

Topdeck

DELVE DEEP: BRITAIN & IRELAND (WINTER)



TOPDECKER, meet Europe (TD)

TRIP VIBE = iconic sights and in-depth adventures with a local Trip Leader. 1. England. 2. The Republic of Ireland. 3. Northern Ireland. 4. Scotland. 5. Wales. Five INCREDIBLE nations all crammed into one teeny corner of the planet. And guess what? Each one is filled to the brim with its own unique cultures, languages, accents, foods and facts. Meaning? You'll need to enlist the help of a pro to make sense of it all. Lucky for you, we've got a few of 'em on hand. Ready to experience this OG Britain & Ireland trip in all its winter-y glory? We thought so.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Delve Deep



Nights



Download app



Meals

Thanks for choosing to holiday with Topdeck

Ready for the time of your LIFE?

The countdown's on...

ABOUT YOUR TRIP NOTES

These Trip Notes contain everything you need to know before your trip departs – from where to meet your Topdeck fam to what we suggest you bring.

Read them on the train, in the supermarket queue or on the loo – we don't mind, just look through them carefully so you know what to expect on your trip. We recommend you download this document so it's with you when you travel (and give a copy to your MVPs so they know what you're up to).

IMPORTANT: please refresh this doc as close to your departure as possible. This means you'll have the most up-to-date info available.

INCLUDED EXPERIENCES

- Walking tour of Oxford with Trip Leader
- Walking tour of Liverpool with Trip Leader
- Walking tour of York with Trip Leader
- See the Angel of the North
- Visit Hadrian's Wall
- Walking tour of Edinburgh with Trip Leader
- Visit Loch Ness
- Glengoyne whisky distillery tour
- Walking tour of Glasgow with Trip Leader
- Walking tour of Belfast with local guide
- Visit the Giant's Causeway
- Visit Derry/Londonderry
- Orientation walk of Galway with Trip Leader
- Visit the Cliffs of Moher
- Walking tour of Dublin with Trip Leader
- Guided tour of the Guinness Storehouse
- Photo stop at Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwlllant
- Visit Stonehenge
- Visit Bath

YOUR TRIP WILL START

PICK UP:

London
Europe

YOUR TRIP WILL FINISH

DROP OFF:

London
Europe

TRIP CURRENCIES

- England - GBP
- Scotland - GBP
- Northern Ireland - GBP
- Republic of Ireland - EUR
- Wales - GBP

YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 | LONDON (ENGLAND)

LDN. The perf place to kick off one mind-blowing wintertime adventure around Britain and Ireland's best bits. First: greet your fellow explorers with a formal royal wave (or, you know, just say hi). Then: settle in for our first included group dinner. Over two weeks' worth of frosty, foodie, fact-filled fun: we're coming for ya.



MEALS:

- Dinner

DAY 2 | LONDON – OXFORD – LIVERPOOL

After that twelfth cuppa (when in England), it's time to hit the road and get pumped for our first stop: Oxford. Get your real-life Harry Potter fix with a walking tour around the INCREDIBLE colleges. Soak up the views from Carfax Tower. And grab a pub lunch next to a toasty fireplace. Then: we'll make tracks to Liverpool. Our Trip Leader will show us around town before we head off solo to tick off the likes of the Tate Liverpool, Maritime Museum, Albert Docks and The Beatles museum (of course). Dinner's up to you this eve. Our suggestion? Warm your cockles with a steaming bowl of scouse stew – so good, Liverpudlians named their accent after it.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Oxford with Trip Leader
- Walking tour of Liverpool with Trip Leader

DAY 3 | LIVERPOOL – YORK

Wave 'ta ra' to Liverpool, today we're off to the medieval walled city of York. Centuries of history. A 'holy sh*t'-worthy cathedral. And some pretty awesome pubs. Don your beanie – we'll get to know the who's who of York on a walking tour, then the rest is up to you. Head up the tower of York Minster, visit the JORVIK Viking Centre or engage explorer mode and lose yourself along the Shambles and Snickelways. Later, track down The York Roast Co. and try the Yorkshire Roast wrap for dinner. It's so wrong, it's right.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of York with Trip Leader

