



NEEDS & NUANCES - SPANISH MARKET

How do they plan and buy?

The Spanish are late and direct bookers

This can sometimes be within 2 or 3 weeks of their travel dates, especially for summer breaks. So it's very important to have your own website set up to appeal to them directly.

They are very heavy users of social media

The Spanish are incredibly savvy on social media and online word of mouth is vitally important. Consider separate social media accounts for your Spanish guests or hiring a Spanish speaker to create and run your Facebook, Twitter and Instagram social media channels.

They love Ireland

The Spanish are incredibly loyal to Ireland and there is a high level of repeat and referral business. So keep them happy, and they'll keep coming back. Many come originally to learn English and return several times as adults.

They have a lot of Bank Holidays from October to December so they tend to take weekend breaks during that time. Ideal for filling the shoulder season!

What do they like to experience when they are here?

The Spanish love to meet the locals

- ✓ They love our sense of humour and a bit of Irish banter. Language can be a barrier, so speak slowly when needed and be prepared to explain a joke.
- ✓ They want to understand how and why Irish people live the way they do. Perhaps an invitation to a home, school, business or event that captures how we live and work should be included in your offering.
- ✓ They love lively cities, busy pubs, live music... and having the craic.

Everything should be translated

- ✓ Spanish guests expect their language needs to be met, as fluent English is not widely spoken. Consider translating printed, online and audio visual guides into Spanish. Make sure you clearly state what translated materials, guides etc. you can offer on your website.
- ✓ Think about having separate Facebook and Twitter accounts in Spanish
- ✓ Menus should be translated and explained, so they can fully appreciate the "real" Irish food.

They prefer good quality, central hotels

- ✓ Spanish guests tend to prefer 4 star hotels, to bed and breakfast options and show a huge preference for city centre locations. They like to be able to walk to pubs and restaurants so highlight local entertainment options on your website.
- ✓ They will book direct online.
- ✓ They don't enjoy driving on the left so this makes the central locations even more important to them. Highlight public transport options locally.

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While not a motivator for Spanish guests, they do love their food!

- ✓ That said, they are usually pleasantly surprised by the quality of Irish food, as their expectations are not high before travelling
- ✓ They tend to find dining options expensive here so highlight early bird and set menus (without supplements if possible). Even though they are late diners, they may be attracted to early bird menus if the value associated with these is made clear.
- ✓ On a tour series, they tend to see a lot of pasta, chicken and salmon. Is it possible for you to offer a different dish which could delight them?
- ✓ They expect bread with every course and jugs of water on all tables.
- ✓ Most Spanish consider coffee to be an integral part of every meal. Remember that coffee is part of their culture at home they like to be asked if they would like it served in a glass or a cup... with cold or hot milk... large or small serving. Make sure your servers are aware of this.
- ✓ They also tend to eat later than us. Lunch at 2pm or even 3pm and dinner at 9pm. Make the most of this by staggering sittings and lengthening your dining hours.

What should you avoid?

- ✗ Serving only cold milk at breakfast! At home in Spain, they expect to have hot milk with every breakfast, so will be disappointed not to find it
- ✗ Tours in English only. They don't like seeing the tour available in all other languages and not their own
- ✗ Lack of food variety... especially for tour groups
- ✗ Not offering value for money. Make sure your options are worth the cost and emphasise the added value aspects.

Where are they most likely to visit?

On their first trip to Ireland, Spanish guests tend to concentrate their visit around Dublin (a must!), Galway, Killarney and Cork. Northern Ireland is becoming more popular, especially Belfast and the Giant's Causeway.

NB: This resource forms part of a series of 'Market Insights' focusing on the needs and cultural nuances of key overseas markets for Irish tourism. It is presented on a market-by-market basis, presenting combined insights from interviews held in 2017 with both Tourism Ireland Market Managers and Tour Operators who engage with these markets. While every effort has been made to ensure accuracy of information, it is recognised that the insights are a general guideline and that many exceptions can also apply.