



# Dublin and Northern Ireland Highlights

8 Days

On this eight day itinerary with Europe Express, travelers experience an enriching journey through Dublin and Northern Ireland, exploring vibrant Celtic cities and serene landscapes. The trip begins in the heart of Dublin, where guests experience the city's rich culture and lively atmosphere. Highlights include a full-day private tour featuring iconic landmarks such as the Book of Kells and the Guinness Storehouse, along with a private walking tour delving into Dublin's literary heritage. Guests will enjoy an evening of traditional Irish entertainment at the Abbey Tavern and a memorable stay at the Clontarf Castle Hotel, a 12th-century castle turned luxury accommodation.

From here, guests travel north through the breathtaking landscapes of Northern Ireland, where history and natural beauty intertwine. The itinerary includes a comprehensive City Sightseeing Belfast tour with a 2-day pass, offering the freedom to explore Belfast's notable sites at leisure. The adventure continues with a shared tour to some of the region's most iconic attractions, including Dunluce Castle, the Giant's Causeway, and the Dark Hedges. This tour provides an immersive experience of Northern Ireland's medieval ruins, unique geological formations, and enchanting landscapes. The journey concludes with a visit to the Titanic Museum, where guests explore over nine interactive galleries and captivating special effects, bringing to life the story of the Titanic. This itinerary promises a perfect blend of cultural exploration, historical insights, and natural wonders, ensuring a truly memorable experience in both Dublin and Northern Ireland.

## Highlights

- ★ Dublin in a Day: Book of Kells and Guinness Storehouse Private Tour
- ★ Dublin's Literary History: Private Off-The-Beaten-Path Walking Tour
- ★ Irish Night at Abbey Tavern
- ★ Castle Stay in Dublin
- ★ City Sightseeing Belfast Tour: 2-Day Pass
- ★ Shared Tour: Giants Causeway, Dunluce, Dark Hedges, and Titanic Experience

## Itinerary Details

Day 1 - 5

- ✈ International Arrival
- 🚗 Taxi from Airport to Hotel
- 🚗 Taxi from Hotel to Castle Stay
- 🚗 Taxi from Castle Stay to Train Station
- 🚆 Train from Dublin to Belfast

4 Nights

### Dublin

Dublin, the vibrant capital city on Ireland's east coast, is abundant with history, culture, and modern charm. The city's cultural quarter is a rich with historic walking trails, medieval castles, and ancient cathedrals. Stroll through the cobbled streets of Temple Bar, renowned for its lively atmosphere, traditional pubs, and eclectic mix of street performers. Discover Dublin Castle, a

historic complex that has served as a royal residence, military stronghold, and government center since the 13th century. The city's historical depth is further highlighted by landmarks such as the 12th-century Christ Church Cathedral and the 1191-founded St. Patrick's Cathedral, where Jonathan Swift once served as Dean. For a taste of Dublin's modernity, the Docklands area stands out with its sleek architecture and burgeoning tech industry, reflecting the city's evolution into a hub of innovation. Dublin's green spaces offer a refreshing escape, with expansive parks like Phoenix Park—one of the largest enclosed public parks in Europe—providing a serene setting for leisurely walks. Visitors can explore historic markets like Moore Street or indulge in Dublin's dynamic food scene, which features everything from fresh seafood to gourmet whiskey tastings. The Guinness Storehouse is a must-visit, where guests can explore the history of Ireland's most famous stout through interactive exhibits and enjoy panoramic city views from the Gravity Bar. Dublin also boasts a thriving arts scene, with numerous galleries and live music venues ensuring there is always something to experience. From its rich historical sites to its modern attractions, Dublin offers a compelling blend of old-world charm and contemporary energy.

Included activities

## Day 1: Arrival in Ireland

Upon arrival in Dublin, guests will make their way to their hotel of choice, where a warm Irish welcome awaits. The evening is free to enjoy a leisurely stroll through Temple Bar or perhaps share a pint with fellow travelers. The adventures in Ireland are just beginning!

## Day 2: Dublin Delights

The day begins with a delicious breakfast at the hotel. A knowledgeable guide will meet guests in the hotel lobby, leading a full-day tour of Dublin. The city's rich history comes alive with visits to must-see attractions, including Saint Patrick's Cathedral and the Book of Kells at Trinity College. Afterward, guests will have free time for lunch on their own, leaving room for a pint of the famous black stuff. In the afternoon, the adventure continues with a self-guided experience at the renowned Guinness Storehouse. The remainder of the day is available for leisure activities before dinner. The evening concludes with a tasty pub meal accompanied by traditional Irish entertainment, ensuring a truly memorable night.