DAY 4 | YORK – EDINBURGH (SCOTLAND)

No lies – today is a bit of a drive day. BUT we've got some awesome stops to make along the way. First up: spread your wings under the Angel of the North. Then: take a peek at what Roman life was like back in the year 122 with a stop along Hadrian's Wall. Wander the barrack blocks of Housesteads Roman Fort and soak up the 360-views from the fortress, before we cross the border into Bonnie Scotland. We'll go all Hogwarts tonight with our included dinner in a traditional Edinburgh dining hall. Line those stomachs with a hearty feast before seeing if the city's bar scene lives up to the hype.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- See the Angel of the North
- Visit Hadrian's Wall

DAY 5 | EDINBURGH

Kick things off today with a walking tour of this historic capital – gawp at mighty Edinburgh Castle, stroll the Royal Mile, get all the feels from Greyfriars Bobby’s statue and stare in awe at St Giles Cathedral. Then? The rest is 100% up to you! Check out the unique collection of Viking-age objects at the Museum of Scotland. Strap on your boots and take a hike up Arthur’s Seat. Step aboard the Royal Yacht Britannia. Join an optional hands-on tour about the Jacobite rebels and get insider knowledge about the men who defied the norm for their country. Or escape the weather with afternoon tea at Elephant House (where JK Rowling wrote THAT series, just sayin’). And tonight? You’ve got the chance to taste a proper Scottish pint or two on a pub crawl. Cheers!



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Edinburgh with Trip Leader



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Jacobite Rebellion tour: from £20
- Pub crawl: from £15

DAY 6 | EDINBURGH

Didn’t get to everything? DW we’ve got your back – here’s a free day we prepared earlier. Zip up the puffer jacket and jump on a Potter-themed walking tour. Check out Charles’ official Scottish residence at the Palace of Holyroodhouse. Explore the National and Portrait Galleries. Sip on Scotland’s national drink at The Scotch Whisky Experience. Or opt to taste alllll the local eats you feast your eyes on during an incred food tour. If the weather is on your side, head up Calton Hill for allllll the sunset views over the city. Then gather the gang for a night on the Old Town – filled with quirky cocktail bars, cosy traditional pubs and craft beerhouses there’s something for everyone. Our fave? Hoot the Redeemer. Think: 1950s’ cocktail bar + arcade games = hours of entertainment!



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Scottish food tour: from £70

DAY 7 | EDINBURGH – SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS

Breathtaking landscapes. Mysterious legends. Culture-rich traditions. And a lot of attractive red-heads. We must be in the Scottish Highlands. Blast Snow Patrol as we weave past more glens, mountains and lochs than you can shake a sporan at. Tonight, after our included dinner you’ll be free to explore or kick back and take it all in. Yep, you’re actually here. *Take note: the Scottish Highlands are BIG – and we’re unable to guarantee exact locations right now. So, sit tight and check your Trip Notes or Topdeck app for specific locations closer to take-off.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner

DAY 8 | SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS

This is your day, your way. But we’ve got an included trip out to see ol’ Nessie if you’re keen. Hear all the legends and see if you can spot the slippery sucker through the mist on an optional scenic cruise. Rather do your own spontaneous-this-is-what-I-came-here-for thing? No worries! There’s plenty to explore around here. Trust us. Tonight, gather your trip mates and seek out a historic pub for a wee dram and hearty Scottish fare. Trying haggis? Go on, we dare you.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit Loch Ness



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Loch Ness cruise: from £19

DAY 9 | SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS – GLASGOW

Fact: you can't 'do' Scotland without whisky. So, we've organised an included tour of Glengoyne Distillery and a belly-warming tasting today. You can thank us later. Uncover the magic maturation process this liquid gold goes through – before having a sniff and swirl of the good stuff. Next: onwards to the home of COP26, mac 'n' cheese pie (try it) and Glasgow kisses (don't try it). Our in-the-know Trip Leader will show us around the Merchants Quarter, Buchanan Street and George Square on a walking tour – pointing out the must-visits for our free time tonight. Then the rest is 100% up to you. We suggest grabbing a bite in Merchant City, where the 18th-century warehouses are chock-a-block with buzzing bars, restaurants and galleries.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Glengoyne whisky distillery tour
- Walking tour of Glasgow with Trip Leader

