



Ireland & Northern Ireland

**Our helpful guide to
everything you need to know
for the perfect vacation
to ‘The Emerald Isle’**



Let us give you a brief background



Both the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland are lands of incredible landscapes, captivating history, and of course warm hospitality. Here's our guide to what you can discover.

This destination welcomes visitors from around the world, and will continue to capture hearts for generations.

- **Northern Ireland:** some highlights include the Giant's Causeway, and historic cities such as Belfast, Derry, and rich culture with attractions, hidden gems, and warm welcomes around every corner.
- **Irish Border:** No immigration checks on the land border with Northern Ireland and Ireland.



A Brief History

As a Celtic island, Vikings founded the first major towns (including Dublin) and St. Patrick is known for introducing Christianity to Ireland in the 5th Century.

St. Patrick's Day (March 17th) has become a worldwide celebration of Irish heritage and culture. Throughout many years of conflict - between Catholics (mostly native Irish) and Protestants (descendants of settlers, English and Scottish) - ultimately led to Partition & "The Two Irelands" in 1921.

The Republic of Ireland gained independence as its own country, and Northern Ireland remained part of the the United Kingdom (UK)

From 1968 "The Troubles" a 30-year violent conflict over Northern Ireland's status (to either become part of a United Ireland, or to remain in the UK) ended in 1998 with "The Good Friday Agreement" establishing a power-sharing government.



In Summary,

Ireland and Northern Ireland are rich in heritage, with a strong national identity recognised worldwide. Despite a complicated history, this is a friendly and welcoming destination, embracing culture and tradition through music, food, and everyday life. You'll discover dramatic coastlines and green landscapes with vibrant cities and ancient landmarks, making an unforgettable place to explore.

- **Republic of Ireland** (often called 'Ireland') capital city: **Dublin**
- Ireland is a member of the European Union (EU)
- **Some popular places in Ireland:** Dublin, Galway, and Cork.
- **Northern Ireland** (part of the UK) capital city: **Belfast**

A city known for its maritime history (as the birthplace of the Titanic), its complex political past - see the famous murals and the "Peace Lines" that once separated communities. St. George's Market is one of the UK's best indoor markets (Fri-Sun) with fresh seafood, local crafts, and live music.

The average vacation is 7 nights -

Depending on where you want to visit, we can make arrangements & add more time to visit other cities or destinations like Scotland, England, or Europe.



Weather

As the weather can be variable, we would advise
- bring a jacket, umbrella or poncho in your bag.
The beauty of the 'Green Isle' comes from rainfall.

It will vary across regions & we have 100% dry, above 71°F (22°C) days too!



January: coldest & windy (coming from Atlantic)
38-46°F (3-8°C)



February: remains wet & cold, days become longer
40-48°F (4-9°C)



March: transition into spring, more sunshine
41-51°F (5-10°C)



April: becoming drier and milder, light rain
43-55°F (6-13°C)



May: most sunshine, increasing temperatures
46-60°F (8-16°C)



June: start of summer, longer daylight & drier
50-65°F (10-18°C)



July: warmest month, peak time for visitors
54-68°F (12-20°C)



August: still warm, rain becoming more frequent
53-67°F (11-19°C)



September: fall (autumn) but milder, '2nd summer'
51-63°F (10-17°C)



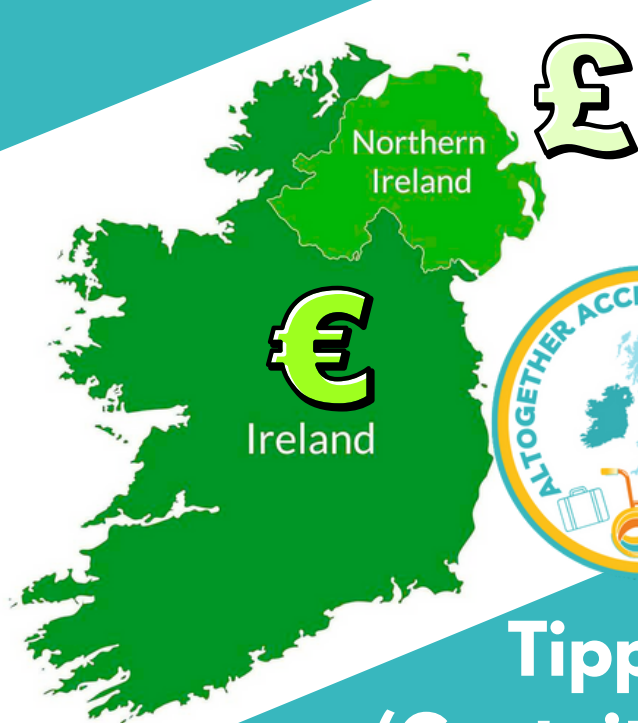
October: wetter & windy, days getting shorter
47-57°F (8-14°C)



