

# CULTURALLY CURIOUS



**Fáilte Ireland**

National Tourism Development Authority

# Why segmentation?

In order to attract more of the right type of visitors and grow Ireland's tourism economy, Ireland's tourism agencies have developed an overseas segmentation model spanning the most important source markets: Europe, Great Britain<sup>1</sup> and the USA.

This segmentation model is focused on understanding visitor motivations and needs and then grouping those visitors with similar behaviours and needs together (segmenting) in order to better target visitors through sales and marketing activity and also to develop the right type of visitor experiences to meet their needs.

Seven segments were identified as being most likely to visit Ireland; three of these segments are being prioritised based upon their likelihood to actually visit Ireland, and both the economical and geographical return on investment that they would yield for the tourism industry.

The 3 segments with the strongest potential for Ireland are:

- Social Energisers  
.....
- Culturally Curious  
.....
- Great Escapers  
.....

Most visitors to Ireland, display similar expectations, motivations and desires from their 'Ireland' holiday. They all want to get away from it all, have fun, experience new things, meet locals etc. They all seek a city break and enjoy a touring holiday. They enjoy nature, walking and boat trips, local food and music.

It is the degree to which certain segments **distinctly** behave and purposefully seek out certain experiences over others that makes them **distinctive** and interesting.

Here we focus on the distinctions and nuances surrounding the Culturally Curious. We will look at who they are and what motivates them. What are they looking for from a holiday in Ireland, how they come to book their holiday – their holiday journey, and more importantly what we need to know and do as tourism businesses and destinations in order to grow market share from this segment.



Figure 1

