



MAY 2ND – 9TH, 2020

Itinerary

Friday, May 1st: Depart the USA for Dublin.

Suggested Flights:

- Delta Airlines #2630: Depart San Antonio at 4:24 p.m., Arrive Atlanta 7:47 p.m.
- Delta Airlines #176: Depart Atlanta at 9:40 p.m., Arrive Dublin at 10:35 a.m.



Day One

SATURDAY, MAY 2ND

Arrive Dublin Airport. Flights under own arrangements.

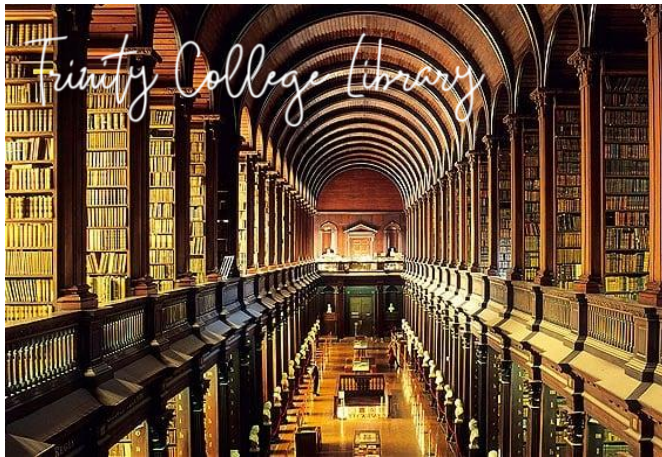
Meet your driver in the Arrivals Hall as you pass through baggage claim. Private transfer destined for **The Merrion Hotel** in the heart of Dublin which is about 30 minutes' drive.

The Merrion is Dublin's most stylish and luxurious five-star hotel. It is remembered historically as the birthplace of the first Duke of Wellington, and it houses an impressive collections of art and antiques. The Merrion is a beautiful Georgian building in the centre of Dublin. It features landscaped gardens, an infinity pool, and Restaurant Patrick Guilbaud—the only restaurant in Ireland with 2 Michelin Stars. In addition, **The Merrion** is home to the Cellar Restaurant, which offers Irish cuisine, and the No. 23, which serves stylish and creative cocktails.

We will stay in Superior King Rooms, which will be located in the garden wing with views over the landscaped gardens. Upgrades to Junior Suites in the main house are available upon request.

In the evening, our private-mini coach will take us to the former home of **W. B. Yeats** when he was senator of the newly formed government where we will enjoy cocktails. We will then return to the hotel for a light dinner and opening speech by your guide Marianne, tour manager James McDonough and Dr. William Rudolph, curator at the San Antonio Museum of Art.

Overnight: The Merrion Hotel, Dublin



Day Two

SUNDAY, MAY 3RD

Treasures of Dublin

In the morning, we will depart the hotel on foot for a walking tour of **Literary Merrion Square**. Merrion Square introduces us to 18th century Dublin. It is one of the most significant public squares in Dublin. Its park and houses were laid out between 1762 and 1800 and it is a gorgeous example of urban planning during the Enlightenment. It also sets a great point of contrast between the 18th century city of Dublin and the 18th and 19th century country houses we will visit.

We will then continue on foot to visit **Trinity College** where we will visit the **Museum Building** and the magnificent **Old Library**, which houses the world-famous **Book of Kells**.

The **Old Library** is one of Dublin's most significant 18th century buildings and a distinctive part of the cityscape. Inside it is no less important as it contains extraordinary manuscript treasures. The Book of Kells is one of the most beautiful extant Medieval Gospel Books, made and illustrated in the 9th century by Celtic monks. It is a masterpiece of Medieval art.

We will then lunch at Peploe's St Stephens Green, a Dublin classic serving a European menu located in the heart of the city.

Next, we will pay a special visit to the **silver collections** at the **National Museum of Ireland** and, if time allows, we will visit the **National Gallery** for a privately curated tour of the Irish National collection of paintings. (If needed, we will visit the National Gallery the following morning instead.)

