



Dublin

POPULATION 1.3 MILLION / AREA 921 SQ KM

Includes »

Around Dublin	132
Dalkey	132
Howth	132
Malahide.....	134

Best Places to Eat

- » Chapter One (p110)
- » Coppinger Row (p105)
- » Green Nineteen (p105)
- » Honest to Goodness (p106)
- » Juniors (p112)

Best Places to Stay

- » Gibson Hotel (p103)
- » Isaacs Hostel (p102)
- » Merrion Hotel (p99)
- » Number 31 (p98)
- » Pembroke Townhouse (p104)

Why Go?

Form is temporary, but class is permanent: the good times may have gone, but Dublin still knows how to have a good time. From its music, art and literature to the legendary nightlife that has inspired those same musicians, artists and writers, Dublin has always known how to have fun and does it with deadly seriousness. As you'll soon find out.

There are world-class museums, superb restaurants and the best collection of entertainment in the country: from rock music to classical concerts there's always something on, and should there not be, you'll always have its thousand or so pubs to while away an evening. And should you wish to get away from it all, the city has a handful of seaside towns at its edges that make for wonderful day trips.

When to Go

March brings the marvellous mayhem of St Patrick's Festival, with 600,000 parade viewers. The world's most popular women's mini-marathon is held in June, with over 40,000 participants. In August the Dun Laoghaire Festival of World Cultures brings musicians and artists from all over the world.

History

Dublin's been making noise since around 500 BC, when a bunch of intrepid Celts camped at a ford over the River Liffey, which is the provenance of the city's tough-to-pronounce Irish name, Baile Átha Cliath (Town of the Hurdle Ford). The Celts went about their merry way for a thousand years or so, but it wasn't until the Vikings showed up that Dublin was urbanised in any significant way. By the 9th century raids from the north had become a fact of Irish life, and some of the fierce Danes chose to stay rather than simply rape, pillage and depart. They intermarried with the Irish and established a vigorous trading port at the point where the River Poddle joined the Liffey in a *dubh linn* (black pool). Today there's little trace of the Poddle, which has been channelled underground and flows under St Patrick's Cathedral to dribble into the Liffey by the Capel St (Grattan) Bridge.

Fast-forward another thousand years, past the arrival of the Normans in the 12th century and the slow process of subjugating Ireland to Anglo-Norman (then British) rule, during which Dublin generally played the role of bandleader. Stop at the beginning of the 18th century, when the squalid city packed with poor Catholics hardly re-

flected the imperial pretensions of its Anglophile burghers. The great and the good – aka the Protestant Ascendancy – wanted big improvements, and they set about transforming what was in essence still a medieval town into a modern, Anglo-Irish metropolis. Roads were widened, landscaped squares laid out and new town houses were built, all in a proto-Palladian style that soon became known as Georgian after the kings then on the English throne. For a time, Dublin was the second-largest city in the British Empire and all was very, very good – unless you were part of the poor, mostly Catholic masses living in the city's ever-developing slums.

The Georgian boom came to a sudden and dramatic halt after the Act of Union in 1801, when Ireland was formally united with Britain and its separate parliament closed down. Dublin went from being the belle of the imperial ball to the annoying cousin who just wouldn't take the hint, and slid quickly into economic turmoil and social unrest. During the Potato Famine (1845–51), the city's population was swollen by the arrival of tens of thousands of starving refugees from the west, who joined the ranks of an already downtrodden working class. As Dublin entered the 20th century, it was a dispirited place plagued by poverty,

DUBLIN IN...

Two Days

If you've only got two days (whatever is taking you away better be worth it!), start with **Trinity College** and the **Book of Kells** before venturing into the Georgian heartland – amble through **St Stephen's Green** and **Merrion Square**, but be sure to visit both the **National Museum** and the **National Gallery**. In the evening, try an authentic Dublin pub – **Kehoe's** off Grafton St will do nicely. The next day go west, stopping at the **Ches-ter Beatty Library** on your way to the **Guinness Storehouse**; if you still have legs for it, the **Irish Museum of Modern Art** and **Kilmainham Gaol** will round off your day perfectly. Take in a traditional Irish music session at the **Cobblestone**.

Four Days

Follow the two-day itinerary, but stretch it out between refuelling stops at some of the city's better pubs. Visit **Glasnevin Cemetery** and the **Dublin City Gallery – Hugh Lane**. Become a whiskey expert at the **Old Jameson Distillery** and a literary (or beer) one with a **Dublin Literary Pub Crawl**. Take a DART out to **Howth**, walk the headland and try some of the fabulous fish restaurants. Oh, and don't forget **Temple Bar** – there are distractions there for every taste.

One Week

As above, but add a day for the southern suburbs of **Dalkey** and **Sandycove**; a visit to the **Phoenix Park** and exploration of the **Docklands**; there might even be someone you'd love to see performing at the **Grand Canal Theatre**. Alternatively, attend a play at either the **Abbey** or the **Gate**.