November: transitioning towards winter, cooler
42-51°F (6-10°C)



December: more rain with less daylight hours
39-47°F (4-8°C)



Tipping (Gratuities)

Workers in Ireland & Northern Ireland (UK) receive a legal minimum wage and so tips are optional and not expected in the same way it is in the USA.

- **Restaurants (good service) 10-15%**
- **Taxis 10% / round up change.**
- **Pubs/Bars/Cafés / Take-out ("takeaways")**
€1 / £1 / change - These may have a tip jar, but having a full meal in a pub, tip as you would in a restaurant. No need to tip per drink.

Exchanging Currency

You can exchange US dollars for Pound Sterling or Euro at "Bureaux de Change" (currency exchange offices) found in most major airports, train stations, and city centers.

Recommendation: Shop around!

Exchange rates and commission fees can vary widely. It is generally more convenient and often cheaper to use a fee-free ATM or credit card for most transactions.

- One pound £1 is made up of 100 pence (p)
- **Coins:** 1p, 2p, 5p, 10p, 20p, 50p, £1, £2
- **Banknotes:** £5, £10, £20, £50, £100
- One euro €1 is made up of 100 cents (c)
- **Coins:** 1c, 2c, 5c, 10c, 20c, 50c, €1, €2
- **Banknotes:** €5, €10, €20, €50, €100

Tip: Please note some shops may not accept notes €50 / £50 or higher for smaller purchases.

Physical US dollars won't be accepted.

Money Matters

Currency

It is important to remember that **Ireland uses Euro (€ EUR)** as its official currency (part of Europe)

Northern Ireland uses Pound Sterling (£ GBP)
(part of UK)

- **Tip:** If you are visiting both Ireland and Northern Ireland, it's worth getting a small amount of both Euros & Pounds.
- **Shops in border towns will often accept both currencies:** but they usually give you a poor exchange rate. It is always better to pay in the local currency (so have both handy)

Using Your Debit and Credit Cards

Using a card is the most common way to pay in Ireland & Northern Ireland (UK), similar to the US.

- **Cash:** this will be useful for rural areas, smaller purchases and tipping.
- **ATMs:** You can use your regular US bank card (debit or credit) to withdraw cash. Most international cards with a chip and PIN should be accepted.
- **Charges:** Your US bank will likely charge a fee for overseas withdrawals and point-of-sale payments. Consider using a credit card with no foreign transaction fees to save money.
- **Contactless Payments:** Contactless card payments (tapping your card or using Apple/Google Pay) are the norm in Ireland & Northern Ireland (UK) and are accepted in almost all shops, restaurants & public transport.
- **Card Acceptance: Visa and Mastercard are widely accepted everywhere.** However, American Express, Discover, Diners Club are not as readily accepted, so be sure to bring an alternative (Visa or Mastercard)

SPEAK LIKE A LOCAL



- **Northern Irish sounds:** vowels like 'ou' (house) can sound like 'oy' (oyster), and a raising pitch at the end of sentences (similar to a question).
- **Irish sounds:** varies by region - for example in Dublin a 't' softens at the end of words (like limit > limiss). Cork is known for being "melodic" with pitch changes throughout speech. One of the most recognisable changes is 'th' replaced by a hard 't' or 'd' sound "33 Tirty-tree"

ESSENTIAL WORDS & PHRASES

IRISH	NORTHEN IRISH	MEANING / AMERICAN TRANSLATION
"What's the craic?" or "Any craic?"	"Bout ye?"	A common greeting (What's going on?) "Craic" means fun, gossip, or a good time.
"Grand"	"Dead on"	Fine / Okay / Good
Sláinte	Cheers	'To good health!'
A scald	A brew / cuppa	Strong tea
The Jacks	The Loo / toilet	The bathroom / restroom
Runners	Gutties / Dapped	Gym shoes
The Guards	The Peelers	The Police

SIMILAR WORDS:

...distinctly two syllables: "Mir-ror"

...sounding like one syllable: "Murr"

Mirror

"N-oh"

"Nai"

No



Go raibh maith agat

(Pronounced)
Guh rov mah ah-gut

"Thank you" (may you have goodness)

Tóg go bog é

Tohg guh bug eh

"Take it easy" (literally "lift it soft") a great send-off or a reminder to relax.

