Day Parade

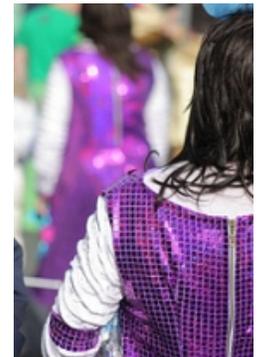
OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

The streets fill quickly so get their early to claim your spot or better still, bring a ladder so you can see over the crowds.

DESCRIPTION: Starting at O'Connell street the parade will weave and wind its way through the crowd lined streets of Dublin City. Passing Trinity College, Dame street, Christchurch Cathedral before finally ending at St. Patricks Cathedral. The theme of the parade for 2010 is 'Extraordinary World'. This is the real climax of the festival and is highly anticipated by people from all over the world. Almost 675,000 visitors lined the streets last year to cheer on the parade. Expect lots of marching bands, dancers, creative street theatre performers, artists and giant inflatable characters to float through the city. © NileGuide

MY NOTE: EVENT: ST. PATRICK'S DAY PARADE
DATE: 17TH MARCH @ 12:00PM

Starting at O'Connell street the parade will weave and wind its way through the crowd lined streets of Dublin City. Passing Trinity College, Dame street, Christchurch Cathedral before finally ending at St. Patrick's Cathedral.



Vourneen Taylor

The theme of the parade for 2010 is 'Extraordinary World'. This is the real climax of the festival and is highly anticipated by people from all over the world. Almost 675,000 visitors lined the streets last year to cheer on the parade. Expect lots of marching bands, dancers, creative street theatre performers, artists and giant inflatable characters to float through the city. Expert Tip - The streets fill quickly so get there early to claim your spot or better still, bring a ladder so you can see over the crowds.

contact:

tel: +353 (0)1 677 2255
fax: +353 (0)1 677 2255
<http://www.templebar.ie/>

location:

12 East Essex Street
Dublin Leinster

3 Temple Bar

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Visit the weekend markets in Temple Bar, the farmers food market & the designer market on cow's lane are held on Saturdays and the book market is on both Saturday and Sunday.

DESCRIPTION: Temple Bar is often used to symbolize the extraordinary changes which Dublin has undergone in recent years. In the 1980s, this district of the city was earmarked as the site for a vast bus station. Galleries and small shops colonized the cheap properties, however, the bus-depot plans were abandoned, and the area now boasts a warren of bustling shops, cafes, galleries and restaurants. Some of the country's best cultural institutions have found a home in Temple Bar, including the Irish Film Centre and the Gallery of Photography. Two new civic spaces - Temple Bar Square and the striking Meeting House Square - have been created and utilized by artist and traders. In short, this district is one of the city's most colourful and vibrant; make a point of seeing it for yourself. Temple Bar boasts a warren of bustling shops, cafes, galleries and restaurants. Some of the country's best cultural institutions have found a home in Temple Bar, including the Irish Film Centre and the Gallery of Photography. © wcities.com

MY NOTE: EVENT: ART TRAIL

DATE: 12th-17th MARCH ALL DAY

21 Irish and international artists will exhibit work along The Art Trail. Explore work in art galleries, vacant retail spaces and public places throughout Temple Bar. The pieces shown are a response to the international economic conditions that many are experiencing both in Ireland and abroad. You will find an array of urban artwork and installation pieces as well as a selection of artists films projected outside in Meeting House Square.



wcities

contact:
tel: 01 879 7601
www.lighthousecinema.ie

location:
Market St S
Dublin

4 Light House Cinema

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

EVENT: BANANAS ON THE BREADBOARD
Date: Saturday 13th 2pm / Sunday 14th 2pm / Wednesday 17th March 4pm
If you visit the market areas of Dublin just as Moore Street, Capel Street or Henry Street you will notice that the women street traders using antique prams with wooden breadboards on top where they place fruit and vegetables for sale. It might be grapes one day and bananas the next. This documentary explores the traditions and characters in these areas of Dublin's inner city where families have been involved in street trading for generations. This is a unique opportunity to gain an insight into these areas of Dublin.

DESCRIPTION: The Lighthouse Cinema offers a diverse programme of top Irish and international films. You can view foreign-language, arthouse as well as classic movies. The interior is stylish and modern yet manages to still have a cosy atmosphere. The facilities also include a café bar where you can relax before or after the film. © NileGuide

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contact:
tel: +353 (0)1 605 7700
(Tourist Info)

location:
Merrion Street
Dublin

hours:
24hrs

5 Merrion Square

DESCRIPTION: Merrion Square is the grandest of the city's great set-piece squares. The park in the centre is owned by the Catholic Church, which has leased it to the city. It is a beautifully maintained green space in the heart of the city dotted with sculpture and public art, the most visible of which is probably the monument to Oscar Wilde in the north-west corner. Wilde spent his childhood at 1, Merrion Square, while W.B. Yeats lived at No. 82. On Sundays, artists hang their works for sale on the railings surrounding the park. © wcities.com

MY NOTE: **EVENT:** CITY AT PLAY FUNFAIR
DATE: MARCH 12th-17th ALL DAY



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For all thrill seekers and dare devils these city funfairs are a must. Go to dizzying heights and witness spectacular views of the capital with the 150 foot high Jubilee Wheel. The fairground attractions will span the city on both the north and south sides of the river Liffey in Merrion Square, Wolfe Tone Square and Custom House Quay. Watch children's faces light up as they delight in the kiddie rides and indulge in the compulsory sticky candy floss.

contact:

tel: +353 1 408 4800

fax: +353 1 408 4965

<http://www.guinness-storehouse.com/>

location:

St James's Gate
Dublin 8

hours:

Daily 9:30am-5pm (until 7pm in July and Aug). Guided tours every half-hr

6 Guinness Storehouse

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

By booking your tickets online you can save 10% and skip the queue on arrival.

DESCRIPTION: Dublin's most popular and most spectacular visitor attraction, the Storehouse is a modern Disneyesque visitor centre, right at the heart of today's working brewery, set inside a beautifully converted fermentation building used between 1904 and 1988. It comprises seven floors of exposed glass and steel, linked by a giant atrium. There is all manner of historical and modern brewing paraphernalia to marvel at but do note that visitors do not get to see the actual brewing process taking place - though it is all happening just a few yards away from where you stand. Each floor deals with the process of making and marketing Guinness, from its origins in 1759 right up until today. It's a fascinating story, tracing ingredient, the brewing process, transportation (much more interesting that it sounds!), the tasting laboratory, advertising (many people's favourite area), and finally the stylish 7th floor Gravity Bar. You'll never taste a better pint of Guinness in your life than the one that is served up here, and with its full-length glass walls and 360-degree views, the only better view of Dublin is from a helicopter. Slainte!

