Amsterdam, Netherlands

Overview

Introduction

Tell anyone you're going to Amsterdam and there's a fair chance they'll either sigh with envy or give you a sly nod. Amsterdam's reputation for tolerance laced with sin precedes it, but equally renowned are its scenic and cultural attractions.

Amsterdam hotels are known for their cleanliness and hospitality, its restaurants offer world cuisine, and along the city streets is a shopper's paradise. Most visitors fall in love with the city and return again and again.

Amsterdam is nourished by a wealth of museums, concert halls, and avant-garde theater and dance venues. Its relaxed and tolerant attitudes draw those looking for a creative, anything-goes atmosphere.

Large numbers of beautiful tree-lined canals are bordered by streets with rows of narrow, gabled houses and 17th-century warehouses, making Amsterdam an architectural treasure trove. Amsterdam is much smaller in population (but no less interesting) than many European capitals. As a result, much of the city center can be comfortably explored on foot—or, if you want to look like a true local, by bicycle.

Highlights

Sights—The Westerkerk (West Church) on the Prinsengracht and the spectacular view from its tower; gabled mansions on the 17th-century canal ring inside the Singelgracht; the Anne Frank Huis; the Red Light District; Amsterdam-Noord.

Museums—Rembrandts at the Rijksmuseum; the Van Gogh Museum; the Stedelijk Museum.

Memorable Meals—Smoked eel at Haesje Claes; french fries with mayonnaise or peanut-butter sauce from the rear end of the Albert Cuyp Markt; rijsttafel at Tempo Doeloe; salted or pickled herring from one of the fish stands along the canals; traditional Dutch fare at Moeders; international dishes from Food Hallen.

Late Night—Jazz at Bimhuis; drinks and dancing at club Panama in the Eastern Docklands; events at the Sugar Factory, ranging from poetry readings in English to DJ nights; concerts featuring international talent at Paradiso, a 19th century church turned rock music venue.

Walks—A stroll that takes in all the sights of Dam Square and the adjacent Red Light District; a walking tour of the old Jordaan section; a walk in Vondelpark; a guided walking tour from Gilde Amsterdam of the city’s hidden courtyards, Jeiwsh quarter or other specialized itineraries.

Especially for Kids—The aquarium, planetarium and petting zoo at the Artis Royal Zoo; the goat farm at the Amsterdamse Bos; hands-on exhibits at NEMO Science Center; the children’s section (Kindermuseum TM Junior) of the KIT Tropenmuseum (tropical museum).
**Geography**

Dam Square is at the heart of Amsterdam's network of canals, streets and squares. There, you'll find historic structures such as the Royal Palace. The street Damrak connects Dam Square to Central Station. Kalverstraat and Rokin, two popular shopping streets, lead from Dam Square to Muntplein and the Flower Market. Farther to the west of Dam is the district of the Jordaan, a picturesque and trendy neighborhood. The Red Light District lies to the east of Dam Square.

The 17th-century canals—whose names often end in the word *gracht* or *kade*—wrap around the historic city center in a series of semicircles called the Grachtengordel (Canal District) and were added to UNESCO's World Heritage list in 2010. The innermost canal in the series is the Singel, followed by the Herengracht, Keizersgracht and finally the Prinsengracht. The Singel canal encircles the old center, extending along its western edge and meeting the Amstel River on the center's southern edge. Intersecting the canals are smaller cross-cana ls and streets.

On the eastern side of the center is the old Jewish Quarter, largely rebuilt, and the Waterlooplein, with the flea market and Stopera (city hall and opera house). To the southwest is Museumplein, the site of several museums, including the Rijksmuseum and the Concertgebouw, the main concert hall.

Nearby Leidseplein is another important square that is frequented by tourists seeking its theaters, restaurants and nightspots. Also popular for clubbing and nightlife is Rembrandtplein, an entertainment square presided over by a statue of iconic Dutch artist Rembrandt Van Rijn and ringed by clubs, cafes, and bars. Slightly east of Museumplein, you'll find the former working-class neighborhood De Pijp, now a bustling mixture of stylish cafes, shops and restaurants, not to mention the largest street market in the Netherlands, the Albert Cuyp Markt.

After years of gentrification, the Oud-West has traded its Wild West reputation for new life as one of the city's most up-and-coming neighborhoods. Bordered by the Vondelpark and Singelgracht canal, the area encompasses the Overtoom, a lively shopping street parallel to Vondelpark, as well as De Hallen, a tram depot turned creative hub and cultural hot spot, housing an eclectic mix of creative, media and fashion businesses, in addition to an indoor food court, library, movie theaters, cafes, upscale restaurants and the four-star Hotel de Hallen.

**History**

In the early 11th century, dikes were built to tame the Amstel River. By 1240, the small village of Aemsteledamme occupied the area that is now Dam Square. Fortunately positioned, Amsterdam grew and spread as it became a bustling port, charging tolls to ships and indulging in trade with many countries.

This trade, fostered by the famed Dutch East India Company, made the Netherlands rich. From the end of the 1500s until the beginning of the 1700s, Amsterdam experienced its Golden Age and became one of Europe's cultural and economic centers. Some of the greatest Dutch artists—most notably Rembrandt—lived during this period.

The spiderweb of canals and streets that gives the city such a distinctive design began to take form in the 1600s. One of the first cities to practice religious tolerance, it drew refugees, adventurers, artists, writers, intellectuals and statesmen from many countries. These immigrants, along with the hardy natives who claimed the land from the sea, have all had a lasting influence.
After World War II and the memories of hardship it incurred began to fade, the city grew quickly, attracting a youthful population. The 1960s were marked by lively counter-culture happenings organized by hippies and "Provos." Also, spurred by a perennial housing shortage, squatters took over deserted buildings in run-down parts of the city, and by the 1980s, clashes with police were becoming common.

Those rebels have grown up now, and redevelopment of the run-down city and harbor areas is well under way. Amsterdam has become increasingly diverse in recent decades as more immigrants, notably those of Moroccan and Turkish descent, have settled there with their families.

**Potpourri**

The Lloyd Hotel in the Eastern Docklands is a showcase for the best of Dutch design, from furniture by Marcel Wanders to breathtaking boiled-wool fabric by Claudy Jongstra.

At the Prostitue Information Center's minimuseum, run by ex-prostitute Mariska Majoor, visitors can see a mock-up of a historic brothel room.

There are 206 paintings by Van Gogh hanging on museum walls in the city compared with just 22 paintings by Rembrandt.

Amsterdam is also known as the Venice of the North, and it has more canals than the Italian city.

The movie *Ocean’s Twelve* was shot in and around the Hotel Pulitzer, the Kloveniersburgwal and Heiligeweg. A key scene was filmed in De Dampkring coffeeshop on the Handboogstraat.

Rembrandt had to leave his home and declare bankruptcy because the company that commissioned his painting *The Night Watch* was dissatisfied with it. The painting is now hailed as one of Rembrandt's masterpieces and can be seen at the Rijksmuseum.

Central Station is supported by 8,687 wooden stakes, which were pounded into three artificial islands built to support it.

All public bars and restaurants in Amsterdam are smoke-free: Coffee shops aren't quite sure whether the ban includes them or not. Currently, you can still smoke your (legal) joint inside, but only if it's 100% marijuana and not laced with tobacco. If you want to smoke a plain cigarette, you must go outside.

New York's Bowery district is named after the Dutch word for a farm, *bouwerij*, and Stuyvesant Street after Peter Stuyvesant, whose statue stands outside Amsterdam's West Indisch Huis.

**See & Do**

**Sightseeing**

The broad plaza outside Central Station is a good place to begin a tour—you're likely to end up there anyway at some point during your stay. A walk down Damrak will take you to Dam Square, site of the Royal Palace and National Monument. If you turn toward the National Monument and continue walking, you'll end up in the colorful Red Light District. This is the oldest part of the city and a neighborhood where quaintness mingles with sex. From there, you can make your way north to the Oude Kerk, the city's oldest church, or continue walking to the southeast and see the Rembrandthuis, the Portuguese Israeli Synagogue and the Jewish Historical Museum.
If you turn toward the Royal Palace at Dam Square and keep walking, you'll be headed in the general direction of the Anne Frank House on Prinsengracht. Also nearby is the Westerkerk, where Rembrandt is buried. The Jordaan, one of Amsterdam's most picturesque districts, is just beyond Prinsengracht. Other areas worth exploring are around Leidseplein, Rembrandtplein and Muntplein, near the Flower Market.

Amsterdam offers a wide range of museums documenting everything from the city's highest cultural achievements to its seediest underpinnings. The must-see museum is the Rijksmuseum, which contains famous old-master paintings, including *The Night Watch* by Rembrandt. Nearby is the excellent Van Gogh Museum.

The Stedelijk Museum is a major modern-art venue that showcases contemporary art alongside works of impressionism, fauvism, cubism and expressionism. At the other end of the spectrum are small private museums dedicated to everything from sex and drugs to rock 'n' roll, tulips, cheese, houseboats, torture, small purses and even cats.

Folks planning to take in many of the local attractions and institutions might consider purchasing a one-, two- or three-day I amsterdam City Card, which entitles holders to free public transportation, discounts for restaurants and attractions, a free canal-boat trip and admission to many museums. A 24-hour pass is 49 euros, a 48-hour pass is 59 euros, and a 72-hour pass is 69 euros. The pass is available from any of the Amsterdam Tourist and Convention Board's VVV offices, or you can order it online. http://www.iamsterdam.com/en-GB/experience/deals/i-amsterdam-city-card.

For those who love museums, the museumjaarkaart may also be worth purchasing. It grants free or reduced-fee admission to more than 400 museums (normally just the permanent collections) throughout the Netherlands (32 are in Amsterdam) and is available at participating museums at a cost of 54.95 euros (27.50 euros for children and young adults up to age 18). You can also order it online, but an administration and shipping fee of 4.95 euros is added to the price. A museumjaarkaart is valid for one year. http://www.museumkaart.nl.

**Historic Sites**

**ARCAM**

Prins Hendrikkade 600 (by Central Station)  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-620-4878  
[http://www.arcam.nl](http://www.arcam.nl)

The ARCAM is the Centre for Architecture in Amsterdam. Anyone interested in architecture and urban planning can consult its collection of documents. It holds exhibitions and provides information on interesting buildings and sites in Amsterdam.  

Tuesday-Sunday 1-5 pm. Admission is free.

**Dam Square**

Damrak (at the south end, in the center of the city)  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  

This is the site of the National Monument (honoring the dead of World War II), the Royal Palace, Nieuwe Kerk (the New Church, where King Willem-Alexander was crowned in 2013 after his mother, Queen Beatrix abdicated after a 33-year reign), Madame Tussauds and the NH Grand Hotel Krasnapolsky. It's a
lively meeting place for tourists, shoppers, businesspeople, street performers, artists and children feeding pigeons.

**Homomonument**

Westermarkt (beside the Westerkerk)  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
[http://www.homomonument.nl](http://www.homomonument.nl)

This is the world's first memorial to persecuted lesbians and gays. It's constructed from three pink-granite triangles that are reminders of the triangles of pink fabric that homosexuals were forced to wear in concentration camps during World War II. Friends and families of AIDS victims often place flowers at the foot of the monument.

**Koninklijk Paleis**

Dam Square  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-522-6161  
[http://www.paleisamsterdam.nl](http://www.paleisamsterdam.nl)

The 17th-century Royal Palace was originally Amsterdam's city hall. It became a royal palace by order of Louis Napoleon in 1808. The many impressive rooms shelter Empire-style furniture and valuable paintings by some of Rembrandt's most illustrious contemporaries, such as Govert Flinck and Ferdinand Bol.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. 10 euros adults.

**Oude Kerk**

Oudekerksplein 23  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-625-8284  
[http://www.oudekerk.nl](http://www.oudekerk.nl)

Dating back to the 14th century, this Gothic structure located in the heart of the Red Light District is Amsterdam's oldest church. The baroque, oak-encased Great Organ; dark wood, gilded ceiling; Renaissance stained-glass windows; and Lady Chapel have largely been preserved and are all worth a look. Rembrandt's first wife, Saskia, is buried there. The church houses exhibitions of modern art and photography.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-6 pm, Sunday 1-5:30 pm. 10 euros adults.

**The Begijnhof**

Begijnhof 30  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-622-1918  

This serene oasis in the heart of Amsterdam dates back to 1150, when a group of Catholic women banded together in a religious community that cared for the sick and educated the poor, using the Begijnhof as their sanctuary. More than nine centuries later, it retains its sanctified atmosphere and reputation as one of the city's most beautiful yet least known attractions, with a history that encompasses
the Miracle of Amsterdam and a few other scientifically inexplicable events. Although it's private property still occupied by single women, visitors are welcome in the peaceful inner courtyard. Daily masses, weekend weddings and baptisms are held in the chapel. A shop accessed via the chapel sells postcards, candles and religious books.

Daily 9 am-5 pm. Free.

**Westerkerk**

Prinsengracht 281
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-624-7766

[http://www.westerkerk.nl](http://www.westerkerk.nl)

This church boasts the tallest and most beautiful tower in Amsterdam (with spectacular views of the city) and contains the largest nave of any Dutch Protestant church. Rembrandt is buried there.

Monday-Friday 10 am-3 pm. Admission to the church is free. Admission to the tower costs 7.50 euros.

**Museums**

**Zaanse Schans**

Schansend 7
Zaandam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 075-681-0000

[http://www.zaanseschans.nl](http://www.zaanseschans.nl)

For a taste of traditional Holland, visit this open-air museum 10 mi/16 km northwest of Amsterdam. The picturesque village features architecture, crafts and trades the way they were in the 17th and 18th centuries, and you'll want to photograph the beautiful working windmills.

Windmills open daily 9 am-5 pm, though November-February most of the windmills are only open on Saturday and Sunday (paint mill De Kat and oil mill De Zoeker are only open March-October). Free admission, but there are separate fees for parking as well as for admission to certain buildings.

**Amsterdams Historisch Museum**

Kalverstraat 92 (with a second entrance at Sint Luciensteeg 27)
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-523-1822

[http://www.ahm.nl](http://www.ahm.nl)

Housed in a former orphanage, this museum painstakingly and artistically re-creates the life of the city from 1275 to World War II and beyond, with many special exhibits and movies linking the past and present.

Open daily 10 am-5 pm. 12 euros adults.

**Cobra Museum voor Moderne Kunst**

Sandbergplein 1
Amstelveen, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-547-5050
http://www.cobra-museum.nl
This building displays works by an international group of experimental artists who were part of the postwar revolutionary movement based in Copenhagen, Brussels and Amsterdam.

Tuesday-Sunday 11 am-5 pm. 9.50 euros adults.

Anne Frank Huis
Prinsengracht 263-267
Amsterdam, Netherlands
Phone: 020-556-7100
http://www.annefrank.org
This house is a stirring memorial to the famed, doomed diarist who hid with her family from the Nazis in this tiny annex in 1942-44. The small house and the exhibition space next door display sections of Frank's diary along with historical photographs and exhibits about racism and anti-Semitism. There's also a bookstore and cafe. Avoid the summer crowds by visiting after 7 pm.

Open April-October daily 9 am-9 pm (till 10 pm on Saturday and in July and August); November-March daily 9 am-7 pm (till 9 pm on Saturday). 9 euros adults.

Erotic Museum
Oudezijds Achterburgwal 54 (Red Light District)
Amsterdam, Netherlands
Phone: 020-627-8954
http://www.erotisch-museum.nl
This repository of all things sex-related is housed in a wonderful 18th-century building in the Red Light District. The saucy space exhibits erotic art and devices from different cultures and historical periods. Visitors younger than 18 must be accompanied by an adult guardian.

Monday-Thursday and Sunday 11 am-1 am, Friday and Saturday 11 am-2 am. 7 euros adults.

Foam Photography Museum
Keizersgracht 609
Amsterdam, Netherlands
Phone: 020-551-6500
http://www.foam.nl
Both classic and innovative photography are on show at this museum, as you follow a maze leading through three beautiful canal houses. Foam strives to be a center for photographers and regularly organizes discussion evenings. There's also a bookshop and a cafe.

Saturday-Wednesday 10 am-6 pm, Thursday and Friday 10 am-9 pm. 9.50 euros adults.

Hash, Marihuana & Hemp Museum
Oudezijdsachterburgwal 148 (Red Light District)
Amsterdam, Netherlands
Phone: 020-624-8926
http://www.hashmuseum.com
The displays distinguish various types of these versatile plants and show how to cultivate them.

Daily 10 am-10 pm. 9 euros adults.

**Hermitage Amsterdam**

Amstel 51  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-530-7488  
[http://www.hermitage.nl](http://www.hermitage.nl)

The Amsterdam branch of St. Petersburg's State Hermitage is located in the impressive and historic Amstelhof building near Waterlooplein. The Amstelhof was originally constructed in the late 17th century as a charitable nursing home for the elderly. Selections of Russian and European art are featured in the Hermitage. It stages two large-scale, temporary exhibitions each year.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. 15 euros adults.

**Het Schepvaart Museum**

Kattenburgerplein 1  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-523-2222  
[http://www.scheepvaartmuseum.nl](http://www.scheepvaartmuseum.nl)

This major maritime museum dates from 1656 and is housed in a former Dutch naval arsenal. It includes a full-scale replica of an 18th-century ship, with actors carrying out the crew's activities.

Daily 9 am-5 pm. 15 euros adults.

**Joods Historisch Museum**

Nieuwe Amstelstraat 1  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-531-0310  
[https://jck.nl/nl/locatie/joods-historisch-museum](https://jck.nl/nl/locatie/joods-historisch-museum)

The Jewish Historical Museum is located in the old Jewish Quarter in a complex of four restored synagogues from the 17th and 18th centuries and modern buildings. Inside are revered artifacts and chronicles of Jewish culture, religion and history in the Netherlands.

Daily 11 am-5 pm. 15 euros adults.

**Katten Kabinet**

Herengracht 497  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-626-9040  
[http://www.kattenkabinet.nl](http://www.kattenkabinet.nl)

This collection of paintings, sculpture and artifacts depicting cats is housed in a beautiful 17th-century canal house. There are pieces by Picasso and other famous artists as well as a gift shop. A fun stop for cat lovers, but anyone else may be bored.
Monday-Friday 10 am-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday noon-5 pm. 6 euros adults, 3 euros children ages 4-12.

**KIT Tropenmuseum**

Linnaeusstraat 2  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-568-8200  
[http://www.tropenmuseum.nl](http://www.tropenmuseum.nl)

This museum of the tropics is an ethnographic treasure-house, illuminating the daily lives of people in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America. There's also a special children's section called Tropenmuseum Junior.

Daily except Monday 10 am-5 pm. 12.50 euros adults, 8 euros children ages 4-17.

**Madame Tussauds**

Dam 20  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-522-1010  
[http://www.madametussauds.com](http://www.madametussauds.com)

Go to the wax museum for face-to-face encounters with famous people from the present and past, including U.S. President Barack Obama and Lady Gaga.

Open daily 10 am-7 pm, with occasional late openings. 22.50 euros adults.

**Museum Our Lord in the Attic**

Oudezijdsvoorburgwal 40  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-624-6604  
[http://www.opsolder.nl](http://www.opsolder.nl)

Previously known as Museum Amstelkring, this may well be one of Amsterdam's best-kept secrets. It is located in a private home built in 1661-63. The lower floors have been wonderfully preserved, but it's the upstairs that harbors something truly unique: A hidden church named Ons' Lieve Heer op Solder (Our Sweet Lord in the Attic), which was used by Dutch Catholics during the 17th century, when Amsterdam Calvinists banned Lutherans and Catholics from public worshipping.

During those times, Amsterdam had a lot of hidden churches, though they were not exactly a secret from the Calvinist authorities, who tolerated them. Not until 1795 did French occupation restore religious freedom to the city. The church has been beautifully preserved. The altarpiece shows a painting by 18th-century artist Jacob de Wit.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Sunday 1-5 pm. 10 euros adults.

**NEMO Science Center**

Oosterdok 2 (a short walk from Central Station)  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-531-3233
http://www.e-nemo.nl
This futuristic, hands-on science center features interactive exhibits about technology, industry, energy and other subjects. A roof terrace is open until 7 pm in summer. The top-floor self-service restaurant can be reached from the street by a pedestrian ramp, and it affords one of the best views of the city.

Tuesday-Sunday 10 am-5:30 pm. 15 euros adults.

**Rembrandthuis**

Jodenbreestraat 4
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-520-0400

[http://www.rembrandthuis.nl](http://www.rembrandthuis.nl)

This three-story house, where the artist lived 1639-58, is now a museum. It provides insight into Rembrandt’s life and holds an important collection of his etchings and drawings, as well as a fascinating series of self-portraits.

Daily 10 am-6 pm. 12.50 euros adults.

**Rijksmuseum**

Museumstraat 1
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-674-7000

[http://www.rijksmuseum.nl](http://www.rijksmuseum.nl)

This vast complex houses many of the greatest Dutch masterpieces. The museum offers works from the Middle Ages to the present, with artworks, historical objects and other items displayed within the context of both art and culture. Rembrandt’s *The Night Watch* is displayed with deserved reverence in its own specially designed gallery at the building’s center.

Daily 9 am-5 pm. 17.50 euros adults.

**Rijksmuseum Amsterdam Schiphol**

Museumstraat 1
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 20-674-7000

[https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en](https://www.rijksmuseum.nl/en)

This exhibition space, formerly located in Schiphol Airport, is temporarily closed while it moves to a new location. It is expected to reopen in the summer of 2016.

17.50 euros adults.

**Stedelijk Museum**

Museumplein 10
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-573-2911

[http://www.stedelijk.nl](http://www.stedelijk.nl)
You’ll see a wide-ranging collection of modern Dutch paintings at the city’s most important venue for contemporary art exhibitions. Post-World War II artists include De Kooning, Newman, Ryman, Judd, Stella, Lichtenstein, Warhol, Nauman, Middleton, Dibbets, Kiefer, Polke, Merz and Kounellis. The Stedelijk also has a fine collection of pre-World War II works from Cezanne, Picasso, Matisse and Chagall.

Daily 10 am-6 pm, Thursday till 10 pm. 15 euros adults.

**Van Gogh Museum**

Paulus Potterstraat 7
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-570-5200

[http://www.vangoghmuseum.nl](http://www.vangoghmuseum.nl)

Hundreds of the artist’s paintings and drawings on permanent display, including some of his most famous works: *Sunflowers*, *Irises* and *The Bedroom*. There is also a collection of work by his contemporaries, such as Claude Monet, Henri Toulouse-Lautrec and Paul Gauguin. Also on display are the famed letters between Vincent Van Gogh and his younger brother Theo.

Open daily 10 am-5 pm (until 10 pm on Friday). 17 euros adults.

**Woonbootmuseum**

Prinsengracht 296 K
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-427-0750

[http://www.houseboatmuseum.nl](http://www.houseboatmuseum.nl)

The Houseboat Museum depicts life on the 2,000 boats lining the canals. The *Hendrika Maria* (1914) is typical of the industrial river barges that were rebuilt as furnished homes. There’s a slide show and models of other boats.

Open daily 11 am-5 pm. Closed most of January. 4.50 euros adults.

**Neighborhoods & Districts**

**Amsterdam North (Noord)**

A free GVB ferry behind Central Station takes people and bicycles across the River Ij to NDSM Wharf and Amsterdam-Noord. What was a shipyard in the 1980s is now an artsy bohemian community where artist ateliers, creative initiatives and trendy businesses such as music channel MTV coexist alongside edgy nightclubs, waterfront cafes and historic villages with traditional Dutch farmhouses. The Ij-Hallen, Europe’s largest flea market, is held monthly in Noord. Ferries run several times an hour, seven days a week.

**Centrum**

This is the busy heart of the city, encompassing Leidseplein, Dam Square and Central Station. Many nice hotels line the main canals—Singel, Herengracht, Keizersgracht and Prinsengracht—that cut through the area. The popular Leidseplein is full of cafes, theaters, nightclubs, restaurants and bars. The flower market is located on the Singel, just off Leidsestraat. The Rembrandtplein area is where the city’s main late-night spots and dance clubs are located. Dam Square and surrounding streets are a main shopping area. There is a large concentration of “coffee shops” around the Central Station area, where marijuana
and hashish are sold and smoked. These smoking cafes also exist all over the city, with the possible exception of the Oud Zuid neighborhood.

**De Pijp**

Sometimes called the *Quartier Latin* (Latin Quarter), De Pijp is best known for the Albert Cuypmarkt, Holland's largest street market, lined with some 260 stands selling fresh fruit and vegetables, fish, flowers, fabrics, clothing, accessories and trinkets. An Amsterdam institution since 1905, the market is the centerpiece of this former working-class neighborhood just outside the busy city center. Along Albert Cuypstraat and Ferdinand Bolstraat, De Pijp's main streets, Syrian, Moroccan and Surinamese restaurants coexist alongside typical Dutch pubs, Islamic butchers and Turkish delicatessens, reflecting the area's multicultural mix.

**Oostelijk Havengebied**

Amsterdam, Netherlands


The area known as Eastern Docklands (between Central Station and Zeeburg Island) is a hive of activity. It's an architectural showpiece that some say is destined to become the future city center. Spectacular modern buildings line the KNSM and Java islands and its south axis, along with accompanying trendy boutiques and restaurants.

**Oud-West**

Bordered by the Singelgracht canal and Vondelpark, Amsterdam's Oud-West has shed its Wild West image for a new reputation as one of the city's most up-and-coming neighborhoods. After a decade of gentrification, the area is now a multicultural blend of residential neighborhoods, family-friendly businesses, busy shopping streets and such architectural gems as the 19th-century *Zenvenlandenhuizen* (Houses of Seven Countries, each representing a different architectural style) on Roemer Visscherstraat, and the neoclassical *Hollandsche Manege*, Holland's oldest equestrian center. De Hallen, a tram depot turned cultural hot spot, is now a big Oud-West draw with its indoor food court, movie theaters, cafes, library, four-star Hotel de Hallen, and a host of creative, media and fashion businesses.

**Oud Zuid**

The Old South district of Amsterdam is one of the cultural hubs of the city, mainly because it contains the wonderful Museumplein, an open grassy area with the Rijksmuseum, the Van Gogh Museum and the Concertgebouw on its edges. This neighborhood contains the city's most elegant residential area. Two of the most exclusive shopping streets, the P.C. Hooftstraat and Beethovenstraat, are located there, as well as many trendy brasseries and restaurants. In the more westerly part of the neighborhood is Vondelpark, the city's largest green area.

**Red Light District**

Amsterdam, Netherlands


For better or worse, this is the place that many outsiders associate with Amsterdam. It's also the oldest part of the city and is known as De Wallen because the old city walls were located there. This crowded, colorful neighborhood draws tourists by the thousands with its proliferation of sex shops and dens along narrow streets and canals. Prostitutes pose in illuminated windows, exhibiting their wares, as would-be customers, backpackers, strolling couples and travelers of all ages gape. (When the window shade is down, it means the woman of the house is engaged in business.) The experience is nothing short of surreal.
One way to explore the buildings and monuments of the district is to join a guided tour. If you're visiting De Wallen out of simple curiosity, you might feel more comfortable going during the day, though the night is when the real crowds show up. Taking pictures is taboo and could prove dangerous—at the least you'll risk your camera being thrown into the murky canal, and if you are really unlucky you may still be attached to it. Ignore the street drug dealers. If you go in the evening, avoid deserted streets. There are also plenty of eateries and bars to nourish the tired spectator. Some of the best Chinese and Thai restaurants are located in Amsterdam's Chinatown, which occupies a small area of the Red Light District around the Zeedijk and Geldersekade.

A plan called Project 1012 (named after the local area code) was launched in 2007 to clean up the neighborhood. The city is buying up windows and plans to replace them with galleries, artists' workshops, restaurants and high-end bars. Some windows already display fashion, but the plan to turn the whole district into a shopping paradise has been met with major protests from locals and tourists alike.

To reach the Red Light District, head east from Dam Square.

The Jordaan

A onetime working-class and immigrant area, the Jordaan has been gradually gentrified into a trendy quarter of galleries, boutiques, cafes and antiques shops. Located northwest of Dam Square and 10 minutes from Leidseplein, the Jordaan is a labyrinth of twisting alleys and streets—confounding to mapmakers, but pleasing to bohemians and culture vultures. It's quieter than the city center and a nice place to stroll.

Some locals complain about the new sheen on the classic old buildings and the pricing-out of the original inhabitants. Nevertheless, the double-edged sword of urban revitalization has carved out a tourist-friendly neighborhood whose canals and narrow streets make it one of the most picturesque in Europe. Many of the houses are topped by gable stones, which (before the advent of numbered addresses) were carved or painted with pictures representing the occupations of their inhabitants.

Between a number of the buildings are hofjes, small private gardens that delight the eye and nose in the spring. Unfortunately, most of the gardens are hidden from the street and are accessible only by doors on the sidewalk. These are generally locked, but some residents keep theirs open as a consideration to visitors. A special Mee in Mokum walking tour of the Jordaan is available through Gilde Amsterdam (http://www.gildeamsterdam.nl). It is probably the best way to view these courtyards. Guides also explain many of the interesting gable stones. Many private canal gardens are open to the public the third weekend in June, during Open Garden Days.

Parks & Gardens

Amsterdamse Bos (Amsterdam Forest)

Bosbaanweg 5
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Phone: 020-545-6100

http://www.amsterdamsebos.nl

Fitness fanatics and nature lovers have it all at the Amsterdamse Bos, 1,000 acres/405 hectares of jogging and walking routes, lakes, waterways, sport fields, scenic bridges and canopied paths. There's also a climbing park, organic goat farm, summer theater, horseback riding, camping, bike and canoe rentals, and several restaurants.
Hortus Botanicus

Plantage Middenlaan 2a (Tram 9 or 14 from Central Station)
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Phone: 020-625-9021
http://www.dehortus.nl

With more than 4,000 species of plants from different climates, the city's botanical garden is one of the world's oldest collections of shrubs, trees, perennials and flowering bulbs. Though it's rather small, it's conveniently located between the Joods Historisch Museum and Artis Zoo. Established in 1638, the Hortus offers regular art exhibitions, such as sculpture gardens and other plant-related art. Its butterfly house is nothing short of spectacular. The Orangerie, a historical monument, houses a cafe with one of the loveliest terrace views in Amsterdam.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. 8.50 euros adults, 5 euros students, 4.50 euros children ages 5-14.

Vondelpark

Vondelpark
Amsterdam, Netherlands

http://www.hetvondelpark.net

A few blocks west of the Rijksmuseum and south of Leidseplein, this bustling park has placid ponds and meandering paths that are popular with joggers. During the 1960s, this was a famous meeting place for hippies from all over the world, and there's still lots of free, youth-oriented entertainment on Saturday afternoons in summer. Just about any nice day brings out plenty of joggers, walkers, skaters, musicians, jugglers, Frisbee-throwers, dog-walkers, ice-cream vendors and all sorts of other sun-seeking citizens. The park also has a rose garden, a statue of Dutch poet Joost van den Vondel, a large outdoor sculpture by Picasso and a few cafes and refreshment stands. An open-air theater hosts free summer programs, while free concerts are held at the park's bandstand.

Westerpark

(Accessible via Haarlemplein or tram 10.)
Amsterdam, Netherlands

http://www.westergasfabriek.nl

While it takes a back seat to Vondelpark, this expansive green space on the city's west side boasts acres/hectares of grassy fields, fountains, ponds, an art-house cinema (Het Ketelhuis) and an events stage. It was originally established in 1891 as a small neighborhood park that served residential Westerpark, a working-class area off the road to Haarlem, the Haarlammerweg. In 1989, the dilapidated red buildings of the city's municipal gas works were declared industrial monuments and remodeled into the Culture Park Western Gas Factory (Cultuurpark Westergasfabriek), now an avant-garde venue that bisects Westerpark, used for markets and special events throughout the year.

(Accessible via Haarlemplein or tram 10.) Phone 020-586-0710.

Wineries, Breweries & Distilleries

Brouwerij de Prael

Oudezijdsvoorburgwal 30
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Phone: 020-408-4470
This working microbrewery in the heart of Amsterdam’s Red Light District is set in a 17th-century canal house where Golden Age auctions were once held. Transformed in 2002 into a beer tasting room, shop and brewery, it now boasts a modern plant that keeps beer history alive using centuries-old brewing techniques that predate the Industrial Age. More than a half-dozen craft beers named after iconic Dutch singers are brewed on-site, in addition to seasonal and special-edition brews. A menu of beer-inspired selections includes Dutch specialties such as bitterballen, croquettes, and local cheese and sausages. Beer packages featuring craft brews as well as T-shirts, beer-based products and beer books are available in the shop, open daily noon-5 pm.

Tasting room open Tuesday and Wednesday noon-midnight, Thursday-Saturday noon-1 am, Sunday noon-11 pm; Brewery open Monday-Friday 9 am-5 pm.

**Brouwerij ‘t IJ**

Funenkade 7
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Phone: 020-528-6237

http://www.brouwerijhetij.nl/homepage-nl/home

Marked by a tall windmill rising from the skyline on Amsterdam’s east side, this small brewery and pub offers a large selection of unfiltered, nonpasteurized beers and seasonal offerings, all certified organic and made on-site. Opened in 1985 by former musician Kaspar Peterson, it boasts a large outdoor terrace where you can enjoy your brew with peanuts, boiled eggs, local cheese, salami and ossenworst. An adjacent pub serves more substantial meals, as well as drinks and snacks.

Daily 2-8 pm.

**Heineken Experience**

Stadhouderskade 78
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Phone: 020-523-9222

http://www.heinekenexperience.com

Though Heineken has stopped production at this former brewery, you can still take a tour of the old factory and learn how beer is made. The renovated brewery features a mini-brewery, the Brew U simulator, a tasting bar and the “Stable Walk,” where visitors can see Heineken’s iconic Shire horses. A visit takes approximately 90 minutes, and two drinks are included. Visitors younger than 18 must be accompanied by an adult.

Monday-Thursday 11 am-7:30 pm, Friday-Sunday 10:30 am-9 pm. July and August Daily 10:30 am-9 pm. 18 euros adults, 12.50 euros children ages 8-15.

**Recreation**

Recreation in Amsterdam focuses largely around the city's parks. Walking, jogging, in-line skating and horseback riding are all available. Bicycling is a common mode of transportation, though you may want to practice in Vondelpark or a smaller neighborhood park before you hit the streets. Helmets are available for rent, but are not required and are rarely worn by locals.
Canal bikes are a wonderful way to explore Amsterdam—without the hassles of traffic lights and detours. Choosing your own route is part of the fun. Canal bikes can be rented from major tourist spots, such as the main train stations and museums. A wide variety of traditional sailing vessels can also be hired for use, whereas less experienced seadogs can opt for a kayak, rowboat, canoe or motorboat. A security deposit and ID are usually required to rent aqueous modes of transport. The season runs April-October.

**Bicycling**

Cycling is not only a popular pastime, it's also a good way to get around the city. You can rent bikes from a number of companies throughout the city. Vondelpark, just west of Leidseplein, and Amsterdamse Bos, a forest planted as a public-works project, are both good spots to cycle. Another pleasant bike route is along the Amstel River, going south to Ouderkerk.

**Damstraat Rent-A-Bike**

Damstraat 20-22  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-625-5029  
[http://www.bikes.nl](http://www.bikes.nl)  
Daily 9 am-6 pm. From 6.75 euros for three hours or 9.40 euros for 24 hours.

**MacBike**

Central Station Oost, Stationsplein 5  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-620-0985  
[http://www.macbike.nl](http://www.macbike.nl)  
Locations in central Amsterdam include Central Station (Stationsplein 5), Leidseplein (Weteringschans 2), Overtoom 45, Oosterdokskade 149 and Waterlooplein 199.  
Daily 9 am-5:45 pm. From 7.50 euros.

**Mike’s Bike Tours**

Kerkstraat 134  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 20-622-7970  
[http://www.mikesbiketoursamsterdam.com](http://www.mikesbiketoursamsterdam.com)  
Rentals and tours daily, year-round (except 23-29 December). Separate tours cover Centrum, the Harbor area, Red Light District and the countryside surrounding Amsterdam.  
Daily March-October 9 am-6 pm; November-February 10 am-6 pm. Adult tour prices start at 20 euros for two hours.

**Hiking & Walking**

The Amsterdamse Bos is a popular spot for walking and hiking. To get there from Central Station or Leidseplein, take Bus 170 or 172. Exit at the stop for Kalfjeslaan/Amstelveenseweg.
Shopping

The Dutch have always been great traders, and in Amsterdam, shoppers are spoiled by the enormous diversity of shops. Leidsestraat, Kalverstraat, Nieuwendijk and Damrak are the classic shopping routes where the department stores, boutiques and souvenirs are concentrated. The more exclusive shops—international fashion houses, boutiques, jewelers and exclusive shoe shops—are mainly along Van Baerlestraat, P.C. Hooftstraat and Rokin.

Try exploring the narrow streets between the canals, which are crammed with unexpected little shops. The best area is the Negen Straatjes (Nine Streets), which forms a grid connecting the three main canals in the Western Canal Belt, south of Radhuisstraat. There you'll find hundreds of delightful places to shop and sip a beer or coffee.