Cead mile fáilte

Kaid mee-la fawl-cha

meaning "a hundred thousand welcomes"

TIPS FOR AMERICAN TOURISTS

Accent & Speed: If you have trouble understanding, it's fine to politely ask, "Could you say that again, please?" or "Sorry, I didn't catch that." as accents can vary across regions & can be quite fast!

Term of Endearment: if a stranger calls you "Mate" or "Pal"

As with any destination, a little goes a long way! Using "Cheers" or local phrases will earn you a smile.

Welcome to Ireland

For many American tourists, Dublin is most popular for:



Direct international flights



When flying home from Dublin airport (DUB), you will complete US Customs and Border Protection Pre-Clearance before you leave Ireland. This means when you land in the US, you arrive as a domestic passenger - making onward connections smoother.



TAXI

The quickest and easiest way from the airport is by taxi, taking about 30 minutes to Dublin city center. There is no guarantee the taxis waiting outside the airport are accessible (with ramps) If you require an accessible transfer – Altogether Accessible Vacations can arrange this for you.

AIRPORT BUS / COACHES

- **Bus Éireann** provides frequent city and town services. All vehicles on these routes are 100% accessible featuring low-floor entry, with a dedicated designated wheelchair user space (max 70cm wide x 120cm long – no pre-booking required)

Accessible coaches (request at least 24 hours in advance, to book your wheelchair user space)

- **Dublin Express** with routes to city center stops like Heuston Station.
- **Aircoach** also gets you to the city center, but offers other service routes in Ireland (and Northern Ireland)



TRAM & APPS

Dublin has the accessible 'Luas' tram (Irish for 'speed') with level-boarding (no ramps needed) and this runs on metral tracks. There are two routes – Green & Red, intersecting in the city centre.

To pay the Luas tram – you can simply buy a paper ticket from machines (at every stop), or tap a 'Leap Card' which you load a balance onto at machines.

Alternatively you can use the TFI Go App, or for taxis – the 'Free Now' app to find an available cab.



TRAIN

There are no train services from Dublin airport, however the Enterprise train runs directly from Dublin Connolly Station to Belfast Grand Central Station (a joint service by Irish Rail and Translink) with wheelchair spaces.

Travel Tip: look out the right-hand side (when heading to Belfast) for sea views between Malahide and Balbriggan.



OTHER TRAINS & AIRPORTS



Iarnród Éireann (Irish Rail) offers train routes across Ireland – although many stations are accessible, these require staff assistance for boarding/alighting via ramps, and at least 4 hours notice to have staff ready for you.

It is recommended to check out the "Live Lift Status" page on Translink / Irish Rail's websites to find out if an elevator is functioning, about an hour before you travel.

Others are not accessible, lacking elevators or have stepped footbridges to switch station platforms.

SHANNON AIRPORT

✓ Shannon airport (SNN) also facilitates completing US Customs and Border Protection Pre-Clearance (like Dublin) before you leave Ireland. When landing in the US, you arrive as a domestic passenger, making onward connections smoother.

Local buses from Shannon Airport are accessible, including the Route 343 from Limerick, using low-floor buses with level entry.

The Expressway (coach) services, connecting to other major cities, are also accessible – though you must book at least 24 hours in advance to reserve your wheelchair space.

Cork airport (ORK) has Bus Éireann routes 225 and 226, with connections from the airport to the city.

There are no train services from Shannon or Cork airports.



The quickest and most convenient way to travel from the airports is taxi: pre-booking is essential for an accessible (ramp) vehicle, and we can arrange this for you.



FERRY SERVICES

Although Northern Ireland and Scotland are neighbours, there is no road or train route between.

There are ferry ports from England, Wales and Scotland to visit Ireland and Northern Ireland – however we recommend a shorter flight so more of your time is spent in a destination, instead of getting from A to B with limited ferry departure times.

Duration of ferries:

- Belfast ferries sail from Cairnryan (in South-West Scotland) taking around 2 hours.
- Next up, Holyhead (North Wales) is the primary gateway to Dublin and offers the the closest distance for crossing for Ireland – taking around 3 hours 15 minutes.
- Another ferry route is Liverpool (England) to Belfast – taking around 8 hours.

