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# DRINKS

SUMMER 2021

# LEMON DROP

The martini that everyone will be serving up this summer

Recipe page 35

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STAY + VISIT + EAT

# DUBLIN

This near neighbour offers more than fine food and whiskey. When travel is back on, put the Fair City on your must-see list for its rich history and warm welcome

Words Mike Gerrard



Being on the UK's doorstep, less than an hour's flight-time from Manchester, Dublin is a city that's easy to overlook as a foodie's travel destination. Yet it has Michelin-starred restaurants and you're as likely to find people drinking martinis as pints of Murphy's. Although the days of the Celtic Tiger boom have passed, the city has bounced back from the recession that followed and one study last year ranked it the most popular European city break<sup>1</sup>.

It's also a city that is eminently walkable, so it's a good place to work off some of those

post-lockdown pounds. Well, unless you get hooked on the full Irish breakfast, that is, a meal that can see you not merely through the day, but through most of a weekend. Although much of the traditional food is, to use a euphemism, 'hearty', if you prefer a lighter diet you'll easily find it. You'll also find gregarious people, first-class museums, bars full of banter and a city that never fails to raise the spirits.

When travel fully opens up again and people start looking beyond the UK's shores, Dublin may well be one of the first European cities to benefit. »

## WHAT TO SEE

Trinity College, containing the Book of Kells, is the undisputed top attraction. The college was founded by Elizabeth I in 1592 and the Book of Kells is even older. The stunningly illuminated manuscript is thought to have been produced by monks in around 800AD. An ideal way to visit is to take a student-led tour of the grounds, as these finish at the entrance to the Book of Kells exhibit and the Old Library.

The National Gallery of Ireland contains an important collection of Irish art, including the country's pre-eminent artist in the Jack B. Yeats Collection, but it has much more. There are works by Picasso, Degas, Turner, Titian, Caravaggio and Monet, among others, and the Dutch collection is particularly good, including Rembrandts and one of the 36 surviving works by Vermeer.

## WHERE TO STAY

The Clontarf Castle Hotel is a 15-minute drive north-east of the city centre in the well-heeled seaside suburb of Clontarf. The present building dates from 1837, though some of the rooms are in modern wings. Its Fahrenheit Restaurant combines a setting of wooden beams and stained glass windows with a contemporary Irish menu. [clontarfcastle.ie](http://clontarfcastle.ie)

If you want to be in the city centre, the 5-star Merrion is hard to beat. Located a 2-minute walk from both Merrion Square and St Stephen's Green, it's a combination of four Georgian townhouses. It also has one of the city's best restaurants, Restaurant Patrick Guilbaud. [merrionhotel.com](http://merrionhotel.com)

## WHERE TO EAT

Chapter One is the city's second Michelin-starred restaurant, in the unusual setting of the Dublin Writers' Museum (another must-see attraction). The sleek modern décor showcases Irish craftspeople and artists, while the menu uses Irish produce equally stylishly. [chapteronerestaurant.com](http://chapteronerestaurant.com)

Winner of numerous Best Restaurant and Best Chef awards, Dax is in the Georgian quarter, but its menu is resolutely modern French.



Owner Olivier Meisonnave is from Aquitaine, while chef Graham Neville has worked in kitchens at The Fat Duck and Le Caprice, among others. [dax.ie](http://dax.ie)

## WHERE TO DRINK

Dublin is packed with literary pubs, which is no surprise in a city full of writers who like a drink. Davy Byrnes is one of the most famous, as it features in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, though you might be more interested in sampling the spirits list than having the Gorgonzola sandwich that Leopold Bloom ordered. [davybyrnes.com](http://davybyrnes.com)

Alongside literature, one of the city's other great passions has always been music. You can combine live music sessions with a chance to sample some of the newest Irish whiskeys at the lovably eccentric Hairy Lemon Pub, which features in the film of Roddy Doyle's *The Commitments*. [thehairylemon.ie](http://thehairylemon.ie)



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**TOURING DUBLIN**

- 1 Officially called the Liffey Bridge, the Ha'Penny Bridge spans the city's River Liffey
- 2 The famous Trinity College Library
- 3 St Patrick's Park, beside the cathedral of the same name
- 4 Malahide Castle, a 40-minute drive north-east of Dublin
- 5 The narrow cobbled streets of Temple Bar are at the heart of the city's lively nightlife
- 6 Statue of poet Oliver Goldsmith outside Trinity College



**AROUND DUBLIN**

If you can, allow time to explore the area around Dublin, too. An hour's drive south and you're in the Wicklow Mountains with the gorgeous Glendalough ('valley of the two lakes'). Even closer, headed north, is the Hill of Tara whose oldest burial mound dates back to 3,000BC. If you don't want to drive, you can still cover a lot of ground using the DART (Dublin Area Rapid Transit) system. It brings the nearby coast within easy reach, including such attractive seaside towns as Dalkey, Malahide and Howth. »

**5 DISHES TO TRY**



**Boxty**

Making use of the Irish fondness for potatoes, Boxty (above) combines mashed potatoes and finely grated raw potatoes with flour, butter, salt and pepper, which is then fried like a pancake.