The Jordaan district has an old-time atmosphere, with narrow streets and quaint shops. Haarlemmerstraat, near Central Station, has come into its own with fashionable boutiques, foodie shops and restaurants. For a shopping mall, head to Kalvertoren on Kalverstraat or Magna Plaza near Dam Square.

No trip to Amsterdam is complete without a visit to the Flower Market. The Albert Cuyp Markt, Waterlooplein flea market and Noordermarkt, where there's a farmers market every Saturday, offer old-world charm, and you can also find fun souvenirs and gifts to take home.

Amsterdam is also a center of the diamond trade, and not surprisingly, prices are often more reasonable there than elsewhere. Guided tours of diamond workshops let you see (usually fairly small) diamonds being cut and polished as they have been for centuries.

If shopping for cheeses or wines, keep in mind that some shops regularly set aside times for wine or cheese tastings.

**Shopping Hours:** Regular shopping hours are Monday 1-6 pm; Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9 am-6 pm; Thursday 9 am-9 pm; Saturday 9 am-5 pm; Sunday noon-5 pm. Large supermarkets stay open till 8 pm daily.

**Department Stores**

**De Bijenkorf**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dam 1</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Amsterdam, Netherlands</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Phone:</strong> 0800-0818</td>
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<tr>
<td><a href="http://www.bijenkorf.nl">http://www.bijenkorf.nl</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Amsterdam's best luxury department store overlooks the Dam and the Royal Palace. All the international cosmetic houses are represented in the center section of the ground floor. On the upper floors, you'll find everything from furniture to anoraks.

Sunday and Monday 11 am-9 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-9 pm.
### HEMA

Nieuwendijk 174-176  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-311-4800  
[http://www.hema.nl](http://www.hema.nl)

This Dutch chain with 11 stores around Amsterdam is known for quality and cool design at low prices. Many locations have inexpensive cafeterias. HEMA sells clothing, toys, tools, cosmetics, paper goods and household wares. In the cheese section, you can buy pungent smoked sausage (*worst*), which is served hot from a large pot.

Open Monday-Saturday 9 am-7 pm (until 9 pm on Thursday), Sunday 11 am-6 pm.

### Galleries

#### Glasgalerie Kuhler

Prinsengracht 134  
Amsterdam, Netherlands

This gallery specializes in studio-glass works, particularly by French and German artists.

Open Wednesday-Saturday noon-5 pm and by appointment.

#### Jaski Art Gallery

Nieuwe Spiegelstraat 29  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-620-3939  
[http://www.jaski.nl](http://www.jaski.nl)

Specializing in Dutch contemporary art, Jaski has an emphasis on the CoBrA movement (Copenhagen, Brussels and Amsterdam).

Daily noon-6 pm.

### Markets

#### Albert Cuyp Markt

Albert Cuypstraat (at Ferdinand Bolstraat)  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
[http://albertcuyp-markt.amsterdam](http://albertcuyp-markt.amsterdam)

This is the Netherlands' largest street market and a multicultural experience. All types of food, clothing, textiles, plants and flowers.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-5 pm.

#### Bloemenmarkt

Singel  
Amsterdam, Netherlands

This famous flower market is on a row of barges moored permanently on the Singel, between Muntplein and Koningsplein. When the tulips are not blooming, it sells tulip bulbs, as well as other bulbs, fresh
flowers and plants, and souvenirs. Even if you don't intend to buy anything, go to enjoy the colors and fragrances.

Open Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-5:30 pm, Sunday 11 am-5:30 pm.

**Noordermarkt**

Noordermarkt  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
[http://www.noordermarkt-amsterdam.nl](http://www.noordermarkt-amsterdam.nl)

This general goods and food market takes place around the old wood-and-stone Noorderkerk (North Church).

Saturday 9 am-5 pm.

**Postzegelmarkt**

Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  

This outdoor stamp market is held along Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal behind the Amsterdam Historisch Museum.

Open Wednesday and Sunday 10 am-4 pm.

**Spui Market**

Spuiplein  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  

This outdoor book market takes place on Spuiplein. Old posters, prints and maps are sold at the art market held in the same location.

Book market Friday 10 am-6 pm. Art market Sunday 10 am-6 pm March-December (depending on the weather).

**Ten Kate Markt**

Ten Katestraat 14  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
[http://www.detenkatemarkt.nl](http://www.detenkatemarkt.nl)

This neighborhood market in the Oud-West serves locals with flowers, cheese, wine, baby items, clothing, vegetables, fruit and knickknacks.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm.

**Waterlooplein**

Waterlooplein 2  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-552-4074  
[http://www.waterloopleinmarkt.nl](http://www.waterloopleinmarkt.nl)
This well-known outdoor flea market is worth the time to browse through. You can find everything from cheap and cheerful clothes and leather goods to tourist-tacky, antiques and downright junk.

Open Monday-Saturday 9 am-6 pm.

Shopping Areas

De 9 Straatjes

Amsterdam, Netherlands

http://www.theninesstreets.com

This area called the "nine little streets" between Radhuisstraat and Leidenstraat is full of quirky shops, with narrow streets reminiscent of a bygone age. You'll find crafts, fashion, jewelry, food and much more, as well as plenty of enticing coffee shops, while enjoying the medieval architecture.

Haarlemmerstraat

Haarlemmerstraat (west from Central Station)

Amsterdam, Netherlands

This street offers many one-of-a-kind stores and trendy brasseries and restaurants.

Kalvertoren

Singel 457 (located next to the Munttoren and Bloemenmarkt)

Amsterdam, Netherlands

http://www.kalvertoren.nl

This shopping center has about 30 stores, specialty shops and restaurants. Its stairs, escalator and glass elevator take visitors to a cafe on the top floor for a good view of the entire city.

Shop hours are generally Monday 11 am-6:30 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-6:30 pm (Thursday till 9 pm), Sunday noon-6:30 pm.

Magna Plaza

Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal 182 (at Raadhuisstraat, just behind Dam Square)

Amsterdam, Netherlands

http://www.magnaplaza.nl

Once the main post office, this building has been beautifully restored and converted into a striking indoor shopping complex with lots of specialty shops.

Open Monday 11 am-7 pm; Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-7 pm (Thursday till 9 pm); Sunday noon-7 pm.

Nieuwespiegelstraat

Amsterdam, Netherlands

http://www.nieuwespiegelstraat.com

This street is the heart of Amsterdam's art and antiques trade, and there are many and varied galleries to browse. Some are long-established; others have changed hands frequently.
The Jordaan

Jordaan (just across the canal from the Anne Frank Huis, a six-minute walk west of Dam Square) 
Amsterdam, Netherlands

An atmosphere all its own, the Jordaan has narrow streets, picturesque canals and quaint little shops—some housed in 17th-century buildings. Second-hand shops and trendy boutiques make it a haven for students and artists. Many of the antiques dealers in the area specialize in art-nouveau and art-deco items and will arrange shipping abroad for antique furniture. Be sure to visit the antiques market Antiekcentrum Amsterdam on the Elandsgracht. The Jordaan is also a tempting route for a stroll.

Specialty Stores

Amsterdam Watch Company
Reesstraat 3 
Amsterdam, Netherlands 
**Phone:** 020-389-2789 
**[http://www.amsterdamwatchcompany.nl](http://www.amsterdamwatchcompany.nl)**

Fascinating collection of restored vintage watches. Some brands are hard to find anywhere else.

Tuesday-Friday 11 am-6 pm, Saturday 11-5 pm.

Brilmuseum

Gasthuismolensteeg 7 
Amsterdam, Netherlands 
**Phone:** 020-421-2414 
**[http://www.brilmuseumamsterdam.nl](http://www.brilmuseumamsterdam.nl)**

This store sells eyeglass frames that range from the traditional to the truly bizarre. There's also a museumlike display devoted to the history of eyewear.

Wednesday-Friday 11:30 am-5:30 pm, Saturday 11:30 am-5 pm.

Condomerie

Warmoesstraat 141 
Amsterdam, Netherlands 
**Phone:** 020-627-4174 
**[http://www.condomerie.com](http://www.condomerie.com)**

This shop located at the border of the Red Light District claims to be the oldest specialized condom shop in the world, and it does have interesting stories to tell about the condom trade in the 18th century, when less affluent clients needed to rely on washed second-hand condoms made of lambs' bladders and ribbons. Charles Goodyear ended that misery in 1839 with processed natural rubber. Progress never looked better than in this shop with its vast assortment from super-fine to super-funny to super-flashy. The philosophy there certainly is not "one size fits all."

Monday-Saturday 11 am-6 pm, Sunday 1-5 pm.
Copenhagen Kralen
Rozengracht 54
Amsterdam, Netherlands
**Phone:** 020-624-3681
[http://www.copenhagenbeads.nl](http://www.copenhagenbeads.nl)
Beads of any size and made of any material you can imagine. The workshop offers beading classes in the evening for groups of six or more (15 euros per person).
Monday 1-6 pm, Tuesday-Friday 10 am-6 pm, Saturday 10 am-5 pm.

Coster Diamonds
Paulus Potterstraat 2-8 (near the Rijksmuseum)
Amsterdam, Netherlands
**Phone:** 020-305-5555
[http://www.costerdiamonds.com](http://www.costerdiamonds.com)
Diamonds, diamonds, diamonds. Walk in and join a free tour, but if you want to buy something custom-made, an appointment is needed.
Daily 9 am-5 pm.

De Kaaskamer van Amsterdam
Runstraat 7
Amsterdam, Netherlands
**Phone:** 020-623-3483
[http://www.kaaskamer.nl](http://www.kaaskamer.nl)
Say cheese! This is one of Amsterdam's best places to buy cheese. It stocks about 400 varieties from all over Europe and you are invited to sample for free to your heart's content. Some products come in interesting colors. *Commissiekaas* is orange, *griene tsiis* is green.
Monday noon-6 pm, Tuesday-Friday 9 am-6 pm, Saturday 9 am-5 pm, Sunday noon-5:30 pm.

Gallery KIS
Paleisstraat 107
Amsterdam, Netherlands
**Phone:** 020-620-9760
Showroom for craft design (furniture and objects) made by emerging Dutch and European designers. The furniture and lamps are truly unique, and much of it is handmade. The quality is high but often affordable, since the gallery only takes a small commission. Open Wednesday-Sunday noon-6 pm.

H.J. Van de Kerkhof
Elandsgracht 43a
Amsterdam, Netherlands
**Phone:** 020-623-4084
[http://www.kerkhofpassementen.com](http://www.kerkhofpassementen.com)
A favorite shop of clothing designers, H.J. Van de Kerkhof stocks an extensive collection of trims, tassels, ribbons, laces and other accoutrements of fancy dress.

Tuesday-Friday 11 am-5 pm.

**Hogendoorn & Kaufman**

Rokin 124
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-638-2736
[http://www.hogendoorn-kaufman.com](http://www.hogendoorn-kaufman.com)

This store offers the finest names in crystal and porcelain, with a wide selection of Royal Delft and Makkum. Unique limited editions are available.

Open Monday-Saturday 10 am-6 pm, Sunday noon-6 pm.

**Jacob Hooy**

Kloveniersburgwal 12
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-624-3041
[http://www.jacobhooy.nl](http://www.jacobhooy.nl)

Since 1743, this shop has been dealing in all sorts of fancy herbs, spices and teas. Worth visiting to see the old-time interior even if you're not going to buy anything, but ask beforehand if you want to take pictures.

Open Monday 1-6 pm, Tuesday-Friday 10 am-6 pm, Saturday 10 am-5 pm.

**Laura Dols**

Wolvenstraat 7
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-624-9066
[http://www.lauradols.nl](http://www.lauradols.nl)

If you love to dress like a Hollywood star of the 1950s, this vintage store will fascinate you. Its dresses are glamorous, elegant and colorful, and many of them quite affordable. Great choice of bags and accessories, too.

Open Monday-Saturday 11 am-6 pm (until 7 pm on Thursday), Sunday noon-6 pm.

**Mechanisch Speelgoed**

Westerstraat 67 HS
Amsterdam, Netherlands

A paradise for kids, this tiny old-fashioned shop in the Jordaan is crammed with traditional toys, from tin drums to teddy bears to snow globes.

Open Monday-Friday 10 am-6 pm, Saturday 10 am-5 pm.
Dutch travel journalist and TV host Floortje Dessing believes that the future of fashion lies in a reconciliation between nature and industry. She indeed proves that sustainable fashion can look good and feel great. Floortje sells brands that support fair trade and produce environmentally friendly clothing, from elegant blouses to rugged jeans and biodegradable shoes. The beautiful belts, bags and wallets from Elvis & Kresse are made of old fire hoses, and the fashion label Boeji specializes in jackets, shoes and bags made from old ship sails.

Open Monday noon-7 pm, Tuesday-Friday 10:30 am-7 pm, Saturday 10 am-6 pm, Sunday noon-6 pm.

This fine shop sells delicious handmade chocolates. There are two other locations, at Singel 184 and Oudekerksplein 17.

Monday noon-6 pm, Tuesday-Saturday 9 am-6 pm, Sunday noon-6 pm.

Fancy shoes and bags sold in a shop with a spectacular, futuristic space-ship design and sophisticated ambient lighting. Barbarellas of the 21st century will feel right at home there, so take your camera. This shop is part of a chain of four stores in Amsterdam.

Monday and Sunday noon-6 pm, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 10 am-6 pm, Thursday 10 am-9 pm.

Probably the country's best souvenir shop, located in the Passenger Terminal. The choice of contemporary Dutch design is mind-blowing.

Open daily 10 am-7 pm (closes at 6 pm 22 December to mid-March).
Wegewijs Kaas
Rozengracht 32 (trams 13, 14 and 17)
Amsterdam, Netherlands
Phone: 020-624-4093
http://www.wegewijs.nl
Choose from hundreds of different cheeses, domestic and foreign, made from goat, sheep and cow milk.
Open Monday-Friday 8:30 am-6 pm, Saturday 9 am-5 pm.

Dining
Dining Overview
Practically every cuisine in the world can be found in Amsterdam, from sophisticated French fare to the renowned Indonesian rijsttafel. Enjoy an Argentinean steak in a decor that evokes the vast pampas, dine on a pleasure boat cruising the canals, stop at any of the inexpensive Middle Eastern grills that seem to be on every other block, or try one of the small Chinese restaurants lining the Zeedijk and its many cross streets.

Smoking is banned in public places in Amsterdam, including restaurants. However, restaurants may designate an area, completely closed off from the rest of the premises, as a smoking area. Service is not provided in these areas, and you'll need to return to the bar to buy drinks.

At least once, you should try a paper cone of french fries served with mayonnaise, peanut-butter satay sauce or any of an ever-increasing number of exotic condiments. The best french fries are called vlaamse frites (Flemish fries). Other Dutch specialties reflect the locals' close relationship with the sea, such as smoked eel and raw or pickled herring (which is usually eaten whole with chopped onions and gherkins).

In winter, locals savor hearty meals of mashed potatoes combined with vegetables such as endive, cabbage, onions and carrots (stamppot) topped with delicious smoked sausage (rookworst). Another cold-weather favorite is snert (also called erwtensoep), a thick pea soup usually served with sausage.

Make a meal of the pannenkoeken, large Dutch pancakes with bacon, cheese, apples or other ingredients mixed into the batter; or poffertjes, tiny pancakes with powdered sugar. Cafes often serve a plate of three fried eggs with ham or cheese, known as an uitsmijter. The Dutch usually have it for lunch, although it also makes an excellent breakfast.

The hearty Dutch breakfast consists of a selection of breads, local cheeses, sliced meats, butter and chocolate sprinkles called hagelslag and jam. Lunch is generally a snack, with dinner being the main meal, eaten between 6 and 8 pm. Most restaurant kitchens close by 10 pm. Reservations are advisable because restaurants are often small and may be crowded during peak periods.

The Dutch are famous for their gin (jenever) and beer (bier). A popular winter drink is a rich herbal liqueur called Beerenburg. Bottled imported wines are expensive, but a carafe of house wine is of good quality for the most part. The Dutch drink their coffee strong, usually with cream and sugar, or opt for a koffie verkeerd, the Dutch version of a latte, that contains more milk than coffee. Tea is normally taken weak and without milk.
Expect to pay within these general guidelines, based on the cost of a dinner for one, not including drinks, tax, tip and service charge: $ = less than 10 euros; $$ = 10 euros-25 euros; $$$ = 26 euros-50 euros; and $$$$ = more than 50 euros.

**Local & Regional**

**De Kas**

Kamerlingh Onneslaan 3  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-462-4562  
[http://www.restaurantdekas.nl/home](http://www.restaurantdekas.nl/home)

This special-occasion restaurant grows its own herbs and vegetables in nearby farmland as well as greenhouses formerly owned by the Amsterdam Municipal Nursey. A daily fixed menu is based on the harvest, supplemented with ingredients from local suppliers, and served in the eight-meter-high main greenhouse. In summer, lunch and pre-dinner drinks are served outside on the herb garden patio.

Monday-Friday for lunch and dinner, Saturday for dinner only. $$$$$. Most major credit cards.

**d’Vijff Vlieghen**

Spuistraat 294-302  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-530-4060  
[http://www.thefiveflies.com](http://www.thefiveflies.com)

This temple of “new Dutch cuisine” was created by the famous art dealer Nicolaas Kroese, who combined five buildings (the “five flies”) to create a culinary art space that is unique in Amsterdam. The history of this restaurant is much older though—a tavern has existed there since 1627. The rooms are decorated with antiques, and the Rembrandt room even has original etchings by Rembrandt. The French-influenced Dutch food is made, as much as possible, using organic ingredients, and the exotic recipes, vegetables, herbs and spices have been brought back by Dutch sailors.

Daily 6 pm-10 pm. Reservations required. $$$$. Most major credit cards.

**Haesje Claes**

Spuistraat 273-275  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-624-9998  
[http://www.haesjeclaes.nl](http://www.haesjeclaes.nl)

At this restaurant, you can sup on Dutch specialties, such as pea soup with sausages and salted herring or *stamppot* (potato and vegetable mash), while enjoying the traditionally decorated Dutch interior. Nearby is the Amsterdam Historical Museum, original site of a public orphanage founded by the restaurant's namesake.

Daily for lunch and dinner. $$-$$$$. Most major credit cards.
Moeders
Rozengracht 251
Amsterdam, Netherlands
Phone: 020-626-7957
http://www.moeders.com
Serving possibly the best Dutch food in Amsterdam, this local favorite is jammed with photos of past guests’ mothers. Eclectic table settings add to the informal vibe, and outdoor seating is possible when the weather is nice.

Monday-Friday 5 pm-midnight, Saturday and Sunday noon-midnight. Reservations recommended. $$$$.
Most major credit cards.

Restaurant het Zwaantje
Berenstraat 12
Amsterdam, Netherlands
Phone: 020-623-2373
http://www.zwaantje.demon.nl
Dutch cooking, and the food is good. Local specialties as erwtensoep (pea soup), fried or boiled mussels, and suddervlees (stewing steak).

Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. $$-$$$.
Most major credit cards.

The College Hotel Restaurant
Roelof Hartstraat 1
Amsterdam, Netherlands
Phone: 020-571-1511
http://www.thecollegehotel.com
Revives Dutch cuisine from yesteryear. The results are innovative and surprisingly palate-pleasing; think North Sea aquarium soup and veal-and-mackerel with quail eggs.

Open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner. $$$-$$$$.
Most major credit cards.

The Pancake Bakery
Prinsengracht 191
Amsterdam, Netherlands
Phone: 020-625-1333
http://www.pancake.nl
Located in a 17th-century warehouse near the Anne Frank Huis and Westerkerk, this place serves the best Dutch pannenkoeken in town. Large selection of typical Dutch pancakes, which are similar to crepes, and other basic dishes as well as interesting international pancake fillings. You can start with a hearty pancake, and if that doesn't fill you up, the dessert pancakes are heavenly. The place is always full, but don't let that stop you—the wait passes quickly.

Daily 9 am-9:30 pm. Reservations not accepted. $.
Most major credit cards.
**t Kuyltje**

Gasthuismolensteeg 9
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-620-1045

http://kuyltje.nl

The delicious Dutch sandwiches called *broodjes* are your best bet for a light and affordable lunch. At this place they are still homemade and are served with fabulous roast meat or fish salads. In winter, it also serves traditional Dutch pea soup with lard.

Monday-Friday 7 am-4 pm, Saturday 10 am-4 pm. $. No credit cards.

**Cuisines**

**Asian**

**Me Naam Naan**

Koningsstraat 29
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-423-3344

http://www.menaamnaan.nl

Located in a historical house from 1604 on a side street of crowded Nieuwmarkt, this hidden gem of a restaurant serves delicious authentic Northeastern Thai cuisine in a cozy setting. The *plaa chao-chii* (gilthead seabream with spicy red curry sauce and coconut milk) is wonderful. If you are bold enough, try the truly hot *laab nua* (finely chopped beef with herbs and vegetables). Many vegetarian dishes, too. Only fresh ingredients with authentic spices and *curry* imported from Thailand are used. Wash it down with a bottle of Singha beer. The staff wears authentic colorful Thai clothing, and service is excellent.

Tuesday-Sunday 5-10:30 pm. $$-$$$. Most major credit cards.

**New King**

Zeedijk 115-117
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-625-2180

http://www.newking.nl

There’s authentic atmosphere in Amsterdam’s Chinatown in the Nieuwmarkt, and all three floors are constantly buzzing with activity as the fragrant, steaming dishes stream past. The staff is efficient, so the wait is never long. The menu includes a vast list of Mandarin Chinese dishes, skillfully prepared.

Daily 11 am-10:30 pm. $. Most major credit cards.

**Samrat**

Bethaniendwarsstraat 17
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-624-6033

http://samratrestaurant.nl
You'll be greeted by wonderful aromas when you open the door to this modest little Indian restaurant. It's a delicious preview of what's to come. You can't go wrong with the tandoori chicken, and the mango lassi is lovely, too. Service is efficient and courteous.

Daily 5-11 pm. $$. Most major credit cards.

**Tempo Doeloe**

Utrechtsestraat 75
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone**: 020-625-6718

http://www.tempodoeloerestaurant.nl

You can get authentic Indonesian fare, including *rijsttafels*, at this romantic Asian restaurant. You must ring the doorbell to gain entry, but you'll feel as if you're being welcomed by friends. If you're not used to very spicy foods, be sure to ask the chefs to adjust the seasonings, although all dishes have an indication of how spicy they are. The *gado gado* (vegetable salad served with a peanut sauce dressing) is delightful.

*Rijstaffel* from 30 euros.

Monday-Saturday for dinner. Reservations required. $$$$. Most major credit cards.

**Wagamama**

Max Euweplein 10 (near Leideseplein)
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone**: 020-528-7778

http://www.wagamama.nl

This informal Japanese restaurant has a large, open dining room. The food in the chain of Wagamama restaurants is simple, fresh, cooked-to-order and designed to share. Dedicated red-meat eaters will not starve, but the emphasis is on chicken, seafood and vegetables served with rice or noodles.

Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations available. $$-$$. Most major credit cards.

**Yamazato**

Ferdinand Bolstraat 333, De Pijp (in the Okura Hotel)
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone**: 020-678-7450

http://www.yamazato.nl

This is one of Europe's leading Japanese restaurants and the only traditional Japanese restaurant in the Netherlands with one Michelin star. The sushi bar serves 20 kinds of sushi and sashimi. Private dining rooms and a tatami room.

Open noon-2 pm and 6 pm-9:30 pm. Reservations required. $$$$$. Most major credit cards.
French

De Herengracht

Herengracht 435
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Phone: 020-616-2482
http://www.deherengracht.nl

This split-level restaurant and bar near Leidseplein opens a fashionable terrace in the summer that overlooks the canal. The kitchen serves mostly traditional French dishes, such as steak tartare with fries (served upright in a takeaway cone). Popular with a twenty- to thirtysomething crowd, especially on the weekends.

Open daily 11 am-1 am, Friday and Saturday until 3 am. Reservations recommended. $$-$$$.

De Knijp

Van Baerlestraat 134
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Phone: 020-671-4248
http://deknijp.jubels.nl

This cozy French bistro is close to the Concertgebouw. The menu changes often and includes daily specials and seasonal game dishes. Popular for pretheater dining, so reservations are recommended.

Daily 5:30 pm-midnight. Reservations available. $$$.

Vinkeles

Keizersgracht 384
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Phone: 020-530-2010
http://www.vinkeles.com

The chic interior and celebrity clientele make this Michelin-starred restaurant in the Dylan Hotel a major hot spot in Amsterdam. The menu presents the very best of French cuisine.

Tuesday-Saturday 7-10 pm. Reservations recommended. $$-$$$$. Most major credit cards.

Fusion

Cafe Spanjer en Van Twist

Leliegracht 60
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Phone: 020-639-0109
http://www.spanjerenvantwist.nl

With tables right on the canal side, this cafe is in a lovely spot for a leisurely lunch or dinner. It’s popular with locals as well as visitors, the menu changes seasonally, and the food is as good as the location.

Daily 10 am-9 pm. Reservations available. $$. Most major credit cards.
De Jonge Dikkert
Amsterdamseweg 104a
Amstelveen, Netherlands
Phone: 020-643-3333
http://www.jongedikkert.nl
Sup on modern French Mediterranean cuisine in this restaurant in a windmill that dates from 1672. It features a toothsome a la carte menu and a number of fixed-price menus that include the Menu Jeunes Restaurateurs d'Europe. There are scrumptious amuses and a heavyweight wine list, too.

Open Monday-Friday for lunch and dinner, Saturday and Sunday for dinner only. Reservations available. $$$ Most major credit cards.

Italian

Hostaria
Tweede Egelantiersdwarsstraat 9
Amsterdam, Netherlands

This cozy Italian restaurant is located in the heart of the Jordaan. Reservations are a must at this tiny, authentic gem—it's always full.

Open daily except Monday for dinner. $$-$ $$$. No credit cards.

Le 4 Stagioni
Johannes Verhulsstraat 32
Amsterdam, Netherlands
Phone: 020-662-0071
http://www.le4stagioni.nl
Close to the Museumplein, this boisterous and brassy, yet upscale Italian restaurant used to be a butcher shop. Delicious pastas and pizzas. Because of the noise level, this is a restaurant that is better suited to small groups than intimate couples. Takeaway orders by phone.

Sunday-Thursday 5-10:30 pm, Friday and Saturday 5-11 pm. $$-$ $$$. Most major credit cards.

Mazzo's
Rozengracht 114
Amsterdam, Netherlands
Phone: 020-344-6402
http://www.mazzoamsterdam.nl/eng/over
Pizza, pastas and other Italian specialties are served in this relaxed, modern "living room" on one of the liveliest streets in the Jordaan. Chesterfield sofas, long dining tables and an open cabinet displaying products and ingredients used in Mazzo's dishes soften the industrial-style concrete and contribute to a family atmosphere. A bar area leads to the restaurant section with a view of the open kitchen. Weekend DJs add to the fun.

Open daily for breakfast, lunch and dinner. $$$$.
Latin American

Moksi

Ferdinand Bolstraat 21
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Phone: 020-676-8264
http://www.moksi.nl

Simple but colorful and friendly Surinamese restaurant. Try moksi meti (rice with fried chicken, beef, and green and black beans) or the rotis (traditional spicy Indian pancakes with curries or cooked vegetables). The rijsttafel for two or more people is a good value, and you can taste a variety of dishes. Desserts include sweet coconut dishes. Warm service South American style.

Open Tuesday-Thursday for dinner, Friday-Sunday for catered affairs and by prior reservation only. $$. Most major credit cards.

Mexican

Los Pilones

Kerkstraat 63
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Phone: 020-320-4651
http://www.lospilones.com

The friendly Mexican owners make eating there fun for everyone. It may be the best restaurant in Amsterdam for authentic Tex-Mex meals. It even serves cactus as food and Mexican beer, not to mention superb margaritas. There are several locations throughout the city.

Open daily for dinner. $$. Most major credit cards.

Spanish

A La Plancha

Eerst Looiersdwarsstraat 15
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Phone: 020-420-3633
http://www.alaplancha.nl

Take a seat at the bar of this small bistro on a tiny street in the Jordaan for authentic Spanish tapas served in a flamenco-inspired atmosphere.

Daily except Monday for dinner. $$$$ Most major credit cards.

Duende

Lindengracht 62
Amsterdam, Netherlands

Phone: 020-420-6692
http://www.cafe-duende.nl

This lively cafe in Jordaan serves tasty tapas; if you want a full-blown meal, order them in larger raciones. Try the seleccion del jefe (selection of the chef) for two or three people. Duende is a meeting place for
Hispanics from all over Amsterdam. Spanish wines and sherries by the glass or bottle. It often has live flamenco performances. *El duende* is the spirit that possesses every good flamenco singer and dancer.

Monday-Friday 4 pm-midnight, Saturday noon-1 pm, Sunday 2 pm-midnight. Reservations available. $$.

Most major credit cards.

**Vegetarian**

**Betty's**

Rijnstraat 75
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-644-5896

[http://www.bettys.nl](http://www.bettys.nl)

Wonderful, fresh, organic ingredients, lovingly cooked. The food is delicious, but be forewarned that the service can be slow, partly because the enthusiastic patron likes to explain the food.

Wednesday-Sunday 5:30-10:30 pm; closed last Sunday of every month. $$.

Most major credit cards.

**Golden Temple**

Utrechtsestraat 126
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-626-8560

[http://www.restaurantgoldentemple.com](http://www.restaurantgoldentemple.com)

This small, informal restaurant has been a favorite with vegetarians for many years. Run by Sikhs, the venue doesn't serve alcohol or allow smoking, and no additives are used in preparing meals. Food is exotic with Indian, Mexican and Mediterranean influences.

Daily 5-9 pm. $$.

Most major credit cards.

**Continental**

**Blauw aan de Wal**

Oudezijds Achterburgwal 99
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-330-2257

[http://www.blauwaandewal.com](http://www.blauwaandewal.com)

Hidden away at the end of a cul-de-sac in the Red Light District is a secret garden and a romantic restaurant that offers French and Italian masterpieces. Try the world-famous chocolate tart.

Tuesday-Saturday 6 pm-11 pm. Reservations recommended. $$$$.

Most major credit cards.

**Cafe Spargo**

Linnaeusstraat 37a
Amsterdam, Netherlands

**Phone:** 020-694-1140

[http://www.cafespargo.nl](http://www.cafespargo.nl)
This laid-back, trendy bar and eatery in the east of Amsterdam is located close to the Tropenmuseum. The chef executes a light Continental cuisine that is presented in a simple, modern fashion. You won't find a more pleasant waitstaff in the Netherlands. In the summer, this restaurant boasts one of the best terraces in the city. In winter, there is live music on the weekends, and Ajax football matches are screened live.

Open daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. $$-$$$$. No credit cards.

**De Silveren Spiegel**

Kattengat 4-6  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-624-6589  
[http://www.desilverenspiegel.com](http://www.desilverenspiegel.com)

The food rivals the ambience and service. Dine on superb Dutch cuisine in a beautiful historic house dating from 1614. Top wines are available, but the house wine is very good.

Open Monday-Saturday for dinner. Reservations required. $$$-$$$$$. Most major credit cards.

**In de Waag**

Nieuwmarkt 4  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-422-7772  
[http://www.indewaag.nl](http://www.indewaag.nl)

Built in 1430 as the gatehouse to the city, this structure served for a couple of centuries as the weigh station for goods entering Amsterdam. Today, it's an elegant cafe and restaurant. Mostly pan-fried dishes for dinner.

Lunch 10 am-4 pm, dinner 5-10:30 pm. $$. Most major credit cards.

**Seafood**

**Brasserie Bark**

Van Baerlestraat 120  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-675-0210  
[http://www.bark.nl](http://www.bark.nl)

Close to the Concertgebouw, this restaurant is frequented by theatergoers and stays open until after midnight. It's constantly busy. There is a broad range of seafood dishes and always one vegetarian entree. It is not a romantic venue—tables are crowded together—but the food rises above the ambience.

Open daily for lunch and dinner. $$-$$. Most major credit cards.

**Bridges**

Oudezijds Voorburgwal 197  
Amsterdam, Netherlands  
**Phone:** 020-555-3560

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http://www.bridgesrestaurant.nl
This bright and trendy restaurant has secured itself a top spot among the best restaurants in Amsterdam. Its emphasis is on spectacular seafood, which may be prepared French style, but also in very appealing southeast Asian ways. If you like your fish raw, try the sushi. The knowledgeable sommelier will recommend wines that best match the fish and seafood served.

Monday 6:30-10:30 am, Tuesday-Friday 6:30 am-10:30 pm, Saturday and Sunday 6:30 am-10:30 pm. Reservations highly recommended. $$$$ Most major credit cards.

Security

Etiquette

Business travelers from North America will find the Netherlands one of the most comfortable countries to visit in Western Europe, because Dutch culture is in many respects quite similar to that of the U.S. and Canada. Be prepared, however, for more bluntness and criticism, and less tact. The Dutch pride themselves on speaking English (and usually two to three additional languages) fluently. For many businesses, English is the preferred (if not mandatory) language.

Appointments—It is not necessary to use an intermediary to make contacts or schedule meetings. The Dutch mainly do business by appointment. Business appointments should be made as far in advance as possible—anywhere from several days to several weeks before your visit. Keep in mind that many Dutch businesspeople are away on extended holidays in summer.

Punctuality is important in business dealings, although the Dutch are usually flexible and tolerant of delays because of traffic jams and road-construction detours. An excuse for lateness that you will hear at least once is “the bridge was open” (boats usually have priority over car traffic). In summer, when there are a lot of boats on the canals, the bridges are open a number of times per day to prevent the occurrence of boat jams.

Personal Introductions—A handshake is a common form of greeting between men and women. Kissing three times on alternating cheeks (left, right, left) is a traditional Dutch greeting (and parting) custom for people of the opposite sex and often those of the same sex, although it is more common among women than men. This custom also extends to familiar business partners, though you should allow your Dutch acquaintance to take the lead in this regard. If he or she does initiate the greeting, you should reciprocate: Failing to do so could be taken as an insult.

It is appropriate to stand when someone is being introduced to you, and to do otherwise could be interpreted as a snub. Business cards are used in the Netherlands in a traditional manner. There is no need to have your card translated into Dutch. It may surprise you that many of the cards you receive from Dutch colleagues will be in English. As Dutch culture is highly egalitarian, everyone from acquaintances to professors and medical professionals are generally referred to by their first name, without professional title.

Negotiating—Business is usually conducted in the office. Although the Dutch are generally reserved and formal, how quickly people get down to business in a meeting varies with the age (or upbringing) of the person with whom you are dealing. You may find business conversations with younger people more informal in tone. Although there may be time for small talk before a meeting, it usually ends once the business discussions have begun.
**Business Entertaining**—Meals are usually treated as a break from business proceedings or a celebration of an agreement, although they can sometimes be part of the meeting. Lunch and dinner are the most common meals for business gatherings, with dinner being the most popular. A business breakfast is rare. Business lunches occur between noon and 1 pm, and a business dinner usually begins around 7:30 pm. Business meals typically take place in a restaurant.

It is quite a compliment to be invited to a private home for a meal, as the tendency is for Dutch people to keep their homes private, open only to close family members and friends. If invited to a private home, it's common courtesy to take a gift of flowers and/or wine for your hosts, but it shouldn't be extravagant.

At meals, it is appropriate to eat everything served. If there is something you do not like and you leave it on your plate, then you may be asked if you would like something else. Occasionally you may need to eat with your hands, but avoid it when you can and follow the lead of your hosts.

Although alcohol is quite prominent in the Dutch and European cultures, it isn't considered unusual if you don't drink. To say “cheers” in Dutch say *proost* (rhymes with boast). Quite often in small gatherings where people actually clink their glasses, it's appropriate to look people in the eye when you clink.

Unless you have been specifically invited out to eat at the invitation and expense of someone, expect to go Dutch and pay for your portion of the bill. A 5%-10% tip is appreciated if the service is good. When paying by credit card, extra tips are usually given in cash.

**Body Language**—When engaged in conversation, the Dutch usually maintain some distance between one another. Friendly gestures such as a pat on the back are not common, because the Dutch are usually rather formal in relationships. All of the general hand gestures are fairly typical. Be careful, however, about pointing at or touching your index finger to your forehead between your eyebrows while looking at someone, as it may be taken as a sign that you are referring to that person as an idiot.

**Gift Giving**—It is not especially common to give gifts in business situations, but it is an impressive gesture. The kinds of business gifts that are considered appropriate are fine wines or other spirits. It may be a good idea to find out what your business host enjoys.

The amount you spend on a business gift depends upon how big an impression you wish to make. When it comes to fine wines, for example, many Dutch people know by the label what's fine and what's not. The Dutch standard for the price range of gifts starts at about 20 euros for a gift for a young manager. If you are given a gift, you should open it immediately in the presence of the giver. Thank-you notes are appropriate and appreciated, preferably handwritten.

**Conversation**—The most common topic of small talk in the Netherlands is the weather. Vacation destinations are also a popular and safe topic. The Dutch also love to talk about politics. (There are 15 to 20 political parties in the country, depending on the time of year and the type of election, and political talk shows are very popular on Dutch television.) Your Dutch acquaintances will probably enjoy the chance to discuss politics with a visitor, but exercise some caution to avoid problems. It's usually wiser to ask questions about Dutch issues rather than stating opinions.

