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The Magazine of SriLankan Airlines



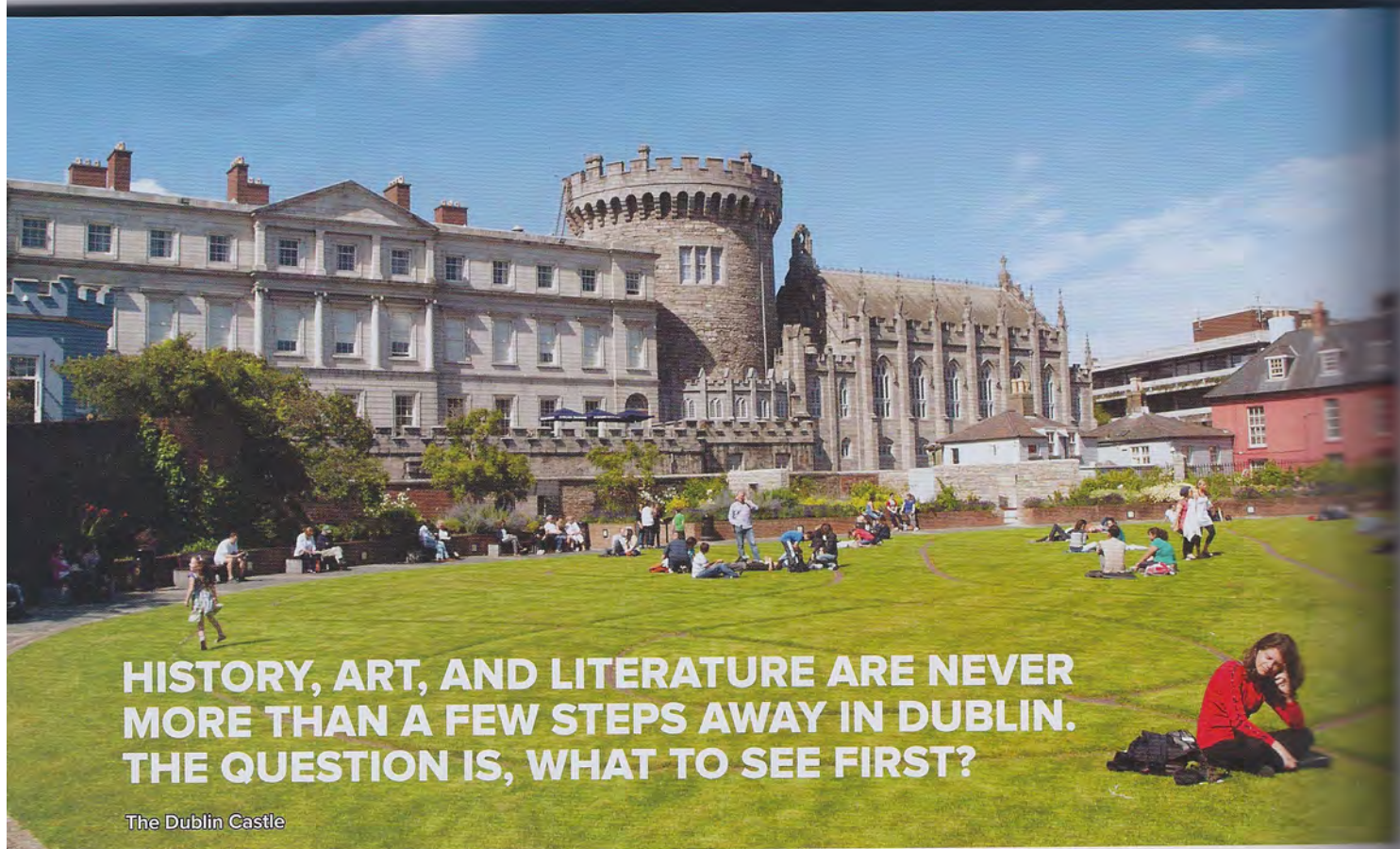
# DUBLIN THE PAST MEETS THE PRESENT

In Ireland's capital city history lurks around every corner and inspires a uniquely Irish way of living.

WORDS AND PHOTOGRAPHY GLEN KAUFMANN

A thousand years of history, centuries of pub culture, and a towering literary legacy have resulted in a city with an astounding creative legacy,

friendly people, reliable public transportation, excellent dining options, safe and walkable streets, jaw-dropping natural beauty, and clean air you can actually breathe.