Did you know? The Titanic was built in Belfast, launching in 1912.

Check out the Museum or enjoy lunch at Titanic Hotel Belfast, where the original plans were drawn & many features are in its design.



Belfast & Northern Ireland

When flying into Belfast, most frequent public transport option is the **Airport Express Bus (Translink 300)** getting you to Belfast Grand Central Station in around 35 minutes.

There are no train services from Belfast International (BFS) airport.

You may also see Airport Express 600 bus from the city center – this is a service for Belfast City airport (BHD), with about a 10 minute journey. If you arrive at Belfast City airport (BHD) there is also a shuttle bus to Sydenham Train Station, around a 15–20 minute walk from the terminal building.

Local bus services: 'Ulsterbus' and 'Metro' are bus networks in Belfast.



Uber is another option for your time in Belfast – select the "Access" or "Assist" option in the app when setting your location.

TAXI

The quickest and easiest way is by taxi from the airport, taking about 25 minutes to central Belfast.

There is no guarantee the taxis waiting outside the airport are accessible (with ramps)

If you require an accessible transfer Altogether Accessible Vacations can take care of this for you.



The "Glider" (Belfast's Tram-Like Bus)

18-metre-long articulated (bendy) vehicles that are designed to look and feel like a tram – with it's own dedicated lanes and priority at traffic lights. It features level boarding and multiple wide doors, making it the easiest public transport to get around the city and stops are called "halts"

- **G1 Route:** runs between West and East Belfast, through the city centre.
- **G2 Route:** connecting the city centre to the Titanic Quarter.

To pay you can use ticket machines at the "halts" (stops) before you board, or pay on board with "Contactless" methods (bank card/phone) to tap-on at the validators.

Translink (trains, buses & the Glider) has a mobility scooter permit/sticker policy within dimension limits, but unfortunately do not allow larger scooters on public transport services.

Translink operates rail services, known as NI Railways (Northern Ireland Railways) with wheelchair spaces (max 70cm wide x 120cm long & max overall weight (wheelchair & person) 300kg /660 pounds.

It is recommended to check out the "Live Lift Status" page on Translink/Irish Rail's websites to find out if an elevator is functioning, about an hour before you travel.

DRIVING / CAR RENTAL

Renting a car in Ireland, Northern Ireland and the UK offers the most flexibility – we would recommend not driving in city locations as public transport and taxis are much more convenient. ***PLEASE NOTE: you may not be able to keep the same car between Ireland and mainland UK (for example: a Dublin company wouldn't send an employee to collect their vehicle from Scotland)**



Major car rental companies can be found at airports and city train stations. **Most rental cars in the UK are manual (stick-shift)** If you require an automatic transmission, be sure to request and confirm this with the rental company when booking.

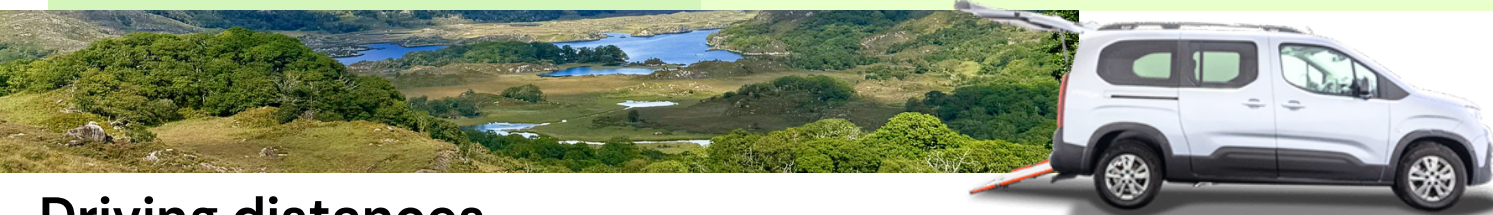
Driving Rules (The Differences from the US)

The most important difference is on which side of the road you drive!

US DRIVING NORM	UK LAW
Drive on the Right	Drive on the LEFT. This is the most critical difference.
Pass on the Left	Overtake (pass) on the Right.
Four-way stops.	Roundabouts are common. Yield to traffic already in the circle and yield to oncoming traffic from right, keep left (& proceed clockwise), and signal your exit.
Speed in kph	All speed limits are in miles per hour (mph) Typical limits are: 30 mph in built-up areas, 60 mph on single-lane roads, and 70 mph on highways (motorways).