**Personal Safety**

Violence occurs less frequently in Amsterdam than in many other European cities, so simple precautions usually suffice. However, pickpockets do operate regularly. Watch your wallet or handbag, especially on public transportation and in department stores, and watch your bags when waiting for a train or bus. Be wary of strangers trying to distract you while you're using an ATM.
Be alert if you walk around the Red Light District, especially at night. The Red Light District is a major tourist attraction, and there are plenty of non-customers there just looking around. If you choose to walk around this area alone, stick to main, well-lit streets. Keep your camera well-stowed; taking pictures is not appreciated and will lead to immediate problems.

 Trafficking in either hard or soft drugs is illegal. Consumption of hard drugs (cocaine, heroin, ecstasy, etc.) is illegal. However, soft drugs (marijuana and hashish) are sold in so-called coffee shops, which are easily identified by their window displays. (Confusion with regular coffee shops is highly unlikely.) The soft-drug coffee shops are allowed to sell small quantities only (no more than 5 grams per person), which can be smoked there or taken to go. The minimum age for this is 18. Police vigorously prosecute those who possess or sell hard drugs.

 In any emergency, dial 112.

 For more information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

 Health

 No special vaccinations are necessary to enter the Netherlands, and health facilities are good. Tap water is safe to drink, and food preparation in restaurants meets high sanitation standards.

 All hotels have English-speaking physicians on 24-hour call. The national (and Europe-wide) emergency telephone number is 112, which is a 24-hour service that contacts ambulance, fire and police departments. The Huisartsenposten Amsterdam is an after-work, weekend and holiday hours emergency doctor referral service (phone 088-003-0600). A doctor who is specifically available for tourists in Amsterdam can also be contacted at 020-427-5011. For a 24-hour dental referral, phone 0900-821-2230.

 Emergency phone calls made from pay phones are free.

 For more information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

 Facts

 Dos & Don'ts

 Do take a boat trip: The city is at its loveliest from the water.

 Don't bother trying to speak Dutch unless you know more than a couple of words. Most locals speak English well. Efforts to use the words alstublieft ("please," but also "you're welcome") and dank u wel ("thank you very much") will be appreciated, though.

 Do leave the athletic shoes, shorts and baseball cap at home if you want to pass for a local.

 Don't walk in the bicycle paths (narrow lanes sometimes marked with a white cycle symbol).

 Do try raw herring with chopped onions and pickles (best in late spring) or, at the very least, the great frites.

 Don't miss the appropriately situated 3-D bronze rendition of Rembrandt's The Night Watch in Rembrandtplein.
Do make an evening pit stop at the Magere Brug (Skinny Bridge). Of Amsterdam's 1,280 or so bridges, it's arguably the most beautiful, lit up as it is at night. Hardly surprising, then, that it's a popular smooching site.

Don't overlook the city's green lung, the Vondelpark. It's located in the south of Amsterdam, just a five-minute walk from the Leidseplein and within walking distance from the Museumplein. The Vondelpark is a perfect respite from the beaten tourist path.

**Geostats**

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** A passport, but not a visa, is required for citizens of Canada and the U.S. All travelers should have proof of onward passage. Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departing.

**Population:** 813,562.

**Languages:** Dutch. English is widely spoken—it's taught in the schools. Many Dutch people also speak German and French.

**Predominant Religions:** Christian (Roman Catholic, Dutch Reformed), Jewish and Islamic, though many other religions are represented.

**Time Zone:** 1 hour ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (+1 GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the end of March to the end of October.

**Voltage Requirements:** 220 volts. 50 Hz.

**Telephone Codes:** 31, country code; 20, city code; 06, mobile numbers;

**Money**

**Taxes**

Value-added tax in The Netherlands is 6% for foods and essentials, and 21% on nonfood items and luxury goods. With a little paperwork, non-EU citizens can obtain a tax refund for purchases of more than 50 euros in a single store during a single day. Refunds usually amount to about 15% of the purchase price.

You need to present several documents to the VAT refund officer at the airport before departure to get a refund: the article you purchased, the receipt, a refund form (which must be picked up at the place of purchase), and your passport and ticket. Note that only unused articles are eligible for a refund. If everything is in order, the VAT refund officer will give you your refund. (For your own convenience, see the VAT officer before checking your bags and have your purchases in an easy-to-reach place.)

Private VAT refund services, located at the airport, will give you an immediate refund minus a fee, which is usually a percentage of the refund.

If you are traveling to other countries in the European Union, you can claim your refunds only at your exit point from the EU. In other words, if you're traveling on to Austria and France and are departing the EU from Paris, you have to claim the VAT refunds from all three countries at the airport in Paris. Keep in mind, too, that the duty-free shopping at Schiphol Airport itself is excellent, and no VAT is charged.
Tipping

Tipping is not something that is expected in Amsterdam, as service charges are included in hotel, restaurant, shopping and taxi bills. North American visitors may have some difficulty with this, but be advised that the pay structure of workers in these service industries does not make them rely on tips to make up their wages. The Dutch usually round up their bill to the nearest euro. There is also nothing wrong with leaving a small tip for exceptionally good service.

Some public restrooms in Amsterdam have an attendant. In these cases, when using the restroom, tip the attendant 0.50 euros.

Weather

Amsterdam’s climate is mild but changeable year-round. January and February are the chilliest months, with temperatures usually between 30 F/-1 C and 40 F/4 C. Though often windy, it’s rare for Amsterdam to get much snow or for the canals to freeze. June-September is warm but generally not hot: Temperatures rarely exceed 80 F/27 C and can get as cool as 50 F/10 C.

The Netherlands is a damp country. The running joke is that it only rains two days a year—the rest of the time it pours. Rain can arrive unexpectedly on what starts out to be a sunny day. Therefore, a raincoat and umbrella are often necessary. In summer, the humidity can become oppressive.

What to Wear

There are no restrictions on dress, and the Dutch are fairly casual dressers themselves. Expect casual business attire at business meetings and most other situations, for both men and women. Only a few formal concert venues and upscale restaurants recommend a coat and tie for men. A light jacket is handy for night, even in summer, and a waterproof one is a good idea any time of year. Pack a small folding umbrella, too.

Because of cobblestoned streets and rough, uneven pavement, women need to be very careful if wearing high heels. Flat, nonslippery footwear is best for walking and biking.

Transportation

A car in Amsterdam is an extravagance and a potential burden. Public transportation in the form of trams, buses and trains is a good, affordable alternative, but in a city as compact as Amsterdam, even that is not always necessary. We think the best way to explore the city is on foot.

Other transportation options are taxis, canal boats and bikes.

If you think you’ll be using public transportation often, we recommend buying an OV-chipkaart. There are three types available: disposable, anonymous and personalized. The disposable is probably fine for most visitors. Buy them at Amsterdam Municipal Transportation (GVB) ticket and information offices, from GVB ticket vending machines, and from drivers and conductors (note that they can only supply the single trip and 24-hour disposable tickets and are subject to a surcharge). You can purchase an OV-chipkaart for 24, 48, 72, 120, 144 or 168 hours, which allows you to travel on all trams, buses, metros and night buses. The cards cost 2.80 euros per hour of unlimited travel. Rates range from 7.50 euros for a one-day ticket to 32 euros for a ticket valid for seven days. A single-journey ticket, good for one hours (including transfers) runs 2.90 euros.
When you start your journey, you have to check in at the gate or one of the pink card readers. Do this by putting the card in front of the reader until you see a green light. At the end of the journey, check out by again scanning the card. If you forget you will be penalized with a maximum charge for the journey, even if it was a short one. You must check out and in again if changing from bus or tram to metro. https://www.ov-chipkaart.nl.

**Air**

Schiphol Airport (AMS) is on the outskirts of Amsterdam (9 mi/14 km southwest of the city center). Passenger surveys consistently rate Schiphol as a favorite airport, and rightly so. It houses some 100 stores—half of them tax-free—good restaurants, a casino, supermarket, playroom, aviation museum, a small gallery of the Rijksmuseum, a sauna and even a spa. Phone 0900-0141 from within the Netherlands (calls cost 0.40 euros per minute). http://www.schiphol.nl.

**Car**

Driving into and around the city is not recommended as the narrow, overcrowded streets and one-way thoroughfares can be frustrating and hazardous to the uninitiated.

If you must drive in the city, keep a sharp lookout for pedestrians, cyclists (who can use one-way streets in both directions), trams and the canals. Cars are driven on the right side of the road. There is a speed limit of 120 kph (about 75 mph) on highways, 80 kph (about 50 mph) on secondary roads and 50 kph (about 30 mph) in built-up areas.

There is very little free parking within the city. Spaces are scarce, and violations carry hefty fines and possible towing fees. When you park, be sure to read the ticket dispensers for the correct information. Parking costs vary according to the time of day and location.

Highways are clearly signposted. The major highway from Schiphol Airport to Amsterdam is the A4 motorway. The highway system is linked to major European highways to the north, south and east and to an elaborate network of ferries arriving daily from the U.K. and Scandinavia.

Legal driving age in the Netherlands is 17. To rent a car, you must be at least 21 years old and have held your driver's license for at least one year. Rental car drivers younger than age 25 may incur a surcharge fee when renting.

**Public Transportation**

**GVB (Amsterdam Municipal Transport)**

Amsterdam's public transportation system is excellent—efficient, modern and comfortable. Buses and especially trams take you rapidly to your destination. An excellent *Tourist Guide to Public Transport* map is given out free by the Amsterdam tourist-information office at Stationsplein and Leidsestraat or at the offices of the GVB on Stationsplein.

**Trams**—Riding a tram through Amsterdam is an excellent way of getting around the city. In most tram shelters, maps of the entire system are posted. At each stop is a sign that lists destinations. Don't forget to check in at the start of your journey by scanning your *OV-chipkaart* at the pink machine.

**Buses**—It's easier to get around Amsterdam by tram than by bus. However, buses are available in areas where trams don't go, and they have a good reputation for being on time. Service is reduced after 12:30 am.
Metro—The metro can be used with your OV-chipkaart. However, the metro has only four lines that mainly take passengers in from the suburbs, so it's of limited use for getting around the city. It's useful for getting to the Amstel Station's international bus terminal.

Ferries—There is a free ferry service to the northern part of the city. The boats depart regularly from behind Central Station. You can also take a ferry from there to the city's architecturally famed eastern islands KNSM and Java Island. A water-bus serving this area runs every eight minutes. The pleasant boat ride through the IJ harbor is free of charge.

The fare system is the same for Amsterdam's trams, buses and the metro. You can purchase single tickets from drivers or conductors or use your existing OV-chipkaart. A GVD day or multiday ticket that allows unlimited travel on Amsterdam bus, metro and tram lines costs 7.50 euros for a 24-hour ticket, 12 euros for a 48-hour ticket, 16.50 euros for a 72-hour ticket, 32 euros for a seven-day ticket. Amsterdam, Netherlands. http://en.gvb.nl/pages/home.aspx.

Taxi

Within the city, you can call Taxicentrale Amsterdam company and tell the operator where you want to be picked up. Phone 020-777-7777. http://www.tcataxi.nl/en/frontpage.

Alternatively, you can find cabs at designated stands, which are located near luxury hotels, Central Station and such major squares as Dam, Rembrandtplein and Leidseplein. Generally, drivers will not respond to hailing from the curb. All taxis are metered.

Train

Amsterdam is connected via high-speed rail to Rotterdam, Antwerp, Brussels and Paris with seven to 10 trains daily at travel speeds ranging 160 kph/99 mph-300 kph/186 mph. Travel time from Amsterdam to Rotterdam is approximately 48 minutes, and from Amsterdam to Paris is about three hours and 18 minutes.

Centraal Station

The main railway station is in the heart of the city. Regular rail connections (up to eight trains per hour) are maintained to all parts of the country. Service to Amsterdam from elsewhere in Europe is equally fast, frequent and reasonably priced. See website for schedules and fares. You cannot make seat reservations for domestic trains. Stationsplein. Amsterdam, Netherlands. http://www.ns.nl.

Other

Bicycles are far and away the most popular form of transportation in Amsterdam. Bikes are a great way to get around quickly and really experience the town—if you're up for the adventure. Be sure to take a pocket map with you if you don't already know the town well.

Contact your hotel's front desk for directions to a bike-rental company nearby. MacBike (http://macbike.nl) is the largest bike rental company in the city and has several locations around the city center. Another option is AmsterBike. http://www.amsterbike.eu.

Bike taxis are also popular, allowing you to view the city from a unique perspective. They can be hailed at tourist hangouts such as Rembrandtplein and Dam Square.
Bruges, Belgium

Overview

Introduction

Located about 60 mi/95 km northwest of Brussels, Bruges, Belgium, is known for its scenic canals, ancient squares, beguinage (a typical Flemish medieval housing concept), art museums featuring exclusive artistic heritage such as paintings by the Flemish primitives, architecture and some of the best lace in the world. The city center is compact and all attractions are within walking distance from the market square (Grote Markt).

Bruges is also famous for its gastronomy. Foremost, it is known as the chocolate capital of the world and is home to more than 50 chocolatiers producing their own handmade chocolates. Obviously, beer is a local must, with lots of cozy pubs serving top-notch Belgian Trappist beers or local ales. It hosts one of the top gastronomic restaurants in Belgium, Hertog Jan, which boasts three Michelin stars.

More than 80 bridges were constructed over the city's network of canals, which in summer teem with tourist boats offering narrated tours. Although you'll undoubtedly have to share the city with a number of tourists, we think Bruges, is a must-see.

Highlights

Sights—The Belfry Tower for a 360-degree perspective of the city; a boat ride on the canals to enjoy the city's spirit and atmosphere.

Museums—Groeninge Museum, featuring key works of the Flemish primitive painters as well as expressionism and post-war modern art.

Memorable Meals—Three-Michelin-starred Hertog Jan for the freshest local fine dining; atmosphere and French cuisine with an Asian twist at Guillaume; the freshest fish in the city at Den Gouden Karpel.

Late Night—Beer tastings at 't Brugs Beertje, where there are more than 300 choices of beers; dancing at De Coulissen.

Walks—A romantic stroll at the Minnewaterpark (Lake of Lovers) and nearby beguinage; a hike on the city's ramparts (Brugse vester).

History

During the 12th and 13th centuries, Bruges was a center of trade and textile manufacturing, as well as the largest city in Belgium. When its river silted up in the late 1400s, merchants and traders abandoned the city for Antwerp. Economic decline allowed the city to remain unchanged for centuries, which is why it is one of the best-preserved medieval cities in Europe.
Port Information

Location

The port of Zeebrugge (Bruges on the Sea) is located about 10 mi/16 km from the city. It has a cruise ship terminal and is considered a key hub to enter Europe. You can travel to the city from the port by taxi or train. Zeebrugge itself has a fishing harbor and scenic promenade. You can also catch a ferry for England from there.

Potpourri

The name Bruges is believed to have originated from the local word bryggia, which means "mooring place" or "landing stage."

Because the city has a number of quaint little streets and romantic canals, Bruges is often referred to as the Venice of the North, although it shares this title with other northern European cities, including Amsterdam and Stockholm.

The average depth of a canal in Bruges is only 6 ft/2 m. The average depth of one of the largest canals that surrounds the city is only 10-13 ft/3-4 m.

See & Do

Sightseeing

The bustle of tourists in Bruges is daunting in high season, but given the postcard-perfect beauty of this medieval city, its popularity is understandable.

Bruges' historical center is a UNESCO World Heritage site, and there are plenty of ways to explore its sights. The half-hour, narrated canal boat tour is the place to be on a hot summer day. You can also sightsee via a horse-and-buggy ride or simply take a walking tour of the most impressive sights in less than two hours.

Bruges' 13th-century Grote Markt (Market Square) features the world-famous belfry. If you are up for a challenge, you can climb its 366 stairs, pause at the treasure chamber, inspect the 47-bell carillon and enjoy the 360-degree panoramic view of Bruges and its surroundings. Market Square also houses a variety of tony shops and outdoor cafes.

Another square, the Burg, is a showplace of architectural styles through the ages. Among its buildings is the 12th-century Basilica of the Holy Blood, which houses the Relic of the Holy Blood and other artifacts from the Crusades. The 14th-century town hall (go upstairs to the very ornate Gothic Hall) is also on the square. To discover a relatively unknown gem, enter the Crowne Plaza hotel and go to its basement, where you will be able to visit the remains of the Saint Donatian Cathedral, a Roman Catholic cathedral located on the Burg that was destroyed during the aftermath of the French Revolution. Admission is free.

Other sights include the 13th-century beguinage (a religious community for women) and the many Godshuizen (almshouses built by wealthy families to provide shelter for the poor and needy) spread all over the city.
Historic Sites

**Beguinage**

Begijnhof 24-30  
Bruges, Belgium  
**Phone:** 50-330-011  
These lovely white houses are now home to a convent; they date from the 13th century, and the surrounding area is a great place for strolling.  
Daily 6:30 am-6:30 pm.

**Belfry**

Markt 1  
Bruges, Belgium  
**Phone:** 050-448-743  
Located in the heart of the city, this iconic symbol of Bruges stands at a height of 272 ft/83 m. Climb the 366 steps to catch a breathtaking view of the city. The Belfry also encompasses a carillon with 47 silver-toned bells, an awesome clock mechanism and a treasure chamber. Carillon concerts are held on Sunday.  
Daily 10 am-5 pm.

**Historium**

Markt 1  
Bruges, Belgium  
https://www.historium.be  
The Historium features a historical experience attraction where you are fully immersed in 15th-century Bruges, right down to the smell, feel and experience of that golden era.  
Monday-Friday 9 am-noon and 1-4:30 pm. 12.50 euros adults, 7.50 euros children.

**Provinciaal Hof**

Markt 3  
Bruges, Belgium  
The provincial court building, a magnificent neo-Gothic-style structure, was constructed in two stages between 1887-92 and 1914-21. While there, you can listen to the carillon music from the nearby Belfry.

**Sound Factory**

Lantaartoren, Concertgebouw Brugge 't Zand 34  
Bruges, Belgium  
**Phone:** 050-448-711  
http://www.sound-factory.be
At this interactive exhibit, part of Bruges' Concertgebouw concert venue, you can work your way through various sound samples to create your own masterpiece. Check out the Tower of Sound on the roof terrace that represents the sounds of 150 bells from the Belfry and other Bruges towers.

Tuesday-Sunday 9:30 am-5 pm. 1 euro.

**Stadhuis**

Burg 12
Bruges, Belgium

**Phone:** 050-448-711


City Hall is one of the oldest buildings in the city. It's where the administration of the city took place for more than six centuries. The Gothic Hall with its polychrome vault and 19th-century murals is sure to catch your attention. An adjoining hall houses various documents that depict the city council's history, as well as various artworks.

**The Burg**

This square has some of the oldest buildings in Bruges, and has evidence of occupation dating from the second century. Its buildings are beautiful and there is much to explore there, from ancient churches to the 14th-century town hall.

**Museums**

**Groeninge Museum**

Dijver 12
Bruges, Belgium


The Groeninge Museum has works by Van Eyck, Bosch, Van der Weyden and other Flemish painters. There are modern and neoclassical works, too.

Tuesday-Saturday 9:30 am-5 pm. 8 euros adults, 6 euros seniors and children ages 12-26, free for children younger than 12.

**Parks & Gardens**

**Brugse Vesten**

Bruges, Belgium


The Brugse vesten (ramparts of Bruges) provide a green walkway encircling the entire city. It's the perfect spot to digest all your impressions and explore the city's four remaining windmills as well as its medieval town gates.

**Koningin Astridpark**

Minderbroederstraat
Bruges, Belgium

**Phone:** 050-444-646

https://bezoekers.brugge.be/en/koningin-astridpark-
With an 18th-century landscape style, this park encompasses groves of trees, rolling lawns and a small pond in the center. It was named after Queen Astrid after her death in 1935.

**Minnewaterpark**

Minnewater 1  
Bruges, Belgium  

The Minnewaterpark is a lovely park built around a rectangular canalized lake called Minnewater (Lake of Lovers). It allows you to chill out from the city's vibrant atmosphere, take a romantic stroll, or simply dream away on a bench whilst overlooking its idyllic surroundings or the swans taking care of their cygnets.

**Religious Sites**

**Basilica of the Holy Blood**

Burg 13-B  
Bruges, Belgium  
**Phone:** 050-336-792  
[http://www.holyblood.com](http://www.holyblood.com)

Originally built in the 12th century, this double chapel is dedicated to Saint Basil. It's a must-see for any visitor in Bruges. It encompasses a Romanesque lower chapel and a Gothic upper chapel on two floors. The lower-level chapel is plain with minimal decoration, while the upper level is vibrant and full of colors. A monumental brick staircase connects the two levels.

**Church of Our Lady**

Mariastraat 38  
Bruges, Belgium  
**Phone:** 050-448-743  
[http://www.onthakerk-brugge.be](http://www.onthakerk-brugge.be)

The 400-ft/122-m-tall brick tower of this church is a standing testimony to the skills of the artisans of the city—it's the second-largest brickwork tower in the world. It also contains the decorated tombs of Charles the Bold, last Valois Duke of Burgundy, and his daughter, the duchess Mary of Burgundy, and a rich art collection. Among its prized artworks is the world-famous *Madonna and Child* by Michelangelo.

**English Convent**

Carmerstraat 85  
Bruges, Belgium  
**Phone:** 050-332-424  

Erected in the 17th century to host various English canons that had been banned in the U.K., the English Convent is the only domed church in the city. It was home to Guido Gezelle, one of the most famous poets from Bruges. Its beautiful garden is open to the public.

**Jerusalem Chapel**

Peperstraat 1  
Bruges, Belgium

This church was built as a private chapel in the 15th century by the Adornes family after returning from a pilgrimage. Some of its highlights include the tabernacle, the stained-glass windows, the tombs and a crypt under a raised choir. The crypt houses an imitation of the grave of Christ. The design of this church was adapted from the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem.

**St. Salvator's Cathedral**

Sint-Salvatorskoorstraat 8  
Bruges, Belgium  
**Phone:** 050-336-841  
[http://sintsalvator.be](http://sintsalvator.be)

Built as an ordinary parish church, the cathedral attained its present status in the 19th century. Its prized collections include medieval tombs, Brussels tapestries, and a roof loft with an organ and various Flemish paintings from the 14th-18th centuries.

Monday-Friday 10 am-1 pm and 2-5:30 pm, Saturday 10 am-1 pm and 2-3:30 pm, Sunday 2-5 pm.

**Wineries, Breweries & Distilleries**

**De Halve Maan**  
Walplein 26  
Bruges, Belgium  
**Phone:** 050-444-222  
[http://www.halvemaan.be](http://www.halvemaan.be)

This family-run brewery offers guided tours that allow you to learn about the traditional brewing methods and sample the beers. Make sure to savor the locally brewed Brugse Zot (literally translated as Fool from Bruges) and Straffe Hendrik.

Monday-Friday 10 am-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10 am-6 pm. 7.50 euros.

**Shopping**

Bruges is known for chocolates, lace, tapestries, art and its famous Belgian beer. There are several shops in the city that sell these items. Boutique-style beer parlors sell Belgian beer that you can buy to carry back with you.

If you are visiting Bruges in November and December, be sure to visit the Christmas Market.

**Shopping Hours:** Shopping hours in Bruges are 10 am-6 pm Monday-Friday and 10 am-6:30 pm Saturday. Most shops are closed on Sunday, except for the first Sunday of the month when they are open. Seasonal discounts are usually offered in January and July.

**Galleries**

**Absolute Art Gallery**  
Dijver 4-5  
Bruges, Belgium  
[http://www.absoluteartgallery.com](http://www.absoluteartgallery.com)
There you'll find contemporary Belgian art.

**Koen Broes**
Simon Stevin Plein 2  
Bruges, Belgium  
**Phone:** 050-333-774  
[http://www.broes.be](http://www.broes.be)  
This gallery specializes in graphics and art on paper.

**Marc Michot**
Groene Rei 3  
Bruges, Belgium  
**Phone:** 050-339-720  
[http://www.marcMichot.com](http://www.marcMichot.com)  
This gallery sells fine Chinese works of art and ceramics.

**Specialty Stores**

**Jean Moust Old Master Paintings**
Mariastraat 15  
Bruges, Belgium  
**Phone:** 050-344-435  
[http://www.jeanmoust.com](http://www.jeanmoust.com)  
If you are looking for original Dutch and Flemish paintings of the 17th century, this is the place to get them. Subjects include architectural, military and battle scenes, mythological and biblical, maritime, landscapes and more.

**Papyrus Fine Silver and Antiques**
Walplein 41  
Bruges, Belgium  
**Phone:** 050-336-687  
[http://www.papyrus-antiques.eu](http://www.papyrus-antiques.eu)  
This shop specializes in antique silverware and jewelry.

**Sweertvaegher**
Philipstockstraat 29  
Bruges, Belgium  
**Phone:** 050-338-367  
[http://www.sweertvaegher.be](http://www.sweertvaegher.be)  
This shop has been crafting fine chocolates since 1933, and is renowned for its carefully chosen ingredients.
't Apostelientje
Balstraat 11
Bruges, Belgium
Phone: 050-337-860
http://www.apostelientje.be
In business for more than three decades, this place sells beautiful laces. It offers more than 700 types, including some antique ones.
Wednesday-Saturday 9:30 am-5 pm.

The Bottle Shop
Wollestraat 13
Bruges, Belgium
Phone: 050-349-980
http://www.thebottleshop.be
This is a true haven for beer lovers. It sells more than 600 Belgian beers with matching glasses, including local beers such as Brugse Zot, Fort Lapin and Straffe Hendrik.

The Old Chocolate House
1-C Mariastraat
Bruges, Belgium
Phone: 050-340-102
http://www.oldchocolatehouse.com
This is the place for fine Belgian chocolates. It also sells gingerbread, biscuits and marzipan

Dining
Dining Overview
Bruges knows how to cater to the discerning foodie with its wide range of cuisines. After taking in the sights, stop at an outdoor cafe for a Belgian beer and plenty of people-watching. Or for a real taste of local cuisine, try chocolate and Belgian waffles with ice cream from stands along the streets.

Most of the city's best restaurants are located in and around Markt Square and Burg.

Most Flemish dishes have drawn their inspiration from French and German cuisines, and are accompanied by traditional Belgian ale. Mussels and frites, and frites with mayonnaise figure prominently on the menus of almost all local restaurants. The well-known Flemish stew (vlaamse stoverij) has fine Belgian dark beer as an ingredient and is worth a try.

Dining times are generally 7-10 am for breakfast, noon-2 pm for lunch and 7-11 pm for dinner. Many restaurants, however, are open from noon until late. A lot of restaurants close for three or four weeks during July or August. In Belgian restaurants, tax and service charges are included in the bill, although it's customary to leave a tip (2%-5% of the bill), especially if the service has been good.

Smoking is prohibited in all restaurants and in pubs and bars that serve food.
Expect to pay within these general guidelines, based on the cost of dinner for one, excluding drinks: $ = less than 25 euros; $$ = 25 euros-35 euros; $$$ = 36 euros-60 euros; and $$$$ = more than 60 euros.

**Local & Regional**

**Assiette Blanche**

Philisstockstraat 23  
Bruges, Belgium

**Phone:** 050-340-094  
http://www.assietteblanche.be

Close to the Markt, this restaurant is known for its wonderful seafood. We recommend the shrimp.

**De Jonkman**

Maalsesteenweg 438  
Bruges, Belgium

**Phone:** 050-360-767  
http://www.dejonkman.be

This two-Michelin-star restaurant specializes in serving the best of North Sea fish; the prix-fixe menu is a good deal.

Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. $$$$.

**Den Gouden Harynck**

Groeninge 25  
Bruges, Belgium

**Phone:** 050-337-637  
http://www.goudenharynck.be

Located in the heart of Bruges, this restaurant serves classical dishes with an innovative twist. It features an exquisite wine list.

Tuesday-Friday for lunch and dinner, Saturday for dinner only. $$$-$$$$.

**De Siphon**

Damse Vaart-Oost 1  
Bruges, Belgium

**Phone:** 050-620-202  
http://www.siphon.be

Located in the nearby town of Damme, this restaurant is known for its excellent cream eel dish. The restaurant is closed the first three weeks of February, the first week of July, and the first two weeks of October.

Monday-Friday for lunch and dinner.

**De Vlaamsche Pot**
Helmstraat 3-5
Bruges, Belgium

Phone: 050-340-086
http://www.devlaamschepot.be
This restaurant offers a variety of local dishes such as Flemish beef, waterzooi stew, mussels with french fries, and waffles.

Wednesday-Friday from 5:30 pm, Saturday and Sunday from noon. Most major credit cards.

Hertog Jan

Loppemsestraat 52
Bruges, Belgium

Phone: 050-363-649
http://www.hertog-jan.com
This restaurant is known for its fresh, local, farm-grown ingredients. It has received three Michelin stars.

Tuesday-Saturday noon-9 pm. $$$$.

Kok Au Vin

Ezelstraat 19
Bruges, Belgium

Phone: 050-339-521
http://www.kok-au-vin.be
This bistro is known for turning local products into creative and innovative dishes.

Tuesday-Saturday for lunch and dinner. $$-$$$$.

The Habitat Grill & Bar

Kemelstraat 7
Bruges, Belgium

Phone: 050-342-421
http://www.thehabit.be
This is a popular place for big helpings of traditional cuisine.

Cuisines

African

Ryad

Hoogstraat 32
Bruges, Belgium
This two-level restaurant transports you to Morocco with its cuisine and ambience. The upper level features a Moroccan-style seating area.
Asian

Bhavani Indian Restaurant
Simon Suitevenplein 5
Bruges, Belgium
Phone: 050-339-025
http://www.bhavani.be
This restaurant serves a range of vegetarian and meaty Indian dishes in a warm, colorful setting.

Tanuki
Oude Gentweg 1
Bruges, Belgium
Phone: 050-347-512
http://www.tanuki.be
Serving real Japanese cuisine, this restaurant has an open kitchen where you can see sushi, sashimi and teppanyaki dishes being prepared.

Wednesday-Sunday noon-9:30 pm.

French

Guillaume
Korte Lane 20
Bruges, Belgium
Phone: 050-344-605
http://www.guillaume2000.be
Located in an old house, this restaurant serves French cuisine with a Burgundy touch and Asian influences. It is known for its surf-and-turf dishes.

Irish

Delaney's Irish Pub & Restaurant
Burg 8
Bruges, Belgium
Phone: 050-349-145
http://www.delaneys.be
Dine in true Irish style at Delaney's.

Monday-Friday noon-3 pm and 6-10:30 pm, Saturday noon-10:30 pm, Sunday noon-10 pm. Reservations available online or by phone.
Mediterranean

The Olive Tree Restaurant
Wollestraat 3
Bruges, Belgium
Phone: 050-330-081
http://www.theolivetree-brugge.com
The Olive Tree is a great place to get Greek-Mediterranean cuisine.
Monday and Wednesday-Saturday 6-10:30 pm, Sunday noon-2:30 pm and 6-10:30 pm.

Mexican

Carrello
Langestraat 136
Bruges, Belgium
Phone: 050-677-678
http://www.carrello.be
If you're looking for Mexican food while in Bruges, Carrello is a good place to get it.

Middle Eastern

Tutankhamun
Academiestraat 6
Bruges, Belgium
Phone: 050-341-837
http://toetanchamonbruges.weebly.com
This place specializes in Egyptian grill dishes such as barbecue chicken and kebabs.
Thursday-Tuesday 11:30 am-3 pm and 5 pm-midnight (till 3 am Friday and Saturday).

Seafood

Den Gouden Karpel
Vismarkt 9
Bruges, Belgium
Phone: 050-333-494
http://www.dengoudenkarpel.be
Located close to the fish market, this restaurant features a fish bar and serves various fresh fish dishes.
Security
Etiquette

**Appointments**—Schedule your meetings well in advance—a week or more before you arrive. Punctuality is expected of everyone. Belgians don't like being late.

**Personal Introductions**—Handshakes are the order of the day, both when you arrive and when you leave. Close acquaintances of both sexes will hug and “air kiss” several times, alternating cheeks. With Flemish-speaking Belgians, use Flemish or English titles. With French-speaking Belgians, use French titles (monsieur, madame, mademoiselle). Continue to address people by their titles and last names until instructed to do otherwise. Business cards are important. Accept your acquaintance's card and read it. The card may be in more than one language, and your own should likewise have a Flemish or French translation on one side.

**Negotiating**—Small talk is not generally practiced. In some cases your hosts will prefer to get right to business, but others will take some time to get to know you. Follow the lead of your host. Remember that Belgians value modesty and are mostly conservative in their demeanor and attitudes.

**Business Entertaining**—Don’t be the first to bring up business during a dinner meeting: Let your host broach the subject. Local specialties such as mussels and regional beers are likely to be part of dinner. Belgians tend to appreciate it when a visitor compliments their cuisine.

You are expected to turn up smartly attired and on time when you are invited for a meal. Wait to see if your host offers you any specific seat. Also, observe if he or she is about to propose a toast before you sip your drink. If there is a toast, raise your glass. Waiters will typically serve women first and empty dishes will only be removed when everyone finished has their meal.

**Body Language**—Conservative body language is recommended. Personal space is important, and conversation should be kept quiet and discreet. Office doors are usually kept closed: Always knock before entering.

**Gift Giving**—Gifts are appropriate in social contexts, but they are not expected or necessary in business settings.

**Conversation**—Personal topics should be avoided until you become well acquainted. Be careful in discussing the country's different cultures: Relations are not always cordial between the groups, and there are complex economic and social aspects to the divisions.

**Other Information**—Though the majority of offices are not air-conditioned, don't remove your jacket unless you see a Belgian counterpart do so first. In business and in personal interactions, women can expect a high degree of deference. It is common for men to hold doors open and allow women to precede them into rooms and elevators. At dinner, women are usually served first.

**Personal Safety**

Bruges has a relatively low crime rate. However, it is advisable to follow the basic tourist precautions because problems such as pickpocketing, purse-snatching and petty theft do occur.
Belgian law requires everyone to have official identification with them at all times, and it must be shown to any Belgian police official upon request. A passport is sufficient, and police are usually satisfied with a photocopy of the passport identification page.

In case of an emergency, dial 101 for the police, and 100 for the fire brigade or an ambulance.

For the latest information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

**Health**

Bruges has excellent health care services, and water and food are generally considered safe. No vaccinations are necessary to enter the country.

Most hospitals have English-speaking physicians on call 24 hours a day. In addition, the 24-hour help line, Community Help Service (CHS), provides information about English-speaking medical practitioners, offers a telephone counseling service and generally offers English-speaking help and advice to visitors to the country. Phone 02-648-4014. [http://www.chsbelgium.org](http://www.chsbelgium.org).

Pharmacies are generally open Monday-Friday 9 am-6 pm. One pharmacy in each district is always on duty for weekend and nighttime emergencies. Its address and phone number are displayed in the window of every pharmacy.

For any emergency, phone 112.

**Disabled Advisory**

Bruges is a flat city without hills and most of the tourist streets are car-free. The city is about 2 mi/3 km long from north to south, and 1.5 mi/2.5 km wide from east to west. The biggest challenge for disabled people is the cobblestones, although they are quite mild when compared to other cities. Most bridges across the canals don't have steps and may be a bit hard to cross for disabled people. Given the small size of the city, there are no buses or taxis between the tourist attractions. Trains and buses entering the city have facilities for disabled people.

**Facts**

**Dos & Don'ts**

Do climb the 366 steps of the Belfry Tower and enjoy the breathtaking views of the city.

Do take a boat ride around the various canals. This is not only a memorable experience, but it’s also the best way to see places that cannot be reached any other way.

Do go for a romantic trip around the city on a horse-drawn carriage.

Do opt for a hot-air balloon flight to catch an aerial view of the city.

Don't forget to wear warm clothes if you are participating in the Snow and Ice Sculpture Festival held on the station square. The hall where the festival takes place is really cold, with a constant temperature of 21 F/-6 C.
Cork, Ireland

Overview

Introduction

The best way to see Ireland's 800-year-old city of Cork on the River Lee (and about 140 mi/225 km by road southwest of Dublin) is on a walking tour, booked through the Cork Tourist Office. Or, if you're hoofing it on your own, begin with an overall view of Cork from Patrick's Hill.

See & Do

Sightseeing

Cork is Ireland's second-largest city and the incredible selection of things to do and see there reflects it perfectly. From centuries-old cathedrals and castles to modern high streets, artisan markets and attractions that introduce you to Cork's troubled past, there is something for everyone in Ireland's second city.

Home to one of Ireland's most famous attractions, Blarney Castle, known for giving visitors and locals the gift of the gab, as well as the newly renovated Blackrock Castle and Observatory, which is now one of Ireland's foremost spots for stargazing, the city is rich in historic sites and attractions.

Historic Sites

Blackrock Castle

| Castle Road |
| Cork, Ireland |
| **Phone:** 21-432-6120 |
| [http://www.bco.ie](http://www.bco.ie) |

Blackrock Castle was constructed in the 16th century, commissioned by Queen Elizabeth I, to defend against pirates and other undesirables in port. Today, it operates as a living history museum and observatory. Take a tour of the castle and dungeons during the afternoon, check out the world-renowned universe exhibit, and stick around for star-gazing with the Cork Astronomy Club in the evening.

