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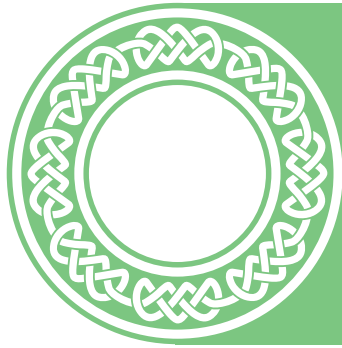
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# ONE DAY IN DUBLIN

By Cindy Sosroutomo

Ireland's capital, with its buzzing energy and undeniable artistry, will have you begging to stay awhile.

**H**ow long does it take for you to fall in love with a city? A day or two? A week? For me, it took the time to down a half pint of Guinness.

Though having only one day in Dublin, Ireland last summer, which any avid traveller would tell you is barely long enough to unpack, much less see the sights, I was instantly hooked by the city's charms. For one thing it's drop-dead gorgeous, especially on a sunny June day when sidewalks are lined by flower stalls and street performers. Also, there's a vibe about Dublin, a youthful energy that comes courtesy of its pub-crawling crowd of students and expats. It's infectious and, to put it simply, downright fun.

I was there while on the tail end of a Silversea cruise to commemorate the 10th anniversary of its Expeditions line. My time onboard the Silver Cloud was amazing, as one would expect from Silversea, but I was looking forward to being on land and discovering a new city I had never been to, one I knew very little about. Don't get me wrong, I knew about the beer and the folk singing and the Irish dancing, but no self-respecting traveller would actually seek

out such touristy pastimes, right?

Luckily, I'm not above the odd tourist trap, and so I found myself enjoying all three at The Old Stonehouse Temple Bar in the famed Temple Bar district. With a half-pint Guinness in my hand, I happily swayed to the music of a live band and cheered on a River Dancer as his legs flailed impossibly about.

Tourist trap or not, it was an epicly good time and the perfect start to my 24 hours in Dublin.

After lunch, I spent a lovely hour exploring Temple Bar, also known as the 'Bohemian quarter' for its eclectic mish-mash of bars, art galleries and colourful boutiques and souvenir shops. I saw steaming hot fish and chips being served through an open window, an assortment of locals drinking full pints on patios at midday, tourists posing in front of 'graffitied' walls, and a rather unfortunate looking bloke dressed in a chicken pasty costume, standing outside a corner bakery. It was all wonderfully weird and weirdly wonderful, and I wanted nothing more than to stay for days to simply people-watch.

But onward and upward, as they say, especially





3



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4

since the clock was ticking. I walked over to Grafton Street (downtown Dublin is conveniently walkable), widely regarded as one of the world's best (and most expensive) shopping streets and easily considered the beating heart of Dublin. My plan was to pick up a few souvenirs for my daughter before heading home the next day; what I didn't plan for was attending what was essentially an open-air concert in the middle of the street.

If anyone's searching for the next big thing to hit the music scene, head over to Dublin because it's teeming with sensational singers and musicians just waiting to be discovered. You'll find several of them on Grafton, strumming their guitars and singing covers of all your favourite songs (sometimes even better than the originals), and you'll be amazed – like I was – by their sheer musical talent. Yes, Grafton Street has some pretty remarkable shopping, but it's the artistry of local performers that gives this world-famous pedestrian street its ubiquitous charm.

The rest of my time in Dublin was spent strolling through the shade at St. Stephen's Green (a public park located at the foot of Grafton Street), and enjoying the best Caesar's salad of my life at a tiny pub on Merrion Row, just down the street from my hotel, The Shelbourne Dublin, A Renaissance. Obviously, I would've loved more time to see the sights (and have another bowl of that Caesar's salad), but I did see and experience enough to know that I'll



5



2

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be coming back.

And when I do? I'll have a long list of items to check off, including: a browse through the National Gallery of Ireland, which houses the finest collection of Irish art in the world; a tour of Kilmainham Gaol, Ireland's notorious 18th-century jail; a night out at the theatre in nearby Dalkey, located a short 25-minute light rail ride from Dublin; a drink at The Church, a restored cathedral-turned bar and nightclub; a trip back in time at the 800-year-old Dublin Castle; a stop at Trinity College Library, the largest library in the country and home of the famous Book of Kells; and a day trip to Wicklow Mountains, famously known for being the location of the film 'P.S. I Love You'.

And of course, since I'm so fond of tourist traps, I'll also be sure to include a visit to the Guinness Storehouse, believed to be Ireland's most popular attraction. After all, by then I'll need a top-up of my measly half-pint of Guinness.

I don't know when I'll return to Dublin, a city that surprises at every turn. But what I do know is that a mere 24 hours was all it took to keep me counting down the days until I do.

1. Temple Bar; 2. A busker performs to a crowd on Grafton Street; 3. The Old Stonehouse Temple Bar; 4. St. Stephen's Green; 5. Graffiti in Temple Bar District.