



AllWays

Dublin, Ireland UK

www.allwaystraveller.com



Friendship taken to a fine art in Dublin

Dublin, Ireland's historic capital, sits on the east coast at the mouth of the River Liffey, which flows through the city.

It is one of Europe's smaller cities and certainly one of its most youthful, friendly and welcoming to visitors.

A vibrant city, it offers lively entertainment as epitomised by the 'Dublin pub' scene.

Dublin is also a cultural hub, having been designated a UNESCO City of Literature.

Just beyond the city limits one finds the rugged Dublin Mountains, while the UNESCO Biosphere of Dublin Bay offers coastal walks, small villages and bracing sea views.

Ashley Gibbins
Commissioning Editor
AllWays traveller




www.sheehanspub.ie

Dublin really is all its *craiced* up to be

Dublin has all that one would expect from a European capital city and, being relatively small, it makes for an excellent long weekend or short break.

But Dublin also offers that extra and unique ingredient – the Irish themselves.

When the Irish travel they tend to be universally welcomed for their easy, friendly nature and genuine wit.

And this is much in evidence when visiting Ireland.

In the short ride from Dublin airport to the city centre, we were quickly on friendly terms with our cabbie Michael.

We heard about his family and he ours. He shared his experience of working in London during the early 80s, was interested in our travels and acted as impromptu tour guide, pointing out the places we should try to get to during our stay.

Dublin indeed offers a rich selection of historic and cultural attractions (see below).

It also has a youthful vibrancy, and joie-de-vivre that is epitomised in 'the craic'.

What is craic?

Craic is the Gaelic word that embraces *fun, enjoyment, abandonment and light-hearted mischief, often in the context of drinking or music.*

The 'old man' pubs

And though the word may have been imported into Ireland from the Scots and English word *crack*, the Irish have turned enjoying the *craic* into an art form.

It is said that wherever you go in the world, you will come across an Irish pub.

Wherever you go in Dublin you will quickly come across one or more of its 740 pubs that are full of character and real characters.

Many of these offer regular live Gaelic music and dancing along with comradery and a rip-roaring good time.



On our first night in Dublin, our young hotel bartender was telling me about the city's 'old man' pubs.

While I had a few years on the lad, I said I had a bit of life left in me.

He quickly explained the traditional Dublin pubs are referred to as old man pubs but, agreed to change old to vintage. I am not sure it helped.

What did help was when a colleague explained the *old* is a derivation of the Gaelic word *auld*, meaning 'old long since', which is correct.

The Dublin pubs are among the oldest found anywhere and are nurtured by their landlords and ladies and welcome all as a local.

The black stuff



And, of course, there is the chance to enjoy a pint of *the black stuff* - Guinness, as it is by Dubliners old and young alike.

Though it is referred to as the black stuff, Guinness is not actually black but an extremely deep ruby red.

The landlord of the Sheehan's, one of my favourites, told me of this and got me to prove it myself by holding my pint up to the light.

At the Guinness Storehouse (see below) I learnt that the deep crimson hue is a result of all the roasted barley in the Guinness recipe.

Best of all Guinness is delicious, rich and creamy and so much better than the version of the brew sold in the UK.

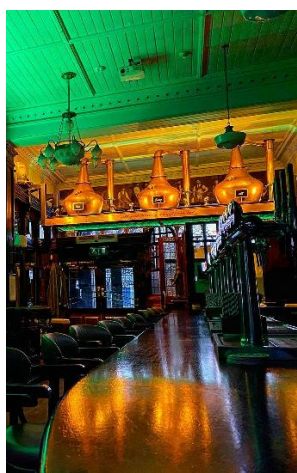
The best Dublin pubs

If you are looking to plan a 'responsible' Dublin pub crawl just google best pubs and you will be able to make your own choice on the many recommendations offered.

One that will certainly be on your list is the Temple Bar pub, which is as popular with artists and poets as it is with locals and visitors.

There is traditional live music performance, a spirited atmosphere and one of the largest stocks of whiskey in the world.

