

Overseas Adventure Travel[®]

THE LEADER IN PERSONALIZED SMALL GROUP ADVENTURES SINCE 1978

Your O.A.T. Adventure Travel Planning Guide[®]



Immersion in Ireland: Belfast to Ennis
2026

Overseas Adventure Travel®

347 Congress Street, Boston, MA 02210

Dear Traveler,

I am thrilled that you are considering exploring the world on one of Overseas Adventure Travel's (O.A.T.'s) NEW **Immersions** itineraries.

As you may already be aware, **Immersions** itineraries are shorter versions of some of our most popular O.A.T. adventures. For our more active travelers who wish to make the most of their limited time abroad, these itineraries have been carefully crafted to include all the iconic must-sees of a destination along with O.A.T.'s signature people-to-people interactions that connect you to local culture and create the most treasured travel memories.

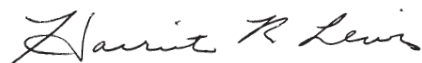
Like all our adventures, **Immersions** itineraries provide you with an intimate understanding of your destination, not just a superficial view. You may find yourself spending **A Day in the Life** of a local community, sharing a meal during a **Home-Hosted Visit**, or discussing **Controversial Topics** that impact everyday life. And if you choose to travel solo, you will enjoy all these cultural experiences at an unmatched value, with our FREE Single Supplements—just one of the reasons we continue to be the leader in solo travel.

To ensure you experience the true culture and feel supported every step of the way, we provide the services of one of our local Trip Experience Leaders. Along with introducing you to the history and culture of their homeland, these friendly experts will gladly help you out with any special requests to make your trip even more special. You can also rely on the seasoned team at our regional office, who are ready to help 24/7 in case any unexpected circumstances arise.

Plus, you can put your own personal stamp on your trip, like the **87% of our travelers who customize their experience**. Perhaps you will choose to arrive a few days early* to explore independently and get acclimated, customize your air itinerary, and more.

I hope you find this Travel Planning Guide helpful. If you have any further questions, do not hesitate to contact one of our Travel Counselors at **1-800-955-1925**.

Warm regards,



Harriet R. Lewis
Chair
Overseas Adventure Travel

*Early arrival option unavailable on **Immersion in Iceland: Selfoss to Reykjavik**

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Dublin, Ireland

New! Immersion in Ireland: Belfast to Ennis Small Group Adventure

Northern Ireland: Belfast | **Ireland:** Dublin, Kilkenny, Galway, Ennis

Small groups of no more than 16 travelers, guaranteed

9 days starting from \$4,295

including international airfare

Single Supplement: **FREE**

For departure dates & prices, visit www.oattravel.com/iel2026pricing

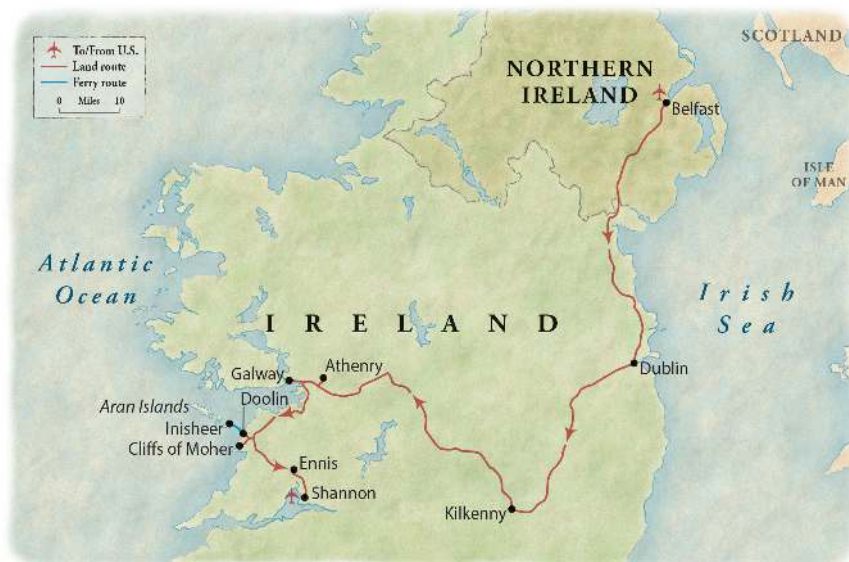
Discover the Emerald Isle's legendary wonders and tumultuous past as you explore thousands of years of history throughout the island. Trace the influence of the infamous Troubles across Northern Ireland through exclusive experiences and local interactions in Belfast, which has emerged with a newfound commitment to peace and unity.

IT'S INCLUDED

- 7 nights accommodation
- International airfare, airport transfers, government taxes, fees, and airline fuel surcharges unless you choose to make your own air arrangements
- All land transportation
- 15 meals—7 breakfasts, 4 lunches, and 4 dinners (including 1 Home-Hosted Dinner)
- 9 small group activities
- Services of a local O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader
- Gratuities for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters
- 5% Frequent Traveler Credit toward your next O.A.T. adventure

Prices are accurate as of the date of this publishing and are subject to change.

Immersion in Ireland: Belfast to Ennis



WHAT TO EXPECT

①②③④⑤ Moderately Strenuous

Pacing: 5 locations in 9 days

Physical requirements: Hike over uneven, unpaved, or cobbled surfaces. The weather can also be unpredictable, quickly switching from sun to showers.

Flight time: Travel time will be 6-17 hours and will most likely have one connection

View all physical requirements at www.oattravel.com/iel

IRELAND: THE O.A.T. DIFFERENCE

Unbeatable Value: Travel at the lowest price and per diems in the industry.

People-to-People Experiences: Take part in *A Day in the Life* of a traditional Gaelic football club. You'll meet the players, learn about the game's long history, rules, and even take part in a hands-on experience paying the game. Plus, we'll connect closely with Irish culture during a **Home-Hosted Dinner** in Ennis.

O.A.T. Exclusives: Participate in an intimate account of the violence that once gripped the city of Belfast at the Felons Club when you will hear about the **Controversial Topic** of the Troubles with ex-political prisoners and a British veteran, who fought on opposite sides.

ITINERARY SUMMARY

DAYS	DESTINATION
1	Depart U.S.
2-3	Belfast, Northern Ireland
4	Dublin, Ireland
5	Kilkenny
6	Galway
7-8	Ennis
9	Return to U.S.

PERSONALIZE YOUR ADVENTURE

ARRIVE EARLY

We recommend that you relax after a long flight or explore more in depth before your trip. Prices shown include accommodations and private airport transfer.

- Arrive early in **Dublin** before your main adventure from **\$390** per room, per night

Immersion in Ireland: Belfast to Ennis

YOUR DETAILED ITINERARY

Day 1 Depart U.S.

Depart the U.S. today on an overnight flight to Belfast, Northern Ireland.

Day 2 Arrive Belfast, Northern Ireland

- Destination: Belfast
- Included Meals: Dinner
- Accommodations: Ten Square Hotel or similar

Morning/Afternoon: You'll arrive in Belfast in the morning or afternoon. An O.A.T. representative will meet you at the airport and assist with the transfer to your hotel.

There, you'll meet our Trip Experience Leader and fellow travelers. Throughout the day, our Trip Experience Leader will lead travelers on orientation walks of the neighborhood surrounding our hotel as they arrive.

Lunch: On your own. Your Trip Experience Leader will be happy to provide you with recommendations.

Afternoon: At your leisure. Perhaps you'll stroll through the regal campus at Belfast's Queen's University.

Dinner: We'll gather at the hotel to enjoy a Welcome Dinner, featuring a selection of local dishes.

Evening: Free to spend as you wish.

Day 3 Black taxi tour with local Belfast drivers • **Controversial Topic:** The violence of the Troubles with ex-political prisoners and a British veteran, who fought on opposite sides

- Destination: Belfast
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Ten Square Hotel or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Belfast is a city with a turbulent history and rich culture. We'll get acquainted with it this morning during an exclusive experience when we explore Belfast like a local: in one of the city's iconic black taxi cabs. During the height of the Troubles in the 1970s, public buses stopped serving West Belfast's Catholic neighborhoods, and these taxis stepped up to offer their services.

Today's cabs are driven by Catholics and Protestants alike. We'll break into even smaller groups for our taxi ride, where we'll get a very personal view of the city through our drivers' eyes. They'll share their perspectives on the city's historic political turmoil and religious divides, as well as their views on how old controversies cast a shadow over Belfast today. As long-term residents of the neighborhoods you'll be exploring, your driver will be able to offer a personal perspective of this dangerous period of Belfast's history, when a wrong turn might have taken you across the dividing line

between the Catholic and Protestant section of the city, putting drivers and passengers at risk of physical abuse or even death.

As we ride through the city, we'll hear firsthand accounts about how the Belfast of the 1970s was a war zone. Fighters belonging to the militant faction of the Irish Republican Army (IRA) committed bombings, shootings, and other acts of terror to pressure the British government into recognizing Irish sovereignty over the north. In response, extremists sympathetic to the crown formed paramilitary groups like the UVF, clashing with IRA rebels and unleashing their own acts of terror on Belfast's Catholic population, while armed British soldiers patrolled the streets, fingers resting lightly on the trigger. The Troubles rocked Northern Ireland for three decades, and when the dust settled, more than 3,500 people—civilians and combatants alike—were killed, and more than 47,000 wounded.

Our drivers will take us by the boundary between West Belfast's Protestant and Catholic neighborhoods, where murals on each side depict contrasting sentiments about the deep-rooted conflict. We'll stop to see famous murals—such as the Irish Language Mural, the Tribute to Frederick Douglass, and the Nelson Mandela Mural—and our driver will help to explain each one's significance. You'll also have the opportunity to make your mark on a peace wall—one of the still-standing barricades that physically separates the city, now adorned with messages of hope and peace from locals and visitors alike.

After our taxi ride, we'll participate in an intimate account of the violence that once gripped this city at the Felons Club, established as a meeting place for Irish Republicans who had been imprisoned for their political or militant activities. Only former prisoners

may achieve full membership, and honorary membership has been extended to other famous revolutionaries.

