

# **IRELAND & SCOTLAND**

## ***Travel Information***

### **PREPARING TO GO**

**ATM and Credit Cards** – Contact your bank in advance of departing on this tour to determine whether you will be able to use your ATM and credit cards while traveling. When contacting your bank, notify them of your travel dates so that they will anticipate charges being made outside of your hometown and do not suspend your cards for what may appear to be “suspicious” charges. Make two photocopies of the front and back sides of your ATM and credit cards. Bring one copy with you, and leave the other copy behind with someone at home who will assist you in the event your cards are misplaced, lost, or stolen.

**Clothing and Packing** – Your adventure to Ireland and Scotland is casual and the weather is moderate this time of year. Dress for comfort and convenience with a wardrobe that is adaptable and allows for layering. Generally, during the day, casual, comfortable, cotton clothing is recommended. Cool weather at higher elevations or at night will require warmer, layered clothing. The Emerald Isle owes its name to precipitation so rain is to be expected anytime. In Europe, it is generally customary to dress somewhat formally. It is advisable to avoid wearing jeans, sneakers, or shorts for dinner.

Pack an adequate supply of your prescription medication, including antibiotics, in its original container to last through your entire journey. In addition, you may want to bring some over-the-counter medication such as Imodium AD, Tylenol, etc.

Bring your travel documents and copies of your passport and credit cards stored in separate places. Also, pack a change of clothing in your carry-on to avoid any inconvenience in the event your flight or luggage is delayed.

Following is a list of recommended items to pack for your trip to Ireland and Scotland:

- Casual daytime wear – slacks, long and short sleeved shirts
- Casual elegant evening wear for ladies
- Sunglasses, sunscreen, hat
- A light sweater or jacket for higher elevations or a breezy night
- Lightweight, comfortable, sturdy walking shoes that have already been broken-in
- Rain poncho and collapsible travel umbrella
- Zipper-lock bags
- Pre-moistened towelettes or liquid hand cleanser
- Prescription medications (including antibiotics) and adequate personal toiletries
- A lock for your luggage
- Passport and copies of passport, ATM and credit cards

**Health** – This tour involves a considerable amount of walking. To enjoy this tour, you should be in good health and able to walk reasonable distances, often over unpaved and uneven surfaces. Some of the most memorable sightseeing can only be accomplished on foot. The amount of walking you do, however, is at your discretion. Most hotels do not have special handicap access rooms.

While drinking water is generally safe at all our hotels, bottled water will be available whenever the local water is not fit to drink.

No vaccinations are currently required for travel to Ireland or Scotland. For personal vaccination boosters and current other health issues, please consult your physician for pre-departure health advice.

**Luggage** – Due to vehicle space constraints during your Ireland and Scotland journey, limit your checked luggage to one average size suitcase per person and one small carry-on containing essentials. For your day-to-day travel while on tour, use a small, soft-sided carry-on piece (lightweight backpack or shoulder purse), and only those items that you need handy during the day. It is recommended that you use the hotel safe and a luggage lock when out of your hotel room for an extended period of time. (Do not use the luggage lock when you check in your luggage at the airport.)

**Travel Document Requirements** – You will need a valid passport for entry into Costa Rica. We recommend that you make at least two photocopies of all the travel documents that you bring with you. Include copies of the photo page of your passport that contains the date of issuance, date of expiration, and your citizenship. Secure one set of copies in the safe in your room while traveling, and leave one set with someone at home who will assist you in the event your documents are misplaced, lost, or stolen.

## DESTINATION INFORMATION

**Air Conditioning** – most hotels and vehicles on this tour have air conditioning, but due to the cool temperatures in Ireland, air conditioning in the hotels is not as common or efficient as that in the US.

**Currency and Exchange Rates** – The currency in Ireland is the Euro (EUR) which is divided into 100 cents and the currency in Scotland is the British Pound (GBP). Currency can be exchanged at banks, exchange bureaus, and some hotels. ATMs are widely available. Credit and debit cards are also widely accepted. Currently the exchange rate is:

1 USD to 0.91 EUR (almost equal)

1 USD to 0.72 GBP

**Customs and Tax-Free Shopping** – As a U.S. resident, you are entitled to a duty-free exemption based on the total value of merchandise purchased abroad, as long as you physically bring them with you. You may be entitled to a VAT (Value Added Tax) refund and should inquire about the refund policy where you shop.

**Electrical Current** – The electrical current in Ireland and Scotland is 230 V, 50 Hz, AC. The plug type is “G” and uses three rectangular blades. If your electrical devices do not conform to this standard, you will need to bring the appropriate converters and adapters.

**Phones** -- Check with your cell phone provider to see if your cell phone will work in Ireland and Scotland. Roaming fees can be expensive, and you pay the toll charges for incoming calls. It is cheaper to send a text message since text messages have a low set fee. Check with your provider for international calling plans for travelers. You can also use Facetime or Skype to make calls with an internet connection.

To call from the U.S. to Ireland, press: 011 + 353 + phone number

To call from Ireland to the U.S., press: 001 + area code + phone number

To call from the U.S. to Scotland, press: 011 + 44 + phone number

To call from Scotland to the U.S., press: 001 + area code + phone number

**Time** – Ireland and Scotland are 8 hours ahead of California time

**Tipping** – Tipping in Ireland and Scotland is not as automatic and generous as it is in the U.S. For special service, tips are appreciated, but not expected. Some tipping guidelines are:

Restaurants: check to see if the service is included. If not, tip about 10%

Taxis: Round up your fare a bit. If the cabbie hauls your bags and gets you to the airport on time, you might want to toss in a bit more.

Services: If someone in the service industry does a super job for you, a small tip of a euro or two is appropriate but not required.

Tour Driver/Guide: \$5 - \$7 per day, paid at the end of the tour.

**Weather** – The weather in Ireland and Scotland can be variable, alternating between wet and cool days, and sunny and mild days.

| July                | Average High/Low Temperature | Average Rainfall |
|---------------------|------------------------------|------------------|
| Dublin, Ireland     | 66 / 54 degrees              | 1.9 inches       |
| Galway, Ireland     | 64 / 55 degrees              | 2.0 inches       |
| Edinburgh, Scotland | 66/52 degrees                | 2.0 inches       |
| Inverness, Scotland | 61 / 50 degrees              | 2.0 inches       |



IRELAND



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