## Dublin in a Day: Book of Kells and Guinness Storehouse Private Tour

This full-day private guided tour takes guests through the picturesque, cobbled streets of Dublin, renowned for vibrant art, lively markets, cozy cafes, historic pubs, and iconic buildings. Dublin's rich history spans over 1,000 years, showcasing Viking and Norman influences, medieval churches, and the 13th-century Dublin Castle. Along the way, guests will explore the Christian takeover of Celtic traditions and the long struggle for Irish independence while visiting historic sites like the parliament buildings. A must-see stop is the Temple Bar neighborhood, famous for its lively atmosphere filled with live music, street performers, and a bar serving over 450 varieties of whiskey. Another highlight is Trinity College, Ireland's prestigious university, home to the renowned Book of Kells, an ancient set of Gospels dating to around 800 C.E. Please note that external guides are not permitted to guide within Trinity College, so visitors will join a shared guided tour of the campus, the Old Library, and the Book of Kells. While most books have been temporarily removed due to the Old Library Redevelopment Project, a digital journey through the library's collections is available. The tour also includes visits to two of Dublin's esteemed museums: the National Museum of Archaeology, featuring the famous Bog Man, a well-preserved Iron Age body, and the National Gallery, home to Caravaggio's masterpiece, 'The Taking of Christ'. The day concludes with a taxi ride to the Guinness Storehouse, where guests embark on a self-guided tour of Ireland's most iconic brewery. Here, they can learn about the brewing process and enjoy panoramic views of the city while savoring a pint of the legendary stout. Blending historical insights, cultural experiences, and lively entertainment, Dublin is a captivating destination for any traveler.

## Day 3: Dublin's Literary and Musical Culture

This final day in Dublin is all about its rich literary and musical history and culture! Guests can enjoy a leisurely morning, perhaps strolling through the gorgeous Temple Bar neighborhood and indulging in a traditional Irish breakfast. This afternoon guests will go on a private, off-the-beaten-path walking tour of Dublin's literary history. Afterwards, enjoy a traditional Irish show at The Abbey Tavern.

## Dublin's Literary History: Private Off-The-Beaten-Path Walking Tour

Delve into the literary history of Dublin on this off-the-beaten-path walking tour, where centuries of writers and poets have left their mark. Known for its stunning architecture, lush green landscapes, and turbulent political history, Dublin has fostered a rich literary tradition. On this private walking tour, guests will explore the city's literary heritage, visiting sites where Wilde, Joyce, Yeats, and Stoker once lived, studied, socialized, and wrote. Begin in Merrion Square, home to plaques commemorating notable residents like Oscar Wilde. Continue on to St Stephen's Green, where the statue of W.B. Yeats stands as a tribute to the Nobel laureate. Pass by St. Patrick's Cathedral and uncover the story of Jonathan Swift. Step back into the 18th century with a visit to Marsh's Library, a perfectly preserved Enlightenment-era library housing over 25,000 rare books. Guests will also stop at Sweny's Pharmacy and the literary pub Davy Byrne's, both immortalized in James Joyce's Ulysses. As a UNESCO City of Literature, Dublin brims with stories of Ireland's greatest minds. This tour winds through the city's streets, libraries, and bookstores, offering a glimpse into the lives of Nobel Prize winners like W.B. Yeats, George Bernard Shaw, and Samuel Beckett, as well as the beloved James Joyce. The tour concludes at the Winding Stair Restaurant & Bookstore, a fitting end to this literary journey through one of the world's most celebrated cities for writers and thinkers.

## Irish Night at Abbey Tavern

Guests will enjoy a delicious traditional meal followed by Irish ballad music at The Abbey Tavern, an authentic old-world venue that captures the heart of Irish culture. This lively, informal evening reflects Ireland's rich musical heritage, with a captivating mix of folk songs, ballads, and traditional tunes. The atmosphere at The Abbey Tavern provides an immersive experience, offering a true taste of Ireland's deep-rooted love of music and song. It's the perfect way to end a day of exploration, surrounded by the warmth and charm of Irish hospitality.

## Day 4: Castle Stay in Dublin

No visit to Ireland would be complete without a stay at an Irish castle! Today guests check-in to the 4.5-star Clontarf Castle Hotel for a final day in Dublin before heading north to Belfast tomorrow. Guests should enjoy exploring this 12th century castle and the surrounding neighborhood!

## Clontarf Castle Hotel Stay

Clontarf Castle Hotel in Dublin offers a captivating blend of historic charm and modern luxury, providing a variety of unique experiences for guests. Guests can explore the castle's rich history, which dates back to 1172, while admiring its stunning architecture and learning about its storied past. The hotel's serene surroundings and beautifully landscaped grounds create a peaceful retreat. Just a short drive from Dublin's bustling city center, the hotel offers easy access to top attractions. For those seeking outdoor activities, the nearby Clontarf seafront is ideal for a leisurely stroll, and golf enthusiasts can enjoy a round at the Clontarf Golf Club, located just minutes away. Clontarf Castle Hotel beautifully combines history, culture, and luxury, making it a perfect destination for relaxation and exploration alike.



