

2024 IFHE Ireland Prepare to Travel Zoom Agenda/Meeting Notes

Tuesday, May 21, 2024. 7:30 p.m. Central

Tonight: review information to assist you in preparing for your tour.

- Please READ *Know Before You Go* Booklet
- Emergency contact form: <https://forms.gle/32cWagg33aECgUat9>
- CHECK YOUR EMAIL DAILY!!!!
- Please add Sue Buck and Joyce Cavanagh's cell phone numbers to your contacts! (their numbers were published in the "prepare to travel follow-up" e-newsletter.

Flights into Dublin and Dublin tours:

- E-tickets: keep all your email and paper air documentation. It will be important to have if you should need to file an insurance claim. Also get (and save) your paper boarding pass, even if you are using an airline app to board the aircraft.
- Check your flights!!! You are responsible for checking your flights for changes, cancellations, etc.
- Recommend you have the airline app on your phone for receiving up-to-date alerts about your flights.
- Arrival into Dublin:
 - Get a taxi at the airport to the hotel. Hotel address is in the materials sent in your care packages.
 - Those arriving one or two nights early, provide your voucher to hotel reception. This tells the hotel your extra room night was prepaid.
 - Early arrivals are on your own until Sunday noon. Breakfast is included in your extra hotel nights.
- Message Sue and/or Joyce via WhatsApp with any flight updates...delays/cancellations/etc.

Sunday, June 16, tour:

- Meet in the hotel lobby at 11:50 a.m. Sue and Joyce will be on the lookout for you. You will meet your Driver/Guide and head off on your tour.
- **If your flight arrives too late for you to make the tour departure: Message Sue Buck or Joyce Cavanagh through WhatsApp when you arrive at the hotel and are ready to join the group. They will check with the Driver/Guide and give you the location to taxi to. (Taxi is at your expense.)** Most taxis take credit cards but check with your taxi driver to make sure.
- Group dinner on Sunday evening at the hotel. Time TBA.

Itinerary Notes:

- Will probably need cash for purchases at Zwartbles Farm. Blankets about 350 Euros.
- Sat June 22, Aran Islands. Note that ferry to the Islands is weather dependent.

Financial:

- Currency is Euro. ATM at airport or within the city. Best exchange/least fee ATMs are those with local banks.
- MasterCard and VISA widely accepted. AMEX accepted at some locations. Recommended to use credit card for most everything to avoid carrying too much cash.
 - Check with your credit card company to make sure your card does not charge foreign transaction fees.
 - Check with your card company to see if they need to be notified of your international travel
 - Travel with a minimum of two credit cards in case one doesn't work.
- Tipping:
 - Restaurants often include a service charge on your bill. If it is not included, it is at your discretion if you want to leave a tip. Recommended 10-15%. Tipping not common in pubs.
 - Driver/Guide @ 10/day = 80 Euros. Joyce will have out envelopes for you to place your gratuities in. You will give them directly to your Driver/Guide on your last day when you get dropped off at your hotel at the end of your tour. This amount is a guideline. Gratuities are always at your discretion...pay less, pay more, pay nothing.
 - Hotel – there may be no daily housekeeping. If you want to leave a gratuity in your room at the end of your stay, feel free to do so.
- Horizon cards: At the back of your *Know Before You Go* booklet is a Horizon Card. Many of the larger retailers will accept these cards. You will scan them much like a credit card and in return you'll receive a tax-exempt receipt. You'll collect these receipts and turn them in at the airport before your return home to receive a VAT refund.

Medications and health issues.

- Any dietary or health issues you did not indicate when you registered...let Deb know ASAP.
- Have a copy or access to your prescription medications in case you need additional while you're gone.
- Should you have a health situation arise while on tour, be sure and notify Sue/Joyce and your Driver/Guide. Your Driver or hotel reception should be able to guide you to health care, if needed.
- Travel prepared in case you become ill. Many cases of illness of travelers!!
- Consult with your primary care practitioner to seek their advice for travel. Some advise traveling with a prescription anti-viral. Travel with upper respiratory over-the-counter relief medications so you are prepared in case of illness.
- There are no longer any isolation/etc. requirements should you become ill while on tour.
- Mask-wearing is your choice. It's recommended that an N95 or KKN95 mask be worn at all times if you begin to show any signs of illness.

Passports

- Make a copy/photo on phone!!
- Keep in carry-on...do not pack!

Shipping Purchases.

If you want to ship things, ask the merchants to do the shipping. You will pay for shipping, but will not need to pay the VAT. ***Please do not plan on shipping anything home through the post office. Come with extra room in your suitcase or pack an extra expandable bag so you have lots of extra room to pack your purchases.***

Travel insurance.

- Print and bring the wallet cards if you purchased travel insurance through Deb. You will find them at the link to your coverage page. Scroll down the page to find the wallet cards. If you can't find the confirmation of your insurance purchase, [email Deb](#) and she will send it to you.
- If you did not purchase insurance through Deb, make sure you provide your health and accident insurance info on the Google form.
- If a situation occurs while you are traveling that may result in an insurance claim being filed, **call the insurance company** early and inform them you might be filing a claim. Ask them what kinds of documentation you might need to file a claim. (e.g. doctors verification, etc.)

Packing/luggage/porterage:

- Refer to the packing list in the *Know Before You Go* booklet. Make sure you have EVERYTHING you need in your carryon that you would require if your luggage is lost for a couple of days!!! Including:
 - Prescription meds
 - Change of clothing
 - Toiletries
 - Travel documents and passport
- You will get porterage for ONE large suitcase. You will be in charge of your own hand baggage/carry on luggage. Carry-on roller bags will not fit in the coach overhead racks. Your CIE backpack works great for a coach carry-on.
- [Compression bags](#) are great for creating extra room in your suitcase and bring extra compression bags to pack your purchases in to bring home!
- Another good packing tool is packing cubes or compression packing cubes. [These are the ones I've tried and like.](#)
- Don't overpack!! You'll probably wear the same clothes most every day. (This is considered VERY acceptable! 😊)
- All other baggage limits, please check directly on your airline website.

Group communications during tour:

- WhatsApp. Download WhatsApp to your phone if you do not already have it installed. Open the app and send a message to Sue Buck. Include your name in the message so Sue knows who the phone number belongs to. She will add you to a WhatsApp group that will be used throughout your tour to get communications to you.
- You can use WhatsApp to reach Sue or Joyce if you have flight delays, etc. Also, to send a message to your group or to individuals in your group.

- Phones/Wi-Fi/communications. Check with your cellular provider as to the settings to use on your phone so you don't get charged international roaming fees! You'll be able to make voice calls, video calls, and message home with WhatsApp on Wi-Fi.

Return Flights Home: Arrive at the Dublin or Shannon airport early. You will go through U.S. border clearance at these airports, making entrance back into the U.S. very easy. Keep an eye on the announcement boards which will indicate when you should proceed to U.S. customs. Note that you will need to go through a full security check.

Your Questions?