

Top Ten Reasons to Visit Dublin!

A Safe and Friendly City!

Dublin is a safe and welcoming city with a strong, stable economy. Over the last fifteen years, Ireland's rate of economic growth has been the highest among member nations of the European Union. This growth has led to enormous investment in the city's infrastructure and facilities. Despite its current economic success, the city remains one of the friendliest in Europe and maintains a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere.

Easy Access

Economic growth has led to Dublin becoming a key European business centre and there is now easy access by air from all major European and international destinations. Dublin airport is only 12 kilometres (8 miles) from Dublin city centre and therefore only a short ride by bus or car. Ferry services are an alternative method of travel from the UK. Dublin has two ferry terminals: Dublin Port, located in the city centre and Dun Laoghaire ferry terminal, located south of the city. Once in Dublin, the city centre is relatively compact, with all major sights within easy walking distance of each other.

A Network of Talented Professionals

Dublin has a network of experienced local operators in conference, exhibition and event management. Their experience in managing international events, combined with a positive "can-do" attitude, will ensure your event is a huge success! DCB can assist you in identifying the appropriate company to assist you with your event and will arrange all necessary introductions. References, accreditations and memberships are detailed on our website www.dublinconventionbureau.com

Irish Hospitality

Dublin boasts a first-class hotel infrastructure for visitors to the city. And, whether you are staying in exclusive five-star luxury, or in more modest student accommodation, you can be confident of a warm welcome to Dublin! The Irish are renowned for their friendliness and even in large corporate hotels, staff will go out of their way to be hospitable. There is a wide variety of accommodation to choose from and you can be assured of finding the appropriate option to meet your needs and budget.

Knowledge Capital

Experienced professionals, world-class researchers, multi-national organisations and innovative start-ups have all made Dublin their home. Over 1,200 overseas companies have chosen Ireland as their European base and are involved in a wide range of activities in sectors as diverse as e-Business, ICT, pharmaceuticals, healthcare, financial and international services. Dublin is now the world's fastest growing location for financial services. Half the world's top 50 banks have operations in the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) in central Dublin. In total, there are almost 450 international institutions directly operating from Dublin with a further 700 managed entities carrying on business under the IFSC programme.

Ireland is a key location for the pharmaceutical and chemical industry in Europe. Nine of the top ten companies in the world have operations in Ireland. Ireland is also home to 13 of the world's top 20 medical device companies. There are 83 overseas healthcare companies and over half of these companies are involved in research and development, with a number of companies having dedicated research and development centres. In order to further develop Ireland as a centre of research excellence, the Government is investing €646 million between 2000 and 2006 in Science Foundation Ireland (SFI). SFI has the goal of creating world-class research programmes in

the areas of ICT and biotechnology and began to recruit world-class research scientists and engineers in these fields in 2000.

Research in the area of Internet-related technologies and interactive and multi-media applications was further enhanced by the decision of MIT to establish MediaLab Europe in Dublin's digital media district. This development builds on Ireland's existing success in the field of IT. The top ten independent software companies in the world all have significant operations in Ireland.

History and Culture

Dublin has produced, or been home to, some of the greatest literary names in history. Dublin's most famous literary son is James Joyce and Dublin is the setting for two of his greatest works: *Ulysses* and *The Dubliners*. (In 2004, *Dubliners* will be celebrating the 100th anniversary of *Ulysses*.) Oscar Wilde, Samuel Beckett, W.B. Yeats, Jonathan Swift, Bram Stoker are just some of the famous writers who were born or lived in Dublin. In 1898, W.B. Yeats helped found The Abbey Theatre in Dublin. Today, visitors to the city continue to enjoy marvelous theatrical productions at The Abbey and at a number of other outstanding theatres such as The Gate, The Gaiety and Andrew's Lane. Recent Irish productions to have enjoyed considerable success abroad include *Dancing at Lughnasa* and *Stones in his Pockets*.