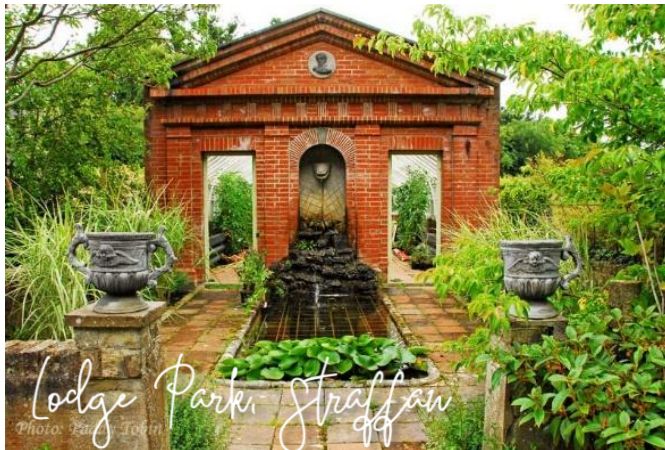
The National Museum of Ireland has the largest collection of Irish silver in the world—it is only matched by the San Antonio Museum of Art's Rowan Collection of Irish silver, which is the second-largest. We will see our museum's "siblings" and get excited about our own exhibition in 2021!

The National Gallery houses exceptional European masterworks, including old master paintings by Diego Velázquez, Rembrandt, Frans Hals, Nicolas Poussin, Francisco Goya, Jusepe de Ribera, Caravaggio, Jean-Baptiste Chardin, Paolo Uccello, Pieter Brueghel the Elder, and, of course, masterpieces of Irish painting.

We will then return to the hotel and rest before departing (40-minute drive) for a private evening visit to **Newbridge House**: one of the finest houses in Ireland. The Cobbe family, owners of the art collection, are family friends of James McDonough and have come up with a unique solution with the Dublin County Council to preserve this amazing house and collection. The house was designed in 1749 for Archbishop Cobbe by George Semple. Newbridge House contains many of its original furnishings, including the Cobbe Portrait, one of the handful of paintings considered to represent the likeness of William Shakespeare.

We will also enjoy a private dinner together at Newbridge House before returning to our hotel.

Overnight: Merrion Hotel, Dublin



Day Three

MONDAY, MAY 4TH

Castletown & County Kildare

The following morning, we transfer to County Kildare (40-minute drive) where we will enjoy a private visit to **Castletown House**. We will tour this icon of stately homes, built for Speaker William Connolly in 1722. Castletown is the only house in Ireland designed by the great Italian architect Alessandro Galilei. Among the architectural features of Castletown House that we will enjoy is its harmonious plan of beautifully proportioned reception rooms featuring their original interior decorations. Castletown House was recently and magnificently restored by owners **Mr. and Mrs. George Magan**.

We will then continue by transfer (15-minute drive) to arrive at a private lunch in **Lodge Park, Straffan**. This beautiful house is the home of **David and Katharine Guinness Bulbulia** who are our hosts. Unlike traditional Palladian Homes, Lodge Park contains four wings rather than three, and has a lovely 18th century garden that features topiary, herbaceous borders, and a glorious walkway of sweet peas; however, the garden is most famous for its beech hedges that create different, themed garden rooms.

Our transfer (15-minute drive) will then take us for a private visit to **Leixlip Castle**, home of our hosts **Hon. Desmond and Penny Guinness**. Leixlip Castle is the oldest building we will visit. Leixlip was built in the 12th century by Adam de Hereford and passed through many owners before the son of Diana Mitford,

Desmond Guinness, purchased the castle in 1958. The house is filled with paintings, tapestries, Chippendale furniture, Savonnerie carpets, and drawings of the six Mitford sisters by William Acton.

Our transfer (15-minute drive) will then return us to our hotel so that we may enjoy an independent afternoon and evening in Dublin.

Overnight: The Merrion Hotel, Dublin



Day Four

TUESDAY, MAY 5TH

Kilkenny & County Kilkenny

We will transfer to Kilkenny (95-minute drive) where we will enjoy coffee on arrival. We will next visit **Kilkenny Castle & Design Yard**. The castle dates back to the 12th century but it also houses one of the finest design workshops in Ireland producing amazing contemporary silver products. Today the Castle Yard is owned by Kilkenny Civic Trust and is home to a number of thriving craft and design businesses where it is possible to watch skilled craftspeople at work. These include JMK Goldsmiths, who, as well as creating fine jewellery, also made one of Ireland's most prized artifacts, the MacCarthy Perpetual Challenge Cup commonly referred to as the McCarthy Cup.

If time allows, we will visit the medieval **cathedral of St Canice**, which is the second longest cathedral in Ireland. It also is noted for its rare and wonderful 9th century Celtic Round Tower next to the 13th century structure. Important 16th century ecclesiastical furnishings will also help us enjoy this holy site. Next, we will enjoy a private lunch at **Dangan Cottage**, home of **Christopher Moore**. We will tour this miniature gem of a house and gardens, which provides a welcome change from "another big castle!"