Here, we will have a chance to hear about a **Controversial Topic** during a conversation with three individuals who fought in the Troubles—on opposing sides. We'll meet two ex-political prisoners—a Republican who fought for Irish independence, and a loyalist who fought with the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF)—as well as an ex-British army serviceman (or, if these men are unavailable, we'll meet alternative individuals who fought during these times). During the violence of the Troubles it would have been inconceivable to gather men such as these in the same room. Today, they have put aside their differences and will share their stories about the dark deeds they took part in during the fighting; their experiences while incarcerated; and their shared hopes for a better future.

While the violence may be over, modern Belfast is still a divided city, and the road to harmony is a long one. Belfast's religious population is roughly equally split, with 48% hailing from a Protestant background, and 45% raised Catholic. To this day, the two factions live in entirely segregated neighborhoods, divided physically by "peace lines"—walled barriers that separate the two sections of the city which are sealed off by locked gates each night. While the brightly colored murals along the walls illustrate the city's hope for peace and reconciliation, the fact that the walls still stand demonstrate the progress that still needs to be made.

Lunch: We will stay on at the Felons Club to enjoy a traditional pub lunch.

Afternoon: The afternoon is free to make your own discoveries. Perhaps you'll visit Titanic Belfast, a memorial to the famed ship and museum chronicling Belfast's maritime heritage.

Dinner: On your own.

Evening: You're free to explore Belfast by night at your own pace this evening, or take some time to rest after your long day of cultural discovery.

Day 4 Belfast • Explore Dublin • Visit the Book of Kells

- Destination: Dublin
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Hotel 7 or similar

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: This morning we'll check out of our hotel in Belfast and drive to Dublin, Ireland with a stop along the way. Upon arrival, we'll drop our luggage at the hotel and set off to discover Dublin, Ireland's political and cultural center.

Lunch: At a local restaurant.

Afternoon: Begin your Dublin discoveries with a guided panoramic and walking tour of the city's sights, culminating at Trinity College where we will have the opportunity to view the famous Book of Kells—an illuminated manuscript of the Gospels. Created in the medieval period, the Book of Kells is widely considered to be a masterpiece of traditional Celtic art with its vibrant illustrations, intricate Celtic motifs, and richly illuminated text. Some of these illustrations are so finely designed that they are difficult to spot without magnification.

You'll have the rest of the day free to explore on your own. Perhaps you'll stay on to visit St. Stephen's Green, the campus at Trinity

College, or head to another of the city's many museums. Dublin is amazingly rich in literary history—Yeats, Shaw, Beckett, Joyce and other literary immortals have walked its streets—and its architecture and museum collections are second to none.

Dinner: On your own.

Evening: Explore Dublin on your own this evening. Perhaps you'll use your free time to walk its cobbled streets, enjoy a pint of Guinness in a pub, or view some of its most famous sights by night.

Day 5 Dublin • Explore Kilkenny

- Destination: Kilkenny
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Kilkenny Ormonde Hotel

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Bid Dublin farewell and depart for Kilkenny, with a stop along the way. We'll arrive at our next hotel just before lunch time where we'll drop off our luggage and set off on a vicinity walk of the area with our Trip Experience Leader.

Lunch: On your own.

Afternoon: After lunch, we'll explore Kilkenny, a medieval city straddling the banks of the River Nore, on an included walking tour with your Trip Experience Leader. Stroll the medieval lanes and "slips" (narrow connecting roads) as your Trip Experience Leader points out the city's highlights, including bustling pubs filled with the sounds of traditional Irish music, and the Smithwicks brewery, the internationally known beer brand that has its headquarters here.

We'll also enjoy a guided tour of one of Ireland's most iconic landmarks, Kilkenny Castle. Founded shortly after the Norman

conquest of Ireland, the magnificent fortress on the banks of the River Nore has loomed over the city for more than 800 years. Rebuilt many times over the centuries and with much of its former glory restored, the castle is filled with a treasure trove of paintings, tapestries, and furnishings. Our tour will also take you to the sprawling gardens of Kilkenny Castle, an 800-year-old stronghold that lords over the city center. Though originally designed to defend a crossing over the River Nore, the castle's grounds today provide a peaceful place for locals and visitors alike to stroll about and admire the impressive artisanal floristry on display.

After our explorations, we'll check into our Kilkenny hotel and enjoy some time at leisure.

Dinner: At the hotel.

Evening: You have the freedom to spend the rest of your evening as you wish—ask your Trip Experience Leader for recommendations.

Day 6 Kilkenny • Explore Athenry • Galway

- Destination: Galway
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch
- Accommodations: Galway Bay Hotel

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll begin our drive to Galway this morning.

Our first stop will be to visit the Irish Workhouse Centre. This former workhouse building has been transformed into a museum documenting an 80-year period of extreme poverty in Ireland—from the 1840s to the 1920s—which included the infamous Potato Famine. These workhouses were established as a means for people who were unable to support themselves and their families a way to work in exchange for food and shelter. However, they were frequently overcrowded and subject to

rapidly spreading disease and mass deaths. One of the cruelest aspects of the workhouse was the forced separation of families, with separate living quarters for men, women, boys, and girls.

Next, we'll drive on to the Athenry, the best preserved medieval town in Ireland, arriving in time for lunch.

Lunch: At a local traditional pub.

Afternoon: After lunch, a local guide will lead us on a walk through the town. Notable sites include its medieval town wall, Athenry Castle, and its charming cobblestone streets and 13th-century buildings. The town is also well-known as the inspiration for the famous Irish song, "The Fields of Athenry."

We will then drive on to Galway city and check into our hotel. After settling in, you may join your Trip Experience Leader on an orientation walk.

Dinner: On your own.

Evening: Free to explore Galway on your own. This enchanting city is a medley of narrow lanes, wood and stone shop fronts, and bustling restaurants and pubs.

Day 7 Galway • A Day in the Life of a Gaelic football club • Visit the Cliffs of Moher • Ennis • Home-hosted Dinner

- Destination: Ennis
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Dinner
- Accommodations: Lahinch Coast Hotel

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: We'll check out of our hotel and depart to experience *A Day in the Life* of a Gaelic football club.

Gaelic football, a sport similar to rugby, has been enjoyed in Ireland for centuries. Officially codified in 1887, there are records of the

game being played as far back as the 1600s. This high-octane team sport is played with a round ball like in soccer, but players are permitted to use both their hands and feet to control and pass the ball. We will meet a local Gaelic football club, learn about the game's history, rules, and even take part in a hands-on experience paying the game.

Afterwards, we'll drive along the coast to visit the majestic Cliffs of Moher. These precipitous rock formations—towering more than 700 feet above the crashing ocean surf at their highest point—offer breathtaking panoramic views of Ireland's Atlantic coast and provide nesting sites for tens of thousands of seabirds. If the wind is strong, the sea foam and spray fly up and over the cliffs along with the rain; while on clear sunny days, fantastic views can be seen from every angle.

Over the centuries, people have also made their mark with towers, quarries, and well-worn paths, but they're almost lost in the scale and grandeur of the sea cliffs. One that does stand out is O'Brien's Tower, a huge structure built to house the guests of Cornelius O'Brien, County Clare's legendary Member of Parliament from the 1830s until he died in 1857.

Lunch: On your own at the Cliffs of Moher.

Afternoon: Continue on to Ennis and check into our hotel. After some free time to settle in, take part in an orientation walk.

Dinner: Enjoy traditional food and lively conversation with a local Irish family during a **Home-Hosted Dinner**.

Evening: Return to our hotel; the remainder of the evening is on your own.

Day 8 Ennis • Explore Inis Oirr • Traditional Irish Music Session • Farewell Dinner

- Destination: Ennis
- Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations: Lahinch Coast Hotel

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: Today we'll drive to the coastal village of Doolin. Here, we'll board a ferry bound for Inis Oirr, the smallest of the Aran Islands. The 260 permanent residents of Inis Oirr are very friendly and welcoming, still speak Irish Gaelic, and practice traditional Celtic customs in their daily lives. Upon arrival, we'll take a tour of the island with a local guide who is a resident here. We'll ride over limestone pavements and explore the rich and diverse landscape, from stone walls enclosing vibrant green patches to the craggy shoreline.

Lunch: At Café Una, a local pub run by an island native.

Afternoon: Enjoy a bit of free time after lunch to explore more of Inis Oirr on your own. You may wish to stay on at the pub and chat with the locals. Or, perhaps you'll visit some of the island's small, locally-owned shops. Nearby you'll find an Aran knitwear shop where all the items are made using the owner's hand-spun yarn. There is also a craft store where you'll find homemade crafts of local women for sale.

We'll then depart the island via ferry. If the weather obliges, we may be able to witness scenic views at the base of the Cliffs of Moher. Upon arrival back in Doolin, we'll drive back to our hotel in Ennis and enjoy some time at leisure.

Before dinner, we will gather to listen to a traditional Irish music session, performed for us by a group of local musicians. These sessions—or *seisiún*, in Irish Gaelic—are

typically casual affairs during which joining in the *craic* (good time) is not only welcome, but expected.

Dinner: Enjoy a Farewell Dinner at a local restaurant.

Evening: On your own. You may wish to linger at a local pub and toast your Ireland discoveries over a pint of Guinness.

Day 9 Return to U.S.

- Included Meals: Breakfast

Breakfast: At the hotel.

Morning: After breakfast, transfer to the airport for your flight home.

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & ENTRY REQUIREMENTS

Your Passport

- Must be in good condition
- Must be valid for at least 6 months after your scheduled return to the U.S.
- Must have the required number of blank pages (details below)
- The blank pages must be labeled “Visas” at the top. Pages labeled “Amendments and Endorsements” are not acceptable

Need to Renew Your Passport?

Contact the National Passport Information Center (NPIC) at **1-877-487-2778**, or visit the U.S. Department of State’s official website at **www.travel.state.gov** for information on obtaining a new passport or renewing your existing passport. The U.S. Department of State allows for passport renewal by mail or, for applicable citizens, renewal online. We advise you review the process and requirements for online passport renewal on the official website.

You may also contact our recommended visa service company, PVS International, at **1-800-556-9990** for help with your passport.

Recommended Blank Pages

Please confirm that your passport has enough blank pages for this adventure.

- **Main trip only:** You will need 4 blank passport pages.

Entry Requirements

A detailed instruction packet and fees will be available on your My Planner about 100 days prior to your departure. In the meantime, we’re providing the information below as a guideline on what to expect. This info is for U.S. citizens only. All visas and fees are subject to change.