Monday-Friday 10 am-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday 11 am-5 pm. 6.50 euros adults.

Lusitania Monument

| Casement Square (take the commuter train from Kent station in Cork to the seaside town of Cobh) |
| Cobh, Ireland |

This somber monument, created by sculptor Jerome Connor, marks the sinking of the passenger liner *Lusitania* by a German U-boat torpedo just off the Kinsale coast in 1915. More than 1,190 of the 1,960 people on board perished, and its sinking helped prompt the U.S. to enter World War I.

6.05 euros adults.
Blarney Castle
Blarney Castle
Blarney, Ireland

**Phone:** 21-438-5252

[http://www.blarneycastle.ie](http://www.blarneycastle.ie)

Just a few miles/kilometers northwest of Cork is Blarney Castle. The castle is home to the Blarney Stone, which is said to give the gift of gab to all who kiss it. Long ago, a witch told a shy, tongue-tied lord of the castle that his fear of public speaking would vanish if he kissed the stone: According to legend, he did so and became a great orator. Today thousands of tourists take their lives in their hands and lean out over the castle walls to repeat the feat.

After a romantic encounter with the stone, visit the lovely garden and nearby Blarney House (Victorian decor and chandeliers made from Waterford crystal). Get there early to avoid the crowds and dress casually—depending upon the weather, Blarney Stone-kissing can be a damp, dirty business.

Daily 9 am-5:30 pm; open late in the summer. 12.50 euros adults.

St. Anne Shandon Church
Saint Anne's Mews Shandon
Cork, Ireland

**Phone:** 021-450-5906

[http://www.shandonbells.ie](http://www.shandonbells.ie)

St. Anne's was built in 1722 and remains one of Cork's most iconic structures, famous for its red sandstone and ashlar limestone, clock and 18th-century bells. The church's beautiful interior is worth checking out, but the real draw is the ringing of the Shandon bells. Don't leave before you've had a chance to ring them yourself.

Summer hours Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Sunday 11:30 am-4:30 pm; check website for winter hours. 5 euros adults.

St. Finbarre's Cathedral
Bishop Street
Cork, Ireland

**Phone:** 021-496-3387

[http://www.cathedral.cork.anglican.org](http://www.cathedral.cork.anglican.org)

Believed to have been founded in 606 AD as a monastery, the cathedral has gone through almost a dozen iterations to its present-day form. The current building, completed in 1879, is made of Cork limestone, Bath stone and red Cork marble. Visitors can see stone carved heads that were part of the medieval cathedral and browse the gift shop for local souvenirs.

Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-5:30 pm, Sunday 12:30-5 pm. 5 euros adults.

University College Cork
College Road
Cork, Ireland

**Phone:** 021-490-3000
http://www.ucc.ie

There's a lot more to do on University College Cork's campus than admire the stunning 18th-century buildings and explore its famous Stone Corridor. You can stroll through the gardens or art galleries, drop by the Crawford Observatory, and indulge in some shopping and sweets afterward. Be sure to stop in the visitors center to get a map so you don't miss anything.

**Museums**

**Cobh Heritage Center**

Lower Road (off Westbourne Place)
Cobh, Ireland

**Phone:** 021-481-3591

http://www.cobhheritage.com

Set in the old Victorian railway station, the Heritage Center's key exhibition is the Queenstown Story, which looks at the history of emigration from Cobh between 1848 and 1950, and the experience of the 2.5 million Irish immigrants who left these shores. There are also exhibits on the *Titanic*, the sinking of the *Lusitania*, and the convict ships bound for Australia, as well as a restaurant and a currency exchange.

Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-6 pm, Sunday 11 am-6 pm in summer, reduced hours in winter. 9.50 euros adults.

**Cobh Museum**

High Road
Cobh, Ireland

**Phone:** 021-481-4240

http://www.cobhmuseum.com

Located in the former Scots Presbyterian Church directly across from the cruise terminal, this small museum contains photographs and artifacts on the town's history. It also stages special themed exhibitions and has a small genealogical reference area where you can research family history.

April-October Monday-Saturday 11 am-5:30 pm, Sunday 2:30-5:30 pm. 4 euros adults.

**Cork Butter Museum**

The Tony O'Reilly Centre
Cork, Ireland

**Phone:** 21-430-0600

http://www.corkbutter.museum

Cork Butter Museum, which dates back as far as 1849, documents the long history of butter production in County Cork. In the 19th century, Cork was the largest exporter of butter in the world. Located in Shandon, where Ireland's largest open-air butchery used to operate, the Butter Museum makes for an interesting glimpse into Cork's past and the city's dependence on farmers.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. 4 euros adults.
Cork City Gaol
Convent Avenue, Sunday's Well
Cork, Ireland

**Phone:** 021-430-5022
**http://corkcitygaol.com**

Opened in 1824, the Cork City Gaol is now a living history museum where visitors can experience a day in the life of a prisoner, or perhaps meet a prisoner on one of the haunted night tours. Daytime tours are also offered, as well as admittance to the radio museum. Don't leave the Gaol without asking a guide about "the great escape."

Daily 9:30 am-5 pm. 8 euros adults.

Lifetime Lab
O'Connell Square, Shandon
Cork, Ireland

**Phone:** 21-494-1500
**http://www.lifetimelab.ie**

An interactive science museum located in the beautifully restored old waterworks buildings on the banks of the River Lee. The building itself dates back to the 1700s and now houses unique exhibitions that teach children about their environment and how to make a difference.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10 am-5 pm. 3.50 euros adults.

The Titanic Experience
White Star Line Building, 20 Casement Square
Cobh, Ireland

**Phone:** 021-481-4412
**http://www.titanicexperiencecobh.ie**

Set in the former ticket office of the White Star Line, this interactive museum recreates the experience of the 123 passengers who set sail from Cobh on the *Titanic*. Your boarding card (entry ticket) lets you follow the fate of one of the passengers, from embarkation to life on board to the chilling last moments of the sinking ship.

Daily 10 am-5:30 pm, extended hours in the summer. 9.50 euros adults.

Religious Sites

St. Colman's Cathedral
5 Cathedral Terrace
Cobh, Ireland

**Phone:** 021-481-3222
**http://www.cobhcathedralparish.ie**

After a steep walk uphill, you'll be rewarded with a splendid view of the town and its harbor from this granite cathedral. Designed in the neo-Gothic style by the British architect E. W. Pugin, it was built between 1867 and 1915. It contains a 49-bell carillon, the largest in the British Isles—and Ireland's largest
bell—weighing 3.6 tons. There are guided tours of the cathedral on Sunday afternoons (call for times), and hour-long recitals on Sunday afternoons.

Daily 8 am-6 pm. Free.

Wineries, Breweries & Distilleries

Franciscan Well Brewery

14 N. Mall
Cork, Ireland

Phone: 21-421-0130
http://www.franciscanwellbrewery.com

Founded in 1998, the Franciscan Well Brewery in Cork city is one of Ireland's longest-established craft breweries and has been recognized as the best craft brewery in Ireland. What makes this craft brewery extra special is that it is located on the site on an old Franciscan Friary which dates back over 800 years to 1214 and was founded by the King of South Munster. Brewery and tasting tours run Monday-Friday from 6.30 pm.

The Jameson Experience

Distillers Walk
Cork, Ireland

Phone: 21-461-3594
https://www.jamesonwhiskey.com

Although the Jameson Irish Whiskey story began in Dublin in 1810, operations were moved to the East Cork town of Midleton in 1975, and Jameson has been distilled there ever since. The Jameson Experience, located at the Old Midleton Distillery, is one of Cork's top attractions and includes a guided tour of the distillery, a short film about the history of Jameson and a free signature Jameson drink. There is also the chance to taste some of Jameson's premium whiskeys.

Daily 10 am-6 pm. 16 euros adults.

Recreation

Beaches

The long coastline of County Cork is famous for its Blue Flag beaches and is home to some of Ireland's most beautiful stretches of coastline.

Garretstown Beach

Garretstown (located 7 mi/12 km south of Kinsale on the R604 Road)
Cork, Ireland

A very popular beach for surfers, kite surfers and body boarders, Garretstown Beach near the seaside town of kindle is one of Cork's top surf spots. If you are not brave enough to get into the water, it is also a beautiful spot for beach walks and collecting shells.

Inchydoney Island

(located just under 2 mi/3 km from the town of Clonakilty)
Cork, Ireland
Inchydoney Beach has always been known as one of Cork's best beaches. This beautiful blue flag beach stretches out east and west from Inchydoney Island, the location of a hotel bearing the same name, and is popular with Sunday walkers, families and surfers hoping to catch a good wave.

(located just under 2 mi/3 km from the town of Clonakility).

Golf

Around 30% of the world's links courses are in Ireland. There is enough variety to maintain the interest of any golfer.

Fota Island Golf Club

Fota Island Resort
Fota Island, Ireland

Phone: 021-488-3700

http://www.fotaisland.ie/Welcome-to-Fota-Island-Golf-Club

Created in 1993 with a course designed by Christy O'Connor Jr. and Peter McEvoy, the Fota Island Golf Club now has three courses spread over a 780-acre/316-hectare estate that challenge even the most experienced professional golfers. Take on the greens, have a drink at the iconic clubhouse's Spike Bar and browse the pro shop to add some extra edge to your game.

Old Head Golf Links

Old Head Lighthouse
Kinsale, Ireland

Phone: 021-477-8444

http://www.oldhead.com

This 18-hole course sprawls over 220 acres/89 hectares of cliffs, caves and rugged, stunning coastline. Jutting out 2 mi/3 km into the Atlantic Ocean, this challenging green is worth playing for the views alone. While you're there, indulge in the decadent service and atmosphere.

Hiking & Walking

Crosshaven Railway Walk

A popular and easy walk among locals in Cork is the Carrigaline to Crosshaven riverside walkway, which follows the Owenabce River as in snakes its way out to Cork Harbour. The walkway, which was completed in 1996, is located where the tracks of the old Cork Railway used to run, with stunning views of one of Cork's most beautiful river estuaries. Rich in bird and marine life, and ending at the World's Oldest Yacht Club, this is a must-do for any keen walkers visiting Cork.

Kinsale to Charles Fort Coastal Walk

The Kindle to Charles Fort coastal walk in the seaside town of Kinsale, best known as the "food capital of Ireland" is well worth the time and effort. The route follows the coast as far as the old fort and offers spectacular views of the harbour and across the water to James Fort.

Shopping

Shop for hand-cut crystal, Irish whiskey and liqueurs, handmade sweaters and other woolens, beautiful linens, Belleek china, silver and gold jewelry with fabulous Gaelic and early Christian designs, gold
Claddagh rings, blackthorn walking sticks, peat carvings, pottery, lace, Donegal tweed and tin whistles. Prices are also good on eiderdowns and copper kitchenware.

CDs of Irish music (from traditional to rock) make wonderful souvenirs. There are also great bookstores (look for books of Irish poetry and history) and antiques shops.

**Department Stores**

**Brown Thomas**

Cork, Ireland

[http://www.brownthomas.com](http://www.brownthomas.com)

This beautiful storefront is located on St. Patrick’s Street, Cork’s main thoroughfare, and is home to the world's top designer labels from Prada and Gucci to the latest designs by Victoria Beckham and Diane Von Furstenberg. There are different levels for cosmetics, shoes and bags, ladies fashion, men’s fashion and household items.

Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 9:30 am-8 pm, Thursday 9:30 am-9 pm, Sunday 11 am-7 pm.

**Debenhams**

St. Patrick's Street
Cork, Ireland

[http://www.debenhams.ie](http://www.debenhams.ie)

Located in Merchants Quay shopping center, which is the largest in the city, this is one of Ireland's biggest department stores with names such as Oasis, Warehouse and Topshop as well as leading cosmetics brands such as Mac, Benefit and Urban Decay.

Monday-Thursday and Saturday 9 am-6 pm, Friday 9 am-9 pm, Sunday noon-6 pm.

**Markets**

**The Coal Qua[y Market**

Each Saturday, this food market takes place in the same spot where locals have sold their wares for hundreds of years. The market now attracts many artisans from around Cork County who bring their freshly baked goods and delicious home cooked meals to lucky shoppers. A true taste of Cork artisan cuisine.

**The English Market**

Prince's St.
Cork, Ireland

[http://www.englishmarket.ie](http://www.englishmarket.ie)

Much more than your average food market, this beautiful Victorian Market dates back to the 18th century, while its present-day buildings were built in 1862 by Sir John Benson. Walking through is a feast for all the senses. Local delicacies include freshly caught fish, fruit and vegetables from local farmers and Clonakilty Blackpudding, which is popular all over Ireland.

Monday-Saturday 8 am-6 pm.
Specialty Stores

Blarney Woolen Mills
Blarney
Cork, Ireland
http://www.blarney.com
Located right next to Blarney Castle and operating since 1790, this is one of the best stores in Ireland to buy authentic Irish wool pro cuts such as Aran Sweaters and warm wool scarves as well as one-off Irish gifts such as pieces of Waterford Crystal or Celtic jewelry.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-6 pm, Sunday 10 am-6 pm.

Christy's Irish Store
Cobh Heritage Center, Lower Road (off Westbourne Place)
Cobh, Ireland
Phone: 021-481-4023
http://www.kilkennyshop.com
You'll find a beautiful range of Irish goods, from knitwear to crystal, pottery, jewelry and more, at this gift shop in the Cobh Heritage Center. It's a sister store of the Kilkenny Group, which promotes Irish design throughout the country.

Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-5 pm, Sunday 11 am-5 pm.

Cobh Pastimes
The Cunard Center, 29 West Beach
Cobh, Ireland
Phone: 021-481-3485
http://www.cobhpastimes.ie
Step back to the days of the Titanic at this old-fashioned photography studio. You'll dress in vintage costumes and pose in a themed set for a unique gift and a personal souvenir of your Irish trip. No appointment necessary.

June-September daily 11 am-6 pm, call for winter hours.

O Conaill's Chocolate shop
16 French Church St.
Cork, Ireland
http://www.oconaillchocolate.ie
The O'Conaill family has been making artisan chocolate since 1979, and its chocolates are a favorite across the city. The two-story shop and cafe located on French Church Street is the perfect place to escape from the unreliable Irish weather and to enjoy some melt-in-the-mouth, locally made hot chocolate. The chocolate itself is made in Carrigaline, just 6 mi/10 km south of the city.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-6 pm, Sunday 11 am-5 pm.
**Pinnochio's Toy and Gift Store**

2 Paul St.
Cork, Ireland

[http://www.pinocchios.ie](http://www.pinocchios.ie)

This toy and gift store is a true gem, packed with unique toys built to last. The shop is a family-run business that specializes in beautifully crafted and ethically produced wooden toys for young children. Excellent store for buying gifts for loved ones back home.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-5:30 pm.

**Tregan Craft Centre**

20 Casement Square
Cobh, Ireland

**Phone:** 021-481-4412

[http://www.tregancrafts.eu](http://www.tregancrafts.eu)

Located in the historic White Star Line building alongside the Titanic Experience, this craft center and design gallery features one-of-a-kind Irish handmade crafts and gifts. Many of the goods are produced by longtime family businesses, using traditional skills in textiles, ceramics, glass and more.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-6 pm, Sunday 11 am-6 pm, reduced hours in winter.

**Dining**

**Dining Overview**

Ireland offers a variety of wholesome foods for every budget. Do try grilled or roast beef, cured hams, breads, fish, oysters, mussels, eel (some of the restaurants have viewing tanks) and very hearty local meals (not fine dining, but they're delicious).

Irish food is traditionally meat-based, so vegetarian choices sometimes are a bit lackluster. However, nobody can do more with a potato than the Irish. Don't leave without trying the simple and delicious potato cake—a flour-and-potato concoction sauteed in butter. Other delicacies include *brack*, a fruity bread that is delicious fresh from the oven and spread with butter; soda bread made from flour, salt, baking soda and buttermilk, the traditional daily bread of most Irish families from the mid-19th century; and *colcannon*, a creamy, delicious potato dish made with milk, leeks, and kale or cabbage.

Cork is also blessed with plentiful salmon. Served in a variety of ways, it can be found in the finest restaurants and in the humblest of pubs. And though it may sound redundant, the Irish (unsurprisingly) make the best Irish stew (mutton, onions and potatoes).

Whether you stay at a bed-and-breakfast or a hotel, your room is likely to come with a morning meal. If you've the stomach capacity for it, you can usually have a huge bowl of cereal, a basket of bread and scones, and a plateful of eggs, bacon and sausage. Although it used to be difficult to find lighter fare, almost every property now has healthier options such as fresh fruit and yogurt.

Cork is well-known all over Ireland for the high quality of its food and local produce. It plays host to many food festivals throughout the year and is home to some of the country's best restaurants. Ingredients are often sourced from local farmers, which means everything is served fresh, be it from the fields or the sea.
No stay in Cork would be complete without trying some of the local cheeses produced as well as Clonakilty Blackpudding and various other pork products.

**Local & Regional**

**Elbow Lane Brew and Smokehouse**
Oliver Plunkett Street  
Cork, Ireland  
**Phone:** 21-239-0479  
[http://www.elbowlane.ie](http://www.elbowlane.ie)

Cork’s most popular smokehouse attracts big crowds with its delicious food and in-house brewery. Situated in a gorgeous building right in the city center, this restaurant is best known for its incredible steaks, made with locally sourced Irish beef. It offers both inside and outside seating plus has a full bar.

Monday-Thursday 5-10 pm, Friday 5-11 pm, Saturday 4-11 pm and Sunday 4-10 pm. Reservations not accepted. Most major credit cards.

**Gilbert's Bistro in the Square**
11 Pearse Square  
Cobh, Ireland  
**Phone:** 21-481-1300  
[http://www.gilbertsincobh.com](http://www.gilbertsincobh.com)

Cobh Cathedral towers above this friendly bistro in historic Pearse Square, set in a 19th-century house and decorated with contemporary art. Stop in for a coffee and homemade scone, or try delicious lunch and dinner dishes such as traditional beef-and-Guinness stew, braised lamb shank or pasta dishes. Save room for the scrumptious desserts.

Monday-Friday 5-9 pm, Saturday noon-9 pm, Sunday 1-9 pm. $$.

**Jacob's Ladder**
Yacht Club Quay  
Cobh, Ireland  
**Phone:** 21-481-5566  
[http://www.watersedgehotel.ie/restaurant.html](http://www.watersedgehotel.ie/restaurant.html)

Next to Cobh Heritage Center, this bistro-style restaurant in the Waters Edge Hotel is a favorite with visitors. Seafood takes pride of place on a menu that also features steaks, chicken and pasta dishes—all made with local produce. There's a simple bar menu at lunchtime. The large windows and balcony offer splendid views of the harbor.

Daily noon-9 pm. $$.

**Gourmet Burger Bistro**
Bridge Street  
Cork, Ireland  
**Phone:** 21-450-5404  
[http://www.gourmetburgerbistro.ie](http://www.gourmetburgerbistro.ie)
Not to be confused with Gourmet Burger Kitchen, a popular chain of burger restaurants around Ireland, this is Cork’s most popular independent burger restaurant. Offering a wide selection of delicious burgers made from organic meat served in a cozy and tranquil bistro.

Monday-Saturday noon-10 pm and Sunday 2-9 pm. Most major credit cards.

**Market Lane**

5 Oliver Plunkett St.
Cork, Ireland

**Phone:** 21-427-4710

[http://www.marketlane.ie](http://www.marketlane.ie)

An award-winning restaurant that continues to draw in both locals and tourists year after year. What makes this restaurant so special is that the menu actually changes throughout the year to coincide with what vegetable, meat and fish is available in the local market as well as from local artisan producers.

Monday-Thursday 5-10 pm, Friday noon-10:30 pm, Saturday noon-11 pm, Sunday 1-9 pm.

**Nash 19**

19 Princes St.
Cork, Ireland

**Phone:** 21-427-0880


This hidden gem is located just a stone's throw from The English Market. We recommend stopping there for lunch and trying out the tomato soup with freshly baked soda bread or the incredible cheese selection, which is produced locally in County Cork.

Monday-Friday 7:30 am-4 pm, Saturday 8:30 am-4 pm. Most major credit cards.

**The Cornerstone Restaurant**

40-A Cornmarket St.
Cork, Ireland

**Phone:** 21-427-4777

[http://www.cornstorecork.com](http://www.cornstorecork.com)

One of the best places in the city to indulge in some locally sourced seafood such as smoked haddock, mussels chowder or delicious pan-seared sea bass. It is also well known for its premium dry-aged steaks.

Monday-Thursday noon-3:30 pm and 5-9:30 pm, Friday and Saturday noon-3 am, Sunday 1-4 pm and 5-9 pm.

**The Ivory Tower**

The Exchange Buildings
Cork, Ireland

**Phone:** 21-427-4665

[http://www.ivorytower.ie](http://www.ivorytower.ie)

One of Cork’s most unusual and expensive restaurants. Expect to pay a lot more for a meal there than in any of the other restaurant in the city, but you will also be guaranteed a very unique dining experience.
Patrons should go with an open mind as the chef creates imaginative and unusual tasting courses such as carpaccio of wood pigeon or rabbit in Beamish and prune jelly.

Thursday-Saturday 7-11:30 pm. Most major credit cards.

**Titanic Bar & Grill**

20 Casement Square
Cobh, Ireland

**Phone:** 21-481-4585

[http://www.titanicbarandgrill.ie](http://www.titanicbarandgrill.ie)

Set in the historic Scott's Building, the elegant bar is a popular local watering hole. The restaurant menu ranges from upscale burgers and pub favorites (bangers and mash, fish and chips) to fresh-caught fish and prime steaks. You can dine al fresco on the wonderful sun deck overlooking the harbor.

Monday-Friday 11 am-9 pm, Saturday noon-9 pm, Sunday 12:30-8 pm. $$.

**Trade Winds**

16 Casement Square
Cobh, Ireland

**Phone:** 21-481-3754

[http://www.tradewindsrestaurant.ie](http://www.tradewindsrestaurant.ie)

This simple yet elegant restaurant is set above a cozy bar and has one of the most extensive menus in town. It ranges from starters of fresh seasonal soup or pan-fried kangaroo to a wide choice of fish, seafood, meat and vegetarian dishes. The stuffed fillet cove, filled with smoked ham, mushroom and onion stuffing and served with cherry brandy sauce, is a popular choice.

Tuesday-Friday noon-10:30 pm, Saturday 6-10:30 pm, Sunday noon-7 pm. $$$.

**Cuisines**

**Italian**

**Scooz'i's**

2-5 Winthrop Lane
Cork, Ireland

**Phone:** 21-427-5077

[http://www.scoozis.ie](http://www.scoozis.ie)

By far the most popular Italian restaurant in the city. Predictably, Scooz'i's is known for its pizzas and pastas. Family friendly and reasonably priced, it also has a wide selection of delicious desserts to ensure you leave on a sweet note.

Monday-Thursday 8 am-10 pm, Friday and Saturday 8 am-10:30 pm.
**Mediterranean**

**Orso**

Pembroke Street  
Cork, Ireland  
**Phone:** 21-243-8000  
**https://www.orso.ie**

Cork’s most popular Mediterranean restaurant offers delicious healthy meals that are fresh and vibrant. It’s known for its bold flavors from the ever-changing menu and for its own roast of coffee.

Monday 8:30 am-6 pm, Tuesday-Thursday 8:30 am-10 pm, Friday and Saturday 8:30 am-10:30 pm. Most major credit cards.

**Vegetarian**

**Cafe Paradiso**

16 Lancaster Quay  
Cork, Ireland  
**Phone:** 21-427-7939  
**http://www.cafeparadiso.ie**

One of Ireland’s best vegetarian restaurants has enough mouth-watering dishes to entice carnivores to try out its carefully crafted masterpieces. The winner of many prestigious awards, this inventive restaurant is sure to please your tastebuds with unique dishes such as roasted eggplant with honey and cardamon or black bean, chocolate and chilli soup.

Monday-Saturday 5:30-10 pm. Most major credit cards.

**Steak Houses**

**Harbour Brown's Steakhouse**

11 West Beach  
Cobh, Ireland  
**Phone:** 021-481-1604  
**http://www.harbourbrownssteakhouse.ie**

Not only is this casual but highly rated restaurant known for its juicy, succulent steaks, but it's also a great lunchtime spot, where you can enjoy generous helpings of a traditional carvery menu (served until 4 pm) or opt for lighter fare. In addition to prime Irish steaks, the evening menu features Atlantic salmon, crispy duck and other dishes made from seasonal local ingredients.

Wednesday-Sunday noon-10 pm. $$-$$$. 
Security

Personal Safety

Cork is, in general, a very safe city to visit. Like many cities in Ireland, there are good spots and bad spots that are easily identified by where they are located in relation to the river: Similar to Dublin, the North side of the city is known to be a lot rougher than the south. Nightlife hotspots such as the Grand Parade, McCurtain Street and Washington Street can get quite rowdy late at night once bars and clubs close. The areas around both the bus and train stations should be avoided late at night.

Health

Cork city is home to three excellent hospitals, Cork University Hospital (Wilton, phone 21-492-2000), The Mercy and The South Infirmary. There is also a 24-hour VHI Swiftcare Clinic (Mahon, phone 18-908-6696) that provides walk-in medical care for minor injuries.

Facts

Geostats

Passport/Visa Requirements: Passports are needed by citizens of Canada and the U.S. Reconfirm travel document information with your carrier before departure.

Population: 194,184.

Languages: English, Gaelic.

Predominant Religions: Christian (Roman Catholic, Protestant, Anglican).

Time Zone: Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the last Saturday of April to the last Saturday of October.

Voltage Requirements: 240 volts.

Telephone Codes: 353, country code; 021, city code;

Money

Taxes

A 21% VAT (value-added tax) is incorporated in prices for almost all goods. But with a little paperwork, nonresidents of the European Union can obtain a tax refund. To reclaim the tax you paid, you must see the VAT refund officer at the airport before departure and present the article you purchased (unused), the receipt and a refund form (which must be obtained at the place of purchase). Some larger stores will handle most of the paperwork for you and then mail you the refund.

Room rates for hotels include VAT at the reduced rate of 13.5%. Some hotels and restaurants may also add a service charge of 10%-15% to the bill.
**Tipping**

Tip 10%-15% in restaurants (if the service charge has not been added to the bill) and 10% for taxi drivers. Do not tip if you are served at the bar in a pub: It's not expected, even if you order food in addition to drinks. And do not tip at all if the service is poor.

**Weather**

May to mid-September is by far the warmest and generally the driest time of year, relatively speaking (Ireland is often chilly and damp). The absolute best times to visit are probably from mid-May to the end of June and during the month of October—the weather is good for touring, and there are likely to be fewer tourists. The rest of the summer is fine, though a bit crowded. In summer, temperatures generally fall in a range of 59°F/15°C to 68°F/20°C.

Winter days can be drizzly, cold and short (the sun sets around 4 pm), but because of the Gulf Stream, the temperature seldom falls below freezing, averaging about 45°F/7°C. Winter is also an opportune time to meet the Irish—few tourists are about, and you can easily find conversation at the local pub. No matter when you go, a light raincoat or Windbreaker is essential, and you’ll need a wool sweater and a jacket or coat, especially at night.

**Transportation**

Unless you've got a lot of time, the most efficient ways to see Cork and the rest of the country are by rental car (self-drive or chauffeured) or on an escorted bus tour. If you undertake a do-it-yourself road trip, be aware that driving is on the left side of the road, and be prepared for very narrow roads and bridges in most of the country. Also beware of livestock, some of which are easily capable of leaping fences. Dark-coated animals are especially difficult to see after dark or in murky weather.

Cork Airport is one of Ireland's three principal international airports. It is located 5 mi/8 km south of the city center. For more information, visit http://www.corkairport.com.

**Waterford, Ireland**

**Overview**

**Introduction**

Founded by the Vikings, the town of Waterford, 85 mi/135 km south of Dublin, is Ireland's oldest city. It was there that the Norman warrior, Strongbow, established England's first grip over Ireland. Today it is home to the Waterford Crystal factory. You can tour the factory and watch crystal being made from beginning to end.

Waterford, which has well-preserved sections of its city walls and towers, is full of atmospheric buildings where you can soak up its medieval and Georgian history. Key sights include Reginald's Tower, the Medieval Museum, Bishop's Palace, Waterford City Hall and Christ Church Cathedral. Smaller places of interest, including the ruins of the French Church (where Huguenots worshipped) and Blackfriars Abbey, are best seen on a walking tour.
See & Do
Sightseeing

Historic Sites

Bishop's Palace
The Mall
Waterford, Ireland
Phone: 076-110-2501
http://www.waterfordtreasures.com/bishops-palace
Set in an elegant Georgian townhouse, this museum looks at the life of the privileged classes of the 18th century. It is filled with fine furnishings, silver and glassware, including the oldest piece of Waterford Crystal in the world.
Monday-Friday 9:15 am-5 pm, Saturday 9:30 am-5 pm, Sunday 11 am-5 pm, extended hours in the summer. 7 euros adults.

Reginald's Tower
The Quay
Waterford, Ireland
Phone: 076-110-2501
http://www.waterfordtreasures.com/reginalds-tower
Originally erected by the Vikings, this stone tower was rebuilt in the 12th century and is Ireland's oldest building. The exhibition inside features exquisite Viking treasures, including the Waterford Kite Brooch and a ninth-century sword from a warrior's grave. A video presentation on the top floor outlines the tower's place in history.
Wednesday-Sunday 9:30 am-5 pm, extended hours in the summer. 4 euros adults.

Waterford City Hall
The Mall
Waterford, Ireland
It's worth stepping inside this grand Georgian building, built in 1783, to see the massive chandelier of 18th century Waterford glass. It hangs in the council chamber along with a famous painting of early Waterford by William Van der Hagen.
Monday-Friday 9 am-5 pm. Free.

Waterford Crystal Visitor Centre
Waterford, Ireland
http://www.waterfordvisitorcentre.com
Waterford Crystal has been produced in the city since 1783. After the old factory on the outskirts of town closed, this new manufacturing center opened in 2010 in the heart of town. Take the fascinating one-hour tour to see the craftsmen at work—from the blowing room to the cutting, sculpting and engraving processes. There's also a display and shop where you can purchase your own crystal treasure.
Museums

Medieval Museum

The Mall
Waterford, Ireland

Phone: 076-110-2501
http://www.waterfordtreasures.com/medieval-museum

This modern museum is built around two medieval buildings, the 13th century Choristers’ Hall and the 15th century Mayor’s Wine Vault. They make a fine repository for Waterford’s medieval treasures, which include the Great Charter Roll of 1372, Anglo-Norman artifacts and the beautiful Cloth of Gold religious vestments from the 15th century.

Monday-Friday 9:15 am-5 pm, Saturday 9:30 am-5 pm, Sunday 11 am-5 pm, extended hours in the summer. 7 euros adults.

Religious Sites

Christ Church Cathedral

Cathedral Square
Waterford, Ireland

Phone: 051-858-958
http://christchurchwaterford.com

This is Ireland's only neoclassical Georgian cathedral, designed by renowned architect John Roberts in the late 18th century. This Protestant cathedral stands on the site of a medieval church where the Norman conqueror Strongbow married an Irish princess. Highlights include a pillar from the medieval church, the stained glass window and stucco plasterwork.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm. Free, donations suggested.

Dublin, Ireland

Overview

Introduction

Dublin, Ireland, is the small, charming, eminently walkable city that visitors expect, and the corner pub offers a warm welcome. Wry perceptions are uttered with a winsome Irish lilt in Dublin. And, as visitors stroll along the city's handsome Georgian squares, they'll realize the necessity of an umbrella.

But today's Dublin also includes high-tech companies, many of them located in the lovely Georgian houses that line the city's streets. High-rises and cosmopolitan restaurants and hotels continue to spring up next door to traditional taverns and friendly guesthouses, and a beehive of construction work aimed at improving the city's infrastructure buzzes around them.
Dublin is a city in transition, from medieval capital to exciting commercial center—a hip, electric city, astonishing even visitors who make it their business to stay on Europe's cutting edge. Dublin's unpretentious charm is still there, but chic urbanity has moved in beside it. Now known for its vibrant nightlife, Dublin has become a favorite city-break destination for young European visitors. Visitors could spend a week in Dublin and still not cover all the attractions.

**Highlights**

**Sights**—Ancient Christ Church Cathedral; the 18th-century Georgian architecture of Merrion Square; the beautiful *Book of Kells* at Trinity College; St. Patrick's Cathedral, where the namesake saint baptized converts to Christianity at a well; Dublin Castle, with its elegant State Apartments.

**Museums**—The National Museum of Ireland's sites at Collins Barracks and Kildare Street; the impressive collection at the Irish Museum of Modern Art; the Dublin Writers Museum; Dublin City Gallery: The Hugh Lane; Dublinia, the Viking heritage center; The Chester Beatty Library, with its magnificent Asian art holdings.

**Memorable Meals**—Haute Irish cuisine at Thornton's; modern Irish cooking at L'Ecrivain; lunches of fresh fish and seafood at Cavistons Food Emporium in Sandycove.

**Late Night**—Mixing with the locals at Mulligans; listening to an up-and-coming Irish band at Whelan's; relaxing in a private booth at Kehoe's; laughing at the alternative comedians at the International Comedy Club; following in the footsteps of the Dubliners in O'Donoghues.

**Walks**—Enjoying breathtaking vistas of Dublin and Wicklow while hiking the Wicklow Way from Marlay Park; meandering through Temple Bar; strolling through the People's Park enjoying spectacular views of Dun Laoghaire; walking around the Baily Lighthouse near Howth; along the North and South Bull Walls or Dun Laoghaire piers.

**Especially for Kids**—Farmleigh and the Dublin Zoo, both in Phoenix Park; the Viking Splash Tour; Liffey River Cruises; the wonderful playground at Malahide Castle, including the Fry Model Railway Museum and Tara's Palace antique dollhouse and toy museum.

**Geography**

Dublin is situated on the east coast of Ireland. Its famed river, the Liffey, cuts through the center of the city and empties into Dublin Bay, dividing the city into north and south. On the north side are 18th-century architectural masterpieces—the Custom House and the Four Courts—and also the historic thoroughfare of O'Connell Street. At the northern end of O'Connell Street are Parnell Square and the Gate Theatre. The Abbey Theatre is east of O'Connell Street. South of the Liffey are Trinity College, the trendy (but old) streets of Temple Bar, the fine Georgian buildings of St. Stephen's Green, Grafton Street's upscale stores and restaurants, and most hotels.

Postal codes help serve as indicators of general location within Dublin, and most addresses incorporate them. With very few exceptions, odd-numbered postal codes are used to designate areas north of the Liffey. Even-numbered ones are south of the river. As examples, addresses in Dublin 1 are just north of the river; those in Dublin 2 are immediately south. County Dublin represents the Dublin metropolitan area north and south of the city. Addresses in County Dublin include the name of the village (Dalkey, for example), followed by the abbreviation "Co. Dublin."
History

Dublin's history is one marked by a tragic influx of conquerors. When the pagan Celts arrived from the European continent sometime around 600 BC, some of them settled on the banks of the Liffey and named the area *Baile Atha Cliath* (meaning the “ford of hurdles”—the name is still visible on buses and license plates).

In the fifth century, Christianity began to sweep across the island, led by the conversion efforts of St. Patrick. Religious scholarship flourished in Ireland until the ninth century, when Viking invaders wreaked havoc on the Emerald Isle and firmly established the city of Dublin. In 1014, the Vikings were defeated by the Irish king Brian Boru in the Battle of Clontarf, but it wasn't long after that the British took an interest in their western neighbor.

In the late 12th century, England's King Henry II sent his well-disciplined army of Anglo-Normans to Ireland, claiming sovereignty over Dublin and the surrounding area. After triumph in the English civil war in the mid-1600s, the Protestant Oliver Cromwell also took control of Dublin, precipitating a power struggle between Catholics and Protestants that has continued to the present day.

As the seat of English rule in Ireland, the town prospered. An 18th-century economic boom fostered a Georgian architectural expansion still evident in the city. At the beginning of the 19th century, however, the Act of Union between England and Ireland abolished the Irish parliament, and many of the city’s aristocrats left for England. This mass exodus was accentuated by the Great Famine of the 1840s and ‘50s, when 2 million Irish people either died of starvation or moved abroad as a result of a far-reaching potato blight and staple-crop failure. Emigration continued over the next century, dramatically reducing the population and inflaming a movement for Irish independence (or Home Rule) from Britain.

During Easter of 1916, a band of Irish rebels led by James Connolly and Patrick Pearse took over Dublin's General Post Office and proclaimed an Irish republic in what became known as the Easter Rising. The British subsequently executed most of the rebel leaders, enraging many Dubliners who had been less enthusiastic about independence. On 6 December 1921, the Irish Free State was finally established. A bitter civil war immediately followed, leaving Dublin in ruin. The conflict ended in a partition of Ireland: The 26 southern counties gained their independence, but six counties known as Northern Ireland remained part of the U.K.