## Day 5 - 8

-  Private or Rented Car Drive to Belfast
-  Taxi from Hotel to Airport
-  International Departure

3 Nights

### Belfast

Belfast, the capital of Northern Ireland, is a city rich in history and vibrant with modern culture. Its transformation from an industrial powerhouse to a dynamic cultural hub makes it an intriguing destination for travelers. A must-see is the Titanic Belfast, an award-winning museum located on the site where the RMS Titanic was built. The museum features nine interactive galleries that bring the story of the ill-fated ship to life, offering insights into its construction, launch, and tragic sinking. Exploring the city's history further, visitors can delve into Belfast's political heritage with a tour of the Murals of Shankill Road and Falls Road. These powerful murals depict Northern Ireland's tumultuous past and are a striking testament to the city's complex history. The Belfast City Hall, an iconic Edwardian building, is a sight to behold with its impressive architecture and informative exhibitions. Nearby, the Crumlin Road Gaol offers a fascinating tour of this historic prison, which has housed political prisoners and convicts over the years. The Botanic Gardens and Queen's University area showcase the city's green spaces and beautiful architecture, while the Ulster Museum offers a diverse collection of artifacts from Northern Ireland's natural and cultural history. In the heart of Belfast's rejuvenated Titanic Quarter, the SS Nomadic, the Titanic's tender ship, provides an additional historical experience. For a taste of modern Belfast, the St. George's Market offers local crafts, fresh produce, and a lively atmosphere. From historical sites to cultural landmarks, Belfast offers a rich blend of experiences for travelers to explore and enjoy.

Included activities

### Day 5: Belfast Bound

Guests will start the day with a delicious breakfast at the hotel before departing for Belfast. Take in the Irish countryside on this 2-hour journey north! Upon arrival, guests can check-in to their hotel and enjoy a leisurely day exploring this northern Ireland city with their 2-day pass for a hop on/hop off open-top tour bus, which has 20 stops around the city for guests to explore.

### City Sightseeing Belfast Tour: 2-Day Pass

This open-top bus tour now offers 20 stops around Belfast, allowing guests to hop on and off to explore the city's many sights. The tour includes a visit to the ever-evolving Titanic Quarter, birthplace of the Titanic and now a vibrant hub of development. The route then heads back to the city center, taking in the politically significant areas of Shankill Road and Falls Road, where guests can view the powerful political wall murals and peace lines. The tour also passes through the Queens University area before returning to the heart of the city.

### Day 6: Belfast Exploration Continued

After breakfast at the hotel, travelers can continue enjoying an exploration of Belfast with the sights they weren't able to take in the previous day with their 2-day pass for the hop on hop off city sightseeing open-top bus. Today is their last full day in this city before their full-day adventure tomorrow on the Antrim Coast!

### Day 7: Adventure on the Antrim Coast and the Titanic Experience

Today's tour of the Antrim Coast and the Titanic Experience in Belfast promises to be a truly unforgettable exploration of Ireland's rich heritage, blending historical grandeur, natural wonders, and cultural insights—a perfect way for travelers to end their visit to the Emerald Isle.

## Shared Tour: Giants Causeway, Dunluce, Dark Hedges, and Titanic Experience from Belfast

Guided by an expert with extensive knowledge of Ireland, this journey takes guests through some of the country's most iconic attractions. Dunluce Castle, perched dramatically on a cliff edge overlooking the Atlantic Ocean, offers a glimpse into medieval life and the impressive architectural grandeur of a bygone era. Its striking ruins and scenic location make it a captivating site for history enthusiasts and photographers alike. The adventure continues at the Giant's Causeway, a natural wonder renowned for its unique geological formations of interlocking basalt columns, created by volcanic activity around 60 million years ago. The site's intriguing shapes and legends, such as those of the giant Fionn mac Cumhaill, add to its mystique and allure. Guests will also explore the Dark Hedges, an enchanting avenue of beech trees planted in the 18th century. This picturesque location, with its twisted, canopy-like branches, has gained fame for its otherworldly appearance and its role as a filming location for Game of Thrones. Once back in Belfast, the experience is further enhanced by a visit to the world-renowned Titanic Museum, where guests can explore over nine interactive galleries and enjoy captivating special effects. This museum brings to life the story of the ill-fated Titanic, offering an immersive and educational journey through its history.

## Day 8: Say Goodbye to the Emerald Isle

Guests bid farewell to the enchanting Emerald Isle! This magical island still has many sights to see, so a return journey is a must!



### Inclusions

#### Includes

- Activities and excursions as specified in the itinerary
- Accommodation: Dublin (4 nights) - Belfast (3 nights)
- Meals where noted in the itinerary
- Train rides where noted in the itinerary
- Admission tickets as specified in the itinerary

#### Not Included

- Tips and personal expenses
- Visa and tourism charges
- Travel insurance
- Arrival and departure flights