**Barnbrack**

A fruity loaf made from dried fruit, peel and spices, often with whiskey or Earl Grey tea, this is especially popular around Halloween when it traditionally contained charms.

**Soda bread**

Once tasted, never forgotten, Irish soda bread has no yeast but only flour, salt, baking soda and buttermilk. Chefs add things like caraway seeds or even whiskey, but a basic soda bread is heavenly.

**White pudding**

A traditional breakfast often includes the less common white pudding, essentially a bloodless black pudding. Recipes vary but a good one is deliciously savoury.

**Coddle**

With no set recipe, this uses leftovers. It's basically a stew and likely to contain meat, potatoes and veg, with onion and herbs to spice it up.

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## UNMISSABLE PLACES

### GUINNESS STOREHOUSE

This excellent experience is about more than just the black stuff. It's the story of a country, a city and an iconic brand. Finish your visit at the rooftop bar with 360° views over the city. [guinness-storehouse.com](http://guinness-storehouse.com)



### KILMAINHAM GAOL

This served as the county gaol for 128 years, although it's most associated with the 1916 uprising as its leaders were imprisoned here. A visit will leave you both better informed about Irish history and incredibly moved. [kilmainhamgaolmuseum.ie](http://kilmainhamgaolmuseum.ie)



### CHESTER BEATTY LIBRARY

An American who made a fortune in mining, Beatty was an avid collector of ancient texts, rare books and objets d'art, and he clearly had an eye for the unusual. [chesterbeatty.ie](http://chesterbeatty.ie)



The Baily Lighthouse was built on a rocky promontory at Howth in 1814. The last of its keepers left in 1997, making it the final Irish lighthouse to go automatic

### WHAT TO SEE

A 20-minute ride on the DART service brings you to Malahide, an affluent small town with attractions including a sandy beach, excellent fish restaurants and the 12th-century Malahide Castle, which sits in more than 260 acres of parkland.

Even closer is Howth, a pretty coastal village that sits on Howth Head, overlooking Dublin Bay. It has an active fishing harbour, so plan on having a fresh seafood lunch while you're there. Its residents include a veritable who's who of Irish arts and politics, including U2's drummer Larry Mullen and Booker Prize winner John Banville.

### WHERE TO STAY

For a touch of stylish luxury, head inland to one of Ireland's classy castle hotels. A four-star Georgian building dating from 1764, Dunboyne Castle Hotel & Spa is a 30-minute drive north-west of the city. With an estate of 21 acres in the lush Meath countryside, it has plenty of outdoor activities, while its Ivy Restaurant has had two AA Rosettes since 2013. [dunboynecastlehotel.com](http://dunboynecastlehotel.com)

The Kilkea Castle Hotel and Golf Resort is an hour south of Dublin in County Kildare. Its history goes back to 1180, making it one of the oldest inhabited castles in Ireland. Eleven of the 140 bedrooms are in the castle itself and activities on offer include archery, tennis and horse riding. [kilkeacastle.ie](http://kilkeacastle.ie)

### WHERE TO EAT

There isn't a better setting for seafood dining than the award-winning Aqua Restaurant at the end of Howth's West Pier. Overlooking the harbour on one side and the sea on the other, you might even be watching the boat that caught the fish on your plate. You can also dine on local beef or venison, with vegetarian options available. [aqua.ie](http://aqua.ie)

The Old Street Restaurant & Artisan Grocer in Malahide might not look anything special from the outside, but it serves up some of the tastiest food in town. They dry-age their beef and charcuterie in house and have an award-winning wine cellar, too. [oldstreet.ie](http://oldstreet.ie)

### WHERE TO DRINK

Dating from the 16th century, The Abbey Tavern in Howth is as traditional as they come, with flagstone floors, stone walls and turf fires. There's regular live music and big names like The Dubliners, The Chieftains, Planxty and Christy Moore have all played here. The international drinks menu might even tempt you away from the Jameson's. [abbeytavern.ie](http://abbeytavern.ie)

Duffy's in Malahide looks like any other traditional Irish pub from the outside, though it's only been in business for 40 years. There's live music at weekends and it has a modern upstairs Steeple Lounge for sipping cocktails, plus – a rarity for an Irish pub – a rooftop terrace. [duffys.ie](http://duffys.ie)