Dubliners rebuilt their city, and after seven turbulent and impoverished decades, they experienced an economic upturn in the 1990s. Many former emigrants returned to their native land. With them came immigrants from eastern Europe, Africa and Asia, giving Ireland its first experience of being a multicultural society. An abundance of new restaurants, pubs and hotels cropped up, reflecting the increasingly cosmopolitan tastes and spending power of the local populace. The city's expansion and resurgence is still going strong: The government projects that by 2020 the population of Ireland will have grown from 4.1 million to 5.3 million, and immigrants will account for 19% of the nation's population.

But the capital has struggled with its growth. A hyperinflated property market has left many burdened by huge mortgages. During the prosperous early 2000s, Dubliners developed expensive lifestyles, which are now financed through credit-card spending—giving the Irish one of the highest levels of personal debt in Europe. A recent movement encourages people to shop around and to refuse to pay for overpriced goods, but the Irish nevertheless travel frequently, especially to southern Europe and the U.S., in search of bargains. Fiscal conservation is under way as the country is struggling with a currency crisis and Ireland attempts to stabilize its economy.
Port Information

Location

Dublin Port Authority books approximately 90 cruise ships and welcomes more than 130,000 passengers each year.

Smaller liners can dock on the River Liffey, and large ships currently dock at Alexandra Quay, an area more suited to cargo ships. There's not much when you disembark, as the area is virtually all industrial, so your best bet is to take one of the shuttle buses or a cab into town. The entire Quay is experiencing redevelopment, including facility updates and other improvements, but work is likely to be ongoing for several years.

Dublin Port is centrally located, only minutes from Dublin city center and major tourist attractions. The port is also within walking distance of the Georgian-style 1791 Customs House, where you can stroll through the arcades and pavilions.

Potpourri

Killiney and neighboring Dalkey form "the Beverly Hills of Ireland." George Bernard Shaw was from there, and residents now include Bono and The Edge from the band U2, singers Sinead O'Connor, Van Morrison, Enya and filmmaker Neil Jordan. Internationally renowned writer Maeve Binchy was born there and lived there until her death in 2012.

At noon and 6 pm, the national broadcaster RTE stops all TV and radio programs on its main stations to play "the Angelus," a one-minute recording of church bells, to allow people to say their daily prayers. The tradition is a vestige of the institutional power held by the Catholic Church in the days when the station was founded.

Stay alert to pick up a few Dublin words and phrases such as me old segosha (my old friend); craic (fun, good conversation and entertainment); holliers (holidays); and the mott (a girlfriend or wife).

Because of the smoking ban in workplaces and public venues, the Irish have developed the new custom of "smirting"—smoking and flirting with people they meet outdoors. The term is said to have originated in Dublin's nightclub-rich Temple Bar district.

Dublin's most notable statues are given nicknames that are usually rhyming and often politically incorrect. A statue of Molly Malone near Grafton Street is called "the tart with a cart" or "the dish with the fish." The Anna Livia statue, a woman sitting in a fountain to represent the spirit of the River Liffey, was unveiled in 1988 and promptly became "the floozy in the Jacuzzi"—or even more impolitely "the hoo-er in the sewer." The sculpture attracted so much abuse from pranksters that it was replaced by the Millennium Spire, soon known as "the stiletto in the ghetto," among other names. In the Grand Canal Basin, just off Pearse Street, the floating cubic building—officially known as the Waterways Ireland Visitors Centre—is affectionately referred to as "the box in the docks."

Dublin's O'Connell Bridge, which spans the River Liffey and connects the north and south sides of the city, is known for being the only bridge in Europe that is just as wide as it is long. What's more, it's not the only O'Connell Bridge in the city; the other can be found in St. Stephen's Green, where it dramatically spans a pond.
Dublin's Trinity College is probably best known as the home of the legendary Book of Kells. Its lengthy list of notable alumni, however, includes Jonathan Swift, Oscar Wilde, Samuel Beckett and even Bram Stoker, author of Dracula, who was born in Dublin.

See & Do

Sightseeing

The River Liffey is the center of activity in Dublin today, just as it was in medieval times. Though not particularly picturesque or impressive, the river's banks are a good place to begin exploring the city. South of the Liffey you'll find much of the tourist infrastructure and the new developments spurred by the city's rapid economic growth. Hotels, restaurants, trendy cafes, shops and attractions abound. North of the Liffey, the flavor of the old city is easier to find in less-gentrified neighborhoods. There, stately Georgian buildings coexist with humble 19th-century workers' cottages. To get an understanding of where Dublin has been and where it's going, spend some time on each side of the Liffey.

One of the most vibrant areas of the city is the rejuvenated docklands district to the east, where numerous cultural events take place and Dublin celebrates its maritime origins. Near Temple Bar, the striking James Joyce Bridge, designed by Spanish architect Santiago Calatrava and built in 2003, spans the river.

Although some of Dublin's once-posh neighborhoods have become run-down and seedy, much of their elegance remains. No expense was spared initially in Dublin's construction and embellishment. As you walk around, notice the brightly colored doors on many of the town houses. The best examples of Georgian architecture are at Merrion Square and Fitzwilliam Square on the south side of Dublin and at Mountjoy Square on the north side.

Chief among Dublin's churches are St. Patrick's Cathedral (whose most famous dean was satirist Jonathan Swift) and Christ Church Cathedral (originally constructed in 1038 but rebuilt many times since). The finest examples of ancient fortifications in the city are Dublin Castle and Malahide Castle (8 mi/13 km north of the city center). The latter is noted for its lovely antiques and outstanding gardens.

Ireland's oldest university is Trinity College, founded by Queen Elizabeth I in 1592. Its refined academic atmosphere remains: Step through the Regent's House passageway and you'll be transported from the busy downtown streets to a serene quadrangle surrounded by vintage buildings. On display at the Old Library is the college's most famous treasure: the must-see Book of Kells, an illuminated manuscript that dates from around AD 800.

Dublin is also a city of wonderful museums. Take time to see the Irish Museum of Modern Art (IMMA) and the National Museum of Ireland. We also enjoyed Dublinia—a re-creation of Dublin as it was when Vikings founded the city more than 1,000 years ago.

Visit the lovely villages of Dalkey, once the site of seven ancient churches, and Sandycove, south of the city center, both accessible by public transportation. The Heritage Center in Dalkey Castle will provide all the information needed. Also check out the picturesque seaside village of Howth, north of the city center, and the medieval Howth Castle on the grounds of the Deer Park Hotel. Behind the hotel is a beautiful walk through the rhododendron gardens that will take you up to a rocky ledge with spectacular views of Dublin Bay.

Literary Dublin deserves its own tour, with a first stop at the Dublin Writers Museum. Merrion Square boasts the homes of a number of noted writers, including Oscar Wilde and William Butler Yeats. Just
outside the city, in the hamlet of Sandycove, is the James Joyce Museum (not to be confused with the James Joyce Centre, in Dublin 1), whose Martello tower is one of the most sacred spots for lovers of literature (the tower is the setting for the opening of Joyce's *Ulysses*). Of course, almost all of Dublin was the setting for *Ulysses*, and there are numerous maps and tours tracing the meanderings of Leopold Bloom (Dublin celebrates Bloomsday—the day on which all the action in *Ulysses* takes place during the year 1904—on 16 June). Literary pub tours also abound.

**Historic Sites**

**Christ Church Cathedral**

Christchurch Place  
Dublin, Ireland 8  
**Phone:** 01-677-8099  
[http://www.christchurchdublin.ie](http://www.christchurchdublin.ie)

Dublin’s oldest building was erected in 1038 and has been rebuilt several times since. It was the center of medieval Dublin. Inside is a range of oddities and relics, including the heart of St. Laurence, Dublin’s patron saint.

Open daily. 6 euros adults.

**Malahide Castle**

Malahide, Ireland  
**Phone:** 01-816-9538  

About 10 mi/16 km outside Dublin, Malahide Castle is the ancestral home of the Talbot family, who lived there 1185-1973. The extensive grounds (250 acres/101 hectares) incorporate the 20-acre/8-hectare Talbot Botanic Garden, the Malahide Historical Society Museum, and soon, an international cricket ground with seating for 12,000 fans. The castle recently underwent a 12-million-euro redevelopment that included an interpretive exhibit in the castle’s basement, as well as a shopping and cafe center. To get there, take the DART or bus No. 42 from the city center.

Open daily 9:30 am-5:30 pm. Closed for Christmas holidays. 12 euros adults.

**City Hall**

Dame Street  
Dublin, Ireland 2  
**Phone:** 01-222-2204  
[http://www.dublincity.ie/dublincityhall](http://www.dublincity.ie/dublincityhall)

Inside is an interesting exhibition about Dublin's history, with artifacts and multimedia presentations. The building, which dates from 1779 and was occupied by rebels during the 1916 Easter Rising, has been renovated. There is also a great cafe in the basement. Guided tours are available.

Open Monday-Saturday 10 am-5:15 pm. 4 euros adults (3.60 euros if booked online), 2 euros students and seniors, 1.50 euros children, 10 euros families. Admission to The Rotunda is free.
### Dalkey Castle and Heritage Centre

**Castle Street**  
Dublin, Ireland  
**Phone:** 01-285-8366  
http://www.dalkeycastle.com

Situated about 5 mi/8 km outside the city center in one of the few remaining of Dalkey's seven castles, this interesting place boasts an impressive exhibition on the history of the Dalkey area, and you can tour the remains of the castle as well as visit a church and graveyard. An art gallery is also on-site.

Monday-Friday 10 am-5:30 pm, Saturday and Sunday 11 am-5:30 pm. 8.50 euros adults.

### Dublin Castle

**Dame Street**  
Dublin, Ireland 2  
**Phone:** 01-645-8813  
http://www.dublincastle.ie

This castle is a joy for anyone interested in archaeology or history. Dublin Castle was built in the 13th century on top of the foundations of a Viking structure. It lies on the site of Dublin's first-ever prehistoric fortification. The River Poddle, which formed the ancient tributary with the River Liffey, now runs under the castle. The tidal pool of this river gave the city its name—Dubh Linn (Black Pool). The medieval castle, set amid sprawling formal gardens and courtyards, served as a military fortress, prison, court of law and the core of British administration in Ireland until 1922. It's now used for state functions and government conferences. Guided tours of the elegant State Apartments, the Undercroft (where the city's old walls join the castle) and the Gothic revival Chapel Royal are available.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-4:45 pm, Sunday noon-4:45 pm. 4.50 euros adults.

### Garda Museum

**Dame Street**  
Dublin, Ireland 2  
**Phone:** 01-666-9998  
http://www.dublincastle.ie/VisitorFacilities/TheGardaPoliceMuseum

The Police Museum is another attraction within the grounds of Dublin Castle and is in the Record Tower, the last intact tower of the castle and of medieval Dublin itself. It houses archives and artifacts of the Garda Síochána as well as the Irish Constabulary, the Royal Irish Constabulary, the Dublin Police and the Dublin Metropolitan Police. It may be of particular interest to people interested in policing in Ireland before 1922.

Admission is by prior arrangement only. Free.

### Glasnevin Cemetery

**Finglas Road**  
Dublin, Ireland 11  
**Phone:** 01-882-6500  
http://www.glasnevintrust.ie
Some of the great figures of Irish history and literature have been laid to rest in this graveyard, including Charles Stewart Parnell, Michael Collins, Maud Gonne, Countess Markievicz, Daniel O'Connell, Eamon De Valera, Brendan Behan and The Dubliners singer Luke Kelly.

Tours daily at 11:30 am and 2:30 pm. One-hour walking tours are available daily at 11:30 am and 2:30 pm and cost 6 euros adults. Tickets combining walking tours with admission to the Glasnevin Museum are 10 euros adults, 9 euros children, students and seniors.

**Irish National Stud**

Tully
Kildare, Ireland

Even if you're not a racing fan, the story of the National Stud and the beautiful horses that are bred and trained here are worth a visit. You can take a guided tour of the facilities and visit the Horse Museum. Leave plenty of time for a stroll in the Japanese Gardens, which were established by Colonel Hall-Walker and designed by master Japanese horticulturalist Tassa Eida. Symbolic landmarks trace the journey of the human soul from birth to the afterlife in these peaceful, meditative surroundings. St. Fiachra's Garden displays Ireland's timeless natural beauty.

Daily 9 am-6 pm. 12.50 euros adults.

**Kilmainham Jail**

Inchicore Road, Kilmainham
Dublin, Ireland 8

Phone: 01-453-5984


Until this jail's closure in 1924, the British incarcerated—and, in 1916, after the Easter Rising, executed—Irish political prisoners at this site. For those who want a more detailed look at events, a collection of documents focuses on the role of women in the rebellion. It's an interesting yet disturbing place to visit. See the audiovisual show and take a guided tour.

Daily 9:30 am-6 pm. 6 euros adults.

**Marsh's Library**

St. Patrick's Close
Dublin, Ireland 8

Phone: 01-454-3511

[http://www.marshlibrary.ie](http://www.marshlibrary.ie)

Just a few steps away from St. Patrick's Cathedral is Ireland's oldest public library. Founded by Archbishop Narcissus Marsh in 1701, this tiny gem is charming and well worth a visit for its collection of early books and manuscripts, not to mention the cages used to confine readers in an effort to discourage theft of rare or valuable volumes.

Monday and Wednesday-Friday 9:30 am-5 pm, Saturday 10 am-5 pm. 3 euros adults.
St. Brigid's Cathedral and the Round Tower
Market Square
Kildare, Ireland

Dating from 1223, the cathedral stands on one of Ireland's most important religious sites, believed to be the place where St. Brigid founded a religious community of nuns in the late fifth century. Brigid is one of Ireland's three patron saints, and in the cathedral's west stained-glass window she is depicted alongside St. Patrick and St. Colmcille. Beside the cathedral, the 12th-century round tower is the second-highest in Ireland. Made of granite and limestone, it stands 108 ft/33 m tall. You can climb to the top for awesome views over the countryside.

May-September Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Sunday 2 pm-5 pm. Round tower 4 euros adults.

St. Michan's Church
Church Street
Dublin, Ireland 7
Phone: 01-872-4154
http://www.stmichans.com

Too often bypassed by tourists, this church just north of the Liffey was founded by the Vikings in 1096. The current building dates from 1685 and has been refurbished and repaired. There's an 18th-century organ said to have been used by composer G.F. Handel during his visit to Dublin. The church may appeal to those with a taste for the macabre: Visitors can view mummified corpses preserved by the dry atmosphere in the church crypt, and Handel's ghost supposedly haunts the structure.

Open November-March Monday-Friday 12:30-3:30 pm, Saturday 10 am-12:45 pm; March-November Monday-Friday 10 am-12:45 pm and 2-4:45 pm, Saturday 10 am-12:45 pm. Guided tours 5 euros adults.

St. Patrick's Cathedral
St. Patrick's Close
Dublin, Ireland 8
Phone: 01-453-9472
http://www.stpatrickscathedral.ie

Ireland's largest church was erected on the oldest Christian site in Dublin, where St. Patrick is believed to have baptized his converts to the Christian faith at a well on the grounds. The site of the well is marked on the left as you enter the cathedral gardens, and a couple of interesting carved-stone slabs found buried at the site of the well are preserved inside the cathedral. The current building dates back to the late 1100s or early 1200s, although it's been restored and altered over the years. Jonathan Swift was dean of St. Patrick's 1713-45, when he wrote Gulliver's Travels. His pulpit and his tomb may still be seen.

Monday-Friday 9 am-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday 9 am-6 pm. 5.50 euros adults.

The Liffey Boardwalk
(Extends from the O'Connell Bridge to the Millennium Bridge on the northern shore of the Liffey)
Dublin, Ireland

Dubliners often walk along this public promenade, flanked by brightly colored buildings and long benches. The walkway is perfect for soaking up the sun, and it offers surprising tranquility given that it's in the midst of city traffic. It can also be a hangout for undesirables, so watch your belongings. The boardwalk extends from the O'Connell Bridge to the Millennium Bridge on the northern shore of the Liffey.
The National Library

Kildare Street
Dublin, Ireland 2

Phone: 01-603-0200
http://www.nli.ie

At the genealogical office, staffers will help trace your Irish roots. Its consultation service on ancestry is available Monday-Wednesday 9:30 am-5 pm, Thursday and Friday 9:30 am-4:45 pm, Saturday 9:30 am-12:45 pm. The library building also contains a heraldic museum, which exhibits coats of arms and banners; the library's great domed reading room is the highlight, however—it has been home to many Irish students, including James Joyce. Free tours of the library Saturday at 2:30 pm.

Main Reading Room open Tuesday and Wednesday 10 am-4:45 pm, Thursday 10 am-1 pm and 2:30-4:30 pm. Free, both for genealogical service and use of the library.

The National Library of Ireland

2-3 Kildare Street
Dublin, Ireland

Phone: 603-0200
http://www.nli.ie

Besides housing the most comprehensive collection of Irish documentary material in the world and valuable resources for family history research, it offers a full program of exhibitions and events. The permanent exhibition *Yeats: The Life and Works of William Butler Yeats* is a large collection of his work, featuring manuscript drafts of some of his most popular poems. Free "drop-in" guided tours are offered Wednesday at 1 pm and Saturday at 3 pm.

For the exhibitions, Monday-Friday 9:30 am-4:45 pm, Saturday 9:30 am-4:45 pm, Sunday 1-4:45 pm.

The Spire

Upper O'Connell Street
Dublin, Ireland 1

http://www.visith dublin.com/dublin-a-to-z/details/the-spire/31186

A 393-ft/120-m steel pole, known unofficially as "the Pin in the Bin" or the "rod to God" can be seen from all directions around the city center. It stands in place of Nelson's Pillar, a British monument that was destroyed by an IRA bomb in 1966. Although originally intended to mark the millennium, the spire wasn't completed until 2003.

Trinity College

College Green
Dublin, Ireland 2

Phone: 01-896-1000
http://www.tcd.ie

Trinity College (officially, the University of Dublin) was founded by Queen Elizabeth I in 1592. The reason most visitors venture to Trinity is to see the *Book of Kells*, the renowned illuminated manuscript created by monks around AD 800. It's one of the most exquisite books in the world and one of the oldest. The precise detail and vivid colors become clear only when you see the actual manuscript, although related exhibits explain the history and techniques behind the book.
The *Book of Kells* is on display at the Old Library. The book was repaired and rebound into four volumes in 1953. Two of the volumes are always on display, along with two other ancient Christian manuscripts from the library's collection. The ticket price includes admission to the Long Room, a striking space that contains 200,000 of the college's oldest books.

There are official student-guided walking tours of the campus, which will provide you with a history of the campus buildings. Tours run daily mid-May through September from inside the front gate of the college. Tours commence every 30 minutes 10:15 am-3:40 pm. The fee is 10 euros per person, 5 euros for students October-March, 10 euros for students April-September. Price includes an Old Library admission ticket.

Additional sites on campus include the Science Gallery (http://www.sciencegallery.com), the Douglas Hyde contemporary art gallery (http://www.douglashydegallery.com/home.php) and the Samuel Beckett Theatre (http://www.tcd.ie/beckett-theatre).

The Old Library is open year-round Monday-Saturday 9:30 am-5 pm; Sunday May-September 9:30 am-4:30 pm, October-April noon-4:30 pm. Call for information about public holiday hours. 9 euros adults, 8 euros students and seniors, 18 euros families, free for children younger than 12.

**Museums**

**James Joyce Museum**

Sandyvore Point (accessible by DART, or bus 59 from Dun Laoghaire)
Sandyvore, Ireland

**Phone:** 01-280-9265 or 01-872-2077

This museum is located in a Martello tower (one of a chain of towers built to withstand invasion by Napoleon) some 8 mi/13 km south of Dublin on the coast road. Joyce's brief stay there in 1904 inspired the opening chapter of *Ulysses*. The museum is filled with letters, photographs, rare first editions of his works and other memorabilia.

Open April-August Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-1 pm and 2-5 pm, Sunday 2-6 pm. Closed on Monday. Open by appointment September-March. 6 euros adults, 5 euros students and seniors, 4 euros children, 15 euros families. Combined tickets available with Dublin Writers Museum and Shaw's birthplace.

**Dublin City Gallery: The Hugh Lane**

Charlemont House, Parnell Square North
Dublin, Ireland 1

**Phone:** 01-222-5550
http://www.hughlane.ie

Made famous in a 1912 poem by William Butler Yeats (*To a Wealthy Man Who Promised a Second Subscription to the Dublin Municipal Gallery if it Were Proved the People Wanted Pictures*), the Hugh Lane is just steps away from the Dublin Writers Museum and contains a wonderful collection of modern portraits as well as other contemporary pieces within its magnificent structure. Exhibits include a recreation of painter Francis Bacon’s supremely messy studio, filled with the contents of the actual studio shipped from London. The artist’s voluminous reference materials are accessible in an interactive format, and the gallery holds an extensive collection of Bacon’s original works. The museum also includes a room dedicated to Irish artist Sean Scully. The gallery has an excellent independent book shop, Dubray Books
Dublinia
St. Michael's Hill
Dublin, Ireland 8
Phone: 01-679-4611
http://www.dublinia.ie
This heritage center charts Dublin's development from the arrival of the Vikings in the ninth century to the closure of the monasteries and the Reformation, circa 1540. It includes a reconstructed archaeological dig, artifacts from excavations at Viking sites and the Life in Medieval Dublin exhibit, which features reconstructions of interiors from the Middle Ages. Get a taste of life long ago by trying on parts of a suit of armor or dressing up in medieval robes.

Daily 10 am-6:30 pm. 7.50 euros adults, 6.50 euros students and seniors, 5 euros children, 23 euros families.

Dublin Writers Museum
18 Parnell Square N.
Dublin, Ireland 1
Phone: 01-872-2077
http://www.writersmuseum.com
Situated at the top of O'Connell Street, this museum contains memorabilia relating to Ireland's literary greats: Oscar Wilde, James Joyce, Samuel Beckett, George Bernard Shaw, William Butler Yeats, Jonathan Swift, Sean O'Casey, Brendan Behan and more. Digital audioguides are available in six languages. A coffee shop and bookstore are also located on-site.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Sunday 11 am-5 pm. 7.50 euros adults.

Glasnevin Cemetery and Museum
Finglas Road
Dublin, Ireland
Phone: 01-882-6550
http://www.glasnevintrust.ie
This contemporary, three-story museum is located on the site of Glasnevin Cemetery, known as Ireland's largest cemetery and its national necropolis. The museum's exhibits look at the social, historical and cultural growth of modern Ireland by documenting the lives of the 1.5 million people buried at Glasnevin. It's a highly recommended stop for tourists interested in exploring their Irish genealogical roots.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. 4 euros adults.

Irish Jewish Museum
3 Walworth Road (between Victoria Street and Kingsland Park Avenue, both of which connect to South Circular Road)
Dublin, Ireland 8
Located on a modest side street in what was once Dublin's main Jewish neighborhood, this former synagogue is bursting with archives, artifacts, historical displays, textiles and other material concerning the last 150 years of Ireland's little-known, and rapidly dwindling, Jewish community. The curators, whose Dublin accents interestingly mix with Jewish intonations, are fountains of information.

Sunday-Thursday 11 am-3:30 pm; in winter Sunday only 10:30 am-2:30 pm. Free, but donations gratefully accepted.

**Irish Museum of Modern Art**

Military Road, Kilmainham
Dublin, Ireland 8

Phone: 01-612-9900

http://www.imma.ie

Housed in the beautifully restored 17th-century Royal Hospital Kilmainham (which was modeled on Les Invalides in Paris), the museum exhibits contemporary art and has an impressive permanent collection representing the cutting edge in Irish and international art. An excellent cafe and a bookstore are also located on-site. A free guided tour is offered Tuesday, Thursday and Friday at 10 and 11:45 am, and 4 pm; Wednesday at 11:45 am and 4 pm.

Tuesday-Friday 11:30 am-5:30 pm, Saturday 10 am-5:30 pm, Sunday noon-5:30 pm. Free.

**James Joyce Centre**

35 N. Great George's St.
Dublin, Ireland 1

Phone: 01-878-8547

http://www.jamesjoyce.ie

Guided tours of this beautifully restored 18th-century town house include information about Joyce's life, family and works. There's also a reference library and bookshop.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Sunday noon-5 pm. 5 euros adults.

**National Gallery of Ireland**

Merrion Square West (at Clare Street)
Dublin, Ireland 2

Phone: 01-661-5133

http://www.nationalgallery.ie

This beautifully maintained and arranged gallery displays works by such Irish artists as Sir John Lavery, Nathaniel Hone, James Osborne and William Orpen. The Millennium Wing houses Irish art from the first half of the 20th century, temporary exhibitions and an archive dedicated to the work of Jack B. Yeats. Try to spend more time looking at the artwork than ogling the striking architecture of the addition—it won't be easy. Royalties from the plays of George Bernard Shaw have provided much of the gallery's funding over the years.

Monday-Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 9:30 am-5:30 pm, Thursday 9:30 am-8:30 pm, Sunday 11 am-5:30 pm. Free, but a donation of 3 euros is encouraged.
National Leprechaun Museum
Jervis Street
Dublin, Ireland
Phone: 01-873-3899
http://www.leprechaunmuseum.ie
This relatively new attraction is less a traditional museum than a collection of multimedia and installation displays dedicated to Irish mythology and culture. The museum was founded with the intention of changing the public's perception of Irish folklore and fairy lore, as well as that of the leprechaun itself, which the Irish consider to be a somewhat derogatory symbol.

Daily 10 am-7:45 pm. 12 euros adults.

National Museum of Ireland—Archaeology
Kildare Street
Dublin, Ireland 2
Phone: 01-677-7444
Its antiquities exhibits hold one of Europe's most impressive collections of artifacts from the Stone Age through the 20th century. Particularly interesting is the gold jewelry from the Bronze Age, as well as the famed Tara Brooch, the Shrine of St. Patrick's Bell and the Ardagh Chalice from early Christian times. Opened in 1890, this wonderful museum hosts an incredible collection of Ireland's ancient and Celtic past, along with an impressive exhibition of Viking and medieval artifacts.

Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Sunday 2-5 pm. Free.

National Museum of Ireland—Decorative Arts & History
Benburb Street (on the Luas Red Line)
Dublin, Ireland 7
Phone: 01-677-7444
The refurbishment of the old Collins Barracks (named after the revolutionary Michael Collins) into a museum is magnificent, with the building itself often taking center stage. Exhibits focus on Ireland's decorative arts, including furniture, ceramics, silver, glassware and a wealth of pieces by the Modernist designer Eileen Gray. Weapons and costumes are also on display. A cafe and gift and bookshop are located on-site.

Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Sunday 2-5 pm. Free.

National Photographic Archive
Meeting House Square, Temple Bar
Dublin, Ireland 2
Phone: 01-603-0200
Located in a bright, modern building, the archive is always worth a browse for its exhibitions showing Ireland in the early years of photography. It includes tourists' views of Ireland, the great political events
that shaped the nation, portraits of Irish luminaries and unexpected subjects such as images of Irish lighthouses.

Open Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Sunday noon-5 pm. Free.

**Number 29**

29 Lower Fitzwilliam St.
Dublin, Ireland 2

**Phone:** 01-702-6165

[http://www.esb.ie/numbertwenty nine](http://www.esb.ie/numbertwenty nine)

This charmingly restored Georgian house (one of very few open for guided tours) gives an excellent overview of life in Dublin between 1790 and 1820.

Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm. 6 euros adults, 3 euros seniors and students, free for children younger than 16.

**The Chester Beatty Library (Dublin Castle Gardens)**

Dublin Castle
Dublin, Ireland 2

**Phone:** 01-407-0750

[http://www.cbl.ie](http://www.cbl.ie)

Located within the grounds of Dublin Castle, this art museum disguised as a library contains an impressive collection of manuscripts and artwork related to ancient and sacred traditions and religions throughout the world. The gardens are also a safe, enclosed, quiet oasis in the heart of the busy city—perfect for small children and families. There's also a rooftop garden and The Silk Road Cafe, with a menu that includes some Middle Eastern dishes (phone 01-407-0770; [http://www.silkroadcafe.ie](http://www.silkroadcafe.ie)).

Monday-Friday 10 am-5 pm, Saturday 11 am-5 pm, Sunday 1-5 pm; closed Monday October-April. Free.

**The Little Museum of Dublin**

15 St. Stephen's Green
Dublin, Ireland

**Phone:** 01-661-1000

[http://www.littlemuseum.ie](http://www.littlemuseum.ie)

A simple yet captivating museum located on the first floor of a traditional Georgian townhouse, this museum tells the story of 20th-century Dublin through a collection of more than 400 unique artifacts. The collection ranges from the cultural to the political, with items encompassing everything from art and photography to letters, postcards and other odd bits of ephemera, the majority of which was donated by Dublin residents, businesses and cultural groups.

Friday-Wednesday 9:30 am-5 pm, Thursday 9:30 am-8 pm. 6 euros adults.
Neighborhoods & Districts

Ballsbridge

Ballsbridge
Dublin, Ireland 4

http://www.dublintourist.com/towns/ballsbridge

Take a walk on the posh side in Dublin's legendary "D4" district. Mansion-lined Aylesbury and Shrewsbury roads are reputedly the most expensive streets in Ireland, and Raglan Road (of the well-known Irish song) boasts impressive redbrick Victorian houses with huge gardens. Herbert Park is a genteel, beautifully maintained oasis for a walk or a picnic lunch. Although there is no high-end shopping street (such as Madison Avenue or Rodeo Drive) per se, the gleaming fancy-food markets, wine shops and trendy lifestyle and fashion boutiques along Donnybrook and Pembroke roads attest to this area's prosperity.

Dalkey

Coliemore Road, Dalkey
Dublin, Ireland

http://www.dalkeyvillage.net

This charming village, located along the coast road about 8 mi/13 km south of Dublin, is a perfect place for an afternoon stroll. Check out its many atmospheric pubs, restaurants and shops or admire the view from the top of Dalkey Hill. You never know—you might bump into one of Dalkey's many celebrity residents, including Bono and The Edge of U2 and filmmaker Neil Jordan. Novelist Maeve Binchy also lived there. For the adventurous, Dalkey Island is just a five-minute boat ride from Coliemore Harbour just south of Dalkey Village. This tiny island, which is popular with scuba divers, boasts the ruins of one of the earliest stone churches in the area. Today it's a haven of peace and tranquility; its only inhabitants are a family of goats. During the summer, drop by the harbor and ask one of the local fishermen about dropping you off and picking you up at the island. Take the DART to the Dalkey station. Just follow the signs for the coastal road.

Dun Laoghaire

Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin
Dublin, Ireland

http://www.dun-laoghaire.com

If it's a sunny Saturday or Sunday, join the locals in their rambles in this increasingly multicultural port town south of the city, on the DART line. Pronounced *Dun-leary*, it has a pleasant park (the People's Park) with a great organic market on Sunday. Its twin Victorian piers offer two of the best walks in Dublin. You can buy fresh fish from its smaller Coal Harbour Pier and feed the seals. The harbor and town have a great array of nightlife, cafes and pubs.

Howth

Howth
Dublin, Ireland 13

http://www.dublintourist.com/towns/howth

Lying on the northern tip of the Dublin Bay, Howth (rhymes with "both") is a picturesque seaside village easily accessible by DART. The lovely marina is a choice spot for eating and drinking, and the coastline provides panoramic views of Dublin Bay. Visit the 15th-century partly-ruined Howth Castle in the Deer Park Gardens. Behind the Deer Park Hotel, take a walk through the rhododendron gardens and enjoy the...
views from the top. Just outside of Howth, drive or walk up to the parking lot—there you can view the Baily Lighthouse or take a spectacular cliffside walk. The road north from Howth to Malahide takes you through a lovely area with some sandy beaches.

**Merrion Square**

Merrion Square  
Dublin, Ireland 2  
[http://www.dublintourist.com/towns/merrion_square_area](http://www.dublintourist.com/towns/merrion_square_area)

One of the city's best-known Georgian squares, Merrion Square has plenty of well-maintained winding walkways, flower beds and statues—including one of Oscar Wilde, whose parents lived at No. 1. Other famous residents included W.B. Yeats, who lived at No. 52 and No. 82. With its proximity to the National Gallery, Merrion Square is a popular place to relax, and on the weekend the square comes alive with artists selling their wares on the street.

**Temple Bar**

Temple Bar  
Dublin, Ireland 2  
**Phone:** 1-677-2255  
[http://www.templebar.ie](http://www.templebar.ie)

Extensive redevelopment has ignited this historical area bordered by the Liffey to the north and Dame Street to the south. (The district's main street running through the area also is called Temple Bar.) Artists, designers and young entrepreneurs have set up small shops, galleries, restaurants and pubs, and many of Dublin's vibrant arts organizations are headquartered there. On Saturday, Meeting House Square boasts a fabulous fresh-food market; other markets sell books, clothing, crafts and furniture. All are abuzz with social activity. Check out the independent films regularly shown at the Irish Film Institute ([http://www.ifi.ie](http://www.ifi.ie)). On a more cautionary note, be aware that Temple Bar has its elements of sleaze and can be a nighttime haunt for drunken revelers—it's pretty well guaranteed to be rowdy during weekends. Watch your wallet.

**Parks & Gardens**

**Farmleigh**

Farmleigh, Castleknock  
Dublin, Ireland 15  
**Phone:** 01-815-5900  
[http://www.farmleigh.ie](http://www.farmleigh.ie)

This late-18th-century Georgian house on a 78-acre/32-hectare estate at the northwest edge of Phoenix Park was bought by the Irish government from the Guinness family in 1999 for 29.2 million euros. Farmleigh has proved a valuable public resource, hosting free jazz and classical concerts, lectures and art workshops, food markets and classes. The lovingly maintained grounds are good for a walk. There are sculptures, ponds and ancient trees, and donkeys, horses, cows and chickens wander through the fields. There is also a cafe on-site.

Daily 10 am-6 pm. Free.
Herbert Park
Ballsbridge
Dublin, Ireland 4
Phone: 01-668-4364

Stretching between the upscale neighborhoods of Ballsbridge and Donnybrook, Herbert Park is a 32-acre/13-hectare public oasis of green space in a rapidly developing area. A relic of the British Empire, this beautifully landscaped park features rose gardens and wooded copses, and such old-fashioned amenities as croquet grounds, tennis courts and boules pitches. Two playgrounds and a duck pond, built for the Dublin International Trades Exhibition of 1907, attract children of all ages, often accompanied by their nannies.

Open daily from 10 am; closing times vary according to time of year.

Iveagh Gardens
Clonmel Street
Dublin, Ireland 2
Phone: 01-475-7816
http://www.heritageireland.ie/en/dublin/theiveaghgardens

This least known of central Dublin's parks is also called "The Secret Garden," and its anonymity makes a stroll there all the more fun. It has a rustic grotto, cascade, fountains, rosarium, maze and old archery range, as well as striking statuary.

Monday-Saturday from 8 am, Sunday from 10 am. Free.

National Botanic Gardens
Botanic Road, Glasnevin (located north of the city center, and accessible by car or city bus)
Dublin, Ireland 9
Phone: 01-804-0300
http://www.botanicgardens.ie

Founded in 1795, these beautiful gardens contain rare blooms and palms housed in huge, equally rare Victorian conservatories. Every September, there's a fascinating outdoor sculpture exhibition, with many tactile artifacts children can play with. The gardens are home to one of very few examples of the Wollemi Pine, a species that was thought to be extinct until it was re-discovered in Australia.

Monday-Friday 9 am-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10 am-6 pm. Free guided tours Sunday at noon and 2:30 pm.

Phoenix Park
Conyngham Road
Dublin, Ireland 8
Phone: 01-677-0095
http://www.phoenixpark.ie

This is one of Europe's largest enclosed urban parks at 1,760 acres/713 hectares. Its size—larger than either New York City's Central Park or London's Hyde Park—allows walkers to travel a great distance and still be in the city. Dubliners use it for picnics, jogging, walking the dog and playing impromptu ball games.
Within the park are the residences of the president of Ireland (Aras an Uachtarain) and the U.S. Ambassador to Ireland, as well as the Papal Cross and the Dublin Zoo (attractive but small). The Phoenix Park Visitors Centre houses exhibitions and an audiovisual show about the park. Next to it is Ashtown Castle, a restored 17th-century tower house. Situated on Dublin's north side, the park gate closest to the city center is at Infirmary and Conyngham roads. Note: As with many large urban parks, it is unsafe to walk in Phoenix Park after dark.

The park is open 24 hours daily. Visitors Centre hours April-December daily 10 am-6 pm; January-March Wednesday-Sunday 9:30 am-5:30 pm. Admission to the Visitors Centre is free.

**St. Stephen's Green**

Top of Grafton Street  
Dublin, Ireland 2

**Phone:** 01-475-7816  

Dublin's best-known central park has trees, flowers, rockeries, gardens for the visually impaired, an artificial lake with ducks and a playground. It's a prime people-watching site, too—much of Dublin goes there at lunchtime on warm days.

Open during daylight hours.

**Wineries, Breweries & Distilleries**

**Guinness Storehouse**

St. James's Gate  
Dublin, Ireland 8

**Phone:** 01-408-4800  
[http://www.guinness-storehouse.com](http://www.guinness-storehouse.com)

Although the Storehouse is adjacent to the Guinness Brewery, you don’t get to see the actual beer-making process or facilities. Instead, it's a large, multifloor museum that tells the story of the famous stout using various mediums, including an interactive “Tasting Laboratory” where visitors can try some beer directly from the keg line. The seventh-floor Gravity Bar offers a fantastic view of the city and is the place where visitors also receive a complimentary pint of Guinness.