DAY 10 | GLASGOW – BELFAST (NORTHERN IRELAND)

Rise and shine! We're leaving Scotland behind and setting sail for the Emerald Isle. First up? Belfast. More than just four-leafed clovers and pots of gold – Northern Ireland's capital is THE place to start delving deeper into the rich history of this island-country. Get a local insight into The Troubles on an included walking tour – visiting significant Protestant and Catholic estates and the Belfast Peace Wall. Tonight: head to the Cathedral Quarter to check out the bar scene. Or find a local haunt to warm your feet by the fire and sip on an Irish coffee. It's like a hug for your insides.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Belfast with local guide

DAY 11 | BELFAST – GALWAY (REPUBLIC OF IRELAND)

Limber up for a giant game of hopscotch – today we'll skip and jump our way across the famous Giant's Causeway. Think these huge hexagonal columns were created by volcanic activity 60 million years ago? Wrong! They're actually remnants of a GIANT-sized, testosterone-filled stand-off. True story, just ask your expert Trip Leader. Next up: (London)Derry, where we'll take a closer look at the Derry Murals and learn about the Battle of Bogside and Bloody Sunday. Later, get the run around Galway with our on-road expert before taking the night off to explore. Tonight, dinner is up to you. But we hear the oysters here are bloody good. Hot tip: McDonagh's is THE place to go.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit the Giant's Causeway
- Visit Derry/Londonderry
- Orientation walk of Galway with Trip Leader

DAY 12 | GALWAY

It's your day, your (Gal)way. You've got 24 hrs to delve deeper, so don't waste a second. Need some suggestions? Set sail for the Aran Islands and rewind to a time of horse-drawn carts, ancient forts and locally spoken Gaelic. Or if you're sticking around town – make sure you check out Wolfe Tone Bridge, the Spanish Arch, Lynch's Castle and settle in for a shamrock tea at Cupán Tae. Tonight, dinner's on us back at the hotel. Then? Find your Galway girl/boy at O'Connor's Pub.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Day trip to Aran Islands: from €39

DAY 13 | GALWAY – DUBLIN

Next: the cobblestone streets of Temple Bar and historic watering holes of the capital. But first, glue your nose to the coach window as we take the scenic route across the Burren to the breathtaking Cliffs of Moher. You're gonna want your camera charged for this one. We'll stop in at Doolan (famous for surfing) and Lisdoonvarna (famous for matchmaking...) before rolling onto Dublin. Home of saints, scholars and U2 – the evening's yours to take on the buzzing local nightlife. Make it a good one.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit the Cliffs of Moher

DAY 14 | DUBLIN

Slip on your gloves and down that cup of Joe – we'll get our bearings around this historic city on a walking tour. Tick off Christchurch Cathedral, Dublin Castle, the General Post Office and Temple Bar. Then? It's time to discover what's so special about Ireland's most iconic export at the Guinness Storehouse. With 7 floors, a sky-high Gravity Bar and a cold pint of the good stuff included – even the cider-drinkers will be impressed. Fact: you've got the rest of the afternoon to do whatever you want. Keep the buzz going and see if Irish whiskey tops the Scottish kind on an optional whiskey tasting tour. Check out the Book of Kells at Trinity College. Take a tour of Kilmainham Gaol. Buy a claddagh ring for someone special along Drury Street. And don't miss out on a cone of brown-bread ice cream at Murphey's. Trust us, even in winter it's a must.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Walking tour of Dublin with Trip Leader
- Guided tour of the Guinness Storehouse



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Whiskey tasting tour: from €20

DAY 15 | DUBLIN – NORTH WALES (WALES)