© NileGuide

MY NOTE: EVENT: ST. PATRICK'S DAY FESTIVAL

DATE: MARCH 17th ALL DAY

All Patrick's, Patricia's, Pats & Paddy's get in for free on St. Patrick's Day! Take advantage of this great opportunity and get into the Guinness Storehouse at no cost to all fellow namesakes. For a list of names visit - . What better way to kick start the day than to raise a glass to St. Patrick at the home of Guinness.



wcities

contact:
tel: +353 1 6283728
www.mariekeating.ie

location:
O'Connell Street
Dublin 1

1 Stiletto Heel Dash

OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

By entering you not only get to show off your best pair of shoes but you also have the opportunity to help a charity organisation the Marie Keating Foundation in their fight against cancer.

DESCRIPTION: Help to kick start the parade and get your funky heels on by entering the World Record Breaking 80 Metre Stiletto Heel Dash. The woman with the most outrageous pair of shoes in the race will win a voucher for the retail outlet Marks & Spencer. By entering you not only get to show off your best pair of shoes but you also have the opportunity to help a charity organisation the Marie Keating Foundation in their fight against cancer. The registration fee for this event is 25.00euro .To register for the event visit www.mariekeating.ie or call the fundraising team on +353 1 6283728 © NileGuide

MY NOTE: EVENT:80 METRE STILETTO HEEL DASH
DATE: 17TH MARCH @ 11.15AM

Help to kick start the parade and get your funky heels on by entering the World Record Breaking 80 Metre Stiletto Heel Dash. The woman with the most outrageous pair of shoes in the race will win a voucher for the retail outlet Marks & Spencer. By entering you not only get to show off your best pair of shoes but you also have the opportunity to help a charity organisation the Marie Keating Foundation in their fight against cancer. The registration fee for this event is 25.00euro .To register for the event visit www.mariekeating.ie or call the fundraising team on +353 1 6283728



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Dublin Snapshot

Local Info

Call it cozy. When you think capital city of a European nation, you think major metropolis. But Dublin-- the city center, anyway-- is a surprisingly intimate place. A sightseeing tour of downtown highlights is no more than a day on foot. But that's not to say there aren't a lot of things to do. There are places to go, people to meet and typically Irish experiences to enjoy. For Dublin has culture in abundance: arts culture, historical culture...pub culture. It's all here and all within easy reach.

Sights

The Irish are quite proud to be Irish and Dublin is proud of its heritage, as is evident in the museums and galleries that abound here. For a wide-ranging lesson in Irish history, check out the National Museum of Ireland. To learn about the country's fight for independence, stop by Kilmainham Gaol Historical Museum. For modern Irish art, there's Dublin City Gallery the Hugh Lane. To learn fascinating facts about Dublin's many famous authors, the Dublin Writers Museum is a must-see. (Did you know Oscar Wilde was a promising boxer at Trinity College Dublin?)

If you visit Dublin in summer, spend a few hours at one of the city parks, where you'll see all sorts of locals come out to enjoy the sun. Start at Trinity College, walk up pedestrian Grafton Street and enjoy Saint Stephen's Green. If you have kids along and they get restless, take them to Imaginosity Dublin Children's Museum, which is full of fun entertainments for children 9 and under. The most popular tourist spot in the city is the Guinness Storehouse, where you can absorb the history of the beer and the company that makes it (and find unique souvenirs). Other landmark sites to add to your itinerary include Malahide Castle, Bedford Tower and St. Audoen's Church. For an enlightening excursion around town, there are double-decker bus tours with guides who have that inimitable Irish gift of gab.

Shopping

If shopping is one of your indulgences, you'll find more than enough in Dublin. There is uniquely Irish merchandise everywhere you go. There are the trendy fashion boutiques and sweater shops on charming Grafton Street and Suffolk Street. There are Irish craft stores, specialty shops and antique galleries like the large Avoca Handweavers store and Powerscourt Townhouse Centre. If you're staying for the weekend and are inclined to do even more shopping, make a visit to the Blackrock Market. It's one of Dublin's "capital gems" and it offers a wide variety of goods, from modern art to furniture, secondhand and new, much of it sold from stalls overseen by friendly proprietors.

Dining and Nightlife

The Dublin night begins in the pub-- virtually every night-- as friends gather to catch up over a pint of Guinness or two (or 10). Much of what happens after dark takes place in the Old City around lively Temple Bar. It's where you'll find all the restaurants, music venues, theater shows, cafes and pubs to satisfy your culinary and social cravings. Temple Bar is sort of a city within the city, a pedestrian street distinguished by historic architecture where you can amble up and down, choosing from a wide variety of fare, from Irish to Chinese, and find a pleasant pub to pop in, have a pint and meet a few of the very amiable Dubliners. Some of the oldest pubs in the city are the Big Tree (nice beer garden), the Stag's Head and the Brazen Head (Ireland's oldest pub, established in 1198).

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History

"Dubh linn" means "dark pool," and "Baile Átha Cliath" (still the Gaelic name for the city) translates as the "town of the Hurdle Ford." The official date for the foundation of the city is 988 AD but these two settlements had existed in one form or another for centuries before this date. Eventually, the

two fused into one town along the river Liffey, a town which eventually became known as Dublin.

Long before the official foundation of the city, the golden age of Christianity had witnessed the creation of some of the treasures of modern Ireland. The Book of Kells, Book of Durrow and Ardagh Chalice all date from the period after 432 AD, when St Patrick baptized the pagan Irish and Irish monks spread the Word throughout Europe.

Viking Dublin Dublin began its long evolution into a city, however, under the Vikings. They found it to be a useful base from which to plunder the surrounding country at will--the round towers which are such a characteristic feature of Irish monasteries were built as defensive structures to help defend the inhabitants from bands of godless Vikings-- but trade, nevertheless, began to develop with the surrounding country. The Scandinavian settlement was far from politically or militarily secure, however, and they were driven from Dublin more than once before the final Viking defeat. This occurred at the Battle of Clontarf in 1014, when the forces of Brian Boru defeated the Scandinavians once and for all. A period of local rule then followed--a time which saw the foundation of Christchurch Cathedral--before the arrival of the English.