One of the many friendly Dubliners we met said to check out :



- **Sheehan's**, founded in 1933, is now a third generation family run pub in the centre of Dublin
- **The Long Haul**, which backs on to Dublin Castle is one of the city's oldest pubs dates back the 1860's and retains much of its old charm
- **Grogans**, which is known for its toasties made with Irish cheddar cheese and traditional deli ham
- **McDaibs**, which was once the City Morgue and was later converted into a chapel and has the high ceilings and Gothic style windows
- **The Palace**, stained-glass windows, a snug, and serving its own whiskey, and
- **O'Neill's**, which was established in 1885 and is a Victorian Dublin pub owned and operated by the same family for more than 100 years.



More information

www.sheehanspub.ie
www.oneillspubdublin.com
www.facebook.com/longhallpub
www.groganspub.ie
www.visitdublin.com/see-do/details/mcdaid-s-pub
www.thepalacebardublin.com



Getting quickly acquainted with Ireland's capital city

Start your short break in Dublin from the top of an open top bus



One of the frustrations of taking a short city break is getting back home and being given post-trip recommendations that one has missed.

Taking in one attraction to find one missed another that was 'just around the corner'.

Cities, be they London, Paris, New York or Dublin will also eminently walkable routes, if one just becomes acquainted with the layout early on.

There are two ways to do this.

The first is to see if the tourist board offers walking tours of the city.

The second, and our choice in Dublin, is to use the hop-on, hop-off open top tourist bus services.

In the Irish capital we used Big Bus on a 24 hour one-day ticket, starting at 12 noon on our first full day in the city.



To begin with we took the complete 90-minute route around Dublin to get our bearings and listen to the always interesting, gently amusing commentary from the driver.

Back where we started, we then planned where to hop off, visit, and hop back on.

Having made our last use of the Big Bus just before the ticket's 24-hour expiry, we spent the rest of our time in Dublin touring on foot.



More information

Big Bus Tours is the largest operator of open-top sightseeing bus tours and operates in 23 cities across four continents.

Other companies offer a similar service

www.bigbustours.com/en/dublin/dublin-sightseeing-tours



Trinity College

What to do

Having gained our bearings atop the Big Bus, we start our exploration of the city with a visit to Trinity College and the very nearby Dublin Castle.

Trinity College Dublin



Trinity College was founded by Queen Elizabeth I in 1592 and has seen some of Ireland's most renowned literary personalities and politicians as its alumni, including Oscar Wilde, Samuel Beckett, and Irish President Mary Robinson.

Today one finds a vibrant campus with many grand 18th Century buildings and, on graduation day, a celebratory walk under the bell tower is a rite of passage for students

The College also has one of the world's finest libraries

Trinity College, established in 1801, is entitled to at least one copy of every publication published in Ireland because of its status as a legal deposit library.

The Book of Kells

The single most precious item on the Trinity College campus is its *Book of Kells*, a stunningly illuminated manuscript from 800AD and containing four gospels of the New Testament.

A librarian turns over a page of the book every day.

Dublin Castle

Dublin Castle was built in the 13th century by King John of England on the site of a Viking settlement.

Over the centuries it has served as a military fortress, prison, treasury, court of law, and the seat of English, later British Administration in Ireland.

In 1922, following Ireland's independence, Dublin Castle was handed over to the new Irish government and is now a major tourist attraction along with being used for State occasions and Presidential Inaugurations.



More information

www.tcd.ie/visitors
www.dublincastle.ie



Little House of Dublin



Dublinia



St Patrick's Cathedral



The National Gallery

The Little Museum

The Little Museum of Dublin is a fascinating local history museum in an 18th-century Georgian townhouse opposite St Stephen's Green.

It takes visitors through the social, cultural and political history of Ireland's capital in the 20th Century by way of a wonderfully eclectic collection of memorabilia that has been assembled by local people.

Dublinia

Dublinia is a historical recreation museum focusing on the Viking and Medieval history of the city.

It is located in a part of Dublin's Christ Church Cathedral, known as the Synod Hall.

Very much a family orientated attraction it provides a glimpse into the lives and turbulent times of those who lived in and around what is now Dublin.

The visit ends with an audio-visual presentation of Medieval Dublin.

There's also the chance to climb the original Medieval tower to get views of the today's city.

St Patrick's Cathedral

Just down the road from Dublinia is Saint Patrick's Cathedral, which was first founded in 1191.