Passing places: drivers must be mindful to slow down (in rural areas & at bends/corners), to be courteous looking for oncoming traffic – passing places allow you to pull into the side.

DRIVING IN IRELAND	DRIVING IN (UK) NORTHERN IRELAND
Drive on the LEFT	Drive on the LEFT
Road Signs: in both Irish and English, distances shown in kilometers (km)	Road Signs: in English only, distances shown in miles (m) 1 mile = 1.6 km
Speed in kilometers per hour (kph)	Speed in miles per hour (mph)



Driving distances

You may be used to long drives across or between States, and Ireland / UK may seem small in comparison – but to give an idea of how close (or far) some destinations are:

- **Dublin to Belfast:** 2.5 hours (around 170 km / 105 miles)
- **Belfast to Giant's Causeway:** 1h 20min (around 61 miles)
OR: 2.5 hours via East coastal route (around 81 miles)
- **Dublin to Galway:** 2h 40min – 3h 10min (from East coast to west, right across Ireland – around 215 miles)
- **Dublin to Cork:** inland route 3h 40min (around 260 km)
OR: 6 hours via East to South coastal route (380 km)
- + any comfort breaks and depending on the chosen route.

Example: Washington D.C. to New York City is 230 miles / 370km.

Wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV)

If you want the freedom to explore whilst in Ireland / UK then we can arrange rental with ramp access / someone to drive you.

Hotels



Our parent company **Altogether Travel** has the UK & Ireland's largest database of accessible hotel, self-catering and holiday rentals. This means we can find you the right accommodation to meet your needs.

During school break periods hotels tend to be more expensive (April, July, August, October), and over bank/national holidays.

We recommend staying in cities while visiting Ireland & Northern Ireland as these locations have the best options for accessible hotels. Keep in mind that in peak tourism season availability is harder to get. Book early to secure yours!

US tourists should also know that hotel rooms in Ireland & Northern Ireland (UK) tend to be smaller than in the US. They may also not have air conditioning (we have a focus on heating!) and beds typically use duvets instead of top sheets.

You'll be asked to show your passport or other travel document at check-in for a hotel stay. This is a legal requirement for overseas visitors to keep a record of their stay. You will also be asked to put some form a payment card against your room (in case of damages)

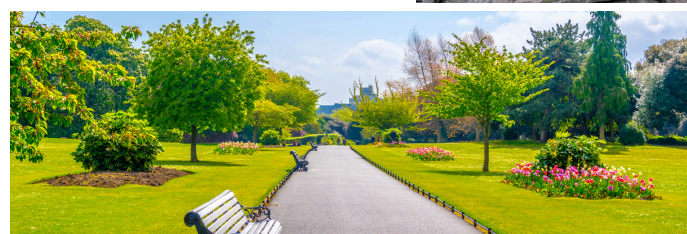
Also, pack lighter-weight luggage, as older hotels typically don't have an elevator (lift), and cobblestone streets can be challenging with large suitcases.

If famous attractions and culture are your thing – we can get your tickets sorted:

Belfast – Titanic Visitor Experience Museum, and there are around 700 murals to see in Belfast. Please note: Giant's Causeway & Visitor Centre is around 1.5 hour drive from Belfast (or longer if taking the Antrim Coast scenic route)

Dublin – Guinness Storehouse, traditional Irish dance & music shows, St. Patrick's Cathedral, National Museum of Ireland, or explore Irish roots with EPIC The Irish Emigration Museum, and experience the Old Library at Trinity College – home of the legendary Book of Kells. Phoenix Park is one of the largest enclosed city parks in Europe (and the home of Dublin Zoo) & so much more.

After all, we are experts in accessible vacations and can arrange everything for you!



GETTING CONNECTED

Cell Phones - to use your cell phone in Ireland & Northern Ireland (UK), you will generally need to unlock it and either purchase a local SIM card or an eSIM.

1. UNLOCK YOUR PHONE BEFORE YOU GO!



Your phone must be "unlocked" to use a different cellular network. Being locked to your current US carrier (like Verizon, AT&T, or T-Mobile) will prevent it from connecting to a local network while you are here.

How to Check: Visit your carrier's website or contact their support team to confirm your phone is unlocked for international use.

If It's Locked: Contact your carrier to have your phone unlocked well before your trip.

