

Itinerary for UK & Ireland Christmas & New Year • Expat Explore

Start Point:

Outside Hotel Novotel at Greenwich station,

173-185 Greenwich High Road, London, SE10

8JA

06:30 hrs to 07:00 hrs

Hotel lobby at Holiday Inn Express, Greenwich,

85 Bugsby Way, Greenwich, London, SE10 0GD

07:00 hrs

End Point:

Outside Hotel Novotel at Greenwich station,

173-185 Greenwich High Road, London, SE10

8JA

18:00 hrs

DAY 1: London - Stonehenge - Bath - Cardiff



Welcome to the first day of this Christmas & New Year tour! The tour begins first thing this morning as it departs Greenwich. The first stop is Stonehenge, which offers the opportunity to discover this ancient archaeological phenomenon's many myths and legends on an optional tour. From one historical site to the next - welcome to Bath! This beautiful and historic city is famous for the Roman

baths built during the reign of the Empire. Learn more about Bath on an orientation tour. Later, settle in for the night in Cardiff, the capital of Wales. Enjoy an included welcome dinner together with the rest of the group.

Experiences

Bath Orientation tour: Your Expat Explore tour leader will point out all the main attractions of Bath, a UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its ancient Roman baths and gorgeous architecture. After the orientation tour, enjoy free time to further explore the area.

Visit Cardiff: Arrive in the Welsh capital this evening and enjoy some free time to explore. A welcome dinner is included tonight which offers a chance to get to know your fellow travellers better.

Included Meals

Breakfast: ✕ Lunch: ✕ Dinner: ✓

Accommodation

Park Inn by Radisson Cardiff City Centre

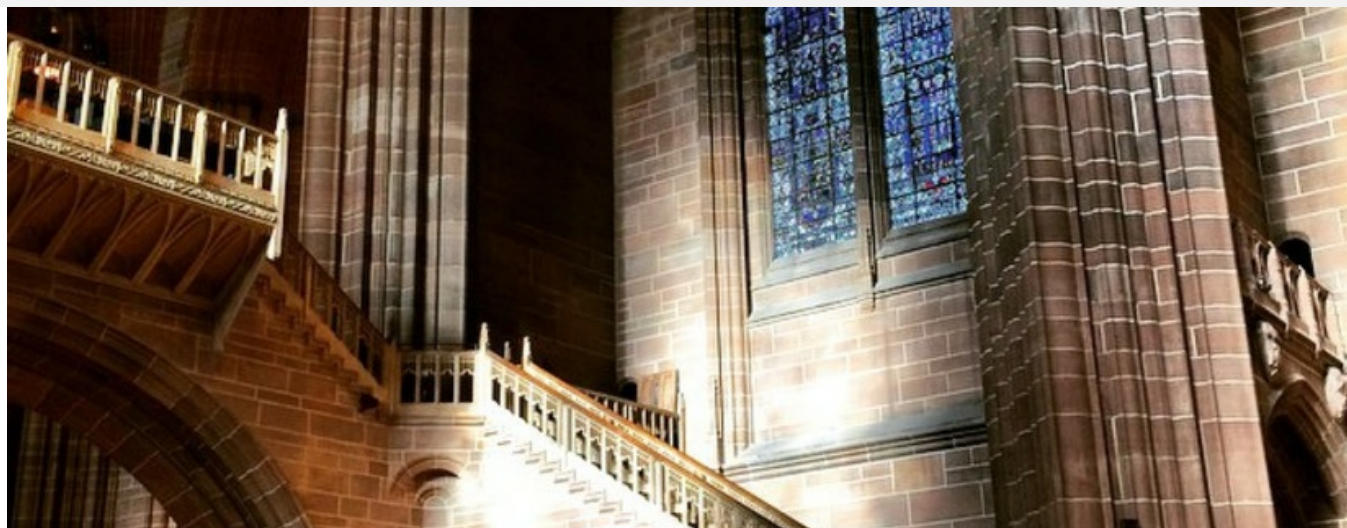
Cardiff North Hotel by Accor

Optional Excursions

Stonehenge: £ 23

** Stated prices and availability are subject to change.*

DAY 2: Stratford-upon-Avon - Liverpool



Today's adventure begins with a visit to Stratford-upon-Avon; home of William Shakespeare! Enjoy free time to explore this 800-year-old market town. Or, join the optional excursion to see Shakespeare's childhood home. Then, travel to Liverpool, the British port city famous for football and The Beatles! Be dazzled by the Christmas lights while exploring the city in your free time this evening. Football fans can delight in the home of Liverpool and Everton football clubs, while music lovers enjoy the city's deep connection with The Beatles at the Cavern Club, where they played hundreds of times. An optional visit to The Beatles Story & Museum is also highly recommended for a unique and detailed insight into this iconic band's history.

Experiences

Visit Stratford-Upon-Avon: Visit the birthplace of William Shakespeare. Enjoy free time to wander the city, and visit some of the Shakespearean attractions, such as the historic 16th-Century house where he grew up.

Liverpool driving tour: Take a driving tour to see some of the city's highlights including the Albert Dock, and a variety of locations connected to the Beatles.

Included Meals

Breakfast: ✓ Lunch: ✗ Dinner: ✗

Accommodation

Ibis Liverpool Centre Albert Dock Hotel

Optional Excursions

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Shakespeare Birthplace: £ 18

The Beatles Story & Museum: £ 18

** Stated prices and availability are subject to change.*

DAY 3: Liverpool - Dublin



This morning, take a driving tour of Liverpool's most famous sights, including Albert Dock, Penny Lane and John Lennon's house. Stop at Strawberry Field, the inspiration for The Beatles' single *Strawberry Fields Forever*. Then, travel back to Wales for a visit to Conwy, a walled market town known for its impressive 13th century castle. Next, enjoy a photo stop in the town that boasts the longest place name in Europe - Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch! Then, board a ferry across the Irish Sea to Ireland! Arrive in Dublin, the bustling capital city, and enjoy a driving tour showcasing the famous sights. The rest of the evening is free. Why not soak up the Christmas Eve atmosphere at one the many pubs in the iconic Temple Bar neighbourhood?

Experiences

Visit Conwy: Enjoy a comfort stop and lunch in the charming Welsh town of Conwy - a walled, market town famous for its 13th century castle.

See Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllantysiliogogoch: Make a photo stop at the village with the longest place name in Europe - try to capture the whole name in a photo and pronounce it correctly on your first go!

Dublin driving tour: Enjoy a driving tour of Ireland's vibrant capital city. Tomorrow offers a full free day, so keep a note of all the sights to explore further, such as St Patrick's Cathedral, the General Post Office building and the many bridges over the River Liffey.

Included Meals

Breakfast: ✓ Lunch: ✗ Dinner: ✗

Accommodation

Clayton Hotel Leopardstown

Ibis Dublin City Centre

DAY 4: Dublin - Free day (Christmas Day)



Merry Christmas to you! Or *Nollaig Shona Duit* as they say in Irish! There is so much to see and do in this beautiful city. Some very brave locals head down to Forty Foot on Christmas morning and have a swim in the Irish Sea. This freezing tradition has been happening for some 250 years! Take time to meander through the streets and soak up the twinkling Christmas lights and festive music. Make sure that this Christmas in Ireland is one to remember! Later, enjoy a delicious Christmas dinner with the rest of the group.

Experiences

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Christmas Day in Dublin: Soak up the festive spirit with a full free day to experience Christmas Day in Dublin! Admire the many magical Christmas lights and decorations, wander the streets, enjoy a pint of Guinness or listen to Christmas choirs and carolers. Later, enjoy an included dinner with the group.

Included Meals

Breakfast: ✓ Lunch: ✗ Dinner: ✓

DAY 5: Waterford - Blarney Castle - Killarney area



Leave the bustling, festive city of Dublin and travel to the oldest city in Ireland; Waterford. This city was first settled by the Vikings in 914 AD! Enjoy free time to explore and grab some lunch. Then, head to the famous 15th century Blarney Castle! Will you be brave enough to hang over the edge and kiss the Blarney Stone for the 'gift of the gab'? The last stop for the day and home for the night is Killarney. With some free time in the afternoon, why not walk through the beautiful town centre and feel the Christmas spirit all around? Sit down for a meal at the hotel this evening and experience that warm Irish hospitality!

Experiences

Visit Waterford: Spend some time in the oldest city in Ireland. Founded over 1,000 years ago, remnants of the city's Viking origins can be seen in ruins of ancient fortified walls. Waterford's history is far-reaching and colourful. Here, feel the atmosphere of medieval Ireland like nowhere else!

Visit Blarney Castle: Blarney Castle is a medieval stronghold located just outside Cork, and it has an interesting claim to fame - it is home to the Blarney Stone! Legend says that if you kiss the famous Blarney Stone you might gain the 'gift of the gab'!

Included Meals

Accommodation

Breakfast: ✓ Lunch: ✗ Dinner: ✓

DAY 6: Kerry Region: Free Day



Enjoy a free day in this beautiful part of Ireland! Choose to join the optional Ring of Kerry excursion for a truly unforgettable experience. Any trip to Ireland is synonymous with rolling green hills, charming villages and breathtaking coastal views, and the Ring of Kerry absolutely ticks all these boxes. Get blown away by the scenery of this gorgeous green valley and picturesque stretches of coastline. En route, stop in picture-postcard villages and quaint towns. Here, stroll down the high streets, relax in charming cafés or browse the souvenir shops. Attend a sheepdog show and enjoy a jaunting (carriage) ride to take in the stunning scenery of Killarney National Park.

Included Meals

Breakfast: ✓ Lunch: ✗ Dinner: ✗

Optional Excursions

Ring of Kerry day trip: € 50

** Stated prices and availability are subject to change.*

DAY 7: Adare - Limerick - Cliffs of Moher - Galway - Ballina



Today is filled with more epic scenery as the coach drives up the Wild Atlantic Way coastal road. Stop along the way in Adare, described as the 'prettiest village in Ireland'. Then, visit Limerick to see the Treaty Stone and King John's Castle. The next stop is a must-see on any trip to Ireland - the Cliffs of Moher. These cliffs rise over 200m above the sea, and the views are nothing short of spectacular! Later, reach Galway and enjoy free time to explore this charming harbour city. Don't miss the opportunity to listen to live traditional Irish music in one of the pubs here! Finally, travel to tonight's accommodation in Ballina.

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Experiences

Visit Adare: Take a few photos in the “prettiest village in Ireland”. This village has perfectly preserved thatch-roofed cottages that house craft shops and restaurants today.

Visit Limerick: Pay a visit to the Treaty Stone; legend says the Treaty of Limerick was signed here, which ended the Williamite War in Ireland between the Jacobites and the supporters of William of Orange, and concluded the Siege of Limerick. Snap some great photos of the 13th century King John’s Castle from across the river.

Experience the views at the Cliffs of Moher: Get those cameras ready for awe-inspiring views of rugged cliffs and crashing waves! The Cliffs of Moher are truly breathtaking and certainly one of the top Ireland travel highlights.

Included Meals

Breakfast: ✓ Lunch: ✗ Dinner: ✗

Accommodation

Imperial Hotel Galway
Ard Rí House Hotel
Imperial Hotel Lisdoonvarna
Claregalway Hotel

DAY 8: Derry - Giant's Causeway - Belfast



Today, the journey continues to Northern Ireland. First stop is Derry, a city famous for the 17th century Derry Walls, which remain intact to this day. Next up is the Giant’s Causeway; an awe-inspiring natural phenomenon brimming with myths and legends. Today’s final stop is Belfast. Embark on a driving and walking tour with a local guide who will highlight some of the city’s most famous attractions and explain its history. Belfast is shaking off its reputation that lingered after the times of The Troubles and has transformed into a modern city with a rich cultural heritage. Fans of Game of Thrones will be pleased to know that a large portion of the series was filmed here!

Experiences

Visit Derry: Still fresh from its makeover following its moment in the limelight as UK City of Culture 2013, Northern Ireland’s second city has a lot to offer, including a beautiful waterfront and well-preserved city walls.

Marvel at the Giant’s Causeway: This natural wonder is surrounded by myth and legend. Did a giant build this sight, or was it an ancient volcanic activity that formed the 40,000 basalt columns? Clamber over the rocks, experience it up close and decide for yourself!

Guided tour of Belfast: A local guide will introduce some of the city's highlights, including Shankill Road and the Falls Road. These roads are associated with loyalist and republican communities respectively and are separated by peace walls. Belfast is shaking off its reputation that lingered after the times of The Troubles and gaining a reputation as an exciting city which blends traditions with modernity.

Included Meals

Breakfast: ✓ Lunch: ✗ Dinner: ✓

Accommodation

DAY 9: Belfast - Scottish Highlands



Explore more of Belfast with some free time this morning. Later, travel across the Sea of Moyle via ferry to a brand new country - Scotland! Scotland is rich in history, from famous battles and towering castles to Celtic legends. It is also known and beloved for its unique and distinct culture. Admire the scenery as the tour travels on to the accommodation for the evening in the picturesque Highlands. On the way, look forward to visiting one of Scotland's oldest licensed distilleries. Sample some authentic Scottish whisky during a tasting experience!

Experiences

Whisky distillery: Enjoy a whisky tasting at one of Scotland's oldest licenced distilleries! Founded in 1833, this distillery is unique in producing single malt Highland whisky that is matured in the Lowlands. Located on the Highlands Line which divides the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland, Glengoyne's stills are on the Highlands side of this road, and the maturing casks rest just a few metres away on the Lowlands side.

Included Meals

Breakfast: ✓ Lunch: ✗ Dinner: ✓

Accommodation

Hotel Arrochar
Macdonald Loch Rannoch Hotel
Long Loch Hotel

DAY 10: Glen Coe - Loch Ness - Edinburgh (New Year's Eve/Hogmanay)



While exploring the stunning Scottish Highlands landscape, visit the famous Loch Ness! To get a better look at the home of the mythical Loch Ness monster, join an optional cruise on the loch. See the Urquhart Castle ruins from the water and try to spot “Nessie”! Admire the last of the Highland views en route to Edinburgh, Scotland’s magical capital city. This evening, celebrate Hogmanay (what the Scots call the last day of the year) and ring in the New Year, Edinburgh style! This tour includes a ticket to the official Hogmanay celebration, described as ‘the ultimate party’. Marvel at the fireworks at midnight which light up the sky with Edinburgh Castle as an epic backdrop!

Experiences

Scenic drive through the Scottish Highlands: Take in the spectacular scenery while driving through the majestic Scottish Highlands. Stop in quaint villages and, if the weather is clear, catch a glimpse of the grand Ben Nevis, Britain’s highest mountain.

See Glen Coe: Admire this spectacular glen (Scottish for a deep valley in the Highlands). This is where the Massacre of Glencoe took place in 1692, one of the most fascinating yet tragic stories in Scotland’s history.

Visit Loch Ness: Try to spot the legendary Loch Ness monster with a visit to the place said to be her home! Enjoy free time to explore or take an optional cruise along the water.

Visit Edinburgh: Spend New Year’s Eve and New Year’s Day in Scotland’s vibrant and historic capital city! Tomorrow offers a full free day to explore or to join the Conquer the Capital optional excursion which provides a unique insight into what makes this city so special.

Experience Hogmanay: Ring in the New Year with an included ticket to Edinburgh's world-famous Hogmanay celebrations! Be entertained by street performers, DJs, artists, bands and many other forms of entertainment. The celebrations conclude with an epic firework show over Edinburgh Castle!

Included Meals

Breakfast: ✓ Lunch: ✗ Dinner: ✗

Accommodation

Holiday Inn West

Novotel Edinburgh Park Hotel

Optional Excursions

Loch Ness Cruise: £ 18

** Stated prices and availability are subject to change.*

DAY 11: Edinburgh - Free day (New Year's Day)



It's a brand new year! Today offers a full free day to explore Edinburgh at your own place. Revisit some of the places seen yesterday or take a walk around Edinburgh's cobbled streets and pop into a pub or two. Alternatively, see Edinburgh's highlights on today's optional excursion! Learn more about this fascinating city during a visit to Calton Hill, see Holyrood Palace, wander along the Royal

Mile and see St. Giles' Cathedral and finish off with time to explore Edinburgh Castle! This evening, why not experience the Spirit of Scotland - an optional evening of delicious Scottish food and traditional entertainment?

Included Meals

Breakfast: ✓ Lunch: ✓ Dinner: ✗

Accommodation

Holiday Inn West

Novotel Edinburgh Park Hotel

Optional Excursions

Edinburgh Highlights: € 40

Spirit of Scotland Show: £ 75

** Stated prices and availability are subject to change.*

DAY 12: York - Yorkshire



Say goodbye to Scotland and head back to England. On the way, stop at Scott's View - a viewpoint in the Scottish Borders. After crossing the border, enjoy a photo stop at the impressive Angel of the North sculpture. Later, arrive in York. Founded by the Romans, York is a centuries-old, walled city which is home to the largest gothic cathedral in northern Europe. This charming city is full of

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winding cobbled streets lined with small boutiques selling all manner of fascinating souvenirs and sweet treats. Join your tour leader on a walking tour to see York's most famous and historic sights, before heading to tonight's accommodation in Yorkshire. Enjoy an included dinner at the hotel this evening.

Experiences

Stop at Scott's View: Before crossing the border into England, visit Scott's View - a magnificent viewpoint in the Scottish Borders. Overlooking the River Tweed, this was said to be one of famed Scottish poet and novelist Sir Walter Scott's favourite views!

Photo stop at Angel of the North: Marvel at this impressive steel artwork believed to be the largest sculpture of an angel in the world! Snap a few pictures with this icon of Northern England en route to Yorkshire.

Orientation tour of York: Join your Expat Explore tour leader on a walking tour of the beautiful city of York. See top attractions including York Minster (the largest Gothic cathedral in Northern Europe), the medieval city walls, Clifford's Tower and The Shambles.

Included Meals

Breakfast: ✓ Lunch: ✗ Dinner: ✓

Accommodation

Cedar Court Wakefield

DAY 13: Cambridge - London



It may be the last day of this adventure-packed Christmas and New Year tour, but it's far from over! On the way back to London, visit the fascinating city of Cambridge. The University of Cambridge was founded here in 1209, and is the world's fourth-oldest surviving university. Walk in the footsteps of the world's brightest minds! Charles Darwin, John Milton, William Wordsworth, Sir Isaac Newton, Stephen Hawking and David Attenborough are all Cambridge alumni. While here, take part in the age-old tradition of punting down the river in a wooden punt boat! Travel to London in the early evening and bid farewell to your fellow travellers after a memorable start to the New Year!

Experiences

Go punting along the River Cam: Enjoy a traditional punt along the river and admire the views. An experienced punter will propel the punt by pushing against the river bed with a pole, while introducing you to the city's history and telling you some of its most famous tales.

Included Meals

Breakfast: ✓ Lunch: ✗ Dinner: ✗