Daily 9:30 am-5 pm. 16.50 euros adults, 13 euros seniors and students older than 18, 10.50 euros students younger than 18, 6.50 euros children ages 6-12, 40 euros families (10% discount on adult tickets if booked online).

**Old Jameson Distillery**

Bow Street  
Dublin, Ireland 7

**Phone:** 01-807-2355  
[http://www.jamesonwhiskey.com](http://www.jamesonwhiskey.com)

This 18th-century brewery includes a tour that reviews the history of whiskey making, which began in the sixth century. You get a taste of the product at the end of the tour.
Monday-Saturday 9 am-6 pm, Sunday 10 am-6 pm. 14 euros adults, 10.60 euros students older than 18 (with ID), 9.60 euros seniors, 7.70 euros children, 35 euros families. 10% discount for adults if booked online.

Recreation

Dublin's lush parks (especially the huge Phoenix Park) are ideal for jogging and walking. If you have a longer trek in mind, pick up a copy of Walking Ireland, a booklet available from Dublin Tourism offices. It includes such walks as the Royal Canal Way and the Grand Canal Way, both originating in the city. Also included is the famous trek called the Wicklow Way, which begins at Marlay Park, Rathfarnum, Dublin, and continues through the Wicklow Mountains along its 82 mi/132 km of paths.

The writer Brendan Behan used to make unkind (and unprintable) jokes about the poor water quality in Dublin Bay, but thanks to improved water treatment, the seas are becoming progressively cleaner. Dubliners take to the waters for boating, swimming and other maritime recreation.

Golf

Edmondstown

Rathfarnham (7 mi/11 km from the city center)
Dublin, Ireland D16N5Y8
Phone: 01-493-1082
http://www.edmondstowngolfclub.ie
Visitors are welcome at this well-established members club, situated in the foothills of the Dublin Mountains.

Portmarnock

Portmarnock Hotel and Golf Links, Strand Road
Portmarnock, Ireland
Phone: 01-846-0611
http://www.portmarnock.com
This well-known property boasts an entire golf resort, including a hotel, a spa and an 18-hole links course. Special hotel and golf packages are also available.

Hiking & Walking

Bull Island, about 4.5 mi/7 km northeast of Dublin city center, is linked to the coast road at Clontarf by a picturesque wooden bridge. It owes its existence to the infamous British naval officer Capt. William Bligh, who provoked the mutiny on the Bounty. He later undertook a survey of Dublin Bay for the Royal Navy. Bligh recommended the construction of the North Bull Wall, one of two huge piers extending into the bay to protect the shipping channel. It was completed in 1823.

An unexpected side effect of Bligh's wall has been formation of a massive sand bank to the north of the Liffey that is now Bull Island. The island has a long beach, Dollymount Strand, plus the beautiful Royal Dublin golf course (http://www.theroyaldublingolfclub.com) and a protected bird sanctuary. Dollymount Strand and the North and South Bull walls all make rewarding walks. Take the DART from the city center.
County Wicklow, south of Dublin, is an unspoiled area of mountains and forests, tranquil pastures and craggy cliffs. For more information about walks, contact the Mountaineering Council of Ireland at 01-625-1115. http://www.mountaineering.ie.

Spas and Health Clubs

Yoga has become extremely popular in Dublin, with several studios offering a variety of classes and levels.

Orla Punch

Dublin, Ireland

Phone: 087-934-0839

http://www.milltownparish.ie/events.html

Orla has a senior-level Iyengar yoga certification and has been teaching yoga for over 25 years. Classes are held at Milltown Parish Centre in Dublin. Times and dates vary, so call or contact the Parish. She can also arrange for private sessions in your hotel room.

Yoga Dublin

Dublin, Ireland

Phone: 01-412-6813 for the Ranelagh branch

http://www.yogadublin.com

Colm Walsh started teaching yoga in a school hall on Baggot Street back in 1999. Now the business has three studios offering some 200 classes every week with a host of highly qualified and experienced teachers. In addition to yoga and pilates, it provides classes in Tai Chi, Reiki, reflexology, acupuncture and a wide range of other activities and treatments. Studios are located in Ranelagh, Dun Laoghaire and Dundrum.

Swimming

Only hardy swimmers should take to the sea, which is at its warmest July-September (around 59 F/15 C). Take the DART to Monkstown, a few miles/kilometers south of the city center, for a dip next to the Martello tower. The beach has been designated a Blue Flag beach, attesting to its water quality. Two hours either side of full tide is the best time (see newspapers for tides).

If you prefer to watch, check out the annual Liffey Swim, which takes place in September and is immortalized in Jack B. Yeat's painting of the same name. There is also the Christmas Day swim (noon at the Fortyfoot, next to Joyce’s Tower, Sandycove, Co. Dublin). For information contact Dublin Tourism, Suffolk Street, Dublin 2. Phone 01-437-0969. http://www.visitsdublin.com.

National Aquatic Centre

Snugborough Road, Blanchardstown
Dublin, Ireland 15

Phone: 1-646-4300

http://www.nationalaquaticcentre.ie

This state-of-the-art swimming facility is located about 10 mi/16 km northwest of the city center. It boasts a 50-m pool and diving pool that meets international competition standards, as well as Europe’s largest indoor water park, AquaZone (http://www.aquazone.ie), featuring flumes, waterslides, simulated surfing
and a pirate ship for children younger than 8. Thrills and fun for the whole family. There’s also an on-site health and fitness club and a cafe.

Hours vary by facility. 15 euros adults.

Shopping

A consumer frenzy developed with the growth of Ireland's economy in the early and mid-2000s, and many shopping centers and smaller retail stores popped up around the city. North of the Liffey, you'll find lots of British chain stores and small Irish boutiques, especially along Henry Street. South of the river, the Temple Bar district is packed with stores selling retro items and the work of local designers. On Grafton Street are Brown Thomas (the Irish department store) and a host of international shops.

The largest concentration of well-known antiques dealers is in the Francis Street area, but there are pockets of shops on Patrick Street, in the Molesworth/Dawson Street area and along the north quays in the first few blocks off O'Connell Street. For books, head to Dawson Street.

A must-have item is Irish smoked salmon. It's sold vacuum-packed and can be imported into most other countries this way. Make sure you buy it at a supermarket, such as Dunnes Stores in the St. Stephen's Green Shopping Centre—you'll save a bundle over prices at the airport.

Shopping Hours: Stores are generally open Monday-Saturday 9 am-6 pm, Sunday noon-6 pm, with later hours on Thursday until 7 or 8 pm.

Department Stores

Arnotts

12 Henry St.
Dublin, Ireland 1

Phone: 01-805-0400

http://www.arnotts.ie

More affordable than Brown Thomas, this Dublin institution offers a wide selection ranging from designer items to bargain-basement finds.

Hours vary.

Brown Thomas

88-95 Grafton St.
Dublin, Ireland 2

Phone: 01-605-6666

http://www.brownthomas.com

Within Dublin's long-established and most prestigious department store, you'll find the best of Irish and European fashion, an extensive range of giftware and everything for the home.

Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9:30 am-8 pm, Tuesday 10 am-8 pm, Thursday 9:30 am-9 pm, Saturday 9 am-8 pm, Sunday 11 am-7 pm.
Galleries

**Green on Red Gallery**
Park Lane, Spencer Dock  
Dublin, Ireland 2  
**Phone:** 01-245-4282  
http://www.greenonredgallery.com  
This gallery specializes in the work of contemporary Irish artists and is a good place to view current trends in Irish art. Its only drawback is a heavy emphasis on selling the works on display, so visitors may feel a little intimidated. Just don’t let that put you off.

Wednesday-Friday 10 am-6 pm, Saturday 11 am-3 pm.

**Kerlin Gallery**
Anne’s Lane, South Anne Street  
Dublin, Ireland 2  
**Phone:** 01-670-9093  
http://www.kerlin.ie  
This gallery is noted internationally for cutting-edge art.

Monday-Friday 10 am-5:45 pm, Saturday 11 am-4:30 pm.

**Taylor Galleries**
16 Kildare St.  
Dublin, Ireland 2  
**Phone:** 01-676-6055  
http://www.taylorgalleries.ie  
This place shows works by some of Ireland’s most accomplished contemporary artists, with an emphasis on painting and sculpture.

Monday-Friday 10 am-5:30 pm, Saturday 11 am-3 pm.

**Temple Bar Gallery + Studios**
5-9 Temple Bar  
Dublin, Ireland 2  
**Phone:** 01-671-0073  
http://www.templebargallery.com  
There are two art exhibition spaces and 30 artist studios in this fine modern building. Studio visits with artists can be arranged by calling in advance.

Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-6 pm.
The Molesworth Gallery

16 Molesworth St.
Dublin, Ireland

Phone: 01-679-1548

http://www.molesworthgallery.com

One of Ireland’s leading contemporary-art galleries, the Molesworth represents some of the most accomplished and exciting artists working in the country today.

Monday-Friday 10 am-5:30 pm, Saturday 11 am-2 pm.

Markets

A vibrant network of farmers markets has developed around Dublin. The stall holders usually include butchers, bakers, cake makers, cheese mongers and other retailers, as well as farmers. The markets are generally smaller—and pricier—than many of the food markets in Europe, but no less appealing. You can buy cheeses, olives, oysters, ethnic fast food, bread, coffee, apple juice and lots of fresh fruit and vegetables—much of it organic. The markets are great places for browsing or an alfresco lunch. For a list of current markets in Dublin, visit http://www.irishfarmersmarkets.ie.

The area around North Moore Street just west of O’Connell Street on the Northside has become a multicultural food haven. Dublin’s ubiquitous fruit and vegetable sellers hawk their wares, and old-fashioned Irish butcher shops display pigs’ heads and tails, alongside a plethora of Russian, Latvian, Romanian, West African, Chinese and Filipino food shops and tiny restaurants.

Parnell and Talbot streets, also on the Northside, just east of O’Connell Street, have become a cultural melting pot dotted with ethnic grocery stores and with Korean, African, Chinese and eastern European restaurants. Take a walk and discover a whole new world of food.

Blackrock Market

19-A Main St.
Dublin, Ireland

Phone: 01-283-3522

http://www.blackrockmarket.com

Only a short bus or DART ride from the city center, this market features 50-plus stalls offering an engrossing hodgepodge of antique housewares and linens, old books, handcrafts and jewelry, as well as standard flea-market discounted CDs and DVDs.

Monday-Friday 11 am-5:30 pm, Saturday 9 am-5:30 pm, Sunday 9:30 am-5:30 pm.

Leopardstown Farmers Market

Foxrock
Dublin, Ireland

Phone: 87-611-5016

http://irishfarmersmarkets.ie/category/leopardstown

Located at Leopardstown racecourse, this is one of the oldest farmers markets in Ireland. There are about 40 stalls of organic and local produce, meat, fish and an incredible selection of freshly baked goods. Most of the stalls are located indoors.
Temple Bar

Temple Bar
Dublin, Ireland

**Phone:** 01-677-2255


Temple Bar has three separate, lively markets. The Book Market is open Saturday and Sunday 11 am-6 pm in Temple Bar Square ([http://www.templebar.ie/markets/article/temple-bar-book-market](http://www.templebar.ie/markets/article/temple-bar-book-market)). Clothing, crafts and furniture can be found at Designer Mart, which is open Saturday 10 am-4:30 pm at Cow's Lane ([http://www.templebar.ie/markets/article/designer-mart](http://www.templebar.ie/markets/article/designer-mart)). Temple Bar Food Market is open Saturday 10 am-4:30 pm at Meeting House Square.

Shopping Areas

Dundrum Town Centre

Sandyford Road (on the Luas Green Line)
Dublin, Ireland 16

**Phone:** 01-299-1700

[http://www.dundrum.ie](http://www.dundrum.ie)

This mall is notable as it includes a few British and European clothing retailers not found anywhere else in Ireland. These include Harvey Nichols and House of Fraser.

Monday-Friday 9 am-9 pm, Saturday 9 am-7 pm, Sunday 10 am-7 pm.

Grafton Street

Grafton Street
Dublin, Ireland 2

[http://graftonstreet.ie](http://graftonstreet.ie)

Ireland’s most famous shopping street stretches between Trinity College and St. Stephen’s Green. Its pedestrianized expanse is lined with smart shops, including Brown Thomas department store and Weir and Sons jewelers, along with popular British chain stores such as Marks & Spencer, Monsoon, Next and Boots the Chemists. There’s always a crowd there, and you’ll see street performers busking, miming or standing absolutely still as “human statues.” It remains the place for teens to hang out on Saturday afternoons.

Powerscourt Townhouse Centre

59 S. Williams St.
Dublin, Ireland 2

**Phone:** 01-679-4144

[http://www.powerscourtcentre.com](http://www.powerscourtcentre.com)

Located in a beautiful Georgian building, the Townhouse is a treasure trove of designer fashion, antiques, jewelry and eateries. There’s also free Wi-Fi.

Monday-Wednesday and Friday 10 am-6 pm, Thursday 10 am-8 pm, Saturday 9 am-6 pm, Sunday noon-6 pm.
Stephen's Green Shopping Centre

Located at the top of Grafton Street, this modern shopping center has a wide range of fashion and gift shops.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-7 pm, Sunday 11 am-6 pm.

Specialty Stores

A Store is Born

This divine (and tiny) shop reflects owner Marie Murphy's eye for vintage fashion. It's like stepping onto a 1950s Hollywood movie set

Open Saturday only 11 am-6 pm.

Celtic Whiskey Shop

An unimaginable array of Irish, Scottish and other world whiskeys (some of them quite rare), plus wines, beers and other spirits—including mead and Irish poitin (moonshine).

Monday-Wednesday and Friday and Saturday 10:30 am-8 pm, Thursday 10:30 am-9 pm, Sunday 12:30-7 pm.

Claddagh Records

This groundbreaking company was founded in 1959 by Garech Brown, and among its earliest releases was the first album by The Chieftains. Its specialty music shop has one of the finest selections of folk, roots, bluegrass and traditional genres in all of Ireland.

Open Monday and Friday 11:30 am-5:30 pm, Tuesday-Thursday 10:30 am-5:30 pm.
Cleo Knitwear
18 Kildare St.
Dublin, Ireland 2
The best place, bar none, for Irish hand-woven and hand-knit sweaters, scarves, throws, hats, bags, socks and other wearable art.
Open Monday-Saturday 10 am-5:30 pm.

Gallery 29 Vintage Posters
29 Molesworth St.
Dublin, Ireland 2
Phone: 01-642-5784
http://www.gallery29.ie
Pick up an alternative gift or memento in the form of an original Irish tourist poster. Many were commissioned by railway companies in the pre-TV age, and some are wonderful landscapes by acclaimed artists such as Paul Henry. There are also film posters for classic movies such as John Ford's The Quiet Man.
Open Tuesday-Saturday 10 am-5:30 pm.

House of Ireland
37-38 Nassau St.
Dublin, Ireland 2
Phone: 01-671-1111
http://www.houseofireland.com
Purchase your Waterford crystal, Belleek china, Aran knitware, and other high-quality Irish homewares and souvenirs from this large, airy emporium near Trinity College.
Monday-Wednesday and Friday 9 am-6:30 pm, Thursday 9 am-8 pm, Saturday 9 am-6 pm, Sunday 10:30 am-6 pm.

Weir and Sons
96-99 Grafton St.
Dublin, Ireland 2
Phone: 01-677-9678
http://www.weirandsons.ie
This Dublin institution is definitely worth a visit if only to gape at the beautiful showcases and elegant surroundings. Fine jewelry, silver, leather, watches and other gift items. There's a second location at Dundrum.
Monday-Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 9:30 am-6 pm, Thursday 9:30 am-8 pm.
Dining
Local & Regional

Chapter One

18-19 Parnell Square
Dublin, Ireland 1

Phone: 01-873-2266
http://www.chapteronerestaurant.com

This welcoming Michelin-starred restaurant, housed in the basement of the Dublin Writers Museum, offers local and seasonal Irish fare prepared with French influences. Specialties include creamed tapioca, stuffed pig's tail and ravioli of 36-month-aged Parmesan. For dessert, try the Irish cherries with yeast ice cream. The pretheater dinner Tuesday-Saturday beginning at 5:30 pm, at 36.50 euros, is deservedly popular and should be booked in advance.

Tuesday-Friday 12:30-2 pm and 7:30-10:30 pm, Saturday 7:30-10:30 pm. Reservations recommended. $$$-$$$$$. Most major credit cards.

Fallon & Byrne

11-17 Exchequer St.
Dublin, Ireland

Phone: 01-472-1010
http://www.fallonandbyrne.com

A food and wine lover's delight, this three-floor emporium in the center of town boasts a wine bar, a gourmet "food hall" market and restaurant. All is fresh, contemporary and beautifully presented. Prices are reasonable.

Daily noon-3 pm and 6-10 pm. $$$-$$$$$. Most major credit cards.

Gallagher's Boxy House

20-21 Temple Bar
Dublin, Ireland 2

Phone: 01-677-2762
http://www.boxtyhouse.ie

This is one of Dublin's most tourist-oriented restaurants, but don't let that put you off. Few places serve the potato variations, Irish stew and other dishes that constitute traditional Irish cuisine—Gallagher's does them well and at reasonable prices.

Daily 11 am-10:30 pm. $$-$$$$. Most major credit cards.

L'Ecrivain

109A Lower Baggot St.
Dublin, Ireland 2

Phone: 01-661-1919
http://www.lecrivain.com
Its name means "the writer," and everything about this handsome, airy restaurant demonstrates owner-chef Derry Clarke's passion for Irish culture. Try the crispy rabbit belly starter followed by the Irish corn-fed chicken served with wild asparagus, fresh almond, sweet-corn puree and smoked bacon popcorn. L'Ecrivain has an excellent wine list, and its personable service suits everyone from executive "suits" at lunch to cozy couples in the evening.

Monday-Saturday 6:30-10 pm, Thursday and Friday 12:30-2 pm. Reservations recommended. $$$-$$$$.

Most major credit cards.

O'Reilly's of Temple Bar

22 East Essex Street, Temple Bar
Dublin, Ireland 2

Phone: 01-677-5222

http://www.oreillysoftemplebar.ie

Three generations of O'Reilly's have been purveying the best of traditional Irish food in their family pubs in Clonakilty, Killarney and Kilrush. It was Ted O'Reilly who exported the family cuisine from West Cork to Dublin. Aunty Nora's Bread and Butter pudding, Nell Og's Stew and Ma Reilly's soda bread are now firm Dublin favorites, along with traditional delights such as bacon and cabbage served with creamy mashed potatoes, Kerry lamb steak, Guinness beef stew and fresh seafood.

Open daily for dinner. Reservations recommended. $$-$$$.

Most major credit cards.

Roly's Bistro

7 Ballsbridge Terrace
Dublin, Ireland

Phone: 01-668-2611

http://www.rolysbistro.ie

Wonderfully consistent, Roly's French-influenced Irish fare never disappoints. Try the Kerry lamb with roasted parsnips and thyme, or the roast breast of free-range chicken with creamed leeks. The service is efficient, the white starched tablecloths very civilized, and you'll be surrounded by a mix of society ladies who lunch, businesspeople and, on weekends, family gatherings. A good value for the money.

Daily noon-10 pm. Reservations recommended. $$$-$$$$.

Most major credit cards.

The Brazen Head

20 Bridge St. Lower
Dublin, Ireland 8

Phone: 01-677-9549

http://www.brazenhead.com

This place claims to be the oldest pub in Ireland. It's not. (That title is held by Sean's Bar in Athlone which, according to Guinness World Records, is the world's oldest pub.) But it does date back to the late 12th century. Its most famous resident was the Irish rebel Robert Emmet, whose writing desk still sits in the restaurant, and whose portrait, along with those of other patriots, adorns the wall of the bar. James Joyce, Brendan Behand, Michael Collins, Jonathan Swift, Wolf Tone and Daniel O'Connell all frequented this establishment. More modern patrons include Van Morrison and Mary Black. There are two bars, and the old bar used to roll back to reveal an escape tunnel for Emmet when the British army got too close. No-frills bar food includes beef-and-Guinness stew and a wide variety of seafood.
Cuisines

**Asian**

**Monty's of Kathmandu**

28 Eustace St., Temple Bar
Dublin, Ireland 2

**Phone**: 01-670-4911

[http://www.montys.ie](http://www.montys.ie)

This is the finest restaurant in Dublin to serve Nepalese food (a subtle variation of Indian cuisine). Both the set lunch and the early evening menu are bargains. It also offers regular cooking classes if you want to learn how to reproduce these culinary creations in your own kitchen.

Monday-Saturday noon-2 pm and 5:30-11 pm, Sunday 5:30-10:30 pm. Reservations recommended. $$-$$$$.

**Wagamama**

South King Street
Dublin, Ireland 2

**Phone**: 01-478-2152

[http://www.wagamama.ie](http://www.wagamama.ie)

Yes, it’s part of a London-based chain, but when it comes to simple, satisfying, generous (and affordable) portions of ramen, udon and soba noodles flavored with South Asian ingredients, this is the place to go. Service is reliably quick—an excellent choice before running to catch an evening play or movie. Multiple locations.

Daily noon-10 pm. Reservations available. $$-$$.

**French**

**L'Gueuleton**

1 Fade St.
Dublin, Ireland 2

**Phone**: 01-675-3708

[http://www.lgueuleton.com](http://www.lgueuleton.com)

This Dublin restaurant opened in response to price awareness among Irish customers. No starched linen or whispering servers—the tasty, reasonably priced food is the reason to go there. The name, French for "taste sensation," sums up the Francophile fare; the offerings include fresh seafood puff pastry and a caramelized onion and smoked Gubbeen tart.

Monday-Saturday 12:30-10 pm, Sunday noon-9 pm. Reservations available. $$-$$$$.

**The French Paradox**

53 Shelbourne Road
Dublin, Ireland 4

**Phone**: 01-660-4068
http://www.thefrenchparadox.com
This extremely popular and stylish establishment combines a wine shop and a wine bar, featuring some 65 French wines by the glass. The list changes frequently, and the menu of French tapas provides a nice complement to the wines.

Wine shop Monday-Saturday 10:30 am-10:30 pm. Reservations recommended. $$-$$$$ Most major credit cards.

Italian

Dunne & Crescenzi

14-16 S. Frederick St.
Dublin, Ireland 2
Phone: 01-675-9892
http://www.dunneandcrescenzi.com
This cafe (with several locations around town) serves hot pasta and soup alongside paninis, plates of ham, cheese and arugula, and some of the best coffee in Dublin. The restaurant, an Irish-Italian partnership, also has a good wine list, with many organic selections.

Monday-Saturday from 8 am, Sunday from 9:30 am. Reservations available. $-$$. Most major credit cards.

Gotham Cafe

8 S. Anne St.
Dublin, Ireland 2
Phone: 01-679-5266
http://www.gothamcafe.ie
This is a great spot if you have a craving for pizza and Americana. The walls are covered with Rolling Stone magazine covers, and the creative, thin-crust pizzas have names such as the Central Park, Bowery, Spanish Harlem and the TriBeCa. A children’s menu is also available.

Monday and Tuesday 11 am-10 pm, Wednesday-Saturday 11 am-11 pm, Sunday 11:30 am-10 pm. Reservations available. $$$. Most major credit cards.

Il Posto Restaurant

10 Stephen's Green
Dublin, Ireland
Phone: 01-679-4769
http://www.ilpostorestaurant.com
Hearty, imaginative Italian and Mediterranean food served in Dublin's trendy Stephen's Green neighborhood, where you can dine inside or out and not break the budget. The early dinner and the lunch special offer particularly good value. Start with the beef meatballs and follow them up with the popular baked fillet of hake.

Monday-Saturday noon-2:30 pm and from 5:30 pm. Reservations available. $$-$$$. 

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Steps of Rome
1 Chatham St.
Dublin, Ireland

Phone: 01-670-5630
http://www.stepsfromome.ie

The takeaway pizza slices are second to none. Conveniently located near St. Stephen's Green and the Grafton Street shopping area.

Monday-Thursday 10 am-11 pm, Friday and Saturday 10 am-11:30 pm, Sunday noon-10 pm. $. No credit cards.

Vegetarian

Blazing Salads
42 Drury St. (next to George's Street Arcade)
Dublin, Ireland

Phone: 01-671-9552
http://www.blazingsalads.com

A restaurant for vegetarians on the go. This whole-food vegetarian takeout spot features a vegan salad bar, organic breads and freshly baked pies. Blazing Salads is a popular lunchtime spot for Dubliners and travelers who want to eat healthy en route.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-6 pm. $$. Most major credit cards.

Seafood

Cavistons Food Emporium
58-59 Glasthule Road, Sandy Cove (accessible by DART)
Dublin, Ireland

Phone: 01-280-9245
http://www.cavistons.com

The freshest seafood imaginable, prepared simply to highlight natural flavors. With a mere 26 seats inside, Cavistons is popular with neighborhood residents.

Tuesday-Saturday 1:30-3 pm, Thursday-Saturday 6-8:15 pm. Reservations recommended. $$-$$$.$ Most major credit cards.

Johnnie Fox's Pub

Johnnie Fox's Pub
Glencullen, Ireland

Phone: 01-295-5647
http://www.jfp.ie

Set in the Wicklow Hills, this place claims to be the highest pub in Ireland. It has a superb seafood menu (with a few choices for non-fish lovers). Amazing views of Dublin and authentic old-country pub decor make this worth the 40-minute drive out of the city center (Express Bus operates a 10-euro round-trip coach service to the pub; pickups are available at a number of major hotels (phone 01-822-1122;
http://www.expressbus.ie). The pub also runs a shuttlebus service; for reservations, call 01-822-1122. For 48 euros, you get dinner and the nightly “Hooley”—an amazing, Riverdance-inspired floor show. There are also daytime sessions of traditional music starting at 3:30 pm on weekends.

Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations recommended. $$-$$. Most major credit cards.

**Leo Burdock**

2 Werburgh St.
Dublin, Ireland 8

**Phone:** 01-454-0306

[http://www.leoburdocks.com](http://www.leoburdocks.com)

You can get fish-and-chips wrapped in newsprint at almost any hour of the night, but not everybody makes them crispy and tasty the way Leo Burdock does. This place has expanded to two other locations.

Monday-Wednesday noon-11 pm, Thursday and Friday noon-midnight, Saturday 2 pm-midnight, Sunday 4-11 pm. $. No credit cards.

**The Lord Edward**

23 Christchurch Place
Dublin, Ireland 8

**Phone:** 01-454-2420

[http://www.lordedward.ie](http://www.lordedward.ie)

Dublin’s longest-established seafood restaurant (overlooking Christ Church Cathedral), serves simple, traditional fresh-fish dishes in comfortable, old-fashioned surroundings.

Open Wednesday-Friday for lunch and dinner, Saturday for dinner only. Reservations recommended. $$-$$. Most major credit cards.

**Security**

**Personal Safety**

Dublin is a reasonably safe city, but use caution when venturing into the northern part of O’Connell Street and surrounding areas at night. Temple Bar can get crowded and rough late at night, especially during weekends—pickpockets haunt the area.

Do not leave valuables in a parked car, even if they are in the trunk or covered with a coat. Do not park your car in the streets—use designated car parks, as they are safer. Be as careful of your handbag or wallet as you would be in any major city; do not carry your passport or large amounts of cash on you or leave them in your hotel room (unless it has a safe). Cell phone theft has become common around the city center, so be extra careful about using one in public places. Dublin also has a drug problem, which is more prominent the farther north of the river you go.

For the latest information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.
Health

No vaccinations are necessary for entry into Ireland. In general, Dublin's sanitation standards are decent, and tap water is safe to drink. Food is not generally sold on the street, but when it is (fish-and-chips or ice cream, for instance), it's safe, though of varying quality. Medical care, if needed, is excellent.

In the event of medical emergency, dial 112 or 999. St. Vincent's University Hospital is centrally located at Elm Park, off Merrion Road, Dublin 2. Phone 01-221-4000.

Pharmacies are available all over the city, including many branches of the chain Boots the Chemists, and most operate at least part of the day on Sunday. Although 24-hour pharmacies are a rarity, Hamilton Long & Co., at 5 Lower O'Connell St., Dublin 1 (phone 01-874-8456), and its sister branch at 4 Merrion Road, Dublin 4 (phone 01-668-3050), are open until 9 pm.

For the latest information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

Disabled Advisory

More and more hotels, guesthouses and restaurants are adapting their facilities for people with disabilities. Most museums are handicap-accessible, as are buses and other public transportation.

Shopmobility Dublin is based at a number of locations, including the Liffey Valley Shopping Centre (phone 01-620-8731) and at Dundrum Town Centre (phone 01-298-7982), and offers a variety of facilities for disabled visitors. http://www.ddai.ie/index.php/shop-mobility.


Facts

Dos & Don'ts

Do check out the free entertainment provided by Dublin's buskers. Although Grafton Street has been the traditional haunt of these street performers, many of the more exotic artists now frequent Temple Bar Square, where you can catch fire-eaters, limbo dancers and madcap comedians, as well as your average guitar strummer.

Don't be daunted by Dublin's reputation for hard drinking. Drinking is considered a sociable pastime, but generally speaking, it's a drinking culture of leisurely pints enjoyed over long conversations.

Do try the Guinness—it's the country's most famous beverage, after all. But don't feel compelled to drink it for your entire stay if it doesn't suit your palate. They say it's an acquired taste, and not everyone acquires it—even some born-and-bred Dubliners. But be careful where you try it. Ask a local for the best places. Kilkenny and Smithwick's are two other good beers, with the former harder to come by.

Don't assume all pubs are the same. If you want to get a good deal, do check the drinks price list, displayed by law just inside the entrance of each bar. Prices can vary wildly from pub to pub, and mixed drinks are generally very expensive.
Do purchase the Dublin Pass, advertised at a lot of tourist venues, but only after you have read the fine print. It may make sense if you want to pack a lot of sightseeing into a short time, but remember that the benefits of the card are limited.

Don't travel during morning or evening rush hours if you can avoid it. Getting stuck in Dublin's infamous traffic gridlock is not a great way to spend time. Despite express bus lanes, public transport will also be jammed with people traveling to and from work.

Do use the word "lift," not "ride," when asking someone to take you someplace in their car. "Ride" is the slangy equivalent of the f-word.

Don't expect to hear much Gaelic in the city: English has long been the first language of Ireland, other than in some rural areas, and although most Dubliners have a basic grasp of the Irish language, some aren't too familiar with it. However, you could be lucky enough to meet some fluent Irish speakers. Some phrases you may encounter include slainte (pronounced slawn-cha), which is a toast to good health; cead mile failte (pronounced cade mee-la fawl-cha), which means "a thousand welcomes"; and go raibh mile maith agat (pronounced guh rev mee-la moh a-got), which means "a thousand thank yous." Also, on public lavatories you may see the words fir (men) and mna (women).

Geostats

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** Passports are needed by citizens of Canada and the U.S. However, a visa is not required for stays of up to three months. Reconfirm travel document information with your carrier before departure.

**Population:** 527,612.

**Languages:** English, Gaelic.

**Predominant Religions:** Christian (Roman Catholic, Church of Ireland).

**Time Zone:** Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October.

**Voltage Requirements:** 220 volts. 50 Hz.

**Telephone Codes:** 353, country code; 01, city code for Dublin;

**Money**

**Taxes**

A 23% VAT (value-added tax) is incorporated into prices for almost all goods, with the exception of books, which are not taxed, and restaurant meals, takeaway food and bakery goods, which are taxed at 13.5%. But with a little paperwork, nonresidents of the European Union can obtain a tax refund. To reclaim the tax you paid, you must see the VAT refund officer at the airport before departure and present the receipt for the article you purchased and a refund form (which must be obtained at the place of purchase). Some larger stores will handle most of the paperwork for you and then mail you the refund.
Tipping

Tipping is not part of Irish culture, and, as is the case in most of Europe, restaurant patrons will often round a bill up or leave some small change on the table. Waitstaff are paid a reasonable wage in Ireland.

Weather

Dublin's weather is best described as changeable. Rain showers can come at any time (carry an umbrella even if it looks sunny). February-July is the driest time of year, with an average of about 2 in/5 cm of rain each month. December is usually the wettest, but then again, no one goes to Ireland for the weather.

There are few extremes of hot or cold. July is typically the warmest month, averaging 60 F/15 C; January and February are the coldest, averaging about 40 F/4 C. Snow falls just a few days a year at most.

What to Wear

The Irish have become more fashion-conscious of late. But you can still wear what you feel comfortable in and not worry about it. Because the weather can be very changeable, wear layers for the greatest flexibility. Even in summer, take a heavy sweater and—always—a rain jacket and/or umbrella. Wearing a T-shirt, shorts and athletic shoes—although very popular with Dublin teenagers—will brand you as a tourist, as well as exclude you from some of the more upscale pubs and restaurants. For business, take a suit.

Liverpool, England

Overview

Introduction

Liverpool, England, an industrial town on the River Mersey about 180 mi/290 km northwest of London, was Britain's major port city in the days of the empire. It was also where more than 9 million emigrants departed on their voyage to the New World.

Liverpool is full of character and is Britain’s most filmed city outside of London—parts of it have doubled as Dublin, Paris, Moscow and Venice.

Liverpool's biggest claim to fame is its identity as home of the Beatles.

Port Information

Location

Liverpool boasts a new City of Liverpool cruise terminal at Princess Dock, which has welcomed, among other large cruise ships, the Queen Mary 2.
See & Do

Sightseeing

Liverpool's waterfront has been declared a World Heritage site, and it was the European Capital of Culture for 2008, which included a yearlong roster of activities designed to highlight the city's heritage. This brought great investment to the city. It has its own Royal Philharmonic orchestra and a thriving nightlife, with bars, restaurants, hotels and shopping springing up everywhere.

In the past decade, billions of dollars have been spent to upgrade the city without erasing its character, and these days Liverpool boasts more museums and galleries than any other city in the U.K. outside of London.

Historic Sites

Church of St. Luke

Leece Street
Liverpool, England L1 2TR
http://www.stlukeliverpool.co.uk

A stunning cathedral-like structure, St. Luke's Church took nearly two decades to build and was consecrated in 1831. During the Liverpool Blitz in World War II, however, it was struck with an incendiary bomb. Today it still stands as a burnt-out shell and memorial to the war, with its churchyard now operating as a public park. The magnificent structure will take your breath away, and not all for its beauty—the visible power (and horror) of the bombings is overwhelming.

Mersey Tunnels

24 Hatton Garden
Liverpool, England L3 2AN
Phone: 151-330-4504
http://www.merseytunnels.co.uk/nossl/html/tunnel_tour.php

The Queensway Tunnel was built in 1934, allowing for easier transportation around Liverpool and serving as the centerpiece of the Mersey Tunnels network. It's also one of Liverpool's most interesting sites to explore—visitors can book tours and traverse through the tunnels, learning about the history, discovering how they were built and getting to walk beneath the city.

Princes Road Synagogue

Princes Road
Liverpool, England L8 1TG
Phone: 151-709-3431
http://www.princesroad.org

The Princes Road Synagogue, still very much in use by the local Jewish community, is an absolutely breathtaking Victorian religious structure that easily rivals any ancient London cathedral. The interior is laid out like a Gothic basilica and is decorated just as ornately. If possible, book one of the 45-minute tours that are sometimes available to see the synagogue, learn about the Liverpool Jewish community and explore the permanent exhibit on the congregation's history.
The Wheel of Liverpool

Keel Wharf
Liverpool, England L3 4FN
Phone: 151-475-8888
http://www.echoarena.com/whats_on/big_wheel.asp

The Echo Wheel of Liverpool is less of a historic site, and more of a way to see all of Liverpool's historic sites. It sits just outside the ECHO Arena and has 42 enclosed and air-conditioned capsules, which offer stunning views of the World Heritage site waterfront, the River Mersey and the Welsh mountains. We recommend trying it in the afternoon as well as at night.

Museums

International Slavery Museum

Albert Dock (Third Floor of Merseyside Maritime Museum)
Liverpool, England L3 4AX
Phone: 151-478-4499
http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/ism

The International Slavery Museum was opened in 2008 when Liverpool was declared the European Capital of Culture for the year. It's part of the National Museums Liverpool organization and accordingly offers free admission to all guests. You can see what life was like in west Africa, during the Middle Passage and once slaves were sold beyond the Atlantic. There's also a special exhibit on the impact and legacy of slavery.

Merseyside Maritime Museum

Albert Dock
Liverpool, England L3 4AQ
Phone: 151-478-4499
http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/maritime

The Merseyside Maritime Museum is one of the most fascinating in Liverpool. It provides free tours of Liverpool's Old Dock and features exhibits on the history of smuggling, emigrants to the New World, life at sea, the World War II campaign "Battle of the Atlantic" and the most tragic ships in history—the Titanic, Lusitania and the Forgotten Empress. Give yourself plenty of time to explore the museum; you may not want to leave.

Free admission.