2. CHOOSE A CONNECTION METHOD

Once your phone is unlocked, you have a few options for connecting:

METHOD

Physical
Ireland / UK
SIM Card

eSIM

US Carrier -
International
Roaming

PROS

Easy to find at supermarkets, mobile shops, and airports. Provides a local cell phone number (*many UK / Irish network providers treat usage in the other country as domestic, data etc.*)

Highly convenient; no physical card needed. Can be set up quickly via apps like Airalo.

Easiest (no setup). Keep your US number. *Check if there are different charges for Europe (Ireland) & UK (Northern Ireland)*

CONS

Requires a physical SIM slot. Airport prices may be higher.

Only works on newer smartphone models.

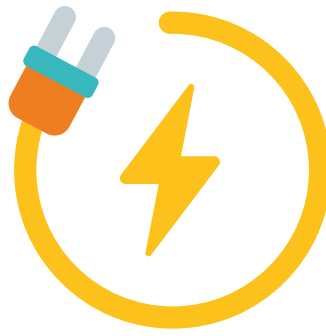
Warning: Roaming can be extremely expensive if you don't have an international plan.

INTERNATIONAL DIALLING CODES:

- In Ireland, replace the local '0' at start of number with +353 ...*continue*
- In Northern Ireland (and UK), replace '0' with +44 ...*rest of tel number*
- In the UK, Ireland and most of Europe you can use '00' instead of '+'
eg. dialing 00 44 ...*continue tel number* / or 00 353 ...*continue number*

Check Your Appliances

It's crucial to check the voltage rating on all your electronic and medical equipment before you travel:



POWER AND ELECTRICITY

IMPORTANT EXAMPLE

A few years ago, we had a guest from the US who plugged in a portable medical machine without checking the voltage. It blew the fuse immediately.

If you are traveling with medical equipment, always check its rating and purchase a voltage converter beforehand to ensure it operates safely and correctly.

Both Ireland & Northern Ireland (UK) use the same Type G plug (the three-prong rectangular shape). When traveling from the US, you will need a power adapter and possibly a converter.



Appliance Type

Dual-Voltage

- **Voltage Rating** - labeled as "Input: 100V-240V" (common for phone, camera, or laptop chargers)
- **What to Do** - You only need the plug adapter. The device handles the voltage difference internally.

Single-Voltage

- **Voltage Rating** - Labeled only for US voltage (e.g., 120V) (common for hair dryers, medical equipment)
- **What to Do** - You must use a voltage converter (or transformer) with your plug adapter to prevent damage or electrical hazard.



You can buy one online for about \$8

Tip: Some hotels may have spare plug adapters available for guests to borrow that have been left behind by previous visitors. It never hurts to ask!

Voltage

Both Ireland & Northern Ireland (UK) use 230V, while the US uses 120V.

- **Plug Adapter:** You will need a Type G power adapter (also known as a UK plug adapter). This allows your US plugs (Type A or B) to fit into wall sockets (power outlets), which accept three rectangular pins.
- **Voltage:** The UK & Ireland operates on a higher voltage (230V) than the US (120V).

IRELAND: HEALTH & MEDICAL CARE

ACTION: IN AN EMERGENCY

*If the situation is life-threatening, CALL 112 (EUROPE EMERGENCY NUMBER)
or call 999 (Northern Ireland & the UK, call redirects)
-this is the equivalent of 911 in US.*

For a true emergency, go immediately to the nearest Accident & Emergency (A&E) department (equivalent of a US Emergency Room)



TRAVEL INSURANCE

We strongly advise you to purchase travel insurance for your trip
- HAVE A COPY WITH YOU & SAVE TELEPHONE NUMBER -
the international contact number for your Travel Insurance provider.
(You can check if your US health policy covers you for medical expenses overseas - AND if this applies when visiting Ireland)



MINOR ILLNESSES: PHARMACY

Go into any local pharmacy (drugstore)

A pharmacist will ask about your symptoms to offer expert advice, recommend treatments, and can even provide prescription medicine without a doctor's appointment (under Ireland's Common Conditions Service (CCS))



PAYMENT & INSURANCE

You will pay for any over-the-counter or prescription medicines provided. Keep all receipts to file a claim with your travel insurance upon returning to the USA.

YOUR MEDICATION

Highly recommended: bring enough of your medications to last the entire trip (Speak with your US doctor to confirm if additional documentation is required for travel) **Original packaging &** carry a copy of US prescription, a letter from your doctor for all medications (eg. controlled substances)

HEALTHCARE CHARGES FOR TOURISTS - € EUR

Visitors must pay for emergency treatment and any other medical services in Ireland.