Dublin & the English In 1169, the Normans arrived on the southeast coast of Ireland. They had been invited over by an Irish chieftain, Diarmait Mac Murchada, who wanted some extra muscle in his struggle for power. The Normans were led by one 'Strongbow'--otherwise known as Richard de Clare--who owed allegiance to the English King Henry II. Strongbow quickly took Dublin and the Norman occupation began. Against a backdrop of plagues and fires, Dublin continued to grow throughout the middle ages. Catholicism was its spiritual rock, upon which stood two cathedrals: St Patrick's and Christchurch. The area controlled by the English, however, was very small, consisting of only a few hundred miles around Dublin. This region was known

Dublin Snapshot continued

as 'The Pale' (hence the term 'beyond the pale' of one who is uncivilized or disorderly) and even it was subject to continual attack from without.

The Tudor Period The reigns of Henry VIII and Elizabeth I saw a consolidation of English rule in Ireland: the tentacles of power spread from Dublin across the island and Elizabeth I used the city as a base from which to further her policy of plantation: the settlement of Protestant families on confiscated 'papist' land. Dublin became a centre of Protestant rule; by 1540 all of the monasteries had been dissolved and the churches taken over. In 1592, the grounds of a former monastery became the site of the newly-established Trinity College Dublin, founded by Elizabeth as a means of educating the new ruling class and of curing Ireland of 'popery'. Meanwhile, the fabric of the medieval city decayed: both Dublin Castle and Christchurch were falling into ruin and plague and poverty continued to claim lives. By the end of the 16th century, the situation was as woeful as it had ever been in Dublin—the defeat of Irish rebellion leader Hugh O'Neill in 1601 opened the door to the influx of English and Scottish Protestants, and Dublin became little more than a garrison town.

The 17th Century This was a turbulent period in Ireland: Cromwell landed in the country from England and proceeded to massacre the people of Drogheda and Wexford in 1649 as a means of preventing further uprisings; and the Williamite wars saw the struggle for control of the English throne played out across Ireland, from Derry to Limerick. Eventually, however, Catholic James II was defeated by William of Orange at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. In the subsequent settlement, Catholics were denied the political rights they had been promised. While Dublin itself was little effected by the upheavals across the rest of the country, the process of the Anglicization of the city continued, and at the close of the 17th century, the city entered its heyday.

The 18th Century The great terraces and squares of Georgian Dublin date from the city's 18th century golden age of

architecture. The period saw the erection or renovation of some of Dublin's greatest buildings. Dublin Castle was fully restored and the great green bowl of the Phoenix Park was established in the west of the city. Also built at this time were the Royal Hospital (now the Irish Museum of Modern Art at Kilmainham), the Long Library of Trinity College, the Royal Exchange (now City Hall), the elegant Marsh's Library and the Mansion House. Later in the century, the Four Courts and the Custom House were raised on the city quays, and St Stephen's Green was laid out as a formal park. Sackville Street, now called O'Connell Street, a grand formal boulevard, became the city centrepiece.

It was also a golden age for politics and culture. The Irish parliament ("Grattan's Parliament") won increasing measures of self-government and the confidence of Dublin increased, as it became the focus of an extraordinary cultural boom, with theatre and music flourishing across the city.

The 19th Century This period of power and influence came to an end with the 1798 Rising, when a rebellion in the south, west and northwest and a botched French invasion convinced Westminster that Ireland had been allowed too much independence. The result was the Act of Union of 1801: the Irish parliament voted itself out of existence and England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales were formally politically unified for the first time. Many of Dublin's movers and shakers left the city for England and Dublin declined into a mere provincial city. In 1841, on the eve of the Great Famine, Daniel O'Connell won Catholic Emancipation, another indication of the decline of the punitive laws against Catholicism.

In the Famine of 1845-1849, Dublin suffered rather less than the rest of Ireland, as it was generally more wealthy (disease-ridden slums notwithstanding). In these years, indeed, the social life of the Anglo-Irish went on as normal and the establishment of the National Museum and National Library was planned on the city's south side.

Home Rule & the Rising Under the surface, however, pressures were growing. The city was to become the focal point for the struggle for and against Home Rule. Throughout the 19th century, this pressure continued to mount remorselessly until eventually, at the beginning of the First World War, Home Rule was promised, as soon as the war itself should end. This modest promise was swept away by the Easter Rising of 1916, when a small band of rebels paralyzed the city and the Irish Republic was proclaimed from the steps of the GPO. They had little public support—many Irish volunteers had joined the war effort in Belgium and the rebels were perceived to be traitors to the greater cause. The people of Dublin were especially angry, for in the course of quelling the uprising, much of the centre of Dublin was bombarded by British Naval vessels standing out to sea. The execution of the rebels at Kilmainham Gaol, however, swung the tide of public opinion and a process was set in motion which would culminate in the Treaty in 1921. The greater part of Ireland achieved a limited independence as the Irish Free State, but the island was partitioned: six northeastern counties remained a part of the United Kingdom. The vicious Civil War which followed saw further damage to the fabric of the city, but once civil unrest had ended the city began the long process of restoration.

The Free State The 1920s saw the gradual rebuilding of a city centre ravaged by the Rising, the War of Independence and the Civil War. Government policy in these years was much more concerned with the theory and practice of nationalism than with building a modern society and areas such as social welfare were severely neglected. The country, under the leadership of Eamon de Valera (the only survivor of the leaders of the Easter Rising) became increasingly isolated and introspective, and upon the outbreak of the Second World War, Ireland declared itself neutral, to the anger of both Britain and the United States. In practice, however, the country was far from neutral, granting (for example) over-fly rights to Allied planes.

Dublin Snapshot continued

The morality of this policy of neutrality, however, continues to be questioned to this day: the banning of Jewish refugees from the country is certainly a source of national shame. One consequence of neutrality, however, was that Dublin (unlike Belfast and Derry/Londonderry in Northern Ireland) escaped the ravages of German bombing. In 1947, the Free State became the Republic of Ireland, and the country left the Commonwealth.

The Republic The post-war years saw economic and cultural stagnation; thousands upon thousands of young people abandoned the countryside for Dublin, which began a period of population growth. Even larger numbers left Ireland altogether, with incalculable consequences for the cultural health of the country. The 1960s saw Ireland begin to look towards the outside world, and the changes which swept across western society in these years began to make their presence felt in Ireland as well. The widespread civil disorder which began in Northern Ireland in 1968 left its mark on Dublin also: the capital was the target of occasional violent attacks in the 1970s and 1980s: the worst of these, in 1974, saw over thirty shoppers killed in a bomb attack. The perpetrators have never been caught.

Dublin Today In 1973, the Republic joined the Common Market. The effect of this decision can be seen in the fabric of Dublin today: enormous amounts of money have been poured into Ireland in the last few decades and have resulted in the kick-starting of the Irish economy. Today, Ireland is one of Europe's fastest-growing economies and Dublin is at the centre of this economic revolution.