## HISTORY, ART, AND LITERATURE ARE NEVER MORE THAN A FEW STEPS AWAY IN DUBLIN. THE QUESTION IS, WHAT TO SEE FIRST?

The Dublin Castle

### DUBLIN'S TURBULENT HISTORY

Conveniently located along the coast at the mouth of a river stretching far inland, Dublin has always been a tempting target for the greedy and ambitious. Since it's founding in 988 A.D., the history of Dublin (and Ireland) has been a veritable who's who of marauding armies and empire builders, from the Danes, Vikings, English, and Anglo-Normans, to the Church. In fact it wasn't until 1922 that Ireland finally established its independence after

nearly seven years of struggle and revolt, and many earlier attempts at winning independence. Visitors to the Emerald Isle will find evidence of this tumultuous past scattered throughout the capital city.

Located just a few blocks from Temple Bar and the main tourist district, the stone walls and tower of Dublin Castle watch over some of Dublin's greatest treasures. On the castle grounds visitors can explore the Chester Beatty Library's extensive collection of cultural

treasures (manuscripts, icons, paintings, and early printed books) from around the world, as well as the exquisite gothic Chapel Royal, and recently unearthed evidence of a Viking age settlement. And on Dublin's many sunny days, the park in front of the Chester Beatty is a popular spot for relaxing and planning one's next adventure in the city. And there is a lot to plan. History, art, and literature are never more than a few steps away in Dublin. The question is, what to see first?



Temple Bar



The Chester Beatty Library

## OUT & ABOUT

### Additional Museums/Attractions of

#### Note:

The Dublin Writers Museum is situated in a neighborhood full of worthy arts and history attractions. Other attractions in the Upper O'Connell area include:

#### THE JAMES JOYCE CENTRE

This intimate exhibit hall takes an in-depth look at the famous writer's life and work.

#### THE GATE THEATRE

This is one of Dublin's numerous theatrical venues showcasing modern works, classics, and theatrical standards.

#### THE HUGH LANE GALLERY (next to the Writers Museum)

This bright and airy museum offers a diverse collection of modern and contemporary art.

## ARTS & LITERATURE

At Dublin's core, the venerable halls of Trinity College are a towering monument to higher education, and Ireland's grand literary tradition. Given that Trinity is known for educating Irish writers and Nobel Laureates in various fields, it comes as no surprise that this seat of knowledge is also the keeper of The Book of Kells, an exquisite illuminated manuscript of the four Gospels produced around the year 800. The book is presented in a magnificent exhibit along with numerous other manuscripts. It is one of Dublin's "must see" attractions. Likewise, ambling through the same tree-shaded Trinity campus that inspired Bram Stoker,

Oscar Wilde, Samuel Beckett, Jonathan Swift, and numerous other Irish writers is a profoundly serene and contemplative experience.

Known for the vision and commitment of writers like George Bernard Shaw, James Joyce, J. M. Synge, Sean O'Casey, Michael Frayn, and others, one of the best ways to get to know Ireland's capital is through a visit to the Dublin Writers Museum. This modest museum's exhibits don't just examine the lives of some of Ireland's best and brightest minds, they deliver a nuanced look at the country's struggles and conflicts as expressed in the pages of some of the world's great literary masterpieces.

## PRACTICAL FACTS

**Getting Around** – Save your coins for use on the bus, or stop in any shop displaying the blue and yellow round Dublin Bus logo to purchase a multi-use pass. Buses stop running fairly early (around 11PM), so if you plan to be out late you'll want to tuck some euros aside for cab fare. The DART is a rail line that is very convenient for coastal destinations. The LUAS is a clean, fast and efficient cross town rail service that is helpful in avoiding traffic.

For a €10 annual subscription charge plus time-based rental fee, visitors can rent one of the distinctive Dublin rental bikes (with the signature blue fender) at any one of 44 stations around the city, and return it to any other station.

**Wind & Weather** – Though Dublin is known for its rain, it's actually windy far more than it is rainy. This is one of the reasons why the air is so clean. But, you'll want to carry a light jacket with you most of the time.