- **United Kingdom:** The United Kingdom requires an Electronic Travel Authorization (ETA) for entry. This includes entry to England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland. You will need an ETA if the UK is your final destination. The ETA will be valid for 2 years.

Traveling Without a U.S. Passport?

If you are not a U.S. citizen, or if your passport is from any country other than the U.S., it is your responsibility to check with your local consulate, embassy, or a visa services company about visa requirements. We recommend the services of PVS International, a national visa service located in Washington D.C.; they can be reached at **1-800-556-9990** or **www.pvsinternational.org**.

Traveling With a Minor?

Some governments may require certain documentation for minors to enter and depart the country or to obtain a visa (if applicable). For further detail on the required documentation, please contact your local embassy or consulate.

Emergency Photocopies of Key Documents

We recommend you carry color photocopies of key documents including the photo page of your passport plus any applicable visas, air itinerary, credit cards (front and back), and an alternative form of ID. Add emergency phone numbers like your credit card company and the number for your travel protection plan. Store copies separate from the originals.

If you plan to email this information to yourself, please keep in mind that email is not always secure; consider using password protection or encryption. Also email is not always available worldwide. As an alternative, you could load these documents onto a flash drive instead, which can do double-duty as a place to backup photos during your trip.

Overseas Taxes & Fees

This tour may have taxes and fees that cannot be included in your airline ticket price because you are required to pay them in person onsite. All taxes are subject to change without notice and can be paid in cash (either U.S. or local currency). If applicable, you will receive a list of these fees with your Final Documents.

RIGORS, VACCINES & GENERAL HEALTH

Is This Adventure Right for You?

Please review the information below prior to departing on this adventure. We reserve the right for our Trip Experience Leaders to modify participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their condition would adversely affect the health, safety, or enjoyment of themselves or of other travelers.

PACING

- 5 locations in 9 days

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

- Not appropriate for travelers using wheelchairs or other mobility aids
- Must be able to walk approximately 3 miles unassisted each day and participate in 6–8 hours of daily physical activities
- We reserve the right for Trip Experience Leaders to restrict participation, or in some circumstances send travelers home, if their limitations impact the group's experience

CLIMATE

- Irish weather is traditionally fickle, but summer temperatures usually range from the low 50s to the low 70s
- Autumn generally brings mist, showers, and brisk weather in the 40s
- Most of the country receives some rain at least 200 days a year

TERRAIN

- There is a fair amount of hiking, and walking over uneven, unpaved, or cobbled surfaces

TRANSPORTATION

- Travel by motorcoach, traditional horse-and-carriage, and Belfast's famous taxis
- There are several 1–3 hour drives (sometimes with around 2 hours between stops)

ACCOMMODATIONS & FACILITIES

- Hotel rooms are smaller than U.S. and offer basic amenities
- All accommodations feature private bathrooms

Steps to Take Before Your Trip

Before you leave on this adventure, we recommend the following:

- Check with the CDC for their recommendations for the countries you'll be visiting. You can contact them online at **www.cdc.gov/travel** or by phone at **1-800-232-4636**.
- Have a medical checkup with your doctor at least 6 weeks before your trip.
- Pick up any necessary medications, both prescription and over-the-counter.
- Have a dental and/or eye checkup. (Recommended, but less urgent)

No Vaccines Required

Recommended Vaccines

At the time of writing there were no required vaccines for this trip. The CDC recommends that all travelers be up to date on their routine vaccinations and on basic travel vaccines like Hepatitis A and Typhoid, but these are suggestions only. However, this could change in future so we encourage you to check with the CDC yourself before meeting with your doctor.

Traveling with Medications

- **Pack medications in your carry-on bag** to avoid loss and to have them handy.
- **Keep medicines in their original, labeled containers** for a quicker security screen at the airport and a better experience if you get stopped by customs while overseas.
- **Bring copies of your prescriptions**, written using the generic drug name rather than a brand name to be prepared for any unforeseen loss of your medications.

We recommend checking with the State Department for medication restrictions by country: **travel.state.gov** (Go to "Find International Travel Information", select "Country Information", then enter the country into the search bar; if you don't see any medications specifically mentioned under the "Health" section, then you can presume major U.S. brands should be OK).

Staying Healthy on Your Trip

Jet Lag Tips

- Start your trip well-rested.
- Begin a gradual transition to your new time zone before you leave or switch to your destination time zone when you get on the plane.
- Attempt to sleep and eat according to the new schedule.
- Avoid heavy eating and drinking caffeine or alcoholic beverages right before—and during—your flight.
- Drink plenty of water and/or fruit juice while flying
- Stretch your legs, neck, and back periodically while seated on the plane.

- After arrival, avoid the temptation to nap.
- Don't push yourself to see a lot on your first day.
- Try to stay awake your first day until after dinner.

Allergies

If you have any serious allergies or dietary restrictions, we advise you to notify us at least 30 days prior to your departure. Please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**, and we will communicate them to our regional office. Every effort will be made to accommodate you.

Water

- Tap water is safe to drink on this trip; however, it may be processed differently than your tap water at home, so you might not like the taste or it may feel "heavy" in your stomach.
- Bottled water is widely available for sale.

MONEY MATTERS: LOCAL CURRENCY & TIPPING GUIDELINES

Top Three Tips

- **Carry a mix of different types of payments**, such as local currency, an ATM card, and a credit card.
- **Traveler's checks are not accepted in Ireland.**
- **You will not be able to pay with U.S. dollars on this trip;** you will need local currency.

Local Currency

For current exchange rates, please refer to an online converter tool like www.xe.com/currencyconverter, your bank, or the financial section of your newspaper.

Republic of Ireland: European Euro (€)

Northern Ireland: Pound Sterling (GBP)

How to Exchange Money

If you want to exchange money before your trip, you can usually do so through your bank or at an exchange office. Your departure airport in the U.S., a travel agent, or an AAA office are also possible outlets.

In the Republic of Ireland, exchange services are not available at hotels or post offices and you must be an account holder in order to exchange money at a bank. Therefore, we recommend that you exchange euros in advance of your trip or withdraw euros from an ATM upon your arrival. The ATM will give you local money and your bank at home will convert that into U.S. dollars. All exchange methods involve fees, which may be built into the conversion rate; ask beforehand.

ATMs

When using the ATM, keep in mind that it may only accept cards from local banks, and may not allow cash advances on credit cards; you might need to try more than one ATM or more than one card.

Many banks charge a fee of \$1–\$10 each time you use a foreign ATM. Others may charge you a percentage of the amount you withdraw. We recommend that you check with your bank before you depart.

Lastly, don't forget to memorize the actual digits of your card's PIN number (many keypads at foreign ATMs do not include letters on their keys—they only display numbers.)

In most countries, ATMs are widely available in major cities. If you are in a rural location, it will likely be harder to find an ATM.

Northern Ireland: ATMS are common throughout Northern Ireland so ATM cards will give you a reliable payment method and ready access to local currency.

Credit & Debit Cards

While traveling, most countries and major cities will accept credit cards. Even if you don't plan on using a credit card during your trip, we still suggest that you bring one or two as a backup, especially if you are planning a large purchase (artwork, jewelry). We also suggest that you bring more than one brand of card (i.e. Visa, MasterCard, American Express) if possible, because not every shop will take every card. For example, although Discover and American Express cards are accepted in some countries outside the U.S., they are not widely adopted, so other brands will work at a much larger range of stores, restaurants, etc.

If you are visiting a country that does not commonly accept credit cards, they will be listed below.

Northern Ireland: Credit cards are readily accepted in most hotels and restaurants, but you should always inquire if your type of credit card is accepted before deciding on your purchase.

Chip Cards

Many countries have adopted credit cards that have an embedded computer chip. These cards are inserted into the reader instead of swiped. The card owner then authorizes the purchase using a PIN instead of signing.

Though this technology is common in the U.S., occasionally there are machines in other countries that can't read U.S. cards or the machine can read the card, but asks for a PIN. This doesn't happen often, and is nothing to worry about. You can usually resolve the situation by asking the cashier to let you sign. (If you don't speak the language, just mime signing on your hand.) If you are not able to sign for a purchase, such as at an automated ticket booth, you can use another form of payment, such as a debit card that has a PIN.

Notify Card Providers of Upcoming Travel

Many credit card companies and banks have fraud alert departments that will freeze your card if they see suspicious charges—such as charges or withdrawals from another country. To avoid an accidental security block, it is a good idea to notify your credit card company and/or bank you will be using your cards abroad. You can do this by calling their customer service number a week or two before your departure. Some banks or credit card companies will also let you do this online.

You should also double-check what phone number you could call if you have a problem with a card while you are abroad. Don't assume you can use the 1-800 number printed on the back of your card—most 1 800 numbers don't work outside of the U.S.!

Tipping Guidelines

Of course, whether you tip, and how much, is always at your own discretion. But for those of you who have asked for tipping suggestions, we offer these guidelines:

- **O.A.T. Trip Experience Leader:** It is customary to express a personal “thank you” to your Trip Experience Leader at the end of your trip. As a guideline, many travelers give \$10–\$14 USD (or equivalent in local currency) per person for each day their Trip Experience Leader is with them. *Please note that these tips can only be in cash. If you are taking any of the optional extensions, your Trip Experience Leader during the extension(s) may not be the same as the one on your main trip.*
- **Hotel Housekeeping:** Many travelers will leave the equivalent of \$1–\$2 per day, per room for the hotel housekeeping staff. *Please note: Because of the difficulty in exchanging a small amount of dollars, it would be easier for the housekeeping staff if you left their tips in local currency.*
- **Waiters:** When dining on your own, a tip of 10%–15% of the bill is standard for good service. Some establishments will add a service charge—in which case you do not need to tip—so check your bill.
- **Taxi:** Tipping isn’t expected, but if you want to give something you can round up your bill to the nearest 5 or 10 euro mark. For example, if your fare was 8 euros, you’d give the driver 10 euros and let them keep the change.
- **Included in Your Trip Price:** Gratuities are included for local guides, drivers, and luggage porters on your main trip, extensions, and all optional tours.

Please note: For your convenience, tips to O.A.T. staff can be paid in U.S. dollars or local currency. Please do not use personal or traveler’s checks for tips.

