

Ireland, a land of traditions



*I*reland. When we hear this name, the first things that come to our minds are sheep, redhead people, pubs, and magical landscapes. Well we're glad to announce to you that all these clichés are true ! Irish people are indeed all redheads and live in magical forests like leprechauns. Haha. sike, that was a joke. However, Ireland is filled with great culture and traditions which will be the main subject of this article.

A CELTIC HERITAGE

If you don't already know it, the Irish people share a Celtic heritage with Brittany, Cornwall, Isle of Man, Scotland and Wales. The Celtic nations are a cultural area and collection of geographical regions in Northwestern Europe where the Celtic languages and cultural traits have survived. In Ireland, we speak English, of course, but also Gaelic. We have seen this directly in Ireland, where signs are written in both languages, a bit like in our region where the names of the villages and towns are in French and translated into Occitan.

Language is not the only Celtic heritage left in Ireland. Indeed, there are also their traditional dances which are in fact an amalgam of cultural influences. When they settled in Ireland, the Druids, Celts and Normans each introduced their own social and religious rituals, and folk dances are part of that. In Ireland, dance is a true cultural heritage that includes both social activities and traditional dance performances with live music. It includes a wide variety of styles for solo, couple and group dances. It is a good experience to practice during a stay in Ireland, but it must be admitted that it is quite complicated, and the majority of Irish do not know how to dance them.

Of course, in addition to these dances, the music. In Ireland, traditional music is part of the soul and cultural identity of the country. It alone is the symbol of the island, of its tradition, as well as the testimony of its tormented history.

A LIFE IN PUBS

One thing we've seen in Ireland that's incredible is the number of pubs. For centuries, the Irish public house has been an integral part of Irish social culture. It is a fact that Irish people love their pubs. Alcohol and pubs play a huge role in Irish culture, and not just because the Irish love a drink and having a good time. It functions as both a place to consume alcohol at leisure as well as a place in which to meet and greet the people of a locality. Ireland is home to more than 7000 pubs, many of which serve food, are open all day and late into the night and host unbeatable Irish music sessions. The pub has been at the center of Irish life since the 10th century. Nowhere in the world pubs have played so many roles: funeral home, restaurant, grocery shop, music venue, job center and meeting place for

everyone from poets to revolutionaries. Often basic and unpretentious, it is a neutral ground, a level playing field, a home away from home. The story of the Irish pub is the story of Ireland itself. It was really exciting to see so many pubs in Ireland, they are everywhere and they are for the most part, really beautiful. The storefronts are so beautiful and when you go inside it's as beautiful as outside. It's really warm, it makes you want to have a drink and stay there and talk for hours.



THE STONE WALLS

*F*inally, after seeing these photos on the internet or social networks, you probably wondered why there are so many stone walls in Ireland. Well, the reason there are so many is that, although they have been around for 4,000 years, many were built only after the Great Famine of 1845. Indeed, there was a time when Ireland was under English occupation. As Great Britain was exploiting the resources of Ireland, and exporting them around the world, local farmers were forced to eat mainly potatoes. However, potatoes were hit by a disease, the late blight. A great famine spread all around Ireland, killing thousands of people, and forcing some to emigrate to foreign countries. For those who stayed in Ireland, they were for the majority poor, and to gain money, the British paid them to build these dry stone walls. Now, these dry stone walls are still all over Ireland and they help to separate

and protect crop fields. It is estimated that the Irish countryside has over 400,000km of dry-stone walls.

Well, it is not part of Irish traditions, but it is part of their history and it is important to talk about it, because it makes them who they are.

Conchou Sarah, Bois--Rolet Margot, Voyer Baptiste, Lacotte Chloé, Lorblancher Lucas,
Tempest Woods Mirai