

Things to know before you go.

Helpful hints while travelling!

Flight & Baggage/Luggage information:

- Recommended check-in for international flights is a minimum of 3 hours. **Airline Baggage** allowance is one suitcase per person. Please check your airline website for complete baggage allowances and travel restrictions E.g luggage weight, size, and if you are allowed a carry-on bag etc.
- **Coach Luggage Allowance:** Due to luggage storage capacity on our touring coaches, each guest is permitted one suitcase per person, along with one small personal/carry-on item.
- For our **group tours, portage is included** for one suitcase per person where portage services are available. Guests are responsible for handling any additional luggage, and additional portage charges may apply.
- Please keep this in mind when packing for your tour, as coach luggage space is limited and we may not be able to accommodate additional large suitcases.
- If you are travelling with additional or oversized luggage, please contact Brack Tours before departure so that we can advise you accordingly.

Plug Adapters & Voltage Converters:

- Ireland, Northern Ireland and Scotland use **Type G three-pin electrical sockets**, with a standard voltage of **230V and frequency of 50Hz**. Guests travelling from North America will require a suitable plug adapter. Please check the voltage requirements of individual electrical devices before travelling, as some appliances may also require a voltage converter.
- Plug adapters do not change the electricity supplied to equipment; they simply allow it to be plugged in to a different type of wall socket or outlet.
- Most Hotels and a few other accommodations in Ireland will have a two-pin 110V to 120V plug for shavers in the bathroom, which will accept an American-style plug and allows 120v shavers to run safely.
- DO NOT use this power outlet for anything except shavers, as it may damage other electrical equipment.

Money & Currency:

- Currency in the Republic of Ireland is the Euro, which uses the following symbol: €. Each Euro consists of 100 cents. Notes are issued in 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200 and 500 Euros.
- In Northern Ireland & Scotland the currency is the British Pound Sterling, which uses the following symbol: £ Notes are issued in 5,10,20 and 50 Sterling.
- The two currencies €/£ are separate and not interchangeable. You cannot use US dollars or other foreign currencies in Ireland & the UK. Sometimes areas near the border of NI & ROI will accept cross currency.
- **New Banking Regulations:** As Irish/UK banks will no longer exchange cash from USD/CAD to Euro/Sterling. We advise that you carry a small amount of local currency and use your credit card for purchases or hotel incidental charges.
- **Cards accepted in Ireland & Scotland:** The most widely accepted credit cards are Visa and MasterCard followed by American Express. Very few places take Diners Club. Discover is not accepted.
- **Best Exchange Rates:** Use credit cards, debit cards and ATMs for the best exchange rates in Ireland, Northern Ireland, and Scotland.
- **Notify Your Credit Card Company and bank in advance:** When you decide which cards, you are taking on your trip, call the company to inform them of your travel dates and where you will be traveling. Otherwise, they may flag your account for suspicious activity and freeze your account.
- If you bring dollars to Ireland to exchange for € euros or £ Sterling, you are limited to currency exchange desks in airports & city locations. Click here for more detailed information: [Money in Ireland](#)

Tipping Policy for hotels, restaurants, bars and various venues:

- Restaurants with table service: Tip 10% - 12.5% of the bill, based on the quality of service. If you receive exceptional service, you can of course tip higher.
- Counter service/fast food: No tip expected.
- Bartenders: No tip expected. (If you are part of a large group who have had a number of drinks and exceptional service from the staff you might consider a tip of € /£2 to € /£5 euros). And while barmen do not expect tips, wait staff do and € /£2 or € /£5 for a large round is considered acceptable.

Tour Director Tipping:

- We recommend a starting tip of €15 - €20 / £15 - £20 per person, per day for a job well done. Tipping is totally discretionary between each passenger and the Tour Director.

Mobile Phones & Calling:

- Consider contacting your mobile phone provider to add an international calling/texting/data plan for the duration of your stay, as you may not be able to use your mobile phone in Ireland without a pre-paid international service plan.
- The international dialing code for **Ireland is + 353** and for **Northern Ireland & Scotland it is + 44**.
- When dialing an Irish number from abroad or a US Mobile Phone, drop the preceding 0 from the local area code e.g. Within Ireland, our telephone number is 091 423 368. From a **US Mobile Phone** our number is +353 91 423 368.

Weather:

- Weather can alter dramatically in Ireland. We are known to have all four seasons in one day so be prepared. We recommend that you bring a mix of clothing, fleece tops, rain jacket, comfortable shoes for walking and enough clothing for each day as laundry services in hotels may be limited when moving locations.

Time-Zone:

- Ireland is on Greenwich Mean Time (GMT) and, in accordance with daylight saving, clocks are put forward one hour in mid-March and back one hour at the end of October annually.
- In summer months light can be expected as late as 23.00hrs; however, winter months bring shorter days and by mid-December it can be dark by 16.00hrs.

Language:

- Ireland has two official languages: Irish and English, with dual signage in place nationwide. English is spoken throughout and is the everyday working language, while Irish is generally confined to certain regions in the South-West, West, and North-West coastal areas, areas more commonly known as the Gaeltacht.