- **Payment is required:** Hospitals and clinics may expect upfront payment for services. You would then seek reimbursement from your travel insurance provider later.
- **Costs can be high:** Emergency room visits can have a flat fee, but overnight stays and extensive treatments (like surgery or medical evacuation) can run into thousands of euros.
- **U.S. insurance is not accepted:** U.S. Medicare/Medicaid and **most** private U.S. health insurance plans are not valid in Ireland.



US Embassy in Ireland (Dublin)

Phone: +353 1 668-8777

HOURS OF OPERATION:
Open 8:30am – 5:00pm

Address:

42 Elgin Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4

Click below to check out:
ie.usembassy.gov/medical-assistance

NORTHERN IRELAND (UK) HEALTH & MEDICAL CARE

ACTION: IN AN EMERGENCY

If the situation is life-threatening, CALL 999 (the UK EMERGENCY NUMBER) or call 112 (Europe, call redirects) – this is the equivalent of 911 in US.

For a true emergency, go immediately to the nearest Accident & Emergency (A&E) department (equivalent of a US Emergency Room)

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We strongly advise you to purchase travel insurance for your trip or confirm that your existing US health policy covers you for medical expenses overseas – HAVE A COPY WITH YOU & SAVE TELEPHONE NUMBERS – international contact number for your provider & 111 (NHS advice helpline)

MINOR ILLNESSES: PHARMACY

Go into any local pharmacy (drugstore)

A pharmacist will ask about your symptoms to offer expert advice, recommend suitable over-the-counter treatments, and can even provide prescription medicine for certain conditions without a doctor's appointment.

PAYMENT & INSURANCE

You will pay for any over-the-counter or prescription medicines provided. Keep all receipts to file a claim with your travel insurance upon returning to the USA.

YOUR MEDICATION

Highly recommended: bring enough of your medications to last the entire trip (Speak with your US doctor to confirm if additional documentation is required for travel) **Original packaging** & carry a copy of US prescription, a letter from your doctor for all medications (eg. controlled substances)



HEALTHCARE & CHARGES FOR TOURISTS

In Northern Ireland: Health and Social Care (HSC) & rest of the UK: National Health Service (NHS)

- **Free Initial Treatment:** Accident & Emergency (A&E) services are free of charge for all visitors.
- **Potential Charges:** Treatment beyond the immediate A&E care, or for conditions not covered by specific exemptions, will likely incur charges for overseas visitors. This is why having comprehensive travel insurance is essential.
- **Always Treated: Urgent or immediately necessary treatment will always be provided regardless of your ability to pay.**

URGENT (but not an emergency)

–call 111 for advice (24/7 helpline with our NHS professionals)

They will direct you to the nearest facility or right service & if appropriate, self-care guidance.

MOBILITY & ACCESSIBILITY

MOBILITY EQUIPMENT:

RENT OR BRING YOUR OWN?



Option

Pros

Cons & Caveats

Bring Your Own

Equipment is familiar, custom-fit, and comfortable.

Risk of Damage:
Despite precautions, travel (especially by air) often results in damaged equipment.

Rent in Ireland & Northern Ireland (UK)

Eliminates the risk of airline damage.
We offer a wide range of vetted equipment.

Equipment may be slightly different from what you are used to.

Our Rental Inventory

We offer a wide range of mobility equipment for rent, which can be delivered directly to your accommodation.

Our inventory includes:

- Electric and manual wheelchairs, and scooters.
- Hoists/lifters and stand aids.
- Shower chairs and bath boards.
- Hospital beds and bed rails.
- And much more – just ask!

Past Experience Warning:

We've had customers experience broken wheels on hoists/lifts and cracks on shower chairs due to baggage handling.

Although we can usually help rectify the issue (once, a hotel maintenance man helped install new wheels we sourced !) it can certainly get your vacation off to a bad start.

ACCESSIBLE RESTROOMS (TOILETS)

Most restaurants and all major visitor attractions in Ireland & Northern Ireland (UK) will have accessible restrooms that are usually unlocked and easy to access.



Changing Places Facilities

For individuals who require more complex assistance, such as specialized equipment to use the restroom or change a continence pad, the UK offers " **Changing Places** " facilities.



