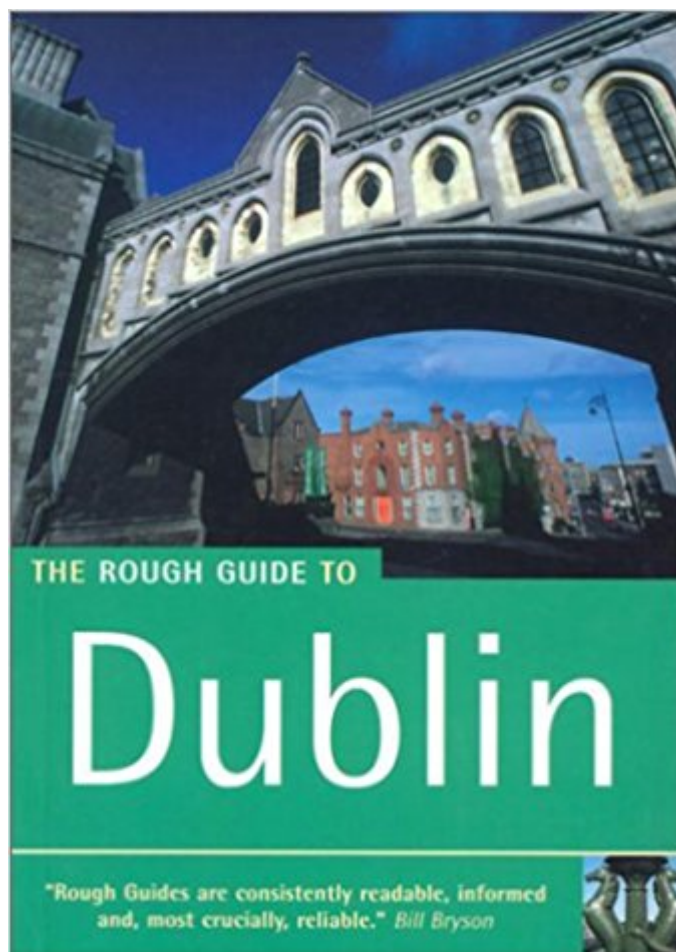


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The Rough Guide To Dublin 3 (Rough Guide Mini Guides)



Synopsis

This guide to Dublin features entertaining accounts of all the attractions, from Dublin Castle and Christ Church Cathedral to vibrant Temple Bar. It also gives insider's reviews of the best accommodation, restaurants, clubs and drinking spots, as well as the pick of the day-trips, from the gardens of Powerscourt Estate to the remarkable prehistoric tombs of the Boyne Valley.

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Customer Reviews

Mark Connolly has worked as a radio journalist for BBC Radio 5 and is currently based in Dublin. Geoff Wallis has been contributing to Rough Guides since the early 1980s and is also the co-author of the Rough Guides to Irish Music and Ireland.

WHERE TO VISIT Central Dublin is easy enough to navigate – it’s fairly compact, and you’re likely to make most of your explorations either on foot or via short bus hops. One obvious axis is formed by the River Liffey, running from west to east and dividing the city into two regions of very distinct character (the northside, poorer and less developed than its southside neighbour), each of which has a strong allegiance among its inhabitants. The other main axis is the north–south one formed by Grafton Street and Westmoreland Street south of the river, running into O’Connell Street to the north. The centre as a whole is bordered by two waterways: the Royal Canal to the north, and the Grand Canal to the south. The majority of the better-known attractions are south of the river, and for many visitors, the city’s heart lies around the best of

what is left of Georgian Dublin: the elegant set pieces of Fitzwilliam and Merrion squares, where the graceful red-brick houses boast ornate, fan-lighted doors and immaculately kept central gardens, and the wide, decorous open space of St Stephen's Green. The southside is also the setting for the compelling displays of the National Gallery and the National Museum, as well as Trinity College, Dublin's august seat of learning and home of a famous library; Grafton Street, the city's upmarket shopping area; and the Temple Bar area, the in-place for the arts, alternative shopping and socializing. Parallel to the river, Dame Street strings together a handful of historic monuments: the Bank of Ireland, City Hall, Dublin Castle (new home to the glorious collections of the Chester Beatty Library) and Christ Church Cathedral. The tangle of lanes between here and Wood Quay are remnants of the medieval city, though these too are now undergoing renovation in a new development aimed at complementing Temple Bar. South of Christ Church lies the majestic St Patrick's Cathedral, while to the west a drab urban scene unfurls, worth exploring nonetheless for the Guinness Brewery and, slightly further out, the Irish Museum of Modern Art and Kilmainham Gaol. North of the Liffey, the key monument along O'Connell Street is the General Post Office building, which still bears the scars of incursions during the Easter Rising of 1916. Elsewhere, the northside is noted for its strong literary and artistic connections; at the north end of O'Connell Street lies Parnell Square, around which you'll find the Dublin Writers Museum and Hugh Lane Municipal Art Gallery. A little way to the east is the James Joyce Cultural Centre, dedicated to the memory of one of Dublin's most renowned literary scions. The inner-city area northeast of O'Connell Street (specifically, east of Gardiner Street) is run-down and should be explored with caution, especially at night. However, regeneration is taking place around the river, and to the east of O'Connell Street, lodged amidst all the new buildings beside the quays, stands the impressively elaborate Custom House. The streets running west of O'Connell are busy with a mix of workaday shops and markets, but beyond here are the elegant Four Courts; St Michan's Church, its crypts containing mummified remains; and Smithfield, famous for its monthly horse fair. Further west is the National Museum's prestigious decorative arts collection at the Collins Barracks, as well as Phoenix Park, one of Europe's largest urban open spaces. Travel beyond the centre is fairly straightforward. The DART line allows easy access to the outskirts along the curve of Dublin Bay such as Sandycove, which boasts another fascinating James Joyce museum, as well as the scenic headlands of Dalkey and Killiney to the south and Howth to the north. Regular buses serve all the other suburbs: in the north, Glasnevin – home to botanic gardens and a historic cemetery – and Marino – site of the exquisite Georgian folly of the Casino – and to the southeast of the centre,

Ballsbridge and Donnybrook, which are fruitful areas for accommodation. There are also plenty of options if you plan on heading out into the surrounding countryside. Dublin is within easy reach of the wild, open heights of the Wicklow Mountains, which shelter the secluded monastic settlement of Glendalough; a sprinkling of choice stately homes; and some of Europe's most important prehistoric sites, including Knowth and Newgrange. WHEN TO VISIT Dublin's warmest months are usually July and August, which are also often the wettest. However, no month is especially hot or cold, and though the climate of Ireland is often damp, the weather shouldn't be the main determining factor in deciding when to travel. Obviously, the summer is the most popular time and, consequently, the most expensive for both flights and accommodation. If you're planning to visit then, make sure you've got your travel arrangements and accommodation sorted out well before you go; and if your stay is going to straddle a weekend, book your room in advance whatever time of year you visit. Before making your decision, you should take a look at the city's calendar of festivals and special events, which range from the parades of St Patrick's Day in March and the meanderings of Bloomsday on June 16 to rock music in and around Temple Bar in early May and the All-Ireland hurling and football finals in September. Dublin's climate

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