AIR, OPTIONAL TOURS & STAYING IN TOUCH

Land Only Travelers & Personalized Air

Quick Definitions

- **Land Only:** You will be booking your own international flights. Airport transfers are not included.
- **Air-Inclusive:** You booked international air with us. Airport transfers are included as long as you didn't customize your trip's dates (see next bullet).
- **Arrive Early or Stopover (select adventures only):** If you chose one of these Personalization options and purchased air through O.A.T, accommodations and airport transfers are included. However, if you chose one of our Personalization options, but did not purchase air through O.A.T., accommodations are included, but airport transfers are not. If you chose one of our Personalization options, and purchase air through O.A.T. but not the accommodations, the airport transfers are not included. We have included transfer options below.
- **Personalization on Your Own:** If you have not purchased air through O.A.T. and decided to arrive early, stay longer, or stop in a connecting city on your own, you are responsible for airport transfers and accommodations. For your convenience, a preliminary list of your included hotels is available on your My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner under "My Reservations" to help you with selecting a hotel for your additional time.

Air Inclusive Travelers

If you have purchased international air with us, there are some points that may be helpful for you to know.

- **Flying with a Travel Companion:** If you're traveling with a companion from a different household, and both of you are beginning and ending your trip at the same airport on the same dates, let us know you'd like to travel together and we'll make every effort to arrange this (please note, however, that this is not always possible). If you request any changes to your flights, please be sure that both you and your companion tell us that you still want to fly together.
- **Selecting Your Seats:** If your airline allows pre-assigned seats, you will be able to select and view them directly from the airline's website after booking. Some airlines will not allow seat confirmation until your reservation is ticketed 45-30 days prior to departure, and/or they may charge a nominal fee. You may locate your itinerary on an airline's website utilizing the Record Locator Number found on the Air Itinerary in your My Planner.

Airport Transfers Can Be Purchased

For eligible flights, airport transfers may be purchased separately as an optional add-on, subject to availability. To be eligible, your flight(s) must meet the following requirements:

- You must fly into or fly home from the same airport as O.A.T. travelers who purchased included airfare.
- Your flight(s) must arrive/depart on the same day that the group arrives or departs.
- If you are arriving early, you must have arranged the hotels through our Arrive Early personalization option

Airport transfers can be purchased up to 45 days prior to your departure; they are not available for purchase onsite. To learn more, or purchase airport transfers, please call our Travel Counselors at **1-800-221-0814**.

If you don't meet the requirements above, you'll need to make your own transfer arrangements. We suggest the Rome to Rio website as a handy resource: www.rome2rio.com

Optional Tours

Optional tours are additional add-on tours that allow you to personalize your adventure by tailoring it to your tastes and needs. And if you decide not to join an optional tour? Then you'll have free time to relax or explore on your own—it's about options, not obligations.

What You Need to Know

- All optional tours are subject to change and availability.
- Optional tours that are reserved with your Trip Experience Leader can be paid for using credit/debit cards only. We accept MasterCard, Visa, and Discover credit cards; we can also take MasterCard or Visa debit cards as long as the card allows you to sign for purchases. (You won't be able to enter a PIN.)
- To ensure that you are charged in U.S. dollars, your payment will be processed by our U.S. headquarters in Boston. This process can take up to three months, so we ask that you only use a card that will still be valid three months after your trip is over. The charge may appear on your credit card statement as being from Boston, MA or may be labeled as "OPT Boston".
- Your Trip Experience Leader will give you details on the optional tours while you're on the trip. But if you'd like to look over descriptions of them earlier, you can do so at any time by referring to your Day-to-Day Itinerary (available online by signing into My Planner at www.oattravel.com/myplanner).

Communicating with Home from Abroad

Cell Phones

If you want to use your cell phone on the trip, check with your phone provider to see if your phone and service will work outside of the U.S. It may turn out to be cheaper to rent an international phone or buy a SIM card onsite. If you want to use a local SIM, just make certain your phone can accept one.

Calling Apps

Another option is to use a smartphone app like Skype or FaceTime. These services are usually less expensive than making a traditional call, but you'll need a Wi-Fi connection and the calls may count towards your phone plan's data allowance. Many smartphones—and some tablets or laptops—come with one of these apps pre-installed or you can download them for free from the appropriate apps store.

Calling Cards and 1-800 Numbers

When calling the U.S. from a foreign country, a prepaid calling card can be useful because it circumvents unexpected charges from the hotel. Calling cards purchased locally are typically the best (less expensive, more likely to work with the local phones, etc.).

One reminder: Do not call U.S. 1-800 numbers outside the continental United States. This can result in costly long distance fees, since 1-800 numbers do not work outside the country.

How to Call Overseas

When calling overseas from the U.S., dial 011 for international exchange, then the country code (indicated by a plus sign: +), and then the number. Note that foreign phone numbers may not have the same number of digits as U.S. numbers; even within a country the number of digits can vary depending on the city and if the phone is a land line or cell phone.

Ireland: +353

Northern Ireland: +44

PACKING: WHAT TO BRING & LUGGAGE LIMITS

Luggage Limits

MAIN TRIP LIMITS	
Pieces per person	One checked bag and one carry-on bag per person.
Weight restrictions	Varies by airline. The current standard is 50 lbs for checked bags and 15 lbs for carry-on bags.
Size Restrictions	Varies by airline. Measured in linear inches (length+width+depth). Generally, 62 linear inches is the checked bag limit; carry-on limit is 45 linear inches.
Luggage Type	A sturdy, fabric-sided suitcase with built-in wheels and lockable zippers is recommended.
TRIP EXTENSION(S) LIMITS	
Same as the main trip.	
REMARKS/SUGGESTIONS	
<p>Luggage rules: Luggage rules and limits are set by governmental and airline policy. Enforcement of the rules may include spot checks or may be inconsistent. However one thing is the same across the board: If you are found to have oversized or overweight luggage, you will be subject to additional fees, to be assessed by—and paid to—the airline in question.</p>	

Don't Forget:

- **These luggage limits may change.** If the airline(s) notify us of any changes, we will include an update in your Final Documents booklet.
- It's a good idea to reconfirm baggage restrictions and fees directly with the airline a week or so prior to departure. For your convenience, we maintain a list of the toll-free numbers for the most common airlines on our website in the FAQ section.
- **Baggage fees are not included in your trip price;** they are payable directly to the airlines.

Your Luggage

- **Checked Luggage:** Consider a duffel bag or soft-sided suitcase. Look for one with heavy nylon fabric, wrap-around handles, built-in wheels, and a heavy duty lockable zipper. Due to space limitations on our motorcoaches, you are allowed one piece of checked luggage per person. Portage at airports and hotels is provided for **one** bag per person. All bags should have luggage tags.
- **Carry-on Bag:** You are allowed one carry-on bag per person. We suggest a tote or small backpack that can be used as both a carry-on bag for your flight and to carry your daily necessities—water bottle, camera, etc—during your daily activities.
- **Locks:** For flights that originate in the U.S., you can either use a TSA-approved lock or leave your luggage unlocked. Outside of the U.S. we strongly recommend locking your luggage as a theft-prevention measure.

Clothing Suggestions: Functional Tips

- **Travel light:** A good rule of thumb is to gather together everything you want to bring; then take half of that. To have a varied travel wardrobe, yet keep your luggage light, we recommend you select a color scheme and pack color-coordinated clothing items that can be mixed to create different outfits.
- **Pack casual clothes:** Comfortable, informal apparel is acceptable at each of your destinations. At dinner, you will not need to wear “dressy” clothing; men do not need jackets or ties and women do not need fancy dresses. You may want one or two “smart casual” outfits for the Welcome Reception or Farewell Dinner, but it’s completely up to you.
- **Consider clothing designed for travel, sports, or camping:** With modern fabrics, lightweight packing for comfort and protection through a wide range of weather is easy.
- **Plan to dress in layers.** Weather in Ireland is unpredictable, and can feature warm and cold temperatures at any time of the year. The most practical travel wardrobe consists of items that you can wear in layers. Then you can easily add or remove a layer according to any fluctuations in temperatures.
- **Bring rain gear:** Regardless of your month of travel, rainfall and heavy fog is certainly a possibility. We suggest you bring a folding umbrella and waterproof shell (including rain pants). Water-resistant walking shoes are advantageous in case heavy downpours pass through. This will be particularly helpful during some of your outdoor activities, such as open-air boat rides.
- **Good walking shoes are critical.** This program features many included tours that follow steep, unpaved or cobbled routes; and even an average day of light sightseeing or shopping can put great demands on your feet. If you prefer more ankle support, take light hiking boots. In case you get caught in the rain, we suggest you bring an extra pair of walking shoes, and rain boots or galoshes. Aboard ship, you’ll want non-slip shoes with rubber soles.

Recommended Packing Lists

We have included suggestions from Trip Experience Leaders and former travelers to help you pack. These packing lists are only jumping-off points—they offer recommendations based on experience, but not requirements. Each travelers packing list may be different depending on the climate you are used to. We recommend using **www.weather.com** and consulting the “Climate” chapter of this handbook.

And don’t forget a reusable water bottle—you’ll need it to take advantage of any refills we offer as we are working to eliminate single-use plastic bottles on all of our trips.

What not to pack: Do not pack aerosol cans, as they tend to leak during air travel. Leave behind any credit cards that are not essential for your trip, valuable jewelry, and anything that you would hate to lose.