In recent years, the political, cultural and social climate of the country has also changed radically. The election of Mary Robinson to the Presidency of Ireland in 1990 also ushered in a series of social changes to the country—divorce, for example, is now legal in Ireland for the first time; and a raft of liberal legislation has challenged the conservative ethos of the country, already damaged by a series of sex scandals involving the Catholic Church.

These social changes have left their mark on Dublin most of all, and there is no doubt that the city has changed radically.

Literary Dublin Dublin is one of the world's great literary cities. Three Nobel laureates—George Bernard Shaw, W.B. Yeats and Samuel Beckett—were born in the city, and James Joyce, the most famous Irishman never to have won the Nobel, was also a Dubliner.

Modern Irish writing, however, begins in Dublin's 18th century heyday. Trinity College produced three of the most prominent writers of the century: dramatist Oliver Goldsmith, philosopher Edmund Burke and satirist Jonathan Swift, author of *Gulliver's Travels*. Only Swift, however, remained in Dublin: Goldsmith and Burke moved to London as quickly as they could get away, setting a precedent for writers to come.

In the 19th century, James Clarence Mangan drank and brawled his way through Dublin, managing to produce some of Ireland's most distinctive poetry in his spare time; Bram Stoker wrote *Dracula* and Oscar Wilde spent his youth in the city and studied at Trinity before he joined the flight to England. Shaw was born in the city in 1856- he left for England too, where he produced *Pygmalion*. Joyce (also writing in exile) set *Ulysses* on a single summer's day in Dublin- June 16, 1904, a date now celebrated in the city as Bloomsday. Beckett went into exile in Paris but some of Ireland's leading lights managed to stay: Yeats, for example, remained in the new Irish Republic until his death in 1939, and the post-war years saw the emergence of such writers as Flann O'Brien and Patrick Kavanagh.

Today, Irish writing is more popular and vigorous than ever. Such novelists as Colm Toibin (*The Heather Blazing*), Anne Enright (*The Portable Vigin*), Roddy Doyle (*The Committments*), Jennifer Johnston (*How Many Miles to Babylon?*), Dermot Healy (*A Goat's Song*) and Robert McLiam Wilson (*Eureka Street*) established international reputations; and they are joined by such important poets as Medbh

McGuckian, Eavan Boland, Nuala Ni Dhomhnaill and Ireland's fourth Nobel laureate, Seamus Heaney. Not all of these writers have made their home in Dublin itself, of course, but they figure prominently in the city's energetic literary scene and their achievements have added to the rich texture of Dublin's literary life.

DUBLIN IN TRANSITION In May 2000, Dublin Corporation opened the Millennium Bridge, linking Ormond Quay to the Temple Bar area. A pedestrian-only alternative to the 19th century Ha'penny Bridge, it's a fine addition to the urban landscape, and a metaphor of sorts, too: for now, more than ever, Dubliners need new walkways to accommodate a rapidly expanding city.

Home to almost a million people, Dublin has undergone a startling transformation of late. Countless apartment blocks have been built in an attempt to accommodate a burgeoning population; while a plethora of stylish restaurants, cafes, bars and hotels serve the needs of those who crave international cuisine, glamorous surroundings and better coffee. Traditional, nostalgic images still abound in promotional tourist literature, but today's Dublin arguably has more in common with the high streets of London or New York than it does with James Joyce, Eamonn De Valera or 'pints of plain'. Dubliners can now be seen sipping cocktails in stylish bars like Dakota; and a casual stroll down Grafton Street displays a growing multi-cultural and multi-racial atmosphere. Dublin has become an international city, and what's more, it seemed to happen almost overnight. Depending on your point of view, all of this is either a breath of fresh air or a testament to the steady dissolution of a concrete national identity, but either way.

©

Hotel Insights

Accommodation in Dublin is not only plentiful—you'll most likely be spoilt for choice. There are a number of centrally-located areas of Dublin that offer a choice of accommodation, with hotels ranging from the budget to the more luxurious.

Dublin Snapshot continued

These areas fall both north and south of the river Liffey and are usually within walking distance of the city's tourist sights and main amenities. Depending on the purpose of your visit, you may wish to consider some of the following options:

Temple Bar Area Once a decaying part of the city, featuring little more than a bus depot, Temple Bar has now become a thriving commercial centre. Depending on your point of view, the area is either the city's bustling cultural quarter or a haven for visiting stag-parties, but it's undeniable that Temple Bar is centrally-located and conveniently packed with affordable restaurants, cafes and interesting shopping options. There is also a vast choice of places to stay.

Essex Street is the location of one of the city's finest hotels, The Clarence. Owned by Irish rock super-group U2, the hotel was refurbished in 1996 and has managed to combine a traditional elegance with a more contemporary design. The Clarence also houses the renowned Tea Room restaurant and the very stylish Octagon bar. Other attractive options in or around the area include the Joycean-themed Blooms, the Central Hotel on South Great Georges Street, the Brooks, and the stylishly decorated Morgan Hotel.

For those travelling on a budget, the Temple Bar Hotel on Fleet Street has relatively reasonable room rates, while the Barnacles Hostel on Cecilia Street offers no-frills but clean accommodation and is very popular with backpackers. For those preferring a self-catering option, Trinity College campus offers budget self-catering accommodation during the summer months. The Temple Bar area has also become a Mecca for the arts, and attractions in the immediate vicinity include The Irish Film Institute, the Gallery of Photography, Arthouse and the Temple Bar Music Centre.

Grafton Street Area The Grafton Street area and the surrounding districts of St. Stephen's Green and Merrion Square are home to a fine architectural heritage and some of the most upmarket commercial

property in Dublin. The accommodation options suitably reflect the affluent nature of this most elegant part of the city. The Westbury, just off Grafton Street, is superbly located right in the heart of the city, while the Shelbourne Hotel offers timeless luxury in a historical setting. Established in 1824, the Shelbourne retains an old-world charm: the Irish Free State constitution was drafted there in 1921 and politicians still frequent the Horseshoe Bar on the ground floor.

For those looking for something a little more contemporary, newer establishments like the Merrion Hotel, the Fitzwilliam and The Conrad are all recommended for those whom luxury is a prerequisite. Many of the hotels in this area offer impressive views of the city, some overlooking the elegant St. Stephen's Green, while others are surrounded by some of the finest architecture in Georgian Dublin. Those on a budget, however, are advised to settle for Staunton's on the Green. Regardless of where you stay, you'll be within walking distance from some of the city's most timeless attractions, including the National Gallery, the National Museum, Trinity College and Dublin Castle.