Land ahoy! Today, we're ferrying over to wild Wales – a country that has collectively rejected the letters K,Q,V and Z. Speaking of letters – we'll make a photo stop at the place with the longest name in Europe. Work on your pronunciation for a bit, then we'll roll through the scenic countryside to Llangollen. A cute lil' Welsh town on the riverfront – you'll have the afternoon to check out the 13th-century ruins of Castell Dinas Brân, jump aboard the (seasonal) steam train, or take a walk along the canal. Tonight: gather the gang to seek out a local pub for some live music and a hearty feed along the riverfront. *Take note: North Wales is a BIG place – and we're unable to guarantee exact locations right now. So, sit tight and check your Trip Notes or Topdeck app for specific locations closer to take-off.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Photo stop at Llanfairpwllgwyngyllgogerychwyrndrobwllllantysiliogogoch

DAY 16 | NORTH WALES – CARDIFF

Today we're gonna find out why so many English university students flock to study in Cardiff. Hint: it has something to do with the awesome bands that pass through. Check out the Castle on the Hill. Take a tour of Principality Stadium. Wander around Cardiff Bay. And tuck into a Welsh cake at Cardiff Central Market. At dinner tonight, we're going to give this incredible adventure the send-off it deserves. Make sure you catch a home-grown act at the Welsh Club or sample a quirky cocktail at the Dead Canary (their menu is as whacky as the name).



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner

DAY 17 | CARDIFF – LONDON (ENGLAND)

Quick maths: this is our last day. But we're sure as hell not done yet! En route to London, we'll stop by the gobsmackingly beautiful Bath to take in the Abbey, Royal Crescent and Roman Baths. You've got free time to take a tour of the Baths and sample the healing (read: disgusting) spa water. Or treat yourself to a classy lunch at the Pump Rooms. Get a Bath Bun (or two) takeaway before we make tracks to our next stop: the mystical Stonehenge. One of the most iconic prehistoric sites in the world, take it alllllll in before piling back on the coach for the drive back to ol' Blighty. Swap Insta handles and start planning that reunion trip – where to next?



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Visit Stonehenge
- Visit Bath

OTHER INFORMATION

TOPDECK APP

Feeling appy? Download the Topdeck app and get PUMPED for the adventure ahead. Best bit is: from 45 days before departure you'll be able to chat with your soon-to-be tripmates.

Plus, get your itinerary at your fingertips – so you know where you'll be going and what you'll be doing on each day of your trip. Nice!

Links:

Apple <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/topdeck/id994727866>

Android <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.FlexiTechSolutions.TopDeck&hl=en>



YOUR SAFETY

NIGHTS OUT

We love a good night out – experiencing the nightlife and entertainment places have to offer is a big part of travelling. But alongside the fun it's important to be aware of your surroundings and personal safety.

When you're out late, remember to avoid walking alone – particularly through deserted areas like beaches and back streets. Always stick together, take a registered taxi where possible, and keep a note of your accommodation so you can find your way back to your fellow Topdeckers if you become separated. Make sure you have your trip mates' mobile numbers in case you need to get hold of them while out and about.

In some countries, alcoholic measures can be considerably larger than what you may be used to. Try to keep track of what you're drinking – and if you see one of your trip mates looking a little worse for wear, take them back to your accommodation. Never leave your drink unattended.

It's also important to be aware that what you might consider harmless flirting may be interpreted differently in some countries. Be yourself and have fun, but stay savvy – you don't want to find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

DRUG USE

Topdeck has a strict zero-tolerance drug policy. Customers should not bring any illegal substances onto the Topdeck coach or into any of the accommodation we stay in on our trips. This includes marijuana – even if it is legal in some of the states your trip passes through. If you are found in possession of drugs, you will be removed from the trip immediately. All instances of drug possession will be reported to Topdeck Head Office, who may consider alerting the relevant authorities.