Recommended Clothing

- ☐ Shirts: A mixture of short and long-sleeved shirts to layer
- ☐ Trousers, jeans, or skirts
- ☐ Comfortable walking shoes and/or water resistant shoes
- ☐ Rain jacket/windbreaker with hood and rain pants: At any time of year, you’ll encounter the heavy rains, wind, and fog associated with the lush green landscapes of Ireland. Since you’ll be exposed to the elements during several activities (such as open-air boat rides and hikes), we strongly suggest that you bring rain gear.
- ☐ Sleepwear
- ☐ Socks and undergarments
- ☐ A jacket or sweater, depending on the time of year

Essential Items

- ☐ Daily essentials: toothbrush, toothpaste, floss, hairbrush or comb, shaving items, deodorant, sunscreen, shampoo/conditioner, shower cap, body soap, etc.
- ☐ Spare eyeglasses/contact lenses and your prescription
- ☐ Sunglasses with a neck strap
- ☐ Wide-brim sun hat or visor
- ☐ Compact umbrella
- ☐ Photocopies of passport, air ticket, credit cards

- ☐ Travel money bag or money belt
- ☐ Camera, spare batteries, and memory cards

Medicines

- ☐ Your own prescription medicines
- ☐ Vitamins
- ☐ Cold remedies: Sudafed/Dristan
- ☐ Pain relievers: Ibuprofen/naproxen/aspirin
- ☐ Laxatives: Senokot/Ex-Lax
- ☐ Stomach upset: Pepto-Bismol/Mylanta
- ☐ Anti-diarrheal: Imodium
- ☐ Band-Aids, Moleskin foot pads
- ☐ Antibiotics: Neosporin/Bacitracin

Home-Hosted Visits

Many of our adventures feature a visit with a local family, often as part of the *A Day in the Life* experience. It is customary, though not necessary, to return your hosts' generosity with a small gift. If you do bring a gift, we recommend that you bring something the whole family can enjoy, or something that represents your region, state, or hometown. Get creative and keep it small—peach jelly from Georgia, maple sugar candy from New England, orange blossom soap from California; something that can be used or used up is best. When choosing a gift, be certain to consider the local culture as well. For example, we do not recommend alcohol in Muslim communities because it is forbidden in Islam, and your hosts may be religious. Not all O.A.T. adventures include a Home-Hosted Visit; please check your final itinerary before you depart.

Electricity Abroad

When traveling overseas, the voltage is usually different and the plugs might not be the same shape.

Voltage

Electricity at hotels in Ireland and Northern Ireland is 220–240 volts. In the U.S. it is 110 volts. Most of the things a traveler will want to plug in—battery chargers, smart phones, tablets or computers—can run off both 110 and 220–240. But you should check the item or the owner's guide first to confirm this before you plug it in. Plugging a 110V U.S. appliance into 220/240V

50/60Hz service will ruin the motor. If you have something that needs 110 volts—like a shaver or a hairdryer—you can bring a transformer to change the current. (But transformers tend to burn out, so it might be better to leave whatever it is at home.)

Plugs

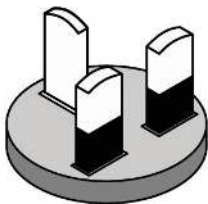
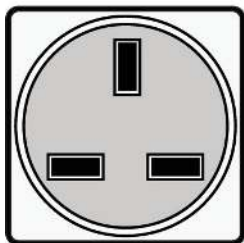
The shape of plugs will vary from country to country, and sometimes even within a country depending on when that building was built. To plug something from the U.S. into a local socket you'll need an adapter that fits between the plug and the socket. Although you are only traveling in one country on this trip, it may be easier to purchase an all-in-one, universal adapter/converter combo. Versatile and lightweight, these can usually be found at your local electronics goods or hardware stores. Sometimes you can buy them at large retailers too, like Target or Walmart. If you forget to bring an adapter, you might also find them for sale at the airport when you arrive at your destination.

Different plug shapes are named by letters of the alphabet. Standard U.S. plugs are Type A and Type B. Here is the list of plugs for the countries on this trip:

Ireland: G

Northern Ireland: G

Type G



CLIMATE & AVERAGE TEMPERATURES

Ireland: Irish weather is traditionally fickle, even in summer—when temperatures usually range from the low 50s to the upper 60s, though over the last decade, the spring and summer seasons were often glorious with many sunny days in the 70s. Nonetheless, chilly east winds may blow through, so come prepared for anything. Except for a strip along the east coast, the country receives some rain at least 200 days a year. This wet climate is responsible for Ireland’s verdant beauty.

Northern Ireland: With the Atlantic front sweeping over Northern Ireland, weather in the region tends to be unstable, with frequent winds and near constant clouds. A completely clear sky is a rarity, a grey sky a more common sight. Winters are cold and rainy, with an average of mid 40s during the day and a chance of a wind storm. Snow is rare. Summers are cool and rainy, with an average of mid 60s during the season. The mild weather and frequent rain has led to Northern Ireland’s picturesque green scenery.

NOTE: If you are taking one of our optional stopovers before or after your OAT adventure, please be aware the climate and temperatures might be different from what you experienced during your tour. To prepare for weather differences and pack appropriate clothing, we recommend the following world weather sites:

- www.intellicast.com
- www.weather.com
- www.wunderground.com

Climate Averages & Online Forecast

The following charts reflect the **average** climate as opposed to exact weather conditions. This means they serve only as general indicators of what can reasonably be expected. An extreme heat wave or cold snap could fall outside these ranges. As your departure approaches, we encourage you to use **www.weather.com** for a more accurate forecast of the locations you visit.

Average Daily High/Low Temperatures (°F), Humidity & Monthly Rainfall

MONTH	DUBLIN, IRELAND			BELFAST, NORTHERN IRELAND		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Monthly Rainfall (inches)	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Average # of Days with Rainfall
JAN	47 to 36	87 to 81	2.5	46 to 36	84	14.7
FEB	47 to 36	87 to 76	1.9	47 to 36	81	11.4
MAR	50 to 38	84 to 71	2.1	50 to 38	78	13.8
APR	54 to 40	80 to 68	2.1	54 to 41	75	11.4
MAY	59 to 44	77 to 68	2.3	60 to 44	73	11.8
JUN	64 to 49	77 to 68	2.6	64 to 50	74	11.2
JUL	67 to 53	79 to 69	2.2	68 to 53	76	12.1
AUG	67 to 53	81 to 69	2.9	67 to 53	77	13.4
SEP	63 to 50	83 to 72	2.3	63 to 49	79	12.3
OCT	57 to 45	86 to 75	3.1	57 to 45	82	14.4
NOV	51 to 40	89 to 80	2.9	51 to 40	84	14.5
DEC	47 to 37	88 to 83	2.9	47 to 36	86	14.4

MONTH	GALWAY, IRELAND		
	Temp. High-Low	% Relative Humidity (am-pm)	Average # of Days with Rainfall
JAN	45 to 37	89 to 83	25
FEB	46 to 37	88 to 77	22
MAR	49 to 39	89 to 75	27
APR	53 to 41	90 to 68	21
MAY	58 to 46	89 to 68	23
JUN	61 to 51	90 to 73	24
JUL	65 to 55	91 to 72	24
AUG	64 to 54	91 to 75	26
SEP	61 to 51	90 to 76	26
OCT	56 to 46	90 to 79	26
NOV	50 to 41	90 to 82	23
DEC	47 to 40	90 to 86	27

ABOUT YOUR DESTINATIONS: CULTURE, ETIQUETTE & MORE

O.A.T. Trip Experience Leaders: A World of Difference

During your adventure, you'll be accompanied by one of our local, Trip Experience Leaders. All are fluent in English and possess the skills, certification, and experience necessary to ensure an enriching adventure. As locals of the regions you'll explore with them, our Trip Experience Leaders provide the kind of firsthand knowledge and insight that make local history, culture, and wildlife come alive. Coupled with their unbridled enthusiasm, caring personalities, and ability to bring diverse groups of travelers together, our Trip Experience Leaders ensure that your experience with O.A.T. is one you'll remember for a lifetime.

Irish Culture

Even if you are not Irish, you probably know someone who is: More than 10% of Americans claim Irish ethnicity. That's about 33 million people—more than actually live on the island of Ireland (6.8 million). And while you are likely familiar with some of the common cultural markers of Irish identity, the richness of Irish culture can only be fully appreciated when you experience it back on the “auld sod,” as some Irish like to call their homeland.

Ireland has been inhabited for at least 9,000 years, by dozens of different tribes that were Celtic or Gaelic in origin. About 1,200 years ago, Viking, Norman, Scottish, Flemish, Welsh and English people began settling here, mixing in with the original population and influencing the culture. Today, most people consider themselves to be ethnically Irish, but in Northern Ireland especially, those who claim some British descent may refer to themselves as “Anglo-Irish” or “West Britons.” Another distinct ethnic minority are the semi-nomadic “Travellers”. For hundreds of years, they have been itinerant metal workers, horse traders, artisans, and entertainers. Much like the Roma of southern and eastern Europe, Travellers have historically suffered discrimination and ostracization. Though they are of Irish extraction, they are genetically distinct from the settled Irish population, due to years of separation.

The friendliness of the Irish people is not just a stereotype, it has been borne out in survey after survey. For instance, in a 2019 Conde Nast Traveler Readers' Choice survey, Dublin and Galway ranked among the world's top ten most friendly cities. Strangers on the street will look you in the eye and say “good day,” drivers will wave at you, and shopkeepers will engage you in conversation. In general, Irish culture is relaxed, informal, and open. Geniality, literacy, and eloquence are valued, and if a person commits a social faux pas, the usual correction would be sarcasm and good-humored teasing. A popular saying explains the rationale: “to make a friend, you must be a friend.”

Nowhere is this more apparent than in the pubs. The pub is not just a place for drinking, it's where the village meets to socialize. In the Republic of Ireland alone, in 2019 there were 7,193 pubs—and that figure does not even include the bars in hotels and restaurants, or any drinking establishments in Northern Ireland. That would make for a very, very long pub crawl. If you are standing at the bar, you will likely be engaged in conversation, and may even be treated to a round of drinks (and also expected to reciprocate). What would you be drinking? Irish whiskey or a pint

of Guinness, first brewed in 1859 and now a symbol of Irish culture. Based on statistics around consumption, the Irish do like to drink, but they describe that penchant with another saying: *galor gan náire*, which means, “an affliction without shame.”

The Irish are said to have the “gift of gab,” and their eloquence is reflected in the disproportionate number of world-class writers Ireland and Northern Ireland have produced compared to their small populations. Four Irishmen have won the Nobel Prize in Literature (William Butler Yeats, George Bernard Shaw, Samuel Beckett, and Séamus Heaney), and other literary giants include James Joyce, Oscar Wilde, Bram Stoker, Jonathan Swift, C.S. Lewis, Maeve Binchy, Frank O’Connor, Flann O’Brien, Roddy Doyle, and John Banville.