North of the Liffey Dublin's northside (the river Liffey divides the city in two) still remains rather downmarket, and is even considered dangerous by some. Don't be put off, however, a whole host of property developments, and even a new Millennium Bridge, linking Temple Bar to the northside quays, means that the area is more accessible and tourist-friendly than ever. A grand accommodation in the area is the Morrison Hotel on Ormond Quay. Designed by international fashion guru, John Rocha, this stylish and luxurious hotel also features a bar and a contemporary Asian restaurant, Halo. The Smithfield area north of the quays also has experienced a major face lift, and a stay at the Chief O'Neill's hotel puts you right in the heart of it all.

The northside's main artery, O'Connell Street, has a range of accommodation options. The Gresham may be of interest to those with an interest in either Irish history or literature. The hotel is featured in the

climax of Joyce's short story *The Dead* (the final episode in *Dubliners*), and is also a stone's throw away from the General Post Office, which was the focal point for the bloody 1916 Easter Rising. Other options in the immediate area include the Royal Dublin, the Clifton Court, and the curiously archaic Wynn's Hotel. O'Connell Street is also within easy reach of the city's main commercial theatres, the Abbey and the Gate, and is adjacent to the northside's main shopping area, Henry Street, which features both the Jervis and Ilac shopping centres.

Those on either a budget or a short-term stay could perhaps be advised to consider the Mount Eccles Court hostel on the elegantly Georgian North Great Georges Street. Alternatively, just take a stroll down the adjacent Gardiner Street. Running north from Dublin's bus station, Busaras, Gardiner Street is home to seemingly countless bed & breakfast guesthouses.

Ballsbridge/Embassy District The embassy district around Ballsbridge and Lansdowne Road is about 2km outside the city centre, but has excellent transport connections and some of the most exclusive hotels in Dublin. The renowned Berkeley Court, Jury's and The Towers are all situated in this leafy suburban area. These hotels are particularly popular with business travellers and offer conference facilities that are second to none.

©

Restaurants Insights

A booming economy and a young, affluent urban population have both given rise to a surge of commercial development throughout Dublin's city centre. While the 1980s were arguably a depressing time for socialising in the city, Dubliners now have more disposable income than ever, and as a result, the restaurant and bar industry continues to thrive. Countless new pubs and eateries open monthly and a visitor to the city may be somewhat bewildered by the diversity of choices on offer.

Restaurants Dining in the city has become a more cosmopolitan experience than ever

Dublin Snapshot continued

and includes everything from traditional Irish restaurants and American-styled diners to Italian pizzerias and Japanese noodle houses. Ireland has a particularly good reputation for the quality of its fresh produce from both land and sea. An obvious port of call if you're looking for a quick bite to eat is the **Temple Bar** area of the southside. Rather inappropriately labled Dublin's "Left Bank," this popular tourist area is packed with a variety of affordable eateries. Restaurants like the ever popular Elephant & Castle, Tante Zoe's, Yamamori Noodles, the Indonesian-themed Chameleon and the theatre-friendly Trocadero all offer a range of varied dining options that won't put too serious of a dent on your wallet. More upmarket, meanwhile, and considerably more sophisticated, Eden, Odessa and Cooke's are all stylish restaurants with excellent service and a modern, often innovative, approach to cooking.

The southside Georgian area that encompasses St Stephen's Green, **Fitzwilliam** and Merrion Square is considerably more affluent and the restaurants that boast such a prestigious address pride themselves on a more formal dining experience. The Restaurant Patrick Guilbaud, L'Ecrivain, and La Stampa have all won international acclaim, and often put emphasis on French cuisine. Reservations are almost essential in such restaurants, but the experience is usually worth it. Those seeking something a little different are advised to check out the Good World restaurant, Saagar or the critically-acclaimed Jacob's Ladder.

The northside of the city is not particularly well-served when it comes to quality eateries. The area's main thoroughfare is **O'Connell Street**, packed with fast food diners like McDonald's and Eddie Rocket's, has an occasional gem to be found if you look hard enough. 101 Talbot is a favorite with vegetarians, the Winding Stair café is an excellent spot for lunch, while the Chapter One restaurant in the basement of the Irish Writers' Museum remains very popular with discerning locals. The Halo restaurant in the Morrison Hotel, has a

great reputation for itself, while the tiny Bangkok Café on Parnell Street has also won acclaim and serves authentic Thai cuisine in an unpretentious and friendly setting.

If you are travelling further afield, suburban areas such as **Dun Laoghaire**, **Howth** or **Malahide** offer a wide variety of quality restaurants, which are particularly noteworthy for their seafood. The King Sitric and Cavistons are both good options.

Bars and Pubs While Dubliners are wealthier, better-dressed and more culturally sophisticated than ever, some have argued that the city is fast losing its authenticity and character. The days of the traditional Dublin pub thriving with intellectual debate and spontaneous humor are certainly numbered, although it's possible to argue that the idea was a myth in the first place. Many traditional establishments, such as Farrington's, The Foggy Dew and the White Horse Inn have all undergone renovations. Much of the newer development is centered around the Temple Bar area: once a decaying part of the south city, the district is now thriving, and if you're staying in the area, you certainly won't have any difficulty finding somewhere to have a pint. Pubs like the Oliver St. John Gogarty and the eponymous Temple Bar Pub are almost permanently packed with visitors and (sometimes disgruntled) locals, and if it's a boisterous and convivial atmosphere you're in search of, look no further.

If Temple Bar is just a little too hectic for your liking, where can you go? That depends what you expect from a night out. More contemporary bars like the Bailey and the Front Lounge, put the emphasis on style and sophistication, and are generally full of stylishly attired twenty-somethings who enjoy chilling out in plush and expensive surroundings. For the die-hard fashion victim, the longer established Hogans and the Globe are arguably a little passé these days, but still draw a committed, hip and clued-in clientele. Many of these bars feature live DJs and are often open until late on the weekends.

The more seasoned drinkers amongst you might find this self-congratulatory bar scene a little smug, however. There are a significant number of Dubliners who would never be seen dead in these denizens of cool and prefer to stick to more traditional pubs, where the emphasis is on conversation and atmosphere, as opposed to music and style. Some include The Long Hall, Grogan's, Mulligan's, Kehoe's, The Stag's Head and McDaid's are all steeped in literary and musical heritage, and offer an atmosphere second to none, where you're also more likely to get a good pint of Guinness. For the more adventurous amongst you, the northside of the city also offers a variety of excellent pubs. Forever synonymous with the Abbey Theatre, the Flowing Tide is certainly worth a visit, as are the Welcome Inn, the Life Bar and the Kavanagh's (Gravediggers), which takes its curious nickname from the fact that the pub is adjacent to the historical Glasnevin Cemetery.