REMEMBER: if you are found in possession of drugs, not only do you risk getting in trouble with the local police, but our Driver will also be held responsible if they are found on the Topdeck coach. Trust us, you don't want that to happen to any of our Drivers – they're awesome.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Culture shock, homesickness, random periods of feeling down – these things happen and are totally normal. You can rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Topdeck crew will do their utmost to cheer you up.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- Call home. Sometimes it's nice to hear a familiar voice and have a good old-fashioned catch up with your loved ones
- Eat well. Never underestimate the power of a good, wholesome meal. Nobody feels at their best when they're hungry!

- Drink responsibly. Not only will you swerve the dreaded hangover, but by keeping an eye on what you drink you could also avoid getting into any potentially uncomfortable situations
- Talk to your Trip Leader. Don't forget, they're probably far from home too – so they're sure to know some tried- and- tested ways to beat the blues
- Integrate with your fellow Topdeckers. This one is key! The more fun you're having on your trip, the less likely you are to feel homesick (fact!)

TRAVEL SINCE COVID-19

Travel looks a bit different since COVID-19. That's why we've put some new procedures in place to help keep you safe on the road.

What remains the same? Your Topdeck trip will be run hygienically, responsibly, and with your safety at the forefront of everything we do. End of.

Here's the info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/travel-safely>

RESPECT ON THE ROAD

RESPECTING FELLOW TRAVELLERS

Our trips are for everyone. We're a family – and we want every Topdecker to have an incredible time.

What we're not about is excluding people or making them feel like they don't belong. That's why we always encourage Topdeckers to be kind and courteous to their fellow tripmates . The golden rules? Respect each other's space, be mindful of causing excessive noise in shared accommodation, and treat others how you'd wish to be treated. Easy!

HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELLER

Responsible travel isn't difficult to achieve. With a little conscious thought and preparation, you can have an awesome adventure AND a positive impact on the places you visit. Sweet!

Here are five things you can do to ensure you're travelling responsibly:

- Conserve water. You know the drill – reuse your room towels, take short showers and remember to turn off the tap when you're brushing your teeth
- Reduce your waste. Ditch the plastic bag, refuse unnecessary packaging, dispose of your waste responsibly and recycle as much as possible
- Go local. Hunt down locally owned and operated restaurants and bars, shop in local markets, and book tours and activities run by local guides
- Consider the wildlife. Avoid any attractions that involve closely engaging with wild animals
- Respect local people and culture. Obeying local laws is a given – but also remember to dress and behave in a manner appropriate to the community. Be polite and keep an open mind!

INSURANCE

Before your trip departs, it's compulsory for all passengers to take out comprehensive travel insurance covering cancellation, medical expenses (including repatriation), loss or damage to baggage and personal belongings, money and personal liability.

Head to our FAQ for more info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/faqs-0>

Got more Qs? Chat with our Customer Service team: <https://www.topdeck.travel/about-us/contact>

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Please make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your trip. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your trip's departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling. Check out our handy interactive map showing global visa requirements:

<https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/latest-border-restrictions>

PLEASE NOTE: some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure, as requirements do change periodically.

TIPPING

Basically: it's not necessary.

Your Trip Leader and Driver don't expect tips, and they won't ask for any either. Meaning? More dollar to spend on optional activities (and a souvenir for your nan).

WHAT TO BRING

Based on our experience, these items are key. Everyone's different though – so if you want to bring more or less, go for it (as long as you don't exceed your 20kg allowance, that is!).

Off to Japan? Your luggage must be no bigger than 160cm in total (height x width x length). So maybe leave the hairdryer at home.

Psst: this is a packing list for Topdeck trips in general. Obv you'd look silly splashing around the Greek islands in a snowsuit.

- 1 pair of comfortable walking shoes + 1 pair of smart casual shoes
- 1 pair of thongs/jandals/flip-flops
- 2 pairs of jeans/trousers
- 2 pairs of shorts/skirts
- 4 shirts/T-shirts
- 2 sweaters/jumpers
- Smart casual evening wear
- 1 warm jacket + 1 rainproof jacket

- Underwear and socks + swimwear
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Hat and sunscreen
- Basic medical kit (including plasters, aspirin etc)
- Adaptor plug
- Reusable water bottle
- Snow gear



THAT'S IT!