Museum of Liverpool

Pier Head
Liverpool, England L3 1DG
Phone: 151-478-4545
http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/mol

The Liverpool Life Museum is the latest addition to the National Museums Liverpool organization. It focuses on the history of Liverpool and features exhibits on archaeology, the King's Regiment, land transport and the historic environment record of the city. The building itself is stunning and situated right along the UNESCO World Heritage waterfront, providing some stunning evening and morning views of the city.
Open Eye Gallery
Mann Island
Liverpool, England
Phone: 151-236-6768
http://www.openeye.org.uk
One of the leading photography galleries in the U.K., the Open Eye Gallery features local and international work, and also houses a permanent archive, which contains important photos from the 1930s to present day. The waterfront location itself is inspiring, but the work contained within is even more so.
Tuesday-Sunday 10:30 am-5:30 pm. Free admission.

Tate Liverpool
Albert Dock
Liverpool, England L3 4BB
Phone: 151-702-7400
http://www.tate.org.uk/visit/tate-liverpool
The Tate Liverpool is part of the Tate Collection, which is a national collection of British art spanning from the year 1500 to present day. Situated on the UNESCO World Heritage Waterfront, the Tate Liverpool has numerous galleries and often features live events in the foyer. Exhibits and collections are always changing, so if you're a repeat visitor, don't count on having seen everything before.
Free admission.

Walker Art Gallery
William Brown Street
Liverpool, England L3 8EL
Phone: 151-478-4199
http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/walker
Part of the National Museums Liverpool, the Walker Art Gallery houses a stunning collection of sculptures, paintings and decorative art from the 13th century to the present day. Exhibits change frequently, but some favorites include the Henry VIII portrait series, 19th-century works, and Rembrandt's Self-Portrait as a Young Man. When you're done exploring the amazing artwork, stop by the shop and cafe on your way out.
Free admission.

Shopping
The 42-acre/17-hectare Liverpool One retail complex features 160 stores, restaurants and bars as well as the 5-acre/2-hectare Chavasse Park, a green space that links the center with Albert Dock.

Napoleon wasn't far off when he described England as "a nation of shopkeepers." All of Liverpool's attractions and sights seem to have a gift shop, and you can expect to be routed through it to reach the exit.
Etiquette

Many North Americans stereotype the British as being prim, proper and perhaps a bit stuffy. It's far from an accurate picture, but in most situations you can expect a certain emphasis on reserve and politeness. Maintaining a respectful, formal demeanor is likely to work to your advantage, at least until your business relationship is well-developed. From there, you'll soon discover the sense of humor and irony that make the British so charming.

Appointments—The government does not require foreign businesses to have a local sponsor or intermediary. Generally speaking, a local go-between isn’t necessary, though one can prove useful in some situations. Schedule meetings in advance, and be punctual.

Personal Introductions—A handshake and a nod are common. Use your acquaintance's last name until instructed to do otherwise. Titles are important: If a person is introduced to you with a title, use it.

Negotiating—Meetings will have a formal atmosphere, especially early in the relationship. The decision-making process is slower than is normal in some other countries, but do not attempt to rush the pace. Expect the conversation to be direct, almost blunt. However, the British have a wonderful, self-deprecating humor that will inevitably demonstrate itself.

Business Entertaining—Business lunches and dinners are common, although dinners tend to be more social than business occasions and drinking alcohol is common. Follow your host's lead in what topics to discuss.

Body Language—Your British acquaintances will probably keep their distance with little physical contact during conversation. Most older people are very conservative with regard to gestures and physical expressiveness.

Gift Giving—Gifts are generally not part of most business dealings. If you're invited to a home, a gift of wine, chocolate or flowers is appropriate.

Conversation—The British often poke fun at themselves but will naturally take offense to outsiders who criticize them. There is an internal split with regard to the Royal Family, so it's best that your comments on the subject be inquisitive, not declaratory. Be aware of the differences between England and the other areas that make up the United Kingdom (Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland). Though united politically, each has its own culture, and lumping them together will please no one. Personal questions are usually reserved for later meetings. If your English diction arises from the U.S., remember that some words have different meanings in the U.K. but this shouldn't cause any real problems.

Personal Safety

Petty crime such as pickpocketing and purse-snatching can be a problem in Liverpool, especially around popular tourist sights and on crowded public transportation. If you're traveling by car, it's always a good idea to keep belongings out of view and locked in the trunk.

Exert extra caution at night, particularly when the pubs start to close (11 pm-midnight) and on Friday and Saturday nights. Drunken behavior is the cause for a majority of crimes and mishaps in English towns, so stay aware when out and about at these times.

ATM crime is also a problem: It's best to draw cash from machines during daylight hours or from inside a bank, and shield your fingers on the keypad when inputting your PIN.
Health

Liverpool has good medical and dental facilities should you need them. Some medications obtained over the counter at home require a prescription in the U.K., so take along what you think you'll need. Food and tap water are safe.

For the latest information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

Facts

Geostats

Passport/Visa Requirements: Citizens of Australia, Canada and the U.S. need passports but not visas. Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departure.

Languages: English.

Predominant Religions: Christian (Anglican, Roman Catholic), Muslim.

Time Zone: Daylight Saving Time is observed from the last Saturday in March to the last Saturday in October.

Voltage Requirements: 240 Volts.

Telephone Codes: 44, country code; 151, city code;

Money

Taxes

A 20% value-added tax (VAT) is levied on most purchases, including hotel and restaurant bills, but services consumed within the U.K. are not eligible for a refund. Nonresidents may receive a VAT refund on goods bought from shops running the VAT Retail Export Scheme. Stores taking part in the program will ask to see your passport and then give you a refund form (Customs Form VAT 407) to fill out in front of them—they may deduct an administration fee, too. At the airport, take your forms to the customs desk and present them, as well as the purchased goods, to process the refund. For more information, call the National Advice Service at 0300-200-3700.

Tipping

In restaurants, a 10%-15% service charge is sometimes included in the bill. If not, tip 10%. It's not usual to tip in pubs or bars or anywhere where there's only counter service, and it's not expected. Taxi drivers do expect a tip, and typically receive 10%. Many British people will round amounts up rather than worrying about giving a certain percentage.

Weather

May and October are pleasant times to visit, when day temperatures tend to be cool. Temperatures in June-September are generally a bit higher.
What to Wear

Adaptable layers are a good idea—a day may be wet and cold one minute, sunny and warm the next. An umbrella is usually a good idea.

Business wear has become less rigidly formal. Depending on the type of business, ties are often optional, and a sleek suit is more likely to be admired than a stuffy one.

Edinburgh, Scotland

Overview

Introduction

Scotland's capital, Edinburgh, draws on its history to appeal to visitors—with good reason. The Old Town of Edinburgh reverberates with the history of Scottish royalty and romantic literary figures. Crossing Princes Street and glimpsing Edinburgh Castle towering over the New Town is like passing through a time warp to the late 1700s.

Edinburgh has also launched more than its fair share of notable figures onto the world stage: Sir Walter Scott, Robert Louis Stevenson, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Alexander Graham Bell and more recently Ian Rankin, Alexander McCall Smith and J.K. Rowling.

But Edinburgh isn't just wrapped up in history. Tourists flock there every summer to partake of the extraordinarily vibrant atmosphere of the Edinburgh Festival—it's the world's biggest performing-arts festival (really, six distinct festivals in one). While the festival time may be the busiest tourist season in Edinburgh, the busiest night of the year is Hogmanay (New Year's Eve), when Edinburgh invites visitors to one of the biggest street parties in the world.

Returning visitors will discover that Edinburgh has been reinvigorated by the opening of the Scottish parliament building, new and improved tourist attractions, an influx of immigrants from the former Eastern Bloc countries, a renaissance of its previously ignored waterfront, and the building of a new tram system.

Highlights

Sights—The view from Calton Hill; Edinburgh Castle; Forth Rail Bridge; Royal Yacht Britannia; a double-decker bus tour of the city with Edinburgh Bus Tours.

Museums—The National Museum of Scotland with its Victorian Royal Museum of Scotland; the National Gallery of Scotland; the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art; The People's Story.

Memorable Meals—Haggis in phyllo pastry at Stac Polly; an assortment of authentic vegetarian dishes at Kalpna; dinner by candlelight at The Witchery by the Castle; breakfast at Urban Angel; a romantic dinner at Rhubarb.
Late Night—Checking out hip grooves at the Liquid Room; stand-up comedy at The Stand; dancing into the wee hours at Cabaret Voltaire; listening to live jazz or funk at The Jazz Bar or The Jam House; sipping a cocktail at Tigerlily Bar; a pint of heavy at Milne's Bar.

Walks—Strolling through the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh; following the Water of Leith, making sure to stop off in Dean Village and Stockbridge.

Especially for Kids—Experiencing earthquakes at Our Dynamic Earth; watching the penguin parade at Edinburgh Zoo; handling creepy-crawlies at Edinburgh Butterfly & Insect World.

Geography

From its location on the banks of the Firth of Forth, Edinburgh enjoys one of the most dramatic settings of any European city. The most distinctive natural landmark, Arthur's Seat, is an extinct volcano around which the oldest parts of town, from Castle Rock down the Royal Mile, cluster on a narrow, rocky ridge surrounded by bare moorland.

The main shopping thoroughfare of Princes Street marks the southern edge of New Town, which is connected to the Old Town by George IV Bridge and the gentle slope of The Mound. Calton Hill looms over the east end of Princes Street, and beyond it is Leith Walk, which leads to Edinburgh's port of Leith. On the west end of Princes Street is Lothian Road, famous as Edinburgh's financial district.

Edinburgh's growth has swallowed up villages to the north, including Stockbridge and Dean Village, which sit on the Water of Leith, a river that runs through Edinburgh and empties into the Forth. Farther out, the city is ringed by distinct neighborhoods, from well-off Morningside to working-class tenement areas such as Dalry. To the northwest and southeast, money-starved 1960s housing projects provide a stark contrast to the grandeur of the city center.

History

Castle Rock has been inhabited since the early seventh century, when the Celtic tribe Gododdin named it Dunedin (Dun Eideann). Dun means "hill fort." Although it had long been the residence of the King of Scots, it did not become the capital city until the 15th century, a position it still retains.

In a centuries-long struggle for power between the English and the Scots, the city was a target for English armies, the scene of popular uprisings, the setting for some dramatic moments in the life of Mary, Queen of Scots, and the headquarters of Bonnie Prince Charlie's unsuccessful attempt to claim the throne of Scotland in 1745-46.

The focus of power shifted away from Edinburgh after the Act of Union in 1707 combined the parliaments of England and Scotland into one body, centered in London. That gave the city a chance to concentrate on itself, and just in time—by the 1760s, the overcrowding, squalor and disease had become too dangerous to ignore, and building began to the north on what is now called New Town, a masterpiece of neoclassical architecture.

Edinburgh grew and prospered, becoming a center for law, medicine and intellectual pursuits in the 1700s and 1800s. The 20th century saw it blossom on other fronts: the foundation in 1947 of the Edinburgh International Festival and its more diverse sister festival, the Fringe, established the city as one of the world's leading centers of art and culture.
Edinburgh has also flourished as one of Europe's financial centers. The millennium ended on a high note with the re-establishment, after nearly 300 years, of a parliament in Scotland's capital and the opening of the new parliament building.

**Port Information**

**Location**

The Port of Leith is the main destination for most cruise ships. It lies just 2.5 mi/4 km from Edinburgh City Centre. The Cruise Terminal building has restrooms, Wi-Fi and refreshments, and ATMs and shopping are available in the adjacent Ocean Terminal Shopping Centre. The Royal Yacht Britannia, a major tourist attraction, is also berthed here.

Taxis to the City Centre can be booked from the terminal or picked up from the taxi rank at Ocean Terminal. Local buses also stop at Ocean Terminal. Lothian Bus 22 will take you to Princess Street in 15 minutes.

**Potpourri**

Edinburgh is a popular film location. Movies set there range from *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* to *Trainspotting*. However, you'll also see the city's streets in films set in other places—its old buildings have stood in for locales in London, Cambridge and Prague.

The Merchiston area of the city has become a writer's enclave. Crime writer Ian Rankin, Kate Atkinson and Alexander McCall Smith all call the area home. In 2004, Edinburgh became the first UNESCO City of Literature.

*The Encyclopaedia Britannica* was first published in 1768 by William Smellie at his printing shop in Anchor Close, off the Royal Mile.

Drink in the footsteps of Inspector Rebus, the melancholy, hard-drinking detective of Ian Rankin's mystery novels, at the Oxford Bar on Young Street, which is as unreconstructed as Rebus himself. Rankin can occasionally be spotted there among the regular clientele of off-duty cops, judges and lawyers.

The Hawes Inn in South Queensbury is featured in Robert Louis Stevenson's novel *Kidnapped*. It's also home to the Loony Dook, a New Year's Day event when hundreds take a dip in the chilly Firth of Forth to raise money for charity.

Then-unknown author J.K. Rowling started writing her early *Harry Potter* novels over coffee in the back room at The Elephant House Cafe.

**See & Do**

**Sightseeing**

There are two "towns" in Edinburgh, the Old Town and the New Town, which are divided by the greenery and floral displays of Princes Street Gardens. Most travelers will want to start their tour in the Old Town, which is dominated by dramatic Edinburgh Castle. It's still headquarters of the Scottish Division of the British Army, and you'll see kilted soldiers performing their duties.
Be sure to walk the length of the Royal Mile: Take your time and explore some of the many closes that lead off the street. The first stop is Outlook Tower, with its fascinating Camera Obscura. Next, pass Gladstone's Land (17th-century tenements), the ornate Gothic St. Giles' Cathedral and the playful Museum of Childhood (antique toys and games).

The Royal Mile ends, appropriately enough, at the queen's Scottish residence, the Palace of Holyroodhouse. The spectacular and controversial Scottish parliament building, opposite the palace, offers tours when there is no parliamentary business. Behind it is Our Dynamic Earth, a millennium project that was designed to educate and interest visitors in the natural wonders of the earth.

In the Old Town, you'll find one of Scotland's best recent attractions, the National Museum of Scotland, which has been described as an ultramodern version of an old Arthurian castle. Don't miss the Greyfriars Kirk yard near the museum. Many famous people are buried there, including Greyfriars Bobby. This small dog spent the last 14 years of its life on or near the grave of its master and is the subject of two Hollywood movies. The National Covenant was signed in front of the church pulpit in 1638, and the graveyard was later a makeshift prison for 1,200 Covenanters. Nearby Candlemakers Row leads to the Grassmarket with its eclectic collection of shops, pubs and restaurants. Allow yourself a day to thoroughly explore Old Town.

The spacious and orderly New Town is no less interesting. Among its treasures are the houses of Robert Louis Stevenson (17 Heriot Row), Sir Walter Scott (39 Castle St.) and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle (11 Picardy Place). There is a statue of Sherlock Holmes not far from Doyle's house. A visit to Calton Hill, located to the east, will provide grand views of Edinburgh, including Arthur's Seat, the castle and the Forth. Across from Princes Street, there are two museums you'll want to visit—the National Gallery of Scotland and the Royal Scottish Academy. They are linked by the Playfair Project, an underground tunnel with shop, restaurant and gallery space. The New Town also hosts the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art and the Scottish National Portrait Gallery.

In Leith (the port district), bars, restaurants and hotels have been joined by the Royal Yacht Britannia. Edinburgh fought off stiff competition to have the ship docked there, and it is now open as a visitor attraction.

**Historic Sites**

**Arthur's Seat**

Holyrood Park
Edinburgh, Scotland

Edinburgh's largest and most visible landmark, Arthur's Seat is an extinct volcano that last erupted about 350 million years ago, located in a 650-acre/260-hectare park that was formerly a hunting ground for Scottish kings. It's not too difficult to reach the summit, and you can walk the Radical Road all the way around it—your reward for climbing to the summit is an amazing, 360-degree view of the city. A path runs right below the jagged cliffs of Salisbury Crags, and behind it there is an isolated, grassy area where you can almost believe you're in the wilderness.

The park is open 24 hours. Free.
Calton Hill
Edinburgh, Scotland


Some of the best views of Edinburgh are from the top of this hill just east of Princes Street. You'll also find a dozen Doric columns up there—all that was ever completed of a 19th-century project to build a copy of the Parthenon. The old City Observatory is there, too, as well as Nelson's Monument, which was built in the shape of Lord Nelson's telescope. A ball is dropped from the top of the 108-ft/34-m tower at 1 pm each day as a time signal to ships on the Forth, continuing a tradition that began before the days of accurate, synchronized chronometers.

Nelson's Monument is open October-June Monday-Saturday; July-September daily. Exact hours vary. Visiting the hill is free. Admission to Nelson's Monument is £4.

Edinburgh Castle
Castlehill
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-225-9846

http://www.edinburghcastle.gov.uk

A truly impressive medieval castle, this place gives the impression of an impregnable fortress. It has functioned as a military barracks since the 1800s. To do it justice, you'll need a whole day. Make sure to see the Honours of Scotland (Crown Jewels), the Stone of Destiny (upon which the ancient Scottish kings were crowned), the tiny St. Margaret's Chapel (from the 12th century, reputed to be the oldest building in Edinburgh), the Scottish National War Memorial and the Great Hall (its timbered roof is breathtaking). If you're there at lunchtime, be prepared for the firing of the One O'Clock Gun over Princes Street.

Open April-September daily 9:30 am-6 pm; October-March daily 9:30 am-5 pm. £16 adults, £12.80 seniors, £9.60 children, free for children younger than 5. Last tickets sold 45 minutes before closing.

Forth Rail Bridge
South Queensferry
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-220-0770 for cruise information

http://edinburghrout.com/tours/bus-and-boat-tour

This masterpiece of Victorian engineering is the second-longest cantilever bridge in the world and the first major all-steel construction in Britain. It crosses the Firth of Forth west of the city center at South Queensferry and is considered Scotland's biggest listed building. Its unusual cantilevered design is one of the world's most remarkable engineering achievements. By the time it was completed in 1890, its construction had used more than 6 million rivets, killed 63 workers and left hundreds of workers injured. You can take a Forth Bridges bus and boat tour to see wonderful views of this and the road bridge.

Greyfriars Kirk
2 Greyfriars Place (Candlemaker Row)
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-225-1900

http://www.greyfriarskirk.com
One of this church's claims to fame is that it was where faithful dog Greyfriars Bobby stayed by his late master's grave for 14 years. There's a statue of the loyal Skye terrier on the street outside. The church itself is steeped in history. The National Covenant was signed there in 1683, and there's a memorial to the executed Covenanters. Sunday church services are held in English at 11 am and in Gaelic at 12:30 pm. Midweek service is on Thursday at 1:10 pm.

Open April-October Monday-Friday 10:30 am-4:30 pm, Saturday 10:30 am-2:30 pm; November-March Thursday 1:30-3:30 pm. The Visitor Center is open April-October Monday-Friday 10:30 am-4:30 pm, Saturday 11 am-2 pm. Free.

**Palace of Holyroodhouse**

Holyrood Road
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-556-5100

[http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/visit/palaceofholyroodhouse](http://www.royalcollection.org.uk/visit/palaceofholyroodhouse)

Built as a royal residence by James IV, this handsome palace also housed Mary, Queen of Scots; Queen Victoria; and, briefly, Bonnie Prince Charlie. Of particular interest are the 150-ft/-45-m-long Great Gallery (filled with portraits of real and imagined ancestors of Charles II) and the room in which Mary, Queen of Scots, watched helplessly as her secretary, David Rizzio, was murdered.

Open April-October daily 9:30 am-6 pm; November-March daily 9:30 am-4:30 pm. Closed 25-26 December, during state functions and when the queen is in residence. ú11 adults.

**Royal Yacht Britannia**

Ocean Drive
Leith, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-555-5566

[http://www.royalyachtbritannia.co.uk](http://www.royalyachtbritannia.co.uk)

The British royal family traveled the world in the Britannia until it was decommissioned in 1997. Everything has been left as it was when the queen used it—complete with flowery 1950s decor. There's a visitors center and a cafe.

Open daily July-September 9:30 am-4:30 pm; April-June and October 9:30 am-4 pm; January-March, November and December 10 am-3:30 pm. £12.75 adults.

**Scottish Parliament**

Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-348-5000. Toll-free 0800-092-7500

[http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/visitandlearn/12514.aspx](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/visitandlearn/12514.aspx)

The controversial Scottish Parliament building opened in September 2004. Its elliptical debating chamber and the public galleries of the committee and chamber rooms are open to visitors, as is an exhibition detailing the history of the parliament. For most people, the chance to examine architect Enric Miralles' striking contemporary design, both inside and outside, is the main reason to visit. Opening times are dictated by parliamentary business. If you want to see the Parliament at work, visit during a business day and head for the public gallery to see the full parliament in progress or to see a committee meeting. On nonbusiness days, you can join a guided tour or explore sections of the building on your own.
Closed Sunday. Admission to the lobby, cafe and shop is free, but to see more of the building, a free guided tour is highly recommended. Call in advance to secure a spot on the tour.

**St. Giles' Cathedral**

High Street (Royal Mile)  
Edinburgh, Scotland  
**Phone:** 0131-226-0674  
[http://www.stgilescathedral.org.uk](http://www.stgilescathedral.org.uk)

There has been a church on this site since 854, and St. Giles' itself was founded in the 1100s. Its medieval interior is topped by a great vaulted ceiling, and the banners of many Scottish regiments are displayed in stained-glass windows and ornate stonework. The Knights of the Thistle have an impressive paneled chapel at the back.

Monday-Friday 9 am-7 pm, Saturday 9 am-5 pm, Sunday 1-5 pm May-September; Monday-Saturday 9 am-5 pm, Sunday 1-5 pm October-April. Free.

**The Georgian House**

7 Charlotte Square  
Edinburgh, Scotland  
**Phone:** 0844-493-2117  
[http://www.nts.org.uk/Property/Georgian-House](http://www.nts.org.uk/Property/Georgian-House)

The great architect Robert Adam designed this house in New Town in the late 18th century. It's considered a fine example of Georgian architecture and has been restored to reflect how it would have looked in the early 1800s, with period furnishings and artwork.

Open March-June, September and October daily 10 am-5 pm; July and August 10 am-6 pm; November 11 am-3 pm. £6.50 adults.

**Museums**

**City Art Centre**

2 Market St.  
Edinburgh, Scotland  
**Phone:** 0131-529-3993  
[http://www.edinburghmuseums.org.uk/Venues/City-Art-Centre](http://www.edinburghmuseums.org.uk/Venues/City-Art-Centre)

This multilevel center hosts art shows and exhibitions, including Scottish art and traveling shows that feature varying subjects—everything from Star Trek to ancient Egyptian artifacts.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Sunday noon-5 pm. Free, except for special exhibitions.

**Museum of Childhood**

42 High St. (Royal Mile)  
Edinburgh, Scotland  
**Phone:** 0131-529-4142  
Adding new items with each generation, this museum evokes the experience of children through the ages with toys, schoolbooks and related items.

Open daily 10 am-5 pm (Sunday from noon). Free.

**National Gallery of Scotland**

The Mound  
Edinburgh, Scotland  
**Phone:** 0131-624-6200  
[http://www.nationalgalleries.org/visit/introduction-114](http://www.nationalgalleries.org/visit/introduction-114)  
The luxurious interior contains a wide selection of paintings from the early Renaissance through impressionism and beyond. Be sure to see the impressive Scottish collection in the modern extension.

Daily 10 am-5 pm (Thursday till 7 pm; daily until 6 pm in August only), with extended hours during the Edinburgh Festival. Free, except for special exhibitions.

**Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art**

75 Belford Road  
Edinburgh, Scotland  
**Phone:** 0131-624-6200  
[http://www.nationalgalleries.org/visit/introduction-118](http://www.nationalgalleries.org/visit/introduction-118)  
The airy, attractive surroundings hold a collection that includes works by Pablo Picasso, Henri Matisse, Rene Magritte and Jackson Pollock, as well as top artists from the contemporary British scene, such as the controversial Damien Hurst. Scottish artists from the 1980s are well-represented, too. Don't overlook the Henry Moore sculptures on the lawn.

Daily 10 am-5 pm (until 6 pm in August only). Free, except for special exhibitions.

**Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art Two**

73 Belford Road  
Edinburgh, Scotland  
**Phone:** 0131-624-6200  
[http://www.nationalgalleries.org/visit/introduction-118](http://www.nationalgalleries.org/visit/introduction-118)  
Formerly known as the Dean Gallery, the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art Two houses an excellent collection of surrealist and dadaist works. Great homage is paid to Edinburgh sculptor Sir Eduardo Paolozzi, whose studio has been painstakingly re-created.

Daily 10 am-5 pm (until 6 pm in August only). Free, except for special exhibitions.

**Scottish National Portrait Gallery**

1 Queen St.  
Edinburgh, Scotland  
**Phone:** 0131-624-6200  
[http://www.nationalgalleries.org/visit/introduction-298](http://www.nationalgalleries.org/visit/introduction-298)
This ornate, neo-Gothic red sandstone building houses an excellent collection of portraits of notable Scots. Long-dead kings and present-day heroes are depicted there, in styles as diverse as the figures they portray.

**The National Museum of Scotland**

Chambers Street
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0300-123-6789

[http://www.nms.ac.uk](http://www.nms.ac.uk)

This museum tells the story of Scotland on seven floors, from the earliest beginnings to present-day Scotland, in an innovative, architecturally playful building. The exhibits, which were chosen by Scots, include Roman remains, medieval armor and "The Maiden," Scotland's version of the guillotine. There are 16 galleries and more than 8,000 artifacts total, providing the most comprehensive look at the nation's history in Edinburgh. Incorporated in the National Museum of Scotland is the Victorian Royal Museum of Scotland, with its wrought-iron main hall and glass ceiling.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. Free, except for special exhibitions.

**The People's Story**

Canongate Tollbooth (Royal Mile)
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-529-4057

[http://www.edinburghmuseums.org.uk](http://www.edinburghmuseums.org.uk)

This history of Edinburgh focuses on the lives of ordinary citizens from the late 1700s to present day. The exhibits are informative and absorbing.

Open Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm (also open Sunday noon-5 pm during the Edinburgh Festival). Free.

**The Royal Scottish Academy**

The Mound (enter via the Princes Street entrance)
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-225-6671

[http://www.royalscottishacademy.org](http://www.royalscottishacademy.org)

This is the home of contemporary art in Scotland, with a collection begun in 1831. Once a teaching institution, it now assists young artists by offering scholarships and awards.

Monday-Saturday 10 am-5 pm, Sunday noon-5 pm. Free.

**Parks & Gardens**

**Princes Street Gardens**

Princes Street
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-529-4068
This tidy, well-looked-after park runs along most of the south side of Princes Street, below Edinburgh Castle. This was actually the Nor' Loch before it was drained for the construction of New Town. There are plenty of paths and benches—and a chance to feed some fearless gray squirrels. The floral clock with both winter and summer plantings is popular. The Gothic, rocket-shaped Scott Monument, built in memory of Sir Walter Scott, is an unmistakable landmark; try the long climb to the top.

The monument is open April-September daily 10 am-7 pm; October-March daily 10 am-4 pm. Gardens open daily until sunset. Free admission to the gardens. £4 for the monument (cash only).

Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh

20-A Inverleith Row
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-248-2901
http://www.rbge.org.uk

These gardens encompass 10 large greenhouses and more than 2,000 specimens of trees. Gardens of various kinds are represented, including a Chinese garden, complete with pagoda. Visit the on-site art gallery in Inverleith House, and enjoy the spectacular view of the Edinburgh skyline.

Open daily February and October 10 am-5 pm; March-September 10 am-6 pm; November-January 10 am-4 pm. Free entrance to the gardens. Greenhouse fee: £4.50 adults, £3.50 seniors, £1 children, £10 family.

Amusement Parks

Camera Obscura

549 Castlehill (Royal Mile)
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-226-3709
http://www.camera-obscura.co.uk

A popular Victorian invention, the camera obscura used mirrors and natural light to project images from the surrounding area onto a white disk. The 20-minute demonstration is fun on a bright day but can be disappointing when it's cloudy. Get there early on winter afternoons before it gets dark.

Open daily July and August 9:30 am-9 pm; April-June 9:30 am-7:30 pm; September and October 9:30 am-7 pm; November-March 10 am-6 pm. £12.95 adults.

Edinburgh Dungeon

31 Market St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-240-1001
http://www.thedungeons.com

The £5-million attraction capitalizes on the uniquely spooky nature of Old Town, from witch hunts to grave robings. The tour offers some grisly and gory sights, including the predecessor to the guillotine and other instruments of torture.

Open mid-March to November daily 10 am-5 pm (until 7 pm late June-August); November to mid-March Monday-Friday 11 am-4 pm, Saturday and Sunday 10 am-5 pm. £16.95 adults.
Our Dynamic Earth
Holyrood Road
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 131-550-7800
http://www.dynamicearth.co.uk

This bold millennium attraction is a roaring success. Located below the crags that inspired James Hutton, the father of geology, its theme is the story of the planet. Only the tentlike entrance hall is aboveground; the rest is a subterranean trip through well-conceived displays and some gimmicky but enjoyable stunts, such as simulated earth tremors and helicopter rides.

Open daily 10 am-5:30 pm (until 6 pm July and August). Last admission 90 minutes before closing. ú12.15 adults.

Wineries, Breweries & Distilleries
The Scotch Whisky Experience
354 Castlehill (Royal Mile)
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-220-0441
https://www.scotchwhiskyexperience.co.uk

Learn about the various processes involved in making Scotland's national drink. The Silver tour includes a ghost-train-style ride through the history of distilling—a bit bizarre, but you get a free dram at the end.

Daily 10 am-5 pm. ú15 adults.

Recreation

Edinburgh has the good fortune to have pleasant countryside close by, with the rugged Pentland Hills to the south and the waters of the Firth of Forth to the north. There are plenty of opportunities for outdoor pursuits and facilities for most indoor activities. Naturally, there are numerous golf courses and spots for bird-watching.

Bicycling
Bike Trax Cycle Hire
11 Lochrin Place (Tollcross)
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-228-6633
http://www.biketrax.co.uk

Rents city (hybrid) and folding bicycles, but not mountain bikes. Located in the city center.

Monday-Friday 9:30 am-6 pm, Saturday 9:30 am-5:30 pm, Sunday 10 am-5 pm. Rental prices start at ú17 per day.

Bird Watching

The boundaries of the city of Edinburgh contain a wide variety of natural habitats, and consequently there's much for the bird-watcher to enjoy. Habitats include sheltered wooded valleys, parkland, lochs for
wildfowl, coastal mud flats and even the cliffs of an extinct volcano right in the city center. The Firth of Forth is home to many sea birds that can be seen from the shore or from a boat.

In the summer, the tour boat Maid of the Forth runs regularly from the port of Newhaven and from South Queensferry out into the estuary, taking in a wide array of bird life, seals and the old abbey on the Island of Inchcolm. £17.50 adults, £15.40 seniors, £8.30 children. Phone 0131-331-5000. http://www.maidoftheforth.co.uk.

Fishing

There are numerous places to fish within a short drive of Edinburgh. Some good places are Portmore Loch, River Almond and the Water of Leith, where trout, salmon and grayling can be found. No license is needed, but you may need to pay the landowner for the privilege.

For a list of options, buy the booklet Angling in the Lothians at any fishing shop. For further information, visit http://www.fishpal.com/VisitScotland/index.asp?dom=VisitScotland.

Golf

Braid Hills Golf Course

15 Braid Hills Approach
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-447-6666
http://www.edinburghleisure.co.uk/venues/braid-hills-golf-course

The two courses feature 18 holes in hilly parkland and excellent views of the city.

Monday Friday 7 am-7:45 pm, Saturday and Sunday 6:45 am-7:30 pm. Greens fees: Monday-Friday £22 per round, Saturday and Sunday £24.75 per round.

Bruntsfield Links

32 Barnton Ave.
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-336-1479
http://www.bruntsfieldlinks.co.uk

In the 16th century, Bruntsfield Links was a moor bounded with oak trees, and home to Edinburgh outlaws and outcasts. It was not a place to be caught after dark. When deer and boar were still plentiful, the Scottish nobility used it for their hunting ground. The Bruntsfield Links Golf Society played there in 1761, making it the fourth oldest club in the world.

Murrayfield Golf Course

43 Murrayfield Road
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-337-3478, ext. 1
http://www.murrayfieldgolfclub.co.uk

It's closed to visitors Saturday and Sunday, but otherwise this is a nice, convenient course.
Musselburgh Links
Stables Pavilion, Balcarres Road
Musselburgh, Scotland
Phone: 0131-635-5122
http://www.musselburgholdlinks.co.uk
Its nine holes are set in the middle of a racecourse. This is the site of the first recorded game of golf, which took place in 1672, and it's registered in the Guinness Book of Records as the oldest playing golf course in the world. You can rent old-fashioned hickory clubs and play the game the way it would have been played more than three centuries ago.
Open April-September daily 8 am-7:30 pm; October-March daily 8 am-4 pm.

Silverknowes Golf Club
118 Silverknowes Road
Edinburgh, Scotland
Phone: 0131-336-3843 for bookings
http://www.silverknowesgc.com
This fairly flat 18-hole course has some fine views over the River Forth.

Hiking & Walking
Walking is a great way to enjoy Edinburgh. The city offers an abundance of parks and trails, some along pleasant waterways and some offering scenic views of the city or surrounding countryside. If you aren’t sure where to start your journey into Edinburgh's stunning wilderness, be sure to check out Walkhighland's website for great, nicely organized hiking and walking tour suggestions.
http://www.walkhighlands.co.uk.

Blackford Hill
Edinburgh, Scotland
Phone: 131-668-8404
http://www.roe.ac.uk/vc
This hill is on the south side of Edinburgh about 2 mi/3 km from the city center and rises to 539 ft/164 m. The Royal Observatory sits high up there, with its notable green dome that includes the Institute of Astronomy of the University of Edinburgh. There are wonderful views of the city from the top.

Corstorphine Hill
Clermiston Road (off Queensferry Road)
Edinburgh, Scotland
This patch of hilly woodland backs onto Edinburgh Zoo. It's a large area to explore. Try to find the "secret" nuclear bunker. This would have housed the Queen if she had been in Scotland at the time of a nuclear attack.

Cramond
This whitewashed coastal village at the mouth of the River Almond sits at the westernmost edge of Edinburgh. From there, walkers can follow the coastal route to Dalmeny House and South Queensferry (a
5-mi/8-km walk) or, at low tide, cross the causeway to Cramond Island. Cyclists can follow bike paths to Cramond from the city center. Beware the fast-moving tides.

Hermitage of Braid
Start from Blackford Glen Road and follow the track beside Braid Burn to the Hermitage House information center. Great views of the city from the top of Blackford Hill.

Pentland Hills
Edinburgh, Scotland
Phone: 131-445-5969
http://www.pentlandhills.org
There are opportunities for horseback riding, fishing and mountain biking, as well as hiking on this range of hills south of Edinburgh. Start at either Hillend Ski Center (dry slope) or Boghall Farm, where there's a small countryside center, and pick up a leaflet detailing good walks.

Monday-Saturday 9 am-5:30 pm, Saturday 9 am-12:30 pm.

Water of Leith
This river runs from the Pentland Hills all the way to the sea (21 mi/33 km in total), and many sections of its length provide pleasant walks. Particularly recommended is the stretch running from Dean Village through Stockbridge to Warriston and its large, atmospheric cemetery. Alternatively, you could follow the walkway all the way to the Shore at Leith.

Spas and Health Clubs
One Spa
8 Conference Square
Edinburgh, Scotland
Phone: 131-221-7777
http://www.onespa.com
This spa at the top of the Sheraton Hotel has a gym, pool, thermal suite and various spa treatments, including a rooftop hydropool with great views.

Monday-Friday 6:30 am-10 pm, Saturday and Sunday 7 am-9 pm. Spa day packages start at £70.

Nightlife
There's a growing trend to reshape Edinburgh into a center for chic cafe culture, and the nightlife choices are wider than ever: vodka bars, theme pubs and semipalatial bars and bistros in converted banks. However, the traditional pub still dominates. Some of the finest pubs Edinburgh has to offer are old-fashioned, with wood paneling and fires in their grates. These time-honored drinking establishments are redolent of Edinburgh's history and culture in a way that museums or historic monuments can never hope to equal. Keep in mind that there is a ban on smoking in both bars and restaurants.

We especially like Sandy Bells and Cafe Royal Circle Bar. The city's most musically interesting clubs tend to be venues for a rotating selection of club nights, rather than permanent nightclubs. Most nightclubs stay open until 3 am, even midweek, although many pubs close much earlier. The best bets for walking in off the street and catching a good live band are The Captain's Bar, The Royal Oak and Whistlebinkies.
## Bars, Taverns & Pubs

### Barony Bar

81-85 Broughton St. (New Town)  
Edinburgh, Scotland

Even though this place can get packed Friday and Saturday, with its old-fashioned wooden fittings and hip atmosphere, drinking there is a real pleasure. It's especially popular with young professionals.

Open Sunday-Thursday noon-11:30 pm, Friday and Saturday 11 am-1 am.