If you have a somewhat nostalgic view of Ireland and expect a traditional music session to be the staple of every pub, you're in for a disappointment. It can be found, but expect to go a little further afield than the immediate city centre: O'Sheas, O'Donoghues, the Harcourt Hotel and the Cobblestone in Smithfield are just a few.

Despite the huge number of bars and pubs across the city, Ireland's licensing laws still remain rather prohibitive. Pubs generally close at 11:30p (Th-Sa 12:30a), and nightclubs begin turning away customers as early as 2a. There are, of course, some exceptions: many of the larger, more popular pubs in the city have negotiated 'late' licences, which allows the establishment to remain open a little longer during the weekends. Finding somewhere to drink later than 2a is virtually impossible, however. There are a variety of wine bars in the Leeson Street that serve until the late hours, but alcohol is often scandalously over-priced and the atmosphere has a reputation for being rather seedy. You're probably best off just going to bed, in the hope that your hangover won't prevent you

Dublin Snapshot continued

from rising early the next morning to do some sightseeing.

©

Nightlife Insights

Unlike some of its European counterparts, Dublin still remains a relatively compact city that can easily be negotiated on foot. Whether your interest be historical, literary or cultural, or if you simply want to relax, Dublin offers a range of interesting diversions in a stylish and increasingly cosmopolitan environment. Some would argue that the social life of Dubliners still revolves around the pub (see the *Drinking & Dining* guide), but if you're staying within the immediate city centre, you'll find plenty of alternatives to nursing a pint of Guinness right on your doorstep.

Literary Attractions Boasting no less than four Nobel Prize winners to date, Irish writers are famed the world over. The first stop on any literary related excursion to Dublin would have to be Trinity College. First established in 1592, the university is home to the famed medieval manuscript, the Book of Kells, and also has associations with Samuel Beckett, Bram Stoker, Edmund Burke and Oscar Wilde. The nearby Merrion Square is also steeped in literary heritage. The former home of both Oscar Wilde and W.B. Yeats, the square boasts an impressive central garden and a beautifully camp memorial to Wilde himself. The spectacular St. Patrick's Cathedral and adjacent Marsh's Library are associated with satirist Jonathan Swift, while devotees of the playwright George Bernard Shaw can visit his birthplace in a restored Victorian house at 33 Synge Street.

Dublin's north-side is also rich in literary attractions. Still a focal point for much of Ireland's new dramatic writing, the Abbey Theatre was originally founded in 1904 by W.B. Yeats and played host to plays by Sean O'Casey and J.M. Synge's infamous *Playboy of the Western World*. More contemporary dramatists such as Brian Friel, Frank McGuinness and Marina Carr have all had premieres staged

here, and the Abbey's sister theatre, the Peacock, continues to promote new writing. Theatre buffs may also be interested in the Gate Theatre, which was first founded by Hilton Edwards and Edward MacLiammoir in 1928.

For those less familiar with Dublin's literary contributions, a visit to the Dublin Writers Museum may be in order. Located on Parnell Square, the museum's collection includes an impressive array of photographs, paintings, first editions and memorabilia, all of which offer an excellent introduction to Irish writing in general. The popular Chapter One restaurant is located in the basement of the museum.

While there is a plethora of writers and dramatists associated with the city, Dublin was undoubtedly best captured by its supreme chronicler James Joyce. Despite popular conjecture, Joyce wasn't awarded a Nobel Prize, but his influence on both world literature and culture has been staggering. *Ulysses* still remains the novel by which most others are measured, and its labyrinthine structure name-checks countless city landmarks, the most immediately obvious of which is the Martello Tower in Sandymount. While the majority of Dubliners would probably admit to having not actually read the novel, the city celebrates its Joycean heritage on June 16th. Increasingly becoming a high-profile event, Bloomsday recreates the events that take place over the novel's 24-hour time span, and plays host to festivities all over the capital. The James Joyce Centre on the elegantly restored North Great Georges Street organises the event, and remains a focal point of activity all year round.

Museums and Galleries Given the fact that Dublin is still a relatively small city, there is an impressively wide range of galleries and museums within walking distance of the city centre. For those interested in the history of Ireland, a visit to the National Museum is certainly advised. Based on two sites, the Museum houses artifacts which date from 7000 BC to the present day. The original Kildare Street site was first opened in 1890, and features examples of Celtic and medieval

art such as the famous Ardagh Chalice, Tara Brooch and the Derrynaflan Hoard. The museum also houses a fascinating exhibition dealing with the turbulent 1916-1921 period of Irish history, which led to independence. The impressive Collins Barracks site, meanwhile, is based in the oldest continuously occupied barracks in the world and is Ireland's museum of the decorative arts and of economic, social, political and military history. Those seeking a more contemporary image of Ireland should check out the Gallery of Photography in Temple Bar.

The Chester Beatty Library, originally owned by the American engineer Sir Alfred Chester Beatty, houses a fine collection of Early Christian, Islamic and East Asian manuscripts, paintings, prints, icons and books. Those conducting genealogical information should pay a visit to the National Library, which offers research facilities that are second to none.

The Natural History Museum on Merrion Square was first opened in 1857. Particularly popular with children, the gallery has a Victorian, almost Gothic feel to it, and appears to have remained wholly unchanged since the 19th century. In an age of computer-aided exhibits and technology, it provides a marvellous glimpse at the mausoleum-museums of days gone by; and poking through its range of grotesque stuffed animals, bottled insects and bizarre flora and fauna is a surprisingly fascinating way to spend an afternoon.

While not having the fine art legacy of other European cities, there are also several excellent galleries in Dublin, where Ireland's relatively little known artists can be appreciated. The National Gallery is an essential stop-off in an exploration of the history of Irish art. A Jack B. Yeats room displays the paintings, notebooks and other artefacts from this important and compulsively creative Irish family. A five minute walk from the National Gallery is the RHA Gallery on Ely Place. The RHA displays exhibitions from the more successful of living Irish artists, as well as significant retrospectives and the annual

Dublin Snapshot continued

National College of Art and Design degree showcase.

The development of the Temple Bar Gallery and Studios has been a prime example of the maturing of the Irish arts scene.