Ireland is also known for its long musical heritage. Even prior to medieval times, early Gaelic culture had ten known musical instruments. Modern performers such as The Chieftains, The Clancy Brothers, Tommy Makem, and the Irish Rovers revitalized the form in the 1960s. Today, traditional music is wildly popular and you will hear it played in local pubs and musical *seisún* (“sessions”). But the Irish have had a major impact in other musical genres, including classical music and popular music, with notable rock performers that include Van Morrison, Sinéad O’Connor, U2, The Cranberries, The Boomtown Rats, Hozier and many, many more. With so much talent and conviviality gracing Ireland’s cultural scene, your visit will surely include plenty of *craic* (fun).

Religion and Religious Observances

It is virtually impossible to separate the role of religion from Ireland’s historic, political and cultural development. The Irish were not only early adopters of Christianity, which arrived here around 400 AD, they were early missionaries whose monks helped to spread the religion throughout the British Isles and even continental Europe. The best known of these is Ireland’s patron, Saint Patrick, who was said to have taught the Irish about the holy trinity using a shamrock. There are many other folk tales involving Patrick, who is a symbol of national identity in the Republic of Ireland.

The Anglo-Norman King Henry II first sent Englishmen to conquer the island of Ireland in 1169. His intent was to acquire valuable (and taxable) lands, and to justify this he asserted the primacy of the state above the church. As the island became increasingly colonized over the next centuries, the population remained Catholic until King Henry VIII broke with the Rome and declared himself head of the Church in England (and Ireland). Monasteries were dissolved and churches were plundered, and those loyal to the Roman Catholic establishment were persecuted.

Protestantism took hold here when the Reformation swept England during the Elizabethan era. An influx of British Protestant colonists continued for the next several centuries, and they were protected and favored by the crown. By 1630, nearly a quarter of all lands in Ireland were owned by Protestants, and many Catholics were dispossessed or forced into tenancy. Right up till the 21st century, Ireland was wracked by frequent rebellions in which fights for religious and political freedom were entwined. With the partition of the island in 1921, the Protestant majority was largely settled in Northern Ireland which remained as part of the United Kingdom.

Interestingly, today the religious divisions of Northern (Protestant) and Republican (Catholic) Ireland are no longer as clear cut. In Northern Ireland, the last census (in 2011) put the Protestant population at 48%, just 3% more than Catholics at 45%. But the Protestant majority here may now be a thing of the past: a 2016 survey showed that among those of working age, 44% in Northern Ireland identified as Catholic and 40% as Protestant. What's more, there is a growing sector of Northern Irish Protestants who favor reunification with Ireland. This has gained traction from an entirely non-religious event: Brexit, which most Northern Irish opposed.

As in other Catholic countries, the rates of church attendance have declined here, and the numbers of those entering the priesthood is at an all-time low. However, Ireland overall still has one of the highest rates of church attendance in Europe, and in general, people are still devout. While many claim to have been disillusioned about the Church after recent scandals, their faith remains strong.

Accommodations

As is common with hotels in Ireland, none of our hotels feature air conditioning, though all feature heating. In general you'll also find that most European hotel rooms are smaller than what you may be used to in the U.S.

Ice Machines

Please note that Ice machines may not be available at the hotels, but ice is usually available at the bar.

Laundry Service

Your Trip Experience Leader can advise you with making arrangements for this service.

Language in Ireland

English is the official language in both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, and is spoken by nearly everyone. Additionally, in parts of Northern Ireland, Ulster Scots, a dialect of Scots, is sometimes spoken as a second language. In Ireland, a second official language is Irish or *Gaelige*. It is a Gaelic language but is separate and distinct from Scots Gaelic. Though most people know some Irish phrases and some signs are translated into this ancient tongue, it is very rarely spoken conversationally.

Useful Phrases

Since everyone speaks English you should have no trouble communicating with your Irish hosts. And in a land where the spoken word is so highly valued, there is a rich and colorful catalog of vernacular and slang phrases. Here are few to help you get started:

- *Craic* is a catch-all word that means any manner of fun. It is social in nature something you'd enjoy at parties, in the pubs and anywhere people gather together.

- When something is on the tip of your tongue but you can't quite muster the actual word you need, *yoke* is a common Irish substitute (like *thingamajig* in English). "Would you hand me that yoke over there?"
- You may know it as the restroom or toilet, but in Ireland the bathroom facilities are called "the jacks". If you need to use one, ask someone "Where are the jacks?" and they'll point you in the right direction.
- The official name for the police is the *Gardai*, and an individual police officer is a *Gard*. But most often they are referred to as the "guards," as in "Slow down your driving, or the guards will be on us."
- "Aw, sure look it" is very widely used, with different connotations. It can be an answer to a rhetorical question, as in "Isn't it a rotten day out there? Ah, sure, look it." It is also used to tack onto the end of a sentence for emphasis, or in response to something when you don't know what to say.
- "Was it any use?" is an inquiry that means, "was it any good?"
- The national drink, Guinness, is sometimes called "the black stuff" or "a pint of Gat."
- If you are out and about exploring, you may be walking along a footpath (sidewalk), and you may be wearing runners (sneakers). If it's cool, you may be wearing a jumper (sweater). You might also be carrying your belongings in a bum bag. Do not call it by its American name, fanny pack, because here, "fanny" is something altogether different (and crude).

Taking Photographs

The etiquette of photographing people in most countries is about the same as it would be on the streets of your hometown. You need permission to take a close-up, but not for a crowd scene. Be especially polite if you want to photograph children or older women. If you want to shoot a great portrait, show interest in your subject and try to have a bit of social interaction first. Then use sign language to inquire if a picture is OK.

Please do not take photographs of military personnel, military compounds, or other official institutions/personnel (such as police). This may result in the confiscation of your camera.

In museums or at archaeological sites, there may be restrictions on using your flash. Please obey any signs or directions by staff; the no-flash rule protects the fragile artifacts and artwork from damage by repeated exposure to light. Occasionally, there may also be a small fee levied by the museum or site for the privilege of taking photos.

Safety & Security

As you travel, exercise the same caution and awareness that you would in a large American city. Don't be overly nervous or suspicious, but keep your eyes open. If you are venturing out after dark, go with one or two other people.

Carry a one-day supply of cash, and your passport, in a travel pouch. Don't leave valuables unattended in your hotel room. Most hotels will offer use of a hotel safe at the front desk or an electronic in-room safe (for which you can set your own personal number). Please utilize this.

Pickpockets may create a sudden distraction. In any sort of puzzling street situation, try to keep one hand on your wallet or money belt. If an encounter with a local turns out to be long and complicated and involves money or your valuables, be very careful.

Irish Cuisine

If you come to Ireland expecting mostly mundane meat and potatoes, you will be surprised. Talented chefs have inspired a burgeoning food culture that continues to reinvent itself all over the island, fed by a steady supply of local ingredients fresh from the farms, fields and sea. There are also plenty of options for international fare, thanks to the growing immigrant population. Start your day right with **an Irish breakfast**. Hearty doesn't begin to describe it, a plateful of some or all of the following: baked beans, broiled tomatoes, eggs, bacon, sausages, kippers, toast (made with soda bread and butter and marmalade), a potato dish, and tea. In Northern Ireland, this breakfast banquet goes by the name of an "**Ulster fry**." But if it is traditional you're after, look for these dishes:

- **Black and white pudding:** This is not puddings in the American sense but casings filled with a mixture of pork, oats, seasonings and pig's blood. They are then sliced and fried—and said to be very tasty. (The white pudding omits the blood.) They are often served alongside traditional pork link sausages.
- **Colcannon:** A mix of mashed potatoes with cabbage or kale, butter, and scallions.
- **Champ:** The North Ireland variant of *colcannon* is made with just scallions and creamy potatoes.
- **Bubble and squeak:** A fritter of mashed potatoes mixed with vegetables and beef.
- **Irish stew:** This is comfort food at its best. Inexpensive ingredients such as mutton, potatoes, and carrots are slow-cooked with herbs such as bay, parsley and thyme create the Irish stew. Nowadays, you are more likely to have your stew made with lamb or even beef. Carnivores might also try **Dexter beef**, which is native to the island and known for its sweet, nutty flavor.
- **Dubliner cheddar, Cashel Blue cheese, and Wicklow Farmhouse (a type of brie):** A variety of fine cheeses that come from Irish cows who produce some of the finest milk in the world and the richest butter.
- **Cockles and mussels:** This Dublin specialty (immortalized in the song Molly Malone) can be enjoyed all over the island.
- **Blaa:** A soft, puffy yeast roll that is a specialty of Waterford and a popular bread used for sandwiches or breakfast.
- **Soda farl:** A type of quick flat bread from Ulster.

- **Barmbrack:** This special bread is made with raisins and candied peel (often steeped in tea and whiskey).
- **Irish Apple Tart:** A family favorite dessert served with cream or creamy custard.

Shopping: What to Buy, Customs, Shipping & More

There may be scheduled visits to local shops during your adventure. There is no requirement to make a purchase during these stops, and any purchase made is a direct transaction with the shop in question, subject to the vendor's terms of purchase. O.A.T. is not responsible for purchases you make on your trip or for the shipment of your purchases.

Returns

If you discover an issue with an item, you should contact the vendor directly and expect that any resolution will take longer than it would in the U.S. We recommend that you keep a copy of all your receipts, invoices, or contracts, along with the shop's contact information. Keep in mind, local practice may vary from U.S. standards, so don't assume that you have a certain number of days after the purchase to speak up or that you are guaranteed a refund.

Crafts & Souvenirs

Ireland

One of the most popular Irish souvenirs is the highly prized white wool Aran sweaters and hats. Other commonly sought items include hand-woven Tweeds, knitwear, linen, earthenware and pottery, porcelain, glass and handmade jewelry (often in Celtic motifs), pearly Belleek china, luminous Waterford crystal, and Irish lace.

U.S. Customs Regulations & Shipping Charges

For all things related to U.S. Customs, the ultimate authority is the U.S. Bureau of Customs & Border Protection. Their website, www.cbp.gov has the answers to the most frequently asked questions. Or you can call them at **1-877-227-5511**.

