

NEEDS & NUANCES - US MARKET

How do they plan and buy?

American visitors rely heavily on referrals and recommendations

TripAdvisor is hugely important for this market, so make sure you monitor your listing and respond to all comments, both good and bad. The internet is a big source of information for them as they plan their trip, so ensure your website can be found through good Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) and that you use American terminology and spelling in your content and SEO phrases (for example using the word lodging for accommodation).

Many use Travel Agents, OTAs and Tour Operators

Connect with the sales channels that are right for your business. Meitheal is a great place to meet lots of US Tour Operators and OTAs under the one roof.

American visitors will spend...

But they must see they are getting good value for money and a varied, interesting experience. Make sure you list everything that they are getting for the rate, so that they can see the value. You may also wish to list your prices in dollars, or have a currency converter, so they can clearly see the dollar value.

What do they like to experience when they are here?

Variety is key...

American visitors quite often like to sample a range of accommodation options from rural guesthouses to 5 star castles. They use the word "charming" a lot in feedback... so if you can offer the right mix of old world charm with modern amenities, you are on to a winner.

They often want to see as much of Ireland as possible

While they will usually want to spend a few days in Dublin, whether they are travelling as a group or independently, they are highly likely to cover a lot of ground. US based Tour Operators often include itineraries off the classic "touristy trail" with a wider selection of accommodation styles and interesting activities.

They want to be entertained

- ✓ While engaging in activities and attractions, they expect high end information, interpretations and entertainment, and especially value personal interaction with the locals.
- ✓ They love an enthusiastic, engaging and well informed guide that they can interact fully with.
- ✓ They are fun loving, and enjoy the "craic" at pubs, chatting with the bar staff and interacting with the locals.

They love a good breakfast

- ✓ American visitors expect a wide selection at breakfast, including hot and cold options, a range of fruits and yoghurts and a selection of tea and coffee options.

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- ✓ If this is your key target market, look at your breakfast offering... and once it's right, tell them about it. Include great images, video and descriptions on your website, and enthuse Tour Operators about your great breakfast.
- ✓ Make sure your breakfast staff are trained to offer the options with an extra hearty smile.

What should you avoid?

- ✗ Treating them like a tourist! Especially within the accommodation they are staying in, they want to feel like locals, be treated like locals, eat like locals.
- ✗ Restrictive menus and minimal breakfast offerings. Their expectations of food in Ireland are increasing, so you need to live up to that.
- ✗ Overly priced offerings. They expect value for money and are pushing against the increasing rates.
- ✗ They are not keen on the narrow roads and driving on the left... so if you can engage with chauffeur drive, coach tour or local tour providers, this would appeal.

Where are they most likely to visit?

American guests love to visit Dublin, especially on their first trip... but Killarney and Galway are also key. After that, Cork, Clare and Belfast are favoured. That said, for returning visitors from the US, they are likely to go to the four corners of Ireland, to explore and engage fully.

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.