We will continue to **Mount Juliet Hotel** (25-minute drive), a lovely 5-star property and the most acclaimed country estate hotel in County Kilkenny. A compelling history, splendid Georgian architecture, luxurious accommodations, Michelin-starred gastronomic delights, and some of the best landscapes in Ireland all come together to make Mount Juliet a very special place. The hotel's leisure center even includes a heated indoor pool. The hotel kindly offered the group complimentary upgrades to executive rooms in the main manor house and there is the possibility to upgrade to river view rooms upon request. We will enjoy dinner together at the hotel.

Overnight: Mount Juliet Manor House Hotel, County Kilkenny



Day Five

WEDNESDAY, MAY 6TH

Curraghmore & County Waterford

We will transfer (50-minute drive) to **Curraghmore House** for a private visit. Curraghmore is the home of the **de las Poer Beresford family, Marquis of Waterford**. It is a wildly romantic house that could only be in Ireland. It is a mix of Medieval and exquisite 18th century treasures. Its stunning grounds include a shell grotto nestled among one of the most spectacular landscapes in Ireland.

We will enjoy a private lunch with the owners before continuing to **Waterford City** (35-minute drive) for a tour of the **Bishops Palace**. The Palace houses a wonderful collection of 18th century furniture, glass, and paintings related to Waterford.

That afternoon will remain free to spend at our leisure before we gather for a private dinner at **Ballysallagh house** (30-minute drive).

Overnight: Mount Juliet Manor House Hotel, County Kilkenny



Day Six

THURSDAY, MAY 7TH

Lismore & County Cork

In the morning, we will transfer (80-minute drive) to **Youghal, County Cork** where we will take the boats up the **Blackwater River** to **Villierstown**. The River Blackwater is designated a 'Special Area of Conservation' and is home to many species of birds including kingfishers, peregrine falcons, egrets, and herons, as well as other species including otters. From there, we will reboard the coach (10-minute drive) for our next stop, a private visit to **Dromana House**. Dromana is home of the **Villiers Stuarts**.

Dromana House is one of the oldest estates in Ireland. Its long history and various rebuilding programs have created a fascinating mixture of styles, including important stables and other outbuildings, as well as a fantastic ballroom.

We will continue on (15-minute drive) for a private visit to **Tourin House** where we will enjoy lunch hosted by **Kristin Jameson**, a ninth-generation direct descendant of John Jameson, whose name is now synonymous with Irish whiskey. Her father, Shane Jameson, who was born in Tourin House in 1924, was the last named non-executive director of Jameson's, from 1963 to 1988.

Next we will transfer (10-minute drive) to **Lismore Castle**, which is one of the most picturesque houses in Ireland and one of the homes of the Duke of Devonshire. The riverside setting on the Blackwater is breathtaking. This is a 19th century gothic dream was home to the 6th 'Bachelor Duke', one of England's greatest art patrons ever.

We will return to our hotel (90-minute drive) and enjoy an independent evening.

Overnight: Mount Juliet Manor House Hotel, County Kilkenny



Day Seven

FRIDAY, MAY 8TH

Russborough House & County Wicklow

On this morning we will transfer back north to County Wicklow (70-minute drive) where we will visit **Russborough House**. This was the former home of **Sir Alfred and Lady Beit**. The home, designed in the 1740's as a Palladian palace, was recently beautifully refurbished and paintings from the Milltown collection were returned. Many regard this as the most beautiful house in Ireland! It contains one of the finest art collections in private hands and has been subject to a turbulent recent history after a series of raids and robberies removed some of the finest paintings, most of which have now been returned.

We will transfer (60-minute drive) to visit **Killruddery**, which is a magnificently laid out 18th century house with a delicate balance between romance and formality. We will take lunch at Killruddery and go on a garden tour. You may recognize the gardens from their appearances in many movies and programs, including *Angela's Ashes* and *Camelot*. The 17th century gardens survive in their original formal layout with some 18th & 19th century additions. The Long Ponds, the Angles and the Sylvan Theatre are features of this magnificent landscape.

Next, we will visit **Dargle Hill** (10-minute drive) which is a gem of a garden around a 1790 house, Dower house of Powerscourt. The elaborate and beautiful gardens are world-renowned: National Geographic labeled them as number 3 in the world's top ten gardens in 2014!

Finally, we will return to Dublin (45-minute drive) and settle into the hotel before enjoying a farewell dinner together.

Overnight: The Merrion Hotel, Dublin

Day Eight

SATURDAY, MAY 9TH

Depart for the USA or onwards destinations

We will depart by private transfer for the **Dublin Airport** for return flights to the USA.

Suggested Flights:

Delta Airlines #177: Depart Dublin 12:20 p.m., Arrive Atlanta at 4:12 p.m.

Delta Airlines #2980: Depart Atlanta 6:00 p.m., Arrive San Antonio at 9:15 p.m.



For More Information, Contact:

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