The national cathedral of the Church of Ireland it serves as a place of worship, a visitor attraction and as a host for many events.

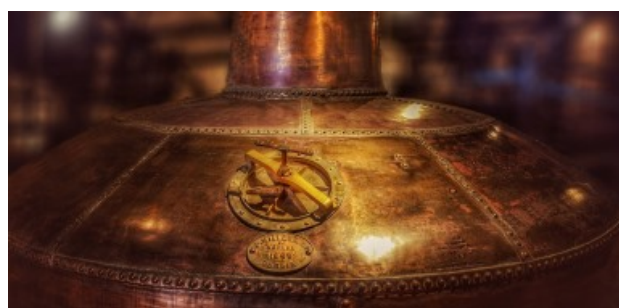
Free guided tours take place regularly throughout the day.

The National Gallery

The National Gallery of Ireland houses a collection of Irish and European art.

The Gallery offers free Self-guided visits to the permanent collection along with a range of special ticketed exhibitions and events.

Irish whiskey



Irish whiskey is lauded the world over with historic distilleries thriving and new distilleries opening, and Dublin has four new distilleries along with whiskey-related museums and specialist tours.

The Irish Whiskey Museum is independent of the whiskey distilleries and, as such, offers its visitors the opportunity to taste and experience a huge selection of Irish Whiskey.

From an historical perspective, John Jameson began distilling in in Smithfield's Bow Street in 1780, and there is the chance to take a tour of the original Jameson Distillery.

More information

www.littlemuseum.ie
www.dublinia.ie
www.stpatrickscathedral.ie/visit
www.nationalgallery.ie
www.visitdublin.com/dublin-whiskey-activities



Guinness Storehouse

Last but by no means least there is the Guinness Storehouse.

Located in what was once the fermentation plant of the brewery, this Guinness experience is Ireland's most popular visitor attraction.

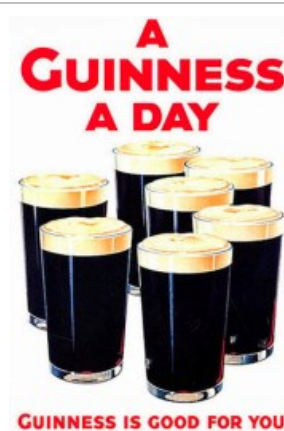
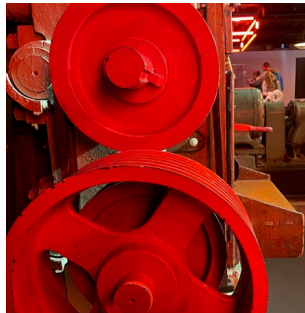
You wind your way through several floors of displays telling the story of this Irish dry stout that was first brewed Arthur Guinness at his St. James's Gate premises in 1759, and where three million pints are still produced every day.

Particularly interesting, from my point of view, are the representations of the seminal Guinness advertising campaigns.

Needless to say, there are also tasting opportunities en route and the chance to get a pint of the 'black' stuff at the rooftop Gravity Bar.

So confident was Arthur of his brew back in the mid-18th Century, he took a 9,000 year lease on the brewery premises.

Wise move as Guinness is the brand most associated with Ireland globally and is now brewed in almost 50 countries worldwide.



More information

www.guinness-storehouse.com



The historic Dylan makes for a very special stay

By Ann Mealor

The historic *Dylan* is tucked away down a leafy residential side street, yet just a stone's throw from the hustle and bustle of Dublin's city centre.



Built in the 1900s, this impressive, traditional Victorian townhouse, once a former nurses' home is now a luxury five-star boutique hotel.

A major refurbishment has given *Dylan* a very chic and stylish bar, restaurant and lounge areas.

Our room

Our room was luxurious, light and spacious with a large bay window overlooking a small park.

Modern and traditional furnishings sat well together with a coffee and cream plush buttoned sofa and an artistic silver standard lamp.

There was a sun shaped mirror in an alcove on the ceiling, candy striped padded chairs, matching headboard and blinds.

There was (organic) tea and coffee in the room and a delicious plate of welcome sweet treats.

I found fluffy dressing gowns and slippers in the wardrobe and a tv and toasty underfloor heating in the marble bathroom.

So, no cold feet and no need to choose between your favourite TV programme and having a nice, long soak in the tub.