Hotels:

- Porterage is included and allows one suitcase per person at each hotel unless stated otherwise.
- Check-in times at most hotels will be from 3pm.
- Accommodation has been reserved for you as outlined on your daily itinerary. Please note that any extras (such as room service, telephone calls, bar charges, etc.) must be settled at check-out; it is advisable to do so the evening before hotel departure.
- Some hotels in Ireland/Scotland do not provide wash cloths /flannels. To avoid disappointment, we would recommend that you bring your own washcloth/flannel or buy one during your vacation.

Ireland is Greener than you think:

- As part of our sustainability action plan, we encourage the use of multiuse water bottles or cups while touring and avoid the purchase of single use plastic where possible. Please take time to review our sustainability policy on our website and look out for our sustainable travel BT logo. <https://www.bracktours.com/sustainability/>

Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) – Required for entry into Northern Ireland & UK:

- The Electronic Travel Authorisation (ETA) is a new requirement that grants permission to travel to the UK, including Northern Ireland. Learn more here: <https://www.tourismireland.com/international/en-us/eta>

Medication & Prescriptions:

- Guests should ensure they bring an adequate supply of any required prescription medication for the duration of their trip. Medication should be kept in its original, clearly labelled packaging and essential medication should be carried in your hand luggage while travelling.
- If you have specific medical, mobility or accessibility requirements that may affect your participation in the tour, please advise Brack Tours in advance so that we can provide appropriate guidance and, where possible, make the necessary arrangements.
- **CPAP Machines & Distilled Water** - If you travel with a CPAP machine and require distilled water, please be aware that distilled water is not routinely available or guaranteed at hotels in Ireland and the UK. Brack Tours can arrange for distilled water to be provided during your tour when requested in advance. Please indicate on your tour registration form if you require distilled water for your CPAP machine. An additional fee of **\$15 per person** applies for this service, allowing us to make the necessary arrangements prior to your arrival. We recommend requesting this service in advance rather than relying on purchasing distilled water locally, as availability can vary.

Emergency & Support:

- Your safety and wellbeing are important to us. Should you need assistance while travelling, the following information may be useful to keep close at hand.
- **In an Emergency:**
For any immediate medical emergency or situation requiring the Police, Fire or Ambulance services:
 - **Republic of Ireland:** Call **112 or 999**
 - **Northern Ireland & the UK:** Call **999 or 112**
 - Emergency services should always be contacted first where urgent medical attention or immediate assistance is required.
- **Brack Tours Support:**
If you require assistance during your tour, please get in touch with your Tour Director in the first instance, where applicable. You can also contact the Brack Tours team through our **Newry or Galway office**, and we will be happy to help direct you to the appropriate support or services where needed.
- **Tourist SOS – Dublin**
If you experience an incident while visiting Dublin, such as the **loss or theft of a passport, travel documents or personal belongings, or an injury**, Tourist SOS provides free and confidential assistance to visitors.
 - The Tourist SOS team is available **seven days a week**:
 - **Telephone:** +353 (0)1 661 0562 **WhatsApp:** +353 (0)87 476 9402 **Website:** www.touristsos.ie
 - Tourist SOS can provide practical assistance and guidance following an incident and help visitors access the appropriate services and support.
- **Lost or Stolen Travel Documents**
If your passport or other important travel documents are lost or stolen, report the incident to the appropriate authorities and contact your **embassy or consulate** as soon as possible. Tourist SOS can also assist visitors in Dublin.

Brack Tours will be happy to help point you in the right direction, but emergency services should always be contacted first in an urgent situation.

Tour Timings & Punctuality:

- Guests should understand that escorted touring works to a schedule and that late departures can affect attraction admissions, guides, meals and other reservations.
- Your Tour Director will advise you of daily departure and meeting times throughout your tour. We kindly ask that you are ready at the agreed time, as many visits, attractions and dining arrangements operate to pre-booked schedules.

Travel Checklist!

- ☐ **Passport:** Make a copy of your passport and be sure to check the validity date.
- ☐ **UK ETA,** where applicable (applies only to Northern Ireland, Scotland, England & Wales)
- ☐ **Travel Itinerary** & copy of **Insurance policy** if applicable
- ☐ **Driver's License:** Check the date on your license to ensure validity during your intended travel dates.
(required if you plan to drive in Ireland)
- ☐ **Travel Documents:** Flight information & Itinerary
- ☐ **Foreign Currency:** Euros € for Republic of Ireland & Sterling £ for Northern Ireland and Scotland
- ☐ **Medication & Prescriptions:** Stored in original, labelled containers
- ☐ **Clothing:** We recommend layered clothing, sensible walking shoes, rain jacket and carry bag for daily touring and activities.
- ☐ **Electronics:** Ireland Adapter, Cameras & Chargers, Spare Memory Cards
- ☐ Please advise your **bank or credit card company** that you will be **travelling** to Scotland, Northern Ireland, and Ireland. (Otherwise, your bank or credit card may not work on tour).

Contact Information:

US/Canada Toll Free: 1 855 338 4339 Ireland Office: 00 353 91 423 368

Newry Office: 00 44 28 3044 5060 E-mail: info@bracktours.com Website: www.bracktours.com

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