

# THE LAYOVER... DUBLIN

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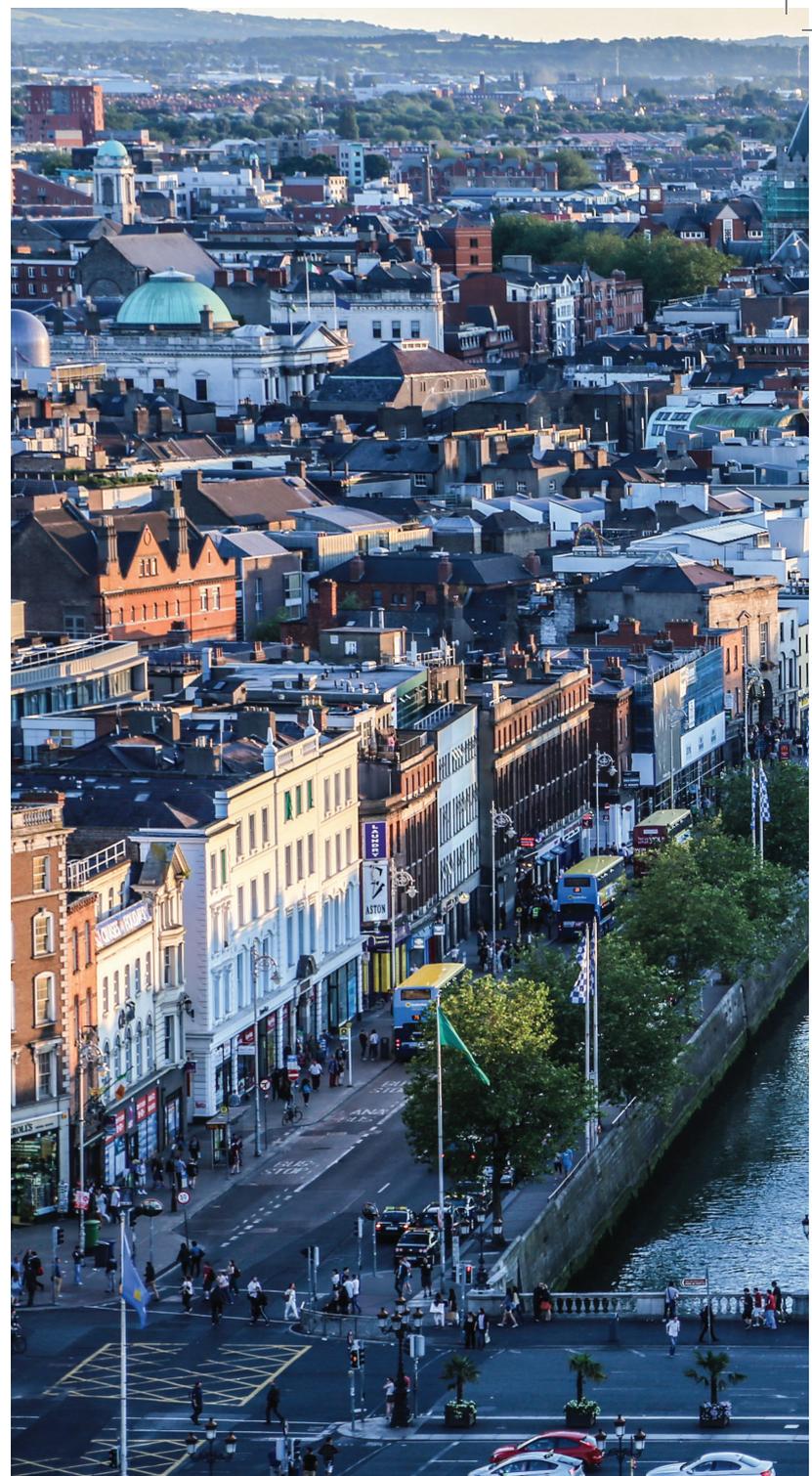
Whilst you're actually in town for turning necks and cashing cheques, that doesn't mean you shouldn't see more than the boardroom and the airport. **Charley Larcombe** checks-in to Dublin to do a little business but a lot of pleasure.