In the 1980s and '90s, artists took over a dilapidated building in the then run-down Temple Bar area and set up studios and a gallery. With the design of the area as a cultural quarter, the gallery enjoyed a major refurbishment and is now one of the more important contemporary galleries in the city. The Taylor, Kavanagh, Kerlin galleries are all also worth a visit.

Adjacent to the Garden of Remembrance, a stone's throw away from historic O'Connell Street, the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art is probably the most significant gallery on Dublin's northside. The Hugh Lane houses an impressive permanent collection and a series of ongoing contemporary art exhibitions.

A short walk from the city centre, the Irish Museum of Modern Art is well worth a visit. Located in the stylishly refurbished Kilmainham hospital, IMMA always has something interesting on show, with ongoing exhibitions of both Irish and international art. The museum has hosted successful retrospectives of Andy Warhol and Joseph Beuys, amongst others, and the permanent collection of modern art is also essential viewing. A children's response room and artists in residence add to the modern art experience in this fine 18th century building.

Live Music Dublin's live music scene is as vibrant and as happening as ever. Sporting slickly designed interiors and accompanying nightclubs, music venues draw a variety of established Irish and international acts, the more popular of which generally play at larger capacity venues like the Olympia Theatre.

For atmosphere, quality and character, however, Dublin's smaller pub venues are still where it's at. Whelan's on Wexford Street is probably one of the best music venues in the city: with great acoustics, a friendly and loyal crowd and a spectacular balcony view of its tiny but perfectly

adequate stage. Whelan's is a great place to catch up-and-coming Dublin bands and emerging international acts, usually of a rock, folk or alternative variety, and the cover charge is always reasonable.

If traditional Irish music is your thing, you're not exactly spoilt for choice. Some of Dublin's more authentic pubs like the Cobblestone, the Harcourt Hotel, O'Shea's and O'Donoghues feature trad sessions, but the quality varies considerably from night to night.

Sport Sport is hugely popular in Ireland and for many it is more than a matter of national pride, but a way of life. The Gaelic Athletic Association, which was first founded in 1884, drew up rules and regulations for native, indigenous sports, and was just as much a political movement as a recreational one. Members of the GAA were even banned from playing English sports. In recent years, however, Gaelic games like football, hurling and camogie have arguably been superseded in popularity by international and British soccer tournaments, not least because of the Republic of Ireland's qualification for the World Cup in 1990 and 1994. GAA games during the championship season, however, still draw huge crowds to Dublin.

Golf is also extremely popular in Ireland and Dublin boasts approximately 55 different links, most of which are located in suburban areas, including the internationally renowned Portmarnock Golf Course, which has hosted many major championships including the Irish Open. Many of these clubs are privately owned, however, and require membership of a golf union. A number of smaller clubs such as Hollystown, Stepside, Elm Green and the Swords Open Golf Club, operate a green fees policy and are within easy reach of the city centre. More information, including a list of private courses, can be obtained from the Golfing Union of Ireland. The Murphy's Irish Open is one of the highlights of the professional golf calendar and is held every July. Other marvelous courses are located within an hour's drive of the city, including the magnificent K Club and **Mount Juliet**.

Ireland also boasts some of the finest fishing locations in the world, although Dublin is not exactly spoilt for choice. Coarse fishing options can be found along the river Liffey, the Royal Canal, the Dodder and the Grand Canal, while Dublin's coastline offers excellent sea fishing opportunities. Dun Laoghaire, Howth, Skerries, Dalkey and Killiney beach are all good locations. Permits can be obtained from most fishing tackle shops. A state licence is required for river fishing for salmon or sea trout from the Fishery Board. Sea, rock, beach or canal fishing does not require a permit, however.

Children Although not always apparent from first glance, Dublin offers a wealth of attractions for both the young and young at heart. The Dublin Zoo is a popular haunt, making for an enjoyable and often educational afternoon. The Ark in Temple Bar is Ireland's only cultural centre for children, regularly hosting exhibitions, theatre performances and workshops. Cinemas, of course, remain always reliable, particularly on rainy days, and with several well-situated theatres like the Savoy and the UCG Multiplex on offer, you should be spoilt for choice.

©

Things to Do Insights

While sipping a pint and soaking up the 360 view from the top of the Guinness Storehouse is certainly a highlight of any trip to Dublin, there is far more to this city than just a brewery. Why not discover some of the oldest manuscripts in the world at the Chester Beatty Library, soak up the views along Dublin's scenic coastline, listen to free live music along the cobbled streets of Temple Bar, or get back to nature and watch the deer in Phoenix Park, one of Europe's largest urban parks.

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Travel Tips

Getting There

Air

Dublin International Airport(DUB)(+353 1814 1111/ <http://www.dublin-airport.com/>)

Dublin Snapshot continued

is six miles north of the city center. Its compact, two-level terminal is user friendly and offers tired travelers short jaunts from point to point. Numerous shops, bars and restaurants are strewn across both levels. ATMs and currency exchanges are located on both levels. Airlines include:

Aer Arann(+353 1 8141058/ <http://www.aerarann.ie/>) Aer Lingus(+1 800 474 7424/ <http://www.aerlingus.com/>) Air Canada(+1 888 247 2262/ <http://www.aircanada.com/>) Air France(+1 800 237 2747/ <http://www.airfrance.com/>) Air Malta(+33 1 58 18 64 05/ <http://www.airmalta.com/>) Air Transat(+877 872 6728/ <http://www.airtransat.com/>) Air Wales(+1800 654 193/ <http://www.airwales.co.uk/>) Alitalia(+1 800 223 5730/ <http://www.alitalia.it/>) Blue1(+358 20 585 6000/ <http://www.blue1.com/>) BMI(+44 1332 854854/ <http://www.flybmi.com/>) BMI Baby(+0890 710 081(France)/ <http://www.bmibaby.com/>) British Airways(+1 800 217 9297/ <http://www.britishairways.com/>) Continental Airlines(+1 800 523 3273/ <http://www.continental.com/>) Delta Airlines(+1 800 221 1212/ <http://www.delta.com/>) FlyBe(+871 700 0535/ <http://www.flybe.com/>) Germanwings(+44 870 252 12 50/ <http://www1.germanwings.com/>) Hapag-Lloyd Express(+180 509 3 509/ <http://www.hlx.com/>) Iberworld Airlines(<http://www.iberworld.com/>) Lufthansa(+1 800 803 5838/ <http://cms.lufthansa.com/>) My Travel(+870 238 7710/ <http://www.mytravel.com/>) Ryan Air(+353 1 249 7851/ <http://www.ryanair.com/>) SAS(+1 800 221 2350/ <http://www.scandinavian.net/>) Sky Europe(+421 2 4850 1111/ <http://www2.skyeurope.com/en/>) Thomson Fly(+43 192 89 598/ <http://www.thomsonfly.com/>) Transavia(+312 406 0406/ <http://www.transavia.com/>)

From the Airport

Car Rentals: Avis(+1 800 230 4898/ +353 1605 7500/ <http://www.avis.com/>) Budget(+353 903 27711/ <http://www.budget-ireland.com/>) Murray's Europcar(+353 1 812 0410/ <http://www.europcar.ie/>) Hertz(+1 800 654 3131(US)/+1 800 654 3001(Intl/

<https://www.hertz.com/>) National(+1 800 227 7368/+353 1844 4162/ <http://www.nationalcar.com/>).