There was a turndown service each evening (including chocolates!), so our room always looked very cosy and welcoming on our return from dinner.





Dylan Bar

On our first night, before heading to the restaurant, we relaxed with an expertly mixed cocktail and a perfectly poured pint of Guinness in the plush, walnut panelled *Dylan Bar*.

We could have spent all evening there, chatting about the day's events over drinks and bowls of mixed nuts, but hunger got the better of us, so eventually we made our way to our table.

The Eddison Restaurant

Bright and airy, with two terraces, *The Eddison* has a conservatory feel to it.

This is, in part due to the fascinating 'living wall', a moss installation created by neighbourhood florists, Ginkgo. A tree-like structure, which changes each season, hangs from the ceiling creating a 'natural' focal point for the restaurant.

With thickly padded, aqua green leather chairs and banquettes, *The Eddison*, provides nicely contrasted surroundings and a different feel to the *Dylan Bar*.

In recognition of its historical past, the restaurant is named after Miss Eddison, a Matron at the Royal City of Dublin Hospital, who treated wounded soldiers, civilians and rebels at great personal risk to herself during the 1916 Rising.

This interesting piece of background information was on the back of the menu, which we perused as we tucked into our bread and creamy Irish butter.

For starters, I chose the Spiced Parsnip & Apple soup with Cashel Blue Cheese-it was hot and silky smooth garnished with a swirl of golden oil and a leafy green. Very satisfying.

Ashley went for the *Super Salad*, a large, colourful and healthy medley of quinoa, sun dried tomatoes, couscous, avocado, pomegranate and beetroot. It was a goodly portion and was, indeed, super!

For mains, I decided on the Halibut with Jerusalem artichoke, organic oyster mushrooms, confit chicken, broccoli, torched leek and potato puree.

It was beautifully presented, being an artistic mix of textures, flavours and shapes. The fish was delicate and flavoursome with a thin, crispy skin.

Ashley ordered the creamy, yet light, Butternut Squash Risotto with goats cheese, crispy sage and parmesan.

It couldn't have looked better on the plate, and it didn't last long enough for me to put my fork in!

For dessert, we shared a sticky toffee pudding with orange ice cream.

You can't go wrong with this, and we didn't.

Spicy, gingery and decadent it's not for those watching the calories.

The Eddison's menu changes monthly to showcase Irish seasonal produce at its best. The chef places special emphasis on vegetables which was noticeable in our meal.

The next morning, I tucked into an excellent *Dylan* breakfast of eggs, bacon, sausage, tomatoes, mushrooms fried potatoes and toast. Ashley had a three-egg cheese, mushroom and onion omelette and said it was one of the best he had tasted.

He sent his compliments to the chef!

Dylan, has many snug places to just sit and relax with a book or work with a laptop including the library, lounge area and sumptuous Ruby Bar.

Its location is perfect being a bit off the beaten track yet only minutes from Dublin's main sights and attractions.

All the staff were friendly and helpful, and I was even offered a take-away coffee to enjoy whilst we explored Dublin on our last day.

The quality of this hotel with the great attention it pays to the small details makes a stay at *Dylan* very special.

More information

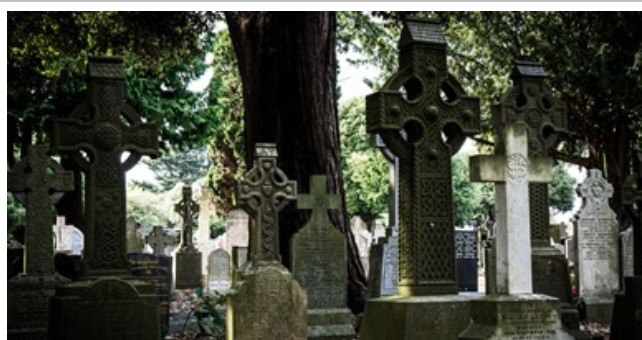
www.dylan.ie

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www.preferredhotels.com/hotels/ireland/dylan-dublin

A snapshot of Dublin





AllWays traveller and the International Travel Writers Alliance



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www.allwaystraveller.com



The International Travel Writers Alliance is the world's largest association of professional travel journalists.

www.itwalliance.com



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