### Cafe Royal Circle Bar

19 W. Register St.  
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-556-1884  
http://www.caferoyaledinburgh.co.uk

An attractive and historic Victorian pub off the east end of Princes Street, this joint has beautiful original tiled walls, large windows, an island bar and welcoming booths along the walls. You can pass through to the adjoining oyster bar for a good meal.

Monday-Wednesday 11 am-11 pm, Thursday 11 am-midnight, Friday and Saturday 11-1 am, Sunday 12:30-11 pm.

### Dragonfly

52 W. Port  
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-228-4543  
http://www.dragonflycocktailbar.com

This relaxed bar has great decor plus a young and funky clientele. Great cocktail list and contemporary nibbles will keep you there until the early hours of the morning.

Daily 4 pm-1 am.

### Kays Bar

39 Jamaica St.  
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-225-1858  
http://www.kaysbar.co.uk

This is a lovely little pub that looks like a cottage from the outside. It attracts all types, from businessmen and architects to hairdressers and young people. Be sure to check out the single-malt whiskey menu.

Monday-Thursday 11 am-midnight, Friday and Saturday 11 am-1 am, Sunday 12:30-11 pm.

### Milne’s Bar

35 Hanover St.  
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-225-6738
Known as "the Poets' Pub," this rambling bar off Princes Street has passed into legend as a favorite hangout of the great Scottish bards of the 19th century. It was once the favorite watering hole of Hugh McDiarmid, Sorley MacLean and Norman MacCaig. It's dark, atmospheric and literary.

Sunday-Thursday 11 am-11 pm, Friday and Saturday 11 am-1 am.

**Opal Lounge**

51-A George St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-226-2275

**http://www.opallounge.co.uk**

The expensive mixture of the classy and the tacky might not be to everyone's taste. This is where Britain's Prince William used to go when he was a student at St. Andrews University. Black leather seats, dim lighting and bold design are employed to make it "relaxing by day, decadent by night." Food available until 10 pm

Sunday-Friday 5 pm-3 am, Saturday noon-3 am.

**Pear Tree House**

38 W. Nicolson St. (Old Town)
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-667-7533

**http://www.pear-tree-house.co.uk**

Situated near the university, this bar is popular with a wide clientele, not just students. On summer evenings, the large beer garden is busy, and when winter sets in, customers withdraw to the open fire.

Open Monday-Thursday 11 am-midnight, Friday and Saturday 11 am-1 am, Sunday 12:30 pm-midnight.

**Sandy Bell's**

25 Forrest Road
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-225-2751

**http://sandybellsedinburgh.co.uk**

This famous pub was once called the Forrest Hill Bar. Sandy Bell was a long-serving manager, and over the years, it was referred to by his name. Eventually, the brewers came to realize the value of this and adopted it formally. This is the pub that anyone interested in folk music would head for as soon as they arrived in Edinburgh. For years, it was the only session pub in town, and most nights you could listen to a veritable Who's Who of Folk Music. Although there are now many similar venues, Bell's is still the place to go if you enjoy excellent and unpretentious live music. It is an old-fashioned pub, so do not expect plush surroundings, but the atmosphere is top quality.

Monday-Saturday noon-1 am, Sunday 12:30 pm-midnight.

**The Captain's Bar**

4 S. College St.
Edinburgh, Scotland
Live Scottish and Irish music are performed nightly at this former sewing shop, which once dressed the sea captains of the day. With a warm, cheery atmosphere, it's a good spot for a wee tipple.

Open daily 2 pm-1 am.

**The Dome Bar and Grill**

14 George St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-624-8624

[http://www.thedomeedinburgh.com](http://www.thedomeedinburgh.com)

A huge bar inside a former bank, the Dome is a grand place with lots of marble, and it attracts a well-heeled clientele. The food, like the drink, is not the least expensive in town; if you want something light, ask to see the snack menu. Very festive in December.

Daily from 10 am; closing times vary.

**The Jolly Judge**

7 James Court (Old Town)
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-225-2669

[http://www.jollyjudge.co.uk](http://www.jollyjudge.co.uk)

Located in the rabbit warren of passages at the top of the Royal Mile, this isn't the easiest of places to find. But once inside, you'll discover a cozy and welcoming traditional pub with high-speed Internet access.

Open Monday and Thursday-Saturday noon-midnight, Tuesday and Wednesday noon-11 pm, Sunday 12:30-11 pm.

**The Sheep's Heid Inn**

43 The Causeway
Duddingston, Scotland

Phone: 0131-661-7974

[http://www.thesheepheidedinburgh.co.uk](http://www.thesheepheidedinburgh.co.uk)

This coaching inn, dating back to 1360, is Edinburgh's oldest surviving hostelry. This pub has played host to some famous historical figures and retains much of its age-old charm. It's a great place to reward yourself with a pint after you've scaled Arthur's Seat. Its skittle alley, beer garden and pub food are strong attractions, too.

Open Monday-Wednesday 11 am-11 pm, Thursday-Saturday 11 am-midnight, Sunday 12:30-11 pm.

**Tigerlily Bar**

125 George St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-225-5005
Part of a boutique hotel, Tigerlily is where the glamorous and fashionable go to be seen. The interior design is contemporary, with metallic wallpaper and bold colors. A fantastic bar and a great cocktail list make this a choice spot for predinner drinks.

Open daily 8 am-1 am.

**Live Music**

**Bannerman's**

212 Cowgate
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-556-3254

[http://www.bannermanslive.co.uk](http://www.bannermanslive.co.uk)

Set in the cellar of a towering Old Town building, Bannerman's has a subterranean feel enhanced by rough-hewn stone walls. It's a fine place to spend long evenings with lots of live bands.

Monday-Saturday noon-1 am, Sunday 12:30 pm-1 am.

**The Jam House**

5 Queen St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-226-4380

[http://www.thejamhouse.com](http://www.thejamhouse.com)

This jazz and blues venue was created by Jools Holland and designer Neil Tibbatt. It's based on the former BBC studios in Queen Street and modeled on the House of Blues in Los Angeles. The Jam House mixes live music and fine dining, with an emphasis on jazz and blues.

Friday and Saturday 6 pm-3 am. Prices vary. See website for details.

**The Jazz Bar**

1-A Chambers St., Old Town
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-220-4298

[http://www.thejazzbar.co.uk](http://www.thejazzbar.co.uk)

The bar offers a selection of jazz, funk and reggae grooves nightly from live musicians and late-night DJs. Local and visiting musicians frequent the place, and the Monday night jam sessions provide good energy. The downstairs space offers tables, bar stools and banquettes, with a small dance floor in front of the stage.

Open Monday-Friday 5 pm-3 am, Saturday and Sunday 2:30 pm-3 am. Open until 5 am in August. No cover most nights.

**The Royal Oak**

1 Infirmary St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-557-2976
This is a great place to find traditional folk music nearly every night, in informal and spontaneous open sessions. Keep an eye out for the unexpected—the scene there can get somewhat weird sometimes.

Monday-Saturday 11:30 am-2 am, Sunday 12:30 pm-2 am. Cover varies.

**Whistlebinkies**

4-6 S. Bridge  
Edinburgh, Scotland  
**Phone:** 0131-557-5114  
[http://www.whistlebinkies.com](http://www.whistlebinkies.com)

An Old Town pub hollowed out of a centuries-old cellar space, this is a real night-owl's haunt. Live music nightly, with early-evening sessions and late-night bands.

Daily 5 pm-3 am. No cover Sunday-Thursday, and free before midnight Friday and Saturday.

**Performing Arts**

The arts scene in Edinburgh is dynamic. The capital is small enough for different scenes to overlap: Club culture forges tentative links with theater or traditional folk music, spawning some striking performances in the process. The Edinburgh Festival plays its role, too, by nurturing both local and visiting talent and keeping alive the city's identity as a cultural center.

The festival attracts the best contemporary talent from around the world, and the Fringe Festival adds the avant-garde and comedic element. But the offbeat and avant-garde happens in Edinburgh all year round, not just in the August festival season. Theaters, such as the Theatre Workshop (phone 0131-555-3834; [http://www.theatre-workshop.com](http://www.theatre-workshop.com)), mount community-based productions and social dramas, ensuring exciting performances September-July.

In addition, other top performing-arts companies based in Glasgow, such as the Royal Scottish National Orchestra and the Scottish Ballet, perform part of their regular season in Edinburgh’s Festival Theatre. Phone 0131-529-6000. [http://www.edtheatres.com/festival](http://www.edtheatres.com/festival).

**Dance**

**DanceBase**

14-16 Grassmarket  
Edinburgh, Scotland  
**Phone:** 0131-225-5525  
[http://www.dancebase.co.uk](http://www.dancebase.co.uk)

This independent company promotes dance in Edinburgh. Its purpose-built building in the Old Town is an oasis for all dance lovers. There are a variety of “drop-in” classes offered, from ballet and contemporary to jazz, Pilates and yoga. If you would like to try some Scottish dancing, this is the place to go for its ceilidh drop-in classes.
Music

Royal Scottish National Orchestra
Cambridge Street
Edinburgh, Scotland
Phone: 141-226-3868
http://www.rsno.org.uk
Based in Glasgow, the orchestra usually performs in Edinburgh on Friday evenings at Usher Hall. Season runs early September through mid-May.

Scottish Chamber Orchestra
4 Royal Terrace
Edinburgh, Scotland
Phone: 0131-557-6800
http://www.sco.org.uk
Recognized as one of the finest chamber orchestras in the world, this group includes new works by Scottish composers in its performance schedules.

Opera

Edinburgh Studio Opera
Edinburgh, Scotland
http://www.edinburghstudioopera.org
This student-run company (originally known as the Edinburgh University Opera Club) performs high-standard operas with the majority of productions performed during the Edinburgh Fringe Festival at the Greenside Theatre.

Check website for production dates and times.

Scottish Opera
Edinburgh, Scotland
Phone: 0141-248-4567
http://www.scottishopera.org.uk
This Glasgow-based, world-renowned company frequently commissions new pieces by leading as well as up-and-coming Scottish composers.

Theater

Bedlam Theatre Company
11-B Bristo Place
Edinburgh, Scotland
Phone: 0131-225-9893 (box office)
http://www.bedlamtheatre.co.uk
The university's troupe performs at the Bedlam Theatre.
Edinburgh Theatre

13-29 Nicolson St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-529-6000
http://www.edtheatres.com

Known as the Festival City Theatres Trust, this company oversees two of the largest venues in Edinburgh: the King's Theatre and the Festival Theatre. The latter is home to the Scottish Ballet and Scottish Opera, and is at the heart of the Edinburgh International Festival.

Box office open Monday-Saturday 11 am-6 pm. Prices vary.

King's Theatre

2 Leven St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-529-6000
http://www.edtheatres.com/kings

Tycoon Andrew Carnegie laid stone foundation to the King's Theatre back in 1905, and it's been entertaining massive audiences ever since, with an impressive seating capacity of 1,350.

Box office open Monday-Saturday 11 am-6 pm. Doors open one hour before the show. Performance times and prices vary. Check website for both.

Shopping

The main shopping area in Edinburgh is Princes Street, an architectural jumble of chain stores, department stores and bustling crowds. It's not always the most pleasant experience, even if it does give a splendid view of Edinburgh Castle, and most shoppers seem to regard it as a necessary evil to be plowed through on a Saturday afternoon. http://www.princes-street.com.

George Street, which runs parallel to Princes Street, is calmer, more exclusive and correspondingly pricier (http://www.edinburghgeorgestreet.co.uk). Rose Street, which is also parallel to and between George and Princes, is a delightful pedestrian haven of quirky shops. It once boasted the most pubs of any street in Edinburgh (http://www.edinburgh-rosestreet.com). William Street, at the east end of Princes Street, has the more individual and unique boutiques.

Be sure to break away from the crowds and the generic shops to investigate some of the stores in places such as Victoria Street and the Grassmarket (for vintage clothing; http://www.grassmarket.net), Causewayside (a mecca for antiques), Broughton Street and Stockbridge.

For souvenirs, quality knitwear and traditional Scottish items, the Royal Mile is the place to shop. http://www.edinburgh-royalmile.com.

Shopping Hours: Generally Monday-Saturday 9 am-5:30 or 6 pm. If stores open on Sunday, it's generally 10 am or noon-4 pm. On Thursday, many shops stay open till 7 pm or later. Store hours are extended during the Edinburgh Festival and in December.
Department Stores

Harvey Nichols

32-34 St. Andrew's Square
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-524-8388
http://www.harveynichols.com

The first Harvey Nichols outside of London opened in Edinburgh, much to the annoyance of rival city Glasgow. The store fuses its chic London collections with goods that have more local appeal (and more appealing prices). The cafe-restaurant on the "Forth" floor has great views and good food, and the attached deli sells distinctive Scottish produce.

Monday-Wednesday 10 am-6 pm, Thursday 10 am-8 pm, Friday and Saturday 10 am-7 pm, Sunday 11 am-6 pm.

Jenners

48 Princes St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 131-225-2442
http://www.houseoffraser.co.uk

An Edinburgh institution since 1838 and often called the Harrods of Scotland, Jenners has six floors of goods that will thin your wallet. The food hall alone is worth a trip.

Monday-Wednesday 9:30 am-6:30 pm, Thursday 9:30 am-8 pm, Friday 9:30 am-7 pm, Saturday 9 am-7 pm, Sunday 11 am-6 pm.

John Lewis

Leith Street
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 131-556-9121
http://www.johnlewis.com/our-shops/edinburgh

This reliable and versatile department store has a knowledgeable staff and good buys in a range of items from cosmetics to electronic goods and furniture.

Monday-Wednesday and Friday 9 am-6 pm, Thursday 9 am-8 pm, Saturday 9 am-6:30 pm, Sunday 10 am-6 pm.

Galleries

Fruitmarket Gallery

45 Market St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-225-2383
http://www.fruitmarket.co.uk

This is one of the city's leading showcases for contemporary art, both local and international, with a lovely cafe and a great bookshop.
Monday-Saturday 11 am-6 pm, Sunday noon-5 pm.

### Stills Gallery

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<th>Address</th>
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<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>0131-622-6200</td>
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<td>Website</td>
<td><a href="http://www.stills.org">http://www.stills.org</a></td>
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This place is considered the best photographic gallery in Scotland and a showcase for contemporary international work.

Monday-Saturday 11 am-6 pm.

### Markets

#### Edinburgh Farmers Market

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<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
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<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td><a href="http://www.edinburghfarmersmarket.com">http://www.edinburghfarmersmarket.com</a></td>
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The farmers market offers a mixture of local produce from specialist producers, including meat, fish, bread, chocolates, fruit and vegetables. There are also stalls that cook food while you wait.

Saturday 9 am-2 pm.

### Shopping Areas

#### Multrees Walk

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<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>0131-557-0050</td>
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<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td><a href="http://www.the-walk.co.uk">http://www.the-walk.co.uk</a></td>
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The chic pedestrian shopping street is anchored by the landmark Harvey Nichols store. Shops include Armani, Louis Vuitton, Calvin Klein, Links of London jewelers, the Pen Shop, Kurt Geiger and DAKS Simpson. Grab a bite or a cup at the sublime cafe, Vincaffe.

### Ocean Terminal

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<th>Address</th>
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<tr>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>0131-555-8888</td>
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<tr>
<td>Website</td>
<td><a href="http://www.oceanterminal.com">http://www.oceanterminal.com</a></td>
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This shopping, dining and cinema complex at Leith Docks is a symbol of the area. It has a decent range of shops and services, and the multiplex theater is a treat. Another attraction is the Royal Yacht *Britannia*, which is docked outside.

Open Monday-Friday 10 am-8 pm, Saturday 10 am-7 pm, Sunday 11 am-6 pm (multiplex and restaurants remain open until midnight).
**Princes Mall**

3 Princes St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-557-3759

http://www.princesmall-edinburgh.co.uk

Often still referred to by its original name, Waverley Market, this mall has distinctive stores that far surpass its unglamorous design. Bargain-priced books, jewelry, designer clothes and more.

Open Monday-Saturday 9 am-6 pm (Thursday till 7 pm), Sunday 11 am-5 pm.

**Specialty Stores**

**Edinburgh Woollen Mill**

449 Lawnmarket (Royal Mile)
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0808-226-3840

http://www.ewm.co.uk

Go there for high-quality wool clothing, as well as rugs and such Scottish ephemera as whiskey miniatures and shortbread. You can also research and purchase your family's tartan there. There are many other branches around the city, including another in the Royal Mile. Check website for details.

Open daily 10 am-7 pm.

**I.J. Mellis**

30 Victoria St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-226-6215

http://www.mellischeese.net

This is quite simply the finest cheese monger in Scotland. You can sample a wide variety of cheeses from the British Isles. Additional locations at 330 Morningside Road (phone 0131-447-8889) and 6 Bakers Place (phone 0131-225-6566).

**MacSween of Edinburgh**

Dryden Road (Bilston Glen, Loanhead)
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-440-2555

http://www.macsween.co.uk

This place is the capital's most celebrated haggis maker. Purists balked at the vegetarian haggis at first, but it's now an accepted (and delicious) alternative to the traditional variety. You can buy items direct from the factory or from stores such as Jenners.

Open Monday-Friday 8:30 am-5 pm.
Dining

Dining Overview

Edinburgh has seen an explosion in the number and variety of restaurants in recent years.

The buzzword these days is "modern Scottish"—cosmopolitan menus that include local seafood and game, as well as fresh produce. It's a successful formula that has won Michelin-star status for such local chefs as Jeff Bland, Martin Wishart and Tom Kitchin.

There are good restaurants scattered all across the city, but the top of the Royal Mile, New Town and Leith are particularly noteworthy spots for dining. Generally, people like to sit down for dinner between 7 and 8:30 pm. Dropping in and hoping for a table is not advised, especially on Friday and Saturday. Make reservations.

Expect to pay within these general guidelines for a dinner for one, excluding tip and drinks: $ = less than £14; $$ = £14-£25; $$$ = £26-£40; $$$$ = more than £40.

Local & Regional

Dubh Prais

123B High St.
Edinburgh, Scotland
Phone: 0131-557-5732
http://www.dubhpraisrestaurant.com

This stone-walled cellar restaurant offers traditional Scottish ingredients such as seafood and venison as mainstays, but award-winning chef and proprietor James McWilliams adds a French influence to the cooking.

Tuesday-Saturday 5-10:30 pm. Reservations recommended. $$. Most major credit cards.

Stac Polly

29-33 Dublin St. (New Town)
Edinburgh, Scotland
Phone: 0131-556-2231
http://www.stacpolly.com

Dublin Street is home to this original fine-dining restaurant as well as the more informal brasserie. Both are strong on seafood, venison and pheasant (and French wines), but don’t leave without trying the famous appetizer: filo-pastry parcels of haggis with red wine and plum sauce. Dinner is served daily in the restaurant; the brasserie serves lunch Monday-Saturday. There’s a second bistro location at 38 St. Mary's St.

Daily from 6 pm. Reservations recommended. $$. Most major credit cards.

The Kitchin

78 Commercial Quay
Leith, Scotland
Chef Tom Kitchin's kitchen boasts a well-deserved Michelin star, and it's worth noting that he's the youngest chef in Scotland to receive the coveted award. He uses seasonal Scottish produce and classical French technique to produce delightful dishes that rightfully earned him such prestige.

Tuesday-Saturday noon-2:30 pm and 6-10 pm. $$$$.

**Tower**

Chambers Street (Old Town)
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-225-3003

[http://www.tower-restaurant.com](http://www.tower-restaurant.com)

James Thomson of The Witchery opened this restaurant on the roof of the Museum of Scotland. It has one of the best views of any restaurant in the capital. The food is surprisingly simple given the beautiful decor, but it's elegantly created, using the best local ingredients in entrees such as beef fillet carpaccio. Being escorted up in the elevator by a uniformed attendant adds something extra to the dining experience.

Sunday-Thursday 10 am-10 pm, Friday and Saturday 10 am-10:30 pm. Reservations recommended. $$$.

**Urban Angel**

121 Hanover St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-225-6215

[http://www.urban-angel.co.uk](http://www.urban-angel.co.uk)

The beauty of this establishment is that it's very unassuming in its location (down a few steps and easy to miss), but the decor is bright, and the fresh food includes as many organic ingredients as possible. Daily pasta, meat and risotto specials along with the regular staples including creamy leek mash and haggis, potato scones with smoked salmon and rocket leaves (arugula), and homemade sorbets. There's a small outdoor garden space in the back, and takeout is available. There is a second location at 1 Forth St. (phone 0131-556-6323).

Monday-Friday 8 am-5 pm, Saturday and Sunday 9 am-5 pm. $$$. Most major credit cards.

**Cuisines**

**American**

**Bell's Diner**

7 St. Stephen St. (Stockbridge)
Edinburgh, Scotland

The small, popular Stockbridge restaurant easily satisfies yearnings for burgers and steaks.

Sunday-Friday for dinner, Saturday for lunch and dinner. It's tiny, so reservations are definitely recommended. $$. MasterCard and Visa accepted.
Buffalo Grill

12-14 Chapel St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-667-7427
http://www.buffalogrill.co.uk

This steak-lover's paradise offers cuts cooked in a variety of ways. There are 10 types of burgers, along with fish, chicken and some Cajun entrees. The Chapel Street location is not licensed, Raeburn Place is; you can take your own wine to both locations (corkage is £1 per bottle). For dessert, try one of the apple pies. Gluten-free options are also available. There is a second location in Stockbridge at 1 Raeburn Place (lunch only; phone 0131-332-3864).

Monday-Friday for lunch and dinner, Saturday and Sunday for dinner only. Reservations recommended. $$$. MasterCard and Visa accepted.

Asian

Kalpna

2-3 St. Patrick's Square (Old Town)
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-667-9890
http://www.kalpnarestaurant.com

This Edinburgh institution serves some of the most authentic and delicious vegetarian Indian fare. Consistent quality. The food is filling, and it is advisable to share several dishes in a group. Lunch is a buffet, and reservations are not normally accepted, but the restaurant will book a table for groups of six or more.

Monday-Saturday noon-2 pm and 5:30 pm-10:30 pm. Reservations recommended. $$. Most major credit cards.

Mosque Kitchen

33 Nicholson St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-667-4035
http://mosquekitchen.com

This place is part of Edinburgh's Central Mosque, and it was set up to counteract negative feelings toward Muslims. It attracts Muslims, students and locals who know where to get one of the best curries in town for less than £7. It's informal, so be prepared to sit at communal tables in the courtyard behind the mosque. Vegetarian meals are also served, and there is a takeaway menu.

Daily 11:30 am-10 pm. $. No credit cards.

Sushiya

19 Dalry Road (Haymarket)
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-313-3222
http://www.sushiya.co.uk
This bright, small space with high tables and stools allows diners to sample a limited sushi menu, as well as some superbly crisp and light tempura, chicken teriyaki, and noodle and broth dishes. If you choose the sushi, have some salmon, as it will be very fresh.

Tuesday-Saturday noon-10:30 pm. $$. Accepts Visa and MasterCard.

The Jasmine

32-34 Grindlay St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-229-5757

http://www.jasminechinese.co.uk

Opposite the Lyceum Theatre, Jasmine is one of the busiest Chinese restaurants in town. It has made its mark with consistent food, an easygoing atmosphere and stylish modern decor. Dishes originate from various regions.

Monday-Thursday noon-11 pm, Friday and Saturday noon-11:30 pm, Sunday 1-11 pm. Reservations available online or by phone. Reservations recommended. $-$$. Most major credit cards.

French

La P’tite Folie

9 Randolph Place (West End)
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-225-8678

http://www.laptitefolie.co.uk

If you speak French you won't be discouraged, but it's certainly not necessary. Specials change regularly, but the menu usually offers fish and meat prepared in interesting sauces, as one would expect in a solid but not fancy French restaurant. The atmosphere is lovely, with the bulk of the tables on the second floor in a renovated Tudor-style space. There's another location at 61 Frederick St. in New Town (phone 0131-225-7983).

Monday-Saturday noon-3 pm and 6-10 pm. Reservations available online or by phone. Reservations recommended. $$. Most major credit cards.

Le Cafe St. Honore

34 Thistle Street Lane N.W.
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-226-2211

http://www.cafesthonore.com

The fact that other chefs and restaurant managers eat there is a good sign. Scottish influences have crept into the excellent French menu, which changes daily.

Monday-Friday noon-10 pm, Saturday and Sunday 6-10 pm. Reservations available online. Reservations recommended. $$$$.$ Most major credit cards.
Fusion

The Witchery by the Castle

Castlehill
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-225-5613

http://www.thewitchery.com

Reached by descending a candlelit stairway, the Witchery has an air of exotic luxury. Its main space is romantic, and the Secret Garden space has an airy feel. Seasonal Scottish food is treated to French and Mediterranean influences. The 500-strong wine list is a recommendation in itself, and the pre- and posttheater menus are reasonably priced.

Daily for lunch and dinner. Reservations required. $$$-$$$$$. Most major credit cards.

Tigerlily Restaurant

125 George St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-225-5005

http://www.tigerlilyedinburgh.co.uk

Located in the boutique-hotel of the same name, the Tigerlily restaurant offers a variety of creative foods and beverages, as well as afternoon tea. Specialties include a spiced coconut soup with bok choy, and a roasted butternut squash with sage risotto.

Daily for lunch and dinner; afternoon tea 3-6 pm. Reservations available. $$$-$$$$$. Most major credit cards.

German

Bruntsfield Konditorei

185 Bruntsfield Place
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-656-0763

http://www.falko.co.uk

This is a little piece of Germany in the heart of Edinburgh. Freshly baked bread, brioches and pretzels are more than tempting. Be warned—the cakes are out of this world, and you will likely find the choices overwhelming.

Wednesday-Sunday 9 am-6 pm. Reservations not accepted. $. Most major credit cards.

Italian

Contini Ristorante

103 George St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone:** 0131-225-1550

http://www.contini.com/contini-george-street
There's a strong menu and impressive Italian wine list in this stylish open-plan restaurant, converted from a banking hall. The menu changes seasonally, but staples include pizzas and the divine orecchiette with sausage, porcini mushrooms, arugula, cream and Parmigiana.

Monday-Friday 8 am-10 pm, Saturday 10 am-10:30 pm, Sunday 11 am-8 pm. Reservations available online or by phone. Reservations recommended. $$-$$$.

Mia Restaurant

96 Dalry Road
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-629-1750

http://mia-restaurant.co.uk

Mia serves fresh Italian food, a great selection of wines, cocktails and delicious coffee only minutes away from Haymarket railway station. The philosophy is that good Italian food is simple, straightforward and fresh. It's open all day, for a cup of coffee and a croissant in the morning, a reasonably priced lunch or a fine dinner with wine.

Daily noon until late. Reservations available.

Origano

277 Leith Walk
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-554-6539

http://www.origano-leith.co.uk

Excellent value for money in this comfortable little restaurant. Freshly made, cheap and cheerful pizzas and pastas are of superb quality. Even the "small" pizzas are huge. Monday and Tuesday are BYOB with a £3 corkage fee. Dishes can also be ordered for takeaway.

Daily 5-10 pm. Reservations available.

Mexican

Blue Parrot Cantina

49 St. Stephen St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-225-2941

http://blueparrotcantina.co.uk

This is the pick of Edinburgh's numerous Mexican restaurants. It's set in a candlelit basement in Stockbridge. Be sure to have a freshly made margarita or tequila sunrise.

Tuesday-Friday 5-11:30 pm, Saturday and Sunday 3:30 -10:30 pm. Reservations available by phone. Reservations recommended. $-$$. MasterCard and Visa accepted.

Pancho Villas

240 Canongate
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-557-4416
This superb restaurant, not far from the Scottish Parliament, serves authentic Mexican food. For starters, choose the *chili rellenos de queso*—cheese-stuffed jalapeno peppers coated with a crispy batter. Then follow with chicken or steak fajitas with all the accompaniments.

Monday-Friday noon-2 pm and 5-11 pm, Saturday noon-11 pm, Sunday 5-11 pm. Reservations available by phone. Reservations recommended. $$. Most major credit cards.

**Vegetarian**

**David Bann**

56-58 St. Mary’s St. (off the Royal Mile and the Cowgate)
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone**: 0131-556-5888

**http://www.davidbann.com**

This place puts an innovative and hip twist on vegetarian dining. Dishes are presented with impeccable flair in a cool minimalist ambience. Specialties include various savory tarts, risottos and juice creations.

Monday-Thursday noon-10 pm, Friday noon-10:30 pm, Saturday 11 am-10:30 pm, Sunday 11 am-10 pm. $$-$$$$. Most major credit cards.

**Henderson’s**

94 Hanover St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

**Phone**: 0131-225-2131

**http://www.hendersonsofedinburgh.co.uk**

Scotland’s oldest vegetarian restaurant—and best, in our opinion—has been going strong since the early 1960s. A popular strategy there is to pick a main course and a plate of two or three salads as accompaniment. Its Scottish trifle is the finest available. Choose from the Salad Table, Bistro or Wine Bar.

Monday-Wednesday 8 am-10 pm, Thursday-Saturday 8 am-11 pm. $. Most major credit cards.

**Seafood**

**The Boathouse**

22 High St. (a 20-minute drive from the city center)
South Queensferry, Scotland

**Phone**: 0131-331-5429

**http://www.theboathouse-sq.co.uk**

This great little seafood restaurant is on the water’s edge in the historic suburb of South Queensferry. The friendly owners make all diners feel welcome, guiding them through a menu that includes domestic seafood and more exotic options. Call ahead for a coveted window table—they have great views of the Forth Rail Bridge.

Daily for lunch and dinner. $$-$$$$. Most major credit cards.
Fishers

1 The Shore
Leith, Scotland

Phone: 0131-554-5666
http://www.fishersbistros.co.uk

This place is located by an inlet with tables inside the base of an old signal tower. During warm weather, tables are available outdoors. A full menu is served all day, including creamy fish soup, fish cakes and the fresh catch of the day. There is also a city-center branch at 58 Thistle St. (phone 0131-225-5109).

Daily noon-late. Reservations recommended. $$. Most major credit cards.

Mussel Inn

61-65 Rose St.
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0843-289-2481
http://www.mussel-inn.com

The seafood there could not be any fresher. Scotland's fine fish and shellfish are allowed to speak for themselves without too much tinkering. Mussel Inn is also known for its thick chowder. Its location just behind Princes Street makes it perfect for a hearty seafood lunch or dinner between bouts of shopping and sightseeing.

Monday-Saturday noon-10 pm, Sunday 12:30-10 pm. Reservations recommended. $$$. Most major credit cards.

The Ship on the Shore

24-26 The Shore
Edinburgh, Scotland

Phone: 0131-555-0409
http://www.theshipontheshore.co.uk

Near the Royal Yacht Britannia with a view over the Water of Leith, the Ship on the Shore focuses on seafood, with the catch of the day and regular offerings such as seafood chowder or steamed Shetland mussels. The wooden decor and the nautical maps along the wall add to the seafaring ambience. When the sun shines, food can be served outside on the shorefront terrace.

Daily 9 am-10 pm.

Security
Etiquette

Apart from obvious linguistic differences, there are few cultural stumbling blocks to be wary of when dealing with the Scots. The most important thing to remember is never to confuse the terms Britain and England. They are not interchangeable. Scotland is a member nation of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as are England and Wales. Scotland's association with England, then, is a union of equals. Scots will take instant offense if you refer to their country as part of England.
Personal Safety

Although Edinburgh is not a particularly dangerous or crime-ridden city, the normal rules of vigilance apply. Don't flash money about, don't conspicuously display expensive jewelry or watches, and never let your valuables out of your sight. Keep wallets and purses protected from pickpockets and purse snatchers, especially in crowded places such as train stations and shopping malls.

Violent crime is rare, but there are parts of the city that do feel threatening, especially at night. Late at night on weekends, Lothian Road, the top of Leith Walk and the Cowgate are teeming with drunk and rowdy youths. You may want to avoid the area then. Until recently, certain parts of Leith were a recognized red-light district; women walking alone off the main roads near Leith docks may be harassed at night. The high-rise apartment developments on the outskirts of the city are also associated with crime and drug problems, but they have little to attract tourists. Also avoid walking on the Meadows or Bruntsfield Links late at night.

For the latest information, contact your country's travel-advisory agency.

Health

No vaccinations are required to enter the U.K., and the water and food are safe to consume. General sanitation throughout Edinburgh and the U.K. is excellent.


There are pharmacies in every residential area—often several. Boots the Chemists is a popular pharmacy chain with a number of branches in Edinburgh (phone 0845-070-8090; http://www.boots-uk.com). Be aware that some drugs available over the counter elsewhere may be available only by prescription in the U.K.

In the case of a medical emergency, dial 112 or 999.

For the latest information, contact your country's health-advisory agency.

Facts

Dos & Don'ts

Do remember that a fierce rivalry exists between Glasgow and Edinburgh, so unless you want to make one of the locals angry, be careful what you say.

Don't be alarmed by the One O’Clock Gun, which is fired from the castle rampart every day. When it goes off, tourists are easy to spot—they're the ones looking about for the cause of the noise. The locals will simply ignore it or check their watches.

Do ditch the taxis and walk—exploring Edinburgh's cobbled streets, unique shops and cozy bars at random is part of the city's charm.

Don't be afraid to ask people to repeat themselves. Even though the average Edinburgh accent is easy to understand, it may take a bit of getting used to. If you haven't understood, ask the speaker to repeat. No one will take offense.
Do try the local ales, even if you don't normally like beer. Served cold, these full-flavored ales are delicious. Ask the bartender for "a pint of 80."

Don't miss the climb to Arthur's Seat if you are able and the weather allows. The setting and the view, of the city and the Firth of Forth, are spectacular.

Geostats

**Passport/Visa Requirements:** Citizens of Canada and the U.S. need passports but not visas for short term visits (less than six months). Reconfirm travel document requirements with your carrier before departure.

**Population:** 495,360.

**Predominant Religions:** Christian (Protestant and Catholic).

**Time Zone:** Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). Daylight Saving Time is observed from the last Sunday in March to the last Sunday in October.

**Voltage Requirements:** 240 volts, 50 cycles.

**Telephone Codes:** 44, country code; 0131, city code;

Money

Taxes

A 20% value-added tax (VAT) is levied on most purchases, including hotel and restaurant bills.

Nonresidents may receive a VAT refund on a purchased item using the Foreign Exchange Tax-Free Shopping arrangements, but only at participating stores. A tax-free shopping form needs to be completed in the store at the time of purchase and presented to HM Customs upon departure. For additional information, visit [http://www.visitscotland.com/travel/information/tax-free-shopping](http://www.visitscotland.com/travel/information/tax-free-shopping).

Tipping

Tipping is expected in hotels, restaurants, taxis and hairdressers. The going rate is 10%-15%. Some restaurants add this automatically to your bill, so check to see if it's included in the total.

Weather

For the most part, Edinburgh has a cool, sometimes gray and overcast climate that reaches its highest temperatures in July and August, when temperatures can reach 70 F/20 C. The saying that Edinburgh can experience four seasons in one day is not far off, as temperatures and levels of sun or rain can vary greatly in short spans of time. May-September is a good time to visit, as the days are longer with plenty of sunshine. In January and February, the temperature can get as high as 43 F/6 C, but it usually hovers around the 34 F/1 C mark. Edinburgh rarely gets much snow, except for the hillier parts toward the Pentland Hills in the south of the city.
What to Wear

The best maxim to remember when dressing in Edinburgh is to be prepared. Scottish weather is notoriously changeable, and sunny weather at breakfast time is no guarantee that there won't be showers by dinner (or vice versa). So dress in layers. At the height of summer, you can usually venture out in shorts and a T-shirt, but still take along a light waterproof jacket. In winter, the weather is more consistent—chilly—and plenty of warm clothing is advised.

Casual attire is acceptable on most occasions, but if you plan to dine at one of the nicer restaurants, be sure to pack at least one nice outfit. If you buy any tartan goods, wait until you get home to wear them. Strolling down High Street in a garish tam o'shanter or a tartan “see you Jimmy” hat complete with fake red hair will nix any chances of your being taken seriously by locals (unless Scotland's playing an international rugby match).

Business attire ranges from a suit with a tie to more informal chinos paired with a smart shirt and jacket.

Dover, England

Overview

Introduction

A busy seaport, Dover, England, is best known for its chalky white cliffs. The town itself is rather drab, but a steep climb takes you to its 900-year-old Norman castle, which overlooks the English Channel. The castle has double walls and underground tunnels (a nerve center for many World War II operations) to explore. The city's museum is worth a visit as well.

If you're in good shape, you may want to take in the views from the trails of the Western Heights.

Located 65 mi/108 km southeast of London, Dover is where you catch the ferry for the 90-minute trip to France.

Port Information

Location

Dover is a major European port, and the U.K.'s second largest cruise terminal, as well as being its busiest ferry port. Dover's two cruise terminals lie west of the town, while the cross-Channel ferry traffic is based in the east. The cruise terminals are jointly known as Dover Cruise Port or Dover Western Docks.

The terminals have good, modern facilities, porters to assist with luggage, bureaus de change, restaurants and cafes. Terminal 1 occupies the former Marine Railway Station and retains many charming Victorian features. Terminal 2 is a modern, purpose-built structure. The town center is about 1.2 mi/2 km from the cruise port. Taxis, which wait to meet all ship arrivals, are readily available at the terminals. There is also a shuttle bus into town.