The rental desks are located in the arrivals area on the lower level of the terminal. From the airport, the M1 shoots directly into the city center. For a more circular route or to access other motorways take the M1 to the M50, which forms a broad half moon around the city.

Bus& Taxi: A taxi rank is outside the arrivals hall and a ride into town will set you back EUR15. A multitude of bus companies(both private and public) run more than 700 departures from the airport to points around town and around the country. Aircoach(+353 1844 7118/ <http://www.aircoach.ie/>) has two routes(one 24-hours) on luxury buses stopping at a number of hotels in the city center and south of Dublin. Fares are EUR6 one way, EUR10 return. The public bus system, Dublin Bus(+353 1 872 0000/ <http://www.dublinbus.ie/>), has an extensive network of lines leaving from the airport including the 747 and 748 Airport Links, which provide express service to the Busaras Bus Station and various rail stations. Other coach companies serving the airport include:

Bus Eireann(+353 1836 6111/<http://www.buseireann.ie/>) Dublin Airport Busnestor(+353 9179 7484) J.J. Kavanagh(+353 563 1106/ <http://www.jjkavanagh.ie/>) CityLink(+353 91 56 4100/ <http://www.citylink.ie/>)

Bus

Bus Eireann(<http://www.buseireann.ie/>) takes care of most of the long haul domestic routes, stretching out to the far reaches of the island, and in cooperation with Eurolines(+353 1836 6111/ <http://www.eurolines.ie/>) covers some 450 international destinations. CityLink(+353 91 56 4100/ <http://www.citylink.ie/>) and Busnestor(+353 91 79 7484) have cheap trips between Dublin and Galway.

Car

The M1/N1 from the north, the N2 and N3 from the northwest, the M4/N4 from

the west, the M7/N7 and N81 from the southwest and the M11/N11 from the south all stream into Dublin.

Rail

Although limited by its island status, Ireland's Irish Rail(+353 1 836 6222/ <http://www.irishrail.ie/>) unites Dublin with most regions throughout the country and offers daily jaunts to from the capital city to Belfast. Trains arriving in Dublin pull into Connolly, Heuston, or Pearse station.

Water

Dublin harbor is Ireland's largest port, aptly named Dublin Port(+353 1 855 2296/ <http://www.dublinport.ie/>), which is quickly becoming a star on the cruise stop circuit. It is also home to numerous ferry companies darting travelers back and forth across the Irish Sea between Dublin and the likes of Liverpool(England), Holyhead(Wales), Moyson(Wales), and during the peak season, Isle of Man, and Cherbourg(France). Ferry companies include:

Sea Cat(+1800 551 743/ <http://www.steam-packet.com/>) Irish ferries(+353 1 638 3333/ <http://www.irishferries.com/>) P&O Irish Sea(+1800 409 049/ <http://www.poirishsea.com/>) Stena Line(+353 1 204 7777/ <http://www7.stenaline.ie/>)

Getting Around

Dublin's bustling economy means more money for locals to go out and buy cars to fill up the streets. So traffic is getting hectic, and the public transit system is good enough that you can get around town easily without the hassle of a car. Of course, if exploring the picture postcard scenic countryside is on the agenda, there are plenty of car rental companies around town.

Taxi

Taxis usually line up outside major hotels and the train and bus stations, but during the peak tourist season lines may be long. You can give it your best shot to flag down a cab on the street, but most likely the driver will pass you by without so much as a glance. Dispatching options include: Metro

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Cab(+353 1 668 3333) and Pony Cab(+353 1 661 2233).

Public Transport

Irish Rail(+353 1 836 6222/ <http://www.irishrail.ie/>) handles DART(Dublin Area Rapid Transit) and the four suburban rail lines. DART is a speedy eclectic rail line that runs through the city center to Howth in the north and down to towns hugging the seaside in the south. Trains halt at each of the 25 stations every 10/15 minutes from 7a to midnight. Single fares start at EUR.90. Multi-day and multimodal passes are available.

LUAS light rail(+353 1 646 3400/ <http://www.luas.ie/>) has two electric tram lines(Red and Green) webbing out from the Connolly and St. Stephen's Green Stations in the city center to the suburbs in the south and southwest.

Dublin's green double decker buses set out to all areas of the city. The massive grid is managed by Dublin Bus(+353 1 872 0000/ <http://www.dublinbus.ie/>) and

has a variety of services including airport links, night links, express links and various hop on hop off sightseeing tours including a Dublin City Tour for EUR12.50. Many bus routes, especially cross town lines, pause at DART stations and both Connolly and Heuston train stations. Basic fares are based on zones and start at EUR.80. Multi-day passes are also available and transferable to the DART system.

Bike

The compact nature of the city center is walking conducive, but not so hot for biking. If pedaling is the preferred mode of transport opt for exploring the outskirts of town or roads along the bay front.

©

Fun Facts

1. There are over 1,000 pubs in Dublin to drink in
2. The legal drinking age is 18
3. 10 million glasses of Guinness are produced daily
4. There are 1.66 million people living in the greater Dublin region

5. Weird fact: There are no snakes in Dublin, this has reputedly to do with St. Patrick banishing them from the country

6. Random fact: Dublin's O'Connell Bridge is the only bridge in Europe which is as wide as it is long

7. Dublin city spans 115 square kilometres

8. Spooky fact: Bram Stoker who wrote the famous novel Dracula, was born in Clontarf the title is said to come from the Irish words "Droch Ola" which means bad blood

9. The Phoenix park is the largest urban park in Europe

10. Bizarre fact: Dublin rock band U2 were given the honorary title of 'the freedom of the Dublin city' with this title carries the unusual privilege of being able to graze sheep for free in St. Stephens Green one of Dublin's landmarks

11. The prestigious "Oscar" statuette used at the Academy Awards was designed by Cedric Gibbons, who was born in Dublin in 1823

12. The Vikings founded Dublin in 988

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