Trinity College



The statue of Molly Malone

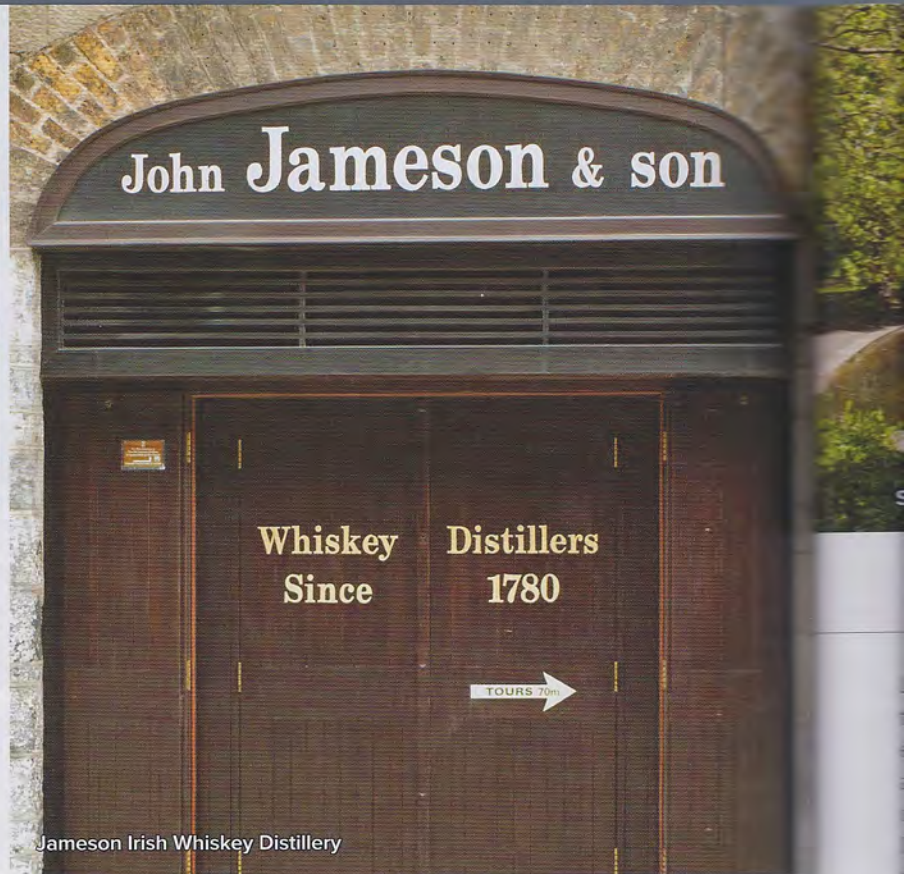
### SEE, DO & SHOP

The myth is that stout, whiskey, and the ambiance of dark smoky pubs are the stuff that literature is made of. While that myth is largely untrue, and visits to the Guinness Storehouse and the Jameson Irish Whiskey Distillery may not help you write the next *Ulysses*, they will reveal some of the secrets behind these iconic beverages, and the important role these businesses played in Dublin's growth.

But the importance of drink in Dublin is far from the last surprise to come out of Irish pubs. One lasting result of the Celtic Tiger (a period of profound Irish economic growth from roughly 1994 to 2007) is a marked improvement

in dining choices (from pub grub to fine dining) all across Ireland. Fish and chips, toasties, and other pub staples are still there, but they now stand alongside genuine vegetarian options, excellent light fare, salads, wine cellars with real depth, and a wide array of international dining options.

Yet, once your mind is full, and your palette sated, Dublin is not done with you yet. Having explored museums and galleries all day, eaten your fill, and shopped your way up Grafton Street, you'll find yourself at the crown prince of Dublin's green spaces.



Jameson Irish Whiskey Distillery



Grafton Street



LUAS Public Transit Light Rail



Stephens Green



The countryside of Glendalough

Let's be honest, a bit of rain is the thing that keeps the Emerald Isle, well, emerald, and encourages millions of annual visitors. Yet the rain and the crowds are easily reckoned with in Dublin. On Dublin's dreary days, the list of museums and other indoor attractions is easily augmented by seemingly countless shops, restaurants and pubs along the walkable alleys and streets between Dawson Street and Great George's Street (and the George's Street Arcade).

## DUBLIN IN GREEN

With 22 acres of manicured lawns, ponds, public artworks, and vibrant greenery in the heart of Dublin, St. Stephens Green anchors the glitter and gloss of big city Dublin to the heart and soul of Ireland, the natural world. On any day, but particularly on Dublin's many sunny days, a stroll down the sun-dappled walking paths of "Stephen's Green" is guaranteed to make your soul gush "Ahh, that's better."

And if that's not enough nature to quench the thirst for the "real Ireland",

hardcore nature enthusiasts will be pleased to know that the coastal enclaves of Howth, Bray, Greystones, and Dun Laoghaire are easily reached by local bus and rail. The Wicklow Mountains and world famous Glendalough are likewise easily visited by taking advantage of regular bus and tour services.

Overall, Dublin wraps arts & culture, fine dining, terrific shopping, nightlife, and pub culture in a profound sense of history but never lets you forget that you're in the lush green splendour of Ireland. ☺



The world famous Glendalough