- These are larger restrooms that include essential equipment like hoists/lifts and changing beds (**remember to bring your own sling**)
- You can use online maps and resources like the Changing Places Toilets website to find the location of these facilities in Ireland and Northern Ireland (& throughout the UK)
- In Ireland (the Republic), you might also see "Step-Down" facilities. These are accessible toilets that have a changing bench and some extra space – but missing the full ceiling hoist required to be a "certified" Changing Place (known as a 'step-down' in functionality, lacking the hoist – there isn't a step to enter)

Access by 'Universal' Key



To access many public disabled restrooms, tourists will need a 'Key' – these are kept locked to ensure they remain clean and available for the people who truly need them. The key itself is bigger than a standard door key, making it easier to handle and use.



- **Ireland: uses the IWA Universal Key** (Irish Wheelchair Association)
- **Northern Ireland: the RADAR Key** is the universal key used throughout the UK that unlocks over 10,000 accessible restrooms.

How to Get One: If you would like a RADAR/IWA Key for your visit to the UK, we can purchase one for you and have it waiting at your hotel.

NOTE: Most of Europe uses the Euro Key – Germany's product "Euroschlüssel" found mainly there, in Austria, Switzerland, Netherlands, Czech Rep. & Slovakia.



ALCOHOL LAWS



In Ireland & Northern Ireland (and rest of the UK) the legal age to buy and consume alcohol is 18 years old.

You or anyone in your party who looks young will likely be asked for ID before being served.

RULE

BUYING ALCOHOL

UNDER 18S IN LICENSED VENUES

PROOF OF AGE

DRINKING IN PUBLIC

DETAILS

ILLEGAL FOR ANYONE UNDER 18 TO BUY ALCOHOL.

AN ADULT BUYING ON BEHALF OF AN UNDER-18 IS ALSO ILLEGAL.

UNDER-18S ARE ALLOWED IN RESTAURANTS AND MANY PUBS THAT SERVE FOOD, BUT THEY CANNOT LEGALLY CONSUME ALCOHOL. THEY USUALLY MUST LEAVE BY A SET TIME, OFTEN 9:00 PM OR 10:00 PM.

VENUES MUST CHECK ID FOR ANYONE WHO APPEARS TO BE 25 OR YOUNGER. ACCEPTABLE FORMS OF ID OFTEN INCLUDE A PASSPORT OR A DRIVER'S LICENSE.

DRINKING ALCOHOL IN PUBLIC PLACES IS GENERALLY PROHIBITED BY LOCAL LAWS, AND POLICE CAN CONFISCATE ALCOHOL.

VISITING A TRADITIONAL PUB

At the heart of Irish social life - it is common to "Buy the bartender a drink" for great service, saying "and one for yourself" when ordering - then the price of a drink is taken as a tip.

We are happy to check out accessibility and recommend some pubs near your hotel. Generally you will come across these when out and about, and as with any destination - older buildings may not offer the space or level access needed. However there are many out there, including pub-restaurant chains - so you can definitely embrace the atmosphere of a traditional pub experience, if this is on your to-do list!

Try some local 'Pub Grub' - including the Big Breakfasts: The Full Irish (Republic) / The Ulster Fry (Northern Ireland). According to locals, **world-famous Guinness** is 'best served' here - in both Ireland and Northern Ireland.

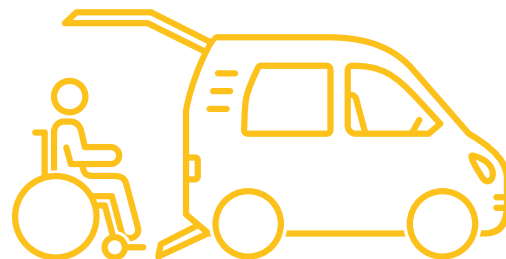


Get a Taste of Irish Foods

- **Breads & Sweet - Soda Bread:** dense, yeast-free with buttermilk. **Barmbrack:** fruited bread soaked in tea. **Fifteens (Northern Ireland)** "fridge cake" made with 15 crushed digestive biscuits, 15 chopped marshmallows, and 15 glacé cherries, mixed with condensed milk - all rolled in finely-grated, dried coconut before slicing (see right)
- **Try a "spud-based" specialty:**
Boxty (traditional potato pancake - grated raw potato with mashed potato, fried until crispy)
Buttery mash potatoes with cabbage/kale ('Colcannon') or spring onions/scallions ('Champ')
- **Irish Stew:** mutton/lamb/beef, potatoes, & onions (Guinness can be used in the gravy)
- **Seafood Chowder:** Ireland is an island! Coastal areas serve incredible creamy chowders packed with salmon, white fish, and shellfish.



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