While in Dublin, why not take in an evening of musical entertainment at the National Concert Hall? Wander over to Trinity College to view the Book of Kells. The most elaborately decorated of Ireland's illuminated manuscripts, the Book of Kells may have been the work of monks who fled to Kells in AD 806 after a Viking raid. Visit Christ Church Cathedral or St. Patrick's Cathedral (located on the site where St. Patrick is said to have baptized converts around AD 450). Explore Irish history in the National Museum. Or, explore your own Irish roots with a visit to the Genealogical Office - they will help anyone with an Irish background to research their Irish ancestors!

"Craic"

"Craic" is the Irish word for good times – the hospitality, humour, music and laughter that sets Dublin apart from every other city in the world. There are many pubs in the city centre, and in the villages to the North and South of the centre, that host traditional Irish music nights. After enjoying a glass of whiskey in the pub, you may be interested in checking out the Old Jameson Distillery tour, which takes you on a fascinating tour of the craft of whiskeymaking. (Irish Whiskey can trace its history back to the sixth century.) Or take a trip to the Guinness Storehouse, where you'll learn all there is to know about the world-famous beer!

Sport & Social Programmes

Dublin city is only minutes away from both the Irish countryside and coast. Dublin is situated on the water and you can take advantage of this for fishing, or to participate in more active water sports. Surfing, windsurfing, water-skiing, scuba diving and canoeing are all possible options along the Dublin coast and in Dublin Bay itself. If you prefer to stay on dry land, why not head south to the beautiful Wicklow mountains for hikes in the Irish countryside? Alternatively, cycle in the city or mountains, or head out along the paths around Dublin Bay. There are also numerous horse-riding centres offering trail-riding and trekking options for the visitor. Ireland has a strong racing culture and visitors to Dublin can enjoy races at the nearby Curragh, Punchestown or Leopardstown racecourses.

Of course, golf has become a national pastime and there are numerous courses around Dublin. If you are feeling confident, why don't you try the course at the Kildare Golf and Country Club (home to the Ryder Cup in 2006)? Depending on when you visit, you may get the opportunity to check out the national sports of hurling and Gaelic football in Croke Park, one of the largest stadiums in Europe and a venue where many Irish legends have been born!

If shopping is more your style, Dublin offers a wonderful array of products from traditional Irish handmade crafts to international (and Irish!) designer labels. For examples of the best in Irish design and workmanship, visit the Kilkenny Design Centre or House of Ireland (both are located on Nassau Street in Dublin). Grafton Street, a pedestrian street to the south of the River Liffey, is the place to promenade and window shop, with a fine selection of the international designer stores that underline Dublin's cosmopolitan atmosphere.

Cuisine

The wide variety of restaurants in Dublin ensures that the capital offers the very best of international cuisine, with something to please every palate! Dublin's position on the water guarantees that seafood and fish are abundant: bowls of steamed mussels, home-made brown bread, mouth-watering smoked salmon, plump Dublin Bay oysters (traditionally washed down with Guinness), luscious lobsters, juicy pink prawns...and that's just for starters! Ireland's rich pastureland is reflected in the succulent Irish lamb, tender Irish beef and pork and excellent fresh fruit and vegetables that are plentiful. The perfect end to a meal is an Irish coffee – coffee, cream and whiskey!

Come Stay Awhile!

Why stop at Dublin? Extend your trip to take in as much as possible of the rest of the country - the variety of scenery in one small island will surprise you! Head south to Waterford and Kilkenny – Waterford's coastline boasts endless golden beaches and scenic areas. Check out the Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre along the way. To the south of the country, you will discover the beautiful countryside of Cork and Kerry. Before you leave Cork, make sure to kiss the Blarney Stone! Tour the Ring of Kerry and visit the Gap of Dunloe. Head west to the rugged landscape of Galway, or north to the inspirational scenery of Donegal. To the northeast, the lively city of Belfast is waiting to entertain you. It is relatively easy to get to all of these destinations by car, bus, train or plane. You'll be glad you did!