The top three points to know are:

- At time of writing, your personal duty-free allowance is \$800 for items brought with you. Items totaling more than \$800 are subject to duty fees.
- **Items shipped home are always subject to duty when received in the U.S.** Even when the shop has offered to include shipping and duties in the price, this typically means shipping to the nearest customs facility and payment of the export duties—not door-to-door shipping or payment of the import duties. All additional duties or shipping charges would be your responsibility. Unless an item is small enough to send by parcel service (like FedEx), chances are you will need to arrange shipping or pick-up once the item is in the U.S. and will need to pay customs duties.

- It is illegal to import products made from endangered animal species. U.S. Customs & Border Protection will seize these items, as well as most furs, coral, tortoise shell, reptile skins, feathers, plants, and items made from animal skins.

DEMOGRAPHICS & HISTORY

Ireland

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 27,136 square miles
- **Capital:** Dublin
- **Location:** Ireland is situated in the Atlantic Ocean and separated from Great Britain by the Irish Sea. Half the size of Arkansas, it occupies the entire island except for the six counties that make up Northern Ireland.
- **Geography:** The ocean is responsible for the rugged western coastline, along which are many islands, peninsulas, and headlands. The main geographical features of Ireland are low central plains surrounded by a ring of coastal mountains. The highest peak is Carrauntuohill (Irish: Corrán Tuathail), which is 1041 m (3414 ft). There are a number of sizable lakes along Ireland's rivers, with Lough Neagh the largest in Ireland and Great Britain. The island is bisected by the River Shannon, at 259 km (161 miles) with a 113 km (70 miles) estuary the longest river in Ireland (and the longest in the British Isles if the estuary is included), which flows south from County Cavan in the north to meet the Atlantic just south of Limerick.
- **Languages:** English, Irish Gaelic
- **Population:** 5,068,050
- **Religions:** Roman Catholicism 78.3%, Church of Ireland 2.7%, other Christian 1.6%, Orthodox 1.3%, Muslim 1.3%, other 2.4%, none 9.8%, unspecified 2.6%
- **Time zone:** Ireland is five hours ahead of Eastern Time: when it is 6 am in New York, it is 11 am in Ireland.

National Holidays: Ireland

In addition to the holidays listed below, Ireland celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and the June, August, and October Bank holidays. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year's Day
03/17 St. Patrick's Day
12/25 Christmas Day
12/26 St. Stephen's Day

Ireland: A Brief History

Human history in Ireland dates back 10,500 years, but the first identifiable people to settle here were the Celts, who came in waves between the 8th and 1st centuries BC. They were organized in various groups, the last of which, the Gaels, conquered the island and divided it into five tribes. The language they spoke, Q-Celtic, was the precursor of the Irish language, *Gaelige*.

Contrary to popular belief, St. Patrick did not introduce Christianity to Ireland's pagan people. The religion was already present here. But Patrick and other priests spread the faith even beyond Ireland's shores, and built great monasteries that became bastions of Latin learning. The monks created illuminated manuscripts such as the *Book of Kells*, and were engaged in sculpture and metalwork. This heritage has led to Ireland being called the "island of scholars and saints."

By the 8th century AD, Vikings began raiding Irish settlements. Though often depicted as violent marauders, in some cases the Vikings arrived as traders and intermingled with the Irish. They established many towns, including Dublin, Cork, Limerick and Waterford. By 1014, Viking power was in decline when the Irish king Brian Bóru defeated the Vikings at the Battle of Clontarf.

New raiders came in 1172 with the Norman King Henry II of England. This began England's 800-year struggle to dominate Ireland. English law was introduced, but the Irish did not accept it. The Normans were able to control four "obedient shires," including the area around Dublin known as the Pale. Anything "beyond the Pale" was said to be savage and lawless. The Tudors brought systematic repression, encouraging Scottish Protestant colonization, and taking farms from Irish landowners and giving them to English nobles. In 1649 Oliver Cromwell launched a violent anti-Catholic campaign that bordered on genocide. By 1801 the Act of Union merged Ireland with Britain as the United Kingdom, with direct rule by Parliament in London.

What Cromwell was unable to accomplish, the Great Famine of 1845-49 nearly did. A blight infecting Ireland's potato crops caused starvation and reduced the population by a third. The term "famine" is a misnomer: There was plenty of food, but it was exported by the English or used by Irish tenants to pay exorbitant rents to British landlords. Failure to pay meant eviction, and eviction meant death. The population further declined with mass emigration.

The late 19th and early 20th century saw vigorous but doomed campaigns for Irish home rule. After many brutal repressions, their moderate nationalism became militant separatism. In 1922, following the Irish Rising of 1916 and the bloody Anglo-Irish War, twenty-six counties of Ireland won freedom from the United Kingdom as the Irish Free State. The remaining six, in the province

of Ulster, remained within the United Kingdom as Northern Ireland. The struggle continued throughout the 1990s with “the Troubles” of Northern Ireland, where those who favored a united Ireland fought with unionists who wanted to stay within the United Kingdom.

For Ireland, the 1990’s ushered in an era of prosperity known as the “Celtic Tiger.” By the early 2000’s, Ireland was one of the richest countries in the EU, moving from being a net recipient to being a net contributor. Ireland rode the Celtic Tiger until the worldwide recession of 2008. In 2010 Ireland’s banks required bailouts from the European Union and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Since then, Ireland has repaid its IMF loan ahead of schedule, in 2017.

The country’s difficult history proves that there is no such thing as “the luck of the Irish.” But there is pluck, endurance, and hope.

Northern Ireland

Facts, Figures & National Holidays

- **Area:** 5,450 square miles
- **Capital:** Belfast (regional); Northern Ireland is part of the United Kingdom, whose national capital is London
- **Location:** Consists of the six counties of Ulster, occupying the northeastern corner of the island of Ireland.
- **Languages:** English
- **Population:** 1,862,100
- **Religions:** Roman Catholic 40.8%, Presbyterian 19.1%, Church of Ireland 13.7%, Methodist 3%, none or unknown 23.5%
- **Time Zone:** Same as the rest of Ireland, five hours ahead of Eastern Time

National Holidays: Northern Ireland

In addition to the holidays listed below, Northern Ireland celebrates a number of national holidays that follow a lunar calendar, such as Easter and the Spring and Summer Bank holidays. To find out if you will be traveling during these holidays, please visit www.timeanddate.com/holidays.

01/01 New Year’s Day
03/17 St. Patrick’s Day
07/12 Battle of the Boyne
12/25 Christmas Day
12/26 Boxing Day

Northern Ireland: A Brief History

The arc of history followed a similar curve in Northern Ireland as it did in the southern island until the 20th century. In the 1600s, northern Ireland (which lies in the province of Ulster) was a bastion of resistance against the forces of King Henry VII, who was instituting widespread

programs of colonization by taking Irish lands and giving them to English and Scottish Protestant settlers. Key leaders of the anti-British forces were from the Ulster county of Tyrone, but many of them fled to Europe after being defeated at the Battle of Kinsale in 1601.

The Protestant colonization program, called the “Ulster Plantation,” continued until another rebellion broke out in 1641. Many Protestant settlers were massacred, but when the New Model Army of Oliver Cromwell arrived from England in 1649, four years of bloody anti-Catholic reprisals followed and land ownership reverted to the Protestants. Over the next several hundred years, there were Irish revolts, but the Protestant population grew into a majority.

Fast forward to 1921, after the island had been ripped by three years of guerilla warfare. A truce was reached between Irish republican and British forces, which resulted in the Anglo-Irish Treaty creating the Irish Free State. Under its terms Northern Ireland would be part of the Free State unless its parliament opted out. The parliament was controlled by the (Protestant) Ulster Unionist party and as expected, it chose to remain as part of the United Kingdom.

For the next 50 years, Northern Ireland enjoyed limited self-government within the UK. But since its parliament was controlled by the Ulster Unionist Party, the large Catholic minority had little participation in the government, which at times openly encouraged discrimination against Catholics. This led to large civil rights protests in the 1960s, which the government brutally suppressed, most notably on “Bloody Sunday.” During this time the paramilitary Provisional IRA, who favored the reunification of Ireland, began its campaign against what it called the British occupation of the six counties. Other splinter groups began to participate in the violence.

The Northern Irish government’s inability to manage the conflict prompted the British government to suspend home rule in 1972 and impose direct rule. The British tried to portray themselves as neutral peacekeepers, but British officers often colluded with illegal loyalist paramilitaries, were involved in murders, and obstructed justice when their crimes were investigated. Irish nationalist and republican groups further fragmented and also committed violence against civilians, as the so-called “Troubles” rolled on for 30 years.

In 1998, following a Provisional IRA cease-fire, the Good Friday Agreement restored self-government to Northern Ireland on the basis of power sharing between the two communities. Violence greatly decreased since the signing of the accord. In 2001, the police force in Northern Ireland, the Royal Ulster Constabulary, was replaced by the Police Service of Northern Ireland. On July 28, 2005, the Provisional IRA (PIRA) announced the end of its armed campaign and that September, international weapons inspectors supervised the full disarmament of the PIRA.

The elections of 2017 marked the first time since partition that the Unionists did not win a majority of seats. The opposing Sinn Féin party has stated its main goal is the reunification of Ireland. After three years of political deadlock, a power-sharing deal was reached in 2020. In 2024, the Sinn Féin party became the largest party in representing Northern Ireland in Westminster. Considering shifting demographics and the fact that the majority of voters in Northern Ireland were opposed to Brexit and wanted to remain within the European Union, maybe reunification with the Republic of Ireland (which is an EU member state) is not a far-off dream.

RESOURCES

Suggested Reading

Ireland

Malachy McCourt's History of Ireland by Malachy McCourt (2008, History) If you like your history with a dose of wry humor, this New York Times best seller may be for you. It is more a series of biographical vignettes than an academic history, but it weaves together myth, folklore, culture, music, cuisine and more from the country's past and present.

Normal People by Sally Rooney (2018, Fiction) This popular best seller (long-listed for the Man Booker Prize) explores the intense love between two west Ireland teens who end up at college in Dublin, and move on to navigate adulthood. It's a witty look at contemporary Irish life, and a love that is muddled by secrecy, social class, and the characters' own complicated personalities.

Angela's Ashes by Frank McCourt (1996, Autobiography) This Pulitzer Prize-winning book recounts the author's youth in Depression-era Limerick. Through harrowing poverty, punishing schools, his father's alcoholism, searing loss, and the casual cruelty of friends and relatives, the author still manages to retain his love for storytelling, for humor, for the mother who could not protect him, and for life itself.

TransAtlantic by Colum McCann (2014, Historical Fiction) Three iconic crossings between Ireland and New World are retold—the 1845 visit to Ireland by Frederick Douglass; the first non-stop transatlantic flight in 1919; and a senator's involvement in the 1998 Good Friday Agreement.

Circle of Friends by Maeve Binchley (1990, Fiction) A coming-of-age novel set in 1950s rural Ireland. Most of the book centers on the lives of three friends—gentle Benny, bravely honest Eve, and class-conscious Nan—as they grow up and enter college. The book was made into a film starring Chris O'Donnell and Minnie Driver.

Northern Ireland

Say Nothing: A True Story of Murder and Memory in Northern Ireland by Patrick Radden Keefe (2019, Nonfiction) In 1972, 38-year old Jean McConville, a widowed mother of eight, was abducted from her Belfast home and murdered. What would otherwise be a gripping true crime story is revealed to be part of a web of other stories, which altogether provide an epic portrait of the Troubles in Northern Ireland.

Suggested Films & Videos

Ireland

The Commitments (1991, Comedy/Drama) Based on a novel by Roddy Doyle, this musical follows the travails of working-class youth in 1980s Dublin, who think their ticket to fame lies in forming a band dedicated to American soul music. A cast of young, inexperienced actors play the musicians with heart and passion (and offer up a truly knockout version of Mustang Sally).

Ryan's Daughter (1970, Drama) Imagine *Madame Bovary*—set against the sweeping beauty of the Dingle Peninsula. This David Lean epic tells the story of a young, unfulfilled married woman's affair with a traumatized British officer during World War I. The all-star cast includes Sarah Miles, John Miles, Robert Mitchum, Trevor Howard, and Leo McKern.

Michael Collins (1996, Drama) Directed by Neil Jordan, this fine biopic stars Liam Neeson as the hero of the Irish Civil War, who helped negotiate the creation of the Irish Free State.

Brooklyn (2015, Drama) is a touching drama about a young Irish woman who emigrates to New York in the 1950s. Though much of it takes place in Brooklyn, the heroine Eilis (Saoirse Ronan) returns to Ireland to make an important choice. Nominated for three Academy Awards in 2016.

Waking Ned Devine (1998, Comedy). Set in a rural Irish town, this is the tale of lottery winner Ned Devine—who is found dead, with a winning ticket in his hand. The townsfolk try to fool the authorities into thinking Ned is still alive so they can cash the ticket in and share the prize.

Northern Ireland

'71 (2014, Drama) During the height of The Troubles, a British soldier becomes separated from his unit after a riot breaks out in a mixed Belfast neighborhood. Suspense and compassion mix as the film explores the humanity of all the characters, regardless of their sectarian roles.

Derry Girls (2018, TV Show). This acclaimed sitcom follows the lives of high school girls in Northern Ireland during the end of the Troubles in the 1990s. Enjoy the dark humor, raw writing and irrepressible cast.

In the Name of the Father (1994, Biopic) The true-life story of Gerry Conlon, one of the “Guildford Four”—four Irish youths who were falsely convicted of blowing up an English pub in the 1970s. Although only partly set in Northern Ireland (the trial and jail time are in England), the film does a good job at exploring the tensions between the Catholics and Protestants at the time.

Useful Websites

Overseas Adventure Travel

www.oattravel.com

Overseas Adventure Travel Frequently Asked Questions

www.oattravel.com/faq

International Health Information/CDC (Centers for Disease Control)

www.cdc.gov/travel

Electricity & Plugs

www.worldstandards.eu/electricity/plugs-and-sockets

Foreign Exchange Rates

www.xe.com/currencyconverter
www.oanda.com/converter/classic

ATM Locators

www.mastercard.com/atm
www.visa.com/atmlocator

World Weather

www.intellicast.com
www.weather.com
www.wunderground.com

Basic Travel Phrases (80 languages)

www.travlang.com/languages

Packing Tips

www.travelite.org

U.S. Customs & Border Protection

www.cbp.gov/travel

Transportation Security

Administration (TSA)

www.tsa.gov

National Passport Information Center

www.travel.state.gov

Holidays Worldwide

www.timeanddate.com/holidays

History & Culture

en.wikipedia.org

Useful Apps

Flight Stats

Track departures, arrivals, and flight status

LoungeBuddy

Get access to premium airport lounges around the world

Timeshifter

Personalized tips for avoiding jetlag, based on neuroscience and your own data

GoogleMaps

Maps and directions anywhere in the world

Triposo

City guides, walking maps, and more – and it works offline

Rome2rio

Where to go, what to see, and what to do in more than 160 countries

Flush or Sit or Squat

Find a clean toilet anywhere

Uber

Ride sharing around the world

Visa Plus and Mastercard Cirrus

ATM locations

Shows the location of the nearest ATM in your network

TunnelBear

Provides a secure VPN (virtual private network) that will encrypt your browsing data when you use a public WiFi network

What's App, Skype, or Signal

WiFi calling anywhere in the world

Duolingo, FLuentU, or Babbel

Learn dozens of foreign languages

Google Translate

Fast and simple translations

XE

Currency conversions

SizeGuide

Clothing and shoe sizes in all countries

Best Units Converter

Converts currency, mileage, weights, and many other units of measurement

Tourlina

For women only, it connects you with other female travelers

Happy Cow

Locate vegan and vegetarian eateries in 195 countries

Eatwith

Dine with locals all over the world

Meetup

Connects you with locals who share your interests

Skyview

Identifies constellations and heavenly bodies

Travello

Find travel friends on the road

ALIX for One

Created by and for women, it identifies solo-friendly dining spots in major international cities

TripWhistle

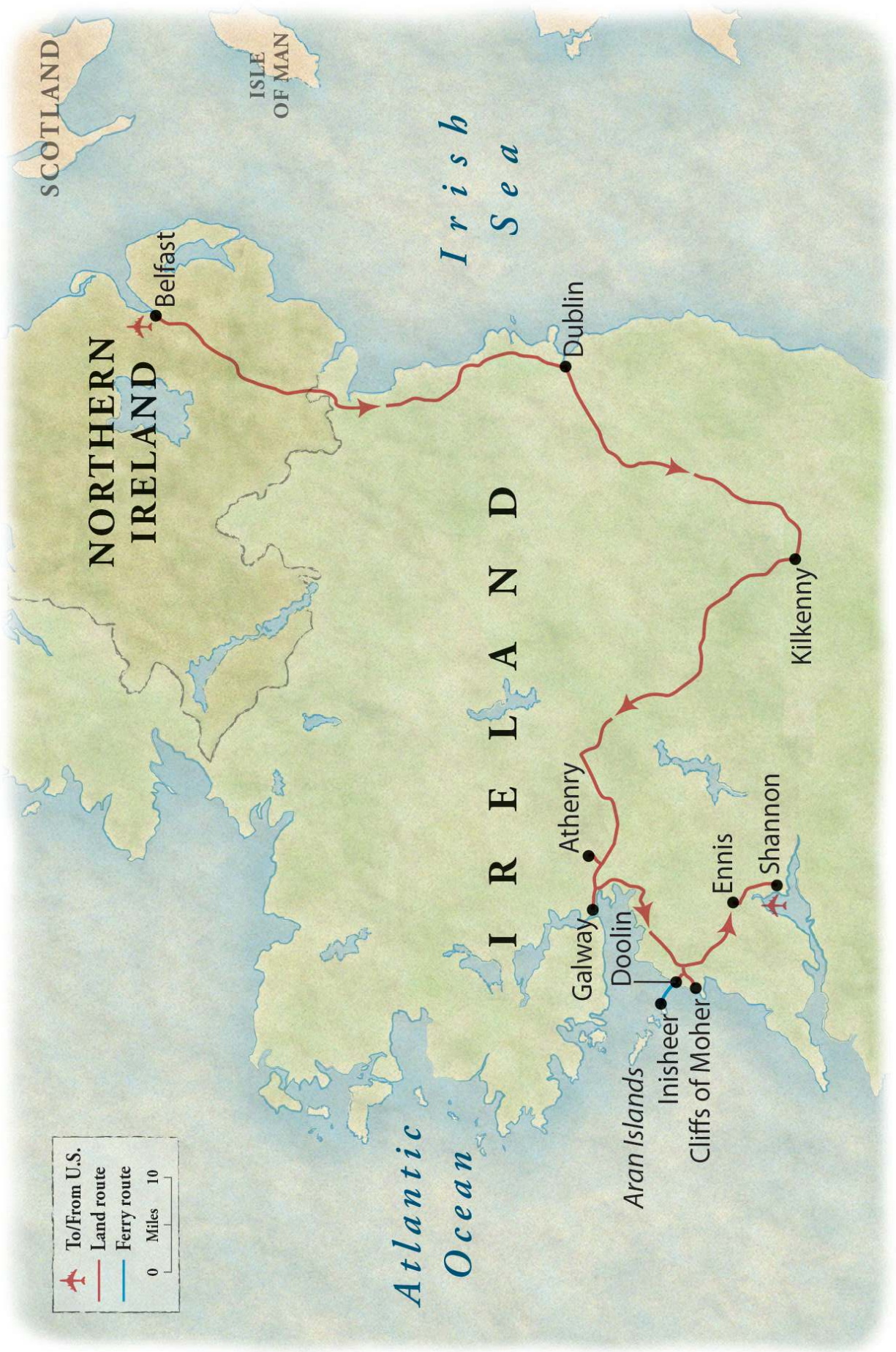
Maps your location and provides emergency numbers for police, medics, and more

GeoSure

Safely navigate neighborhoods around the world

Chirpey

For women only, connect with other women, find out what's safe, meet up, and more



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Submitted by Joy and Don Janke,
8-time travelers from Stevensville, MI



Submitted by Julia Schneider,
5-time traveler from Pinellas Park, FL



Submitted by Martin Schwartzman,
30-time traveler from Woodbury, NY



Submitted by Paul Stark, 17-time traveler
from Edina, MN



Submitted by David Fong, 16-time traveler
from Foster City, CA



Submitted by Steven dos Remedios,
23-time traveler from Oakland, CA



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