*Photography by Charley Larcombe & courtesy of Tourism Ireland*

## Where... are we staying?

Join the workers of the future from Google's nearby office at *The Marker*. A gleaming glass building in the regeneration projects around the Docks, book into the hippest of hotels in the city. Relax when you can in the spa, or by taking in the view from the rooftop bar with the rest of Dublin's movers and shakers.

Or try *The Alex*. The lobby is a good spot for a coffee meeting or to attack an early morning email session, but the rooms are the real winners. Total inspiration goals, you'll want to recreate the décor at home – and work out how to smuggle the herringbone tweed blankets past the front door.



## Where... are we celebrating our promotion?

*The Sidecar* at *The Westbury Hotel* is grown-up. Grown-up cocktails with grown-up price tags for grown-ups with promotions. Hope for a seat at the bar so you can watch all the drama of the shaking and stirring and peruse the menu. Your bartender will quietly glide up to pour coupes of champagne whilst you decide on what you will be cheers-ing your success with, but honestly order anything. Each crystal cut drink is superb.

## Where... are we enjoying a lazy walk about?

If you celebrated that promotion a little too wildly last night, then you need to get up for some fresh air,



a spot of coffee and a little shopping cardio. Start in the Creative Quarter, and walk down the cobbled stones of *Drury Street*. Pop in and out of little galleries and vintage stores, have a hipster matcha at *Koph* and treat yourself to lunch at *Fade St Social*.

#### **Where... are we setting up our remote office?**

*Brother Hubbard* is a breakfast and brunch spot that is high up the must-visit list. Super-smiley staff bring over water infused with mint and orange slices whilst you peruse the menu. I suggest going for the Turkish eggs *menemen* with whipped feta and baby spinach, and rocket fuel coffee, and whilst you wait, just power up the laptop and get writing that novel.

#### **Where... are we taking the team?**

What would be particularly handy is if you happen to be in town for meetings, which coincide with a Gaelic football or a hurling game at *Croke Park*. Witness the passion and the violence of either the original beautiful game, or hear the ‘clash of the ash’ – the sound of players’ wooden hurleys colliding fiercely – surrounded by excited fans and your cheering colleagues.

#### **Where... are we having a cracking lunch?**

Book a table at *Etto* on Merrion Row; it’s where all the chefs go on their day off. This award-winning spot offers a delicious mid-week lunch menu including



mussels with samphire, and braised ribs with a side of hashed potatoes (two courses €23; three €27) from noon until 4pm. Find a gap in your working schedule for a sit-down.

### Where... are we spending some of our hard-earned euros?

Have an urge to give the credit card a workout? You need to head to the beautiful department store, *Brown Thomas* on Grafton Street. Covet the latest Chloe bags, stock up on Diptyque candles and book an Aveda blow dry at the Beauty Lounge.

For independent stores, pop into *Costume* for Isabel Marant or *Nowhere* for Comme des Garçons. Want to take home some gifts? Have a quick tour of the *Teeling Distillery* and grab a bottle of their whiskey, or go to the delightful *Sweny's Pharmacy* for their famous lemon soap.

### Where... are we ordering a glass of the black stuff?

*The Stag's Head*. There's a comedy club downstairs, which kicks off at 9 o'clock most evenings, but the upstairs bar is just as much fun. Taxidermy peers down from above the bar, deep wood panelling adorns the walls and the general feel is of a historical boozier – it's even featured in Guinness ads. Importantly, this is a place frequented by locals, so there's promise of good chat with your cold pint. James Joyce used to come in and wax lyrical.

Or, you can play tourist. Take the crew to the *Guinness Storehouse* for the background on the black velvet drink, an all-important pint and a 360-degree view of the city from the *Gravity Bar*.

### Where... are we escaping for an hour to ourselves?

If you need to take a moment just to breathe, go to *Trinity College's library*. There's something very relaxing about standing in The Long Room, being surrounded by so many wise words. The permanent home of the Brian Boru harp, the huge draw is mainly the decorated pages of the Book of Kells, but watch out for the snaking queue of tourists.

I also particularly loved the recreated Francis Bacon studio on show at *The Hugh Lane Gallery*. Make the effort to cross the Liffey to this part of town for a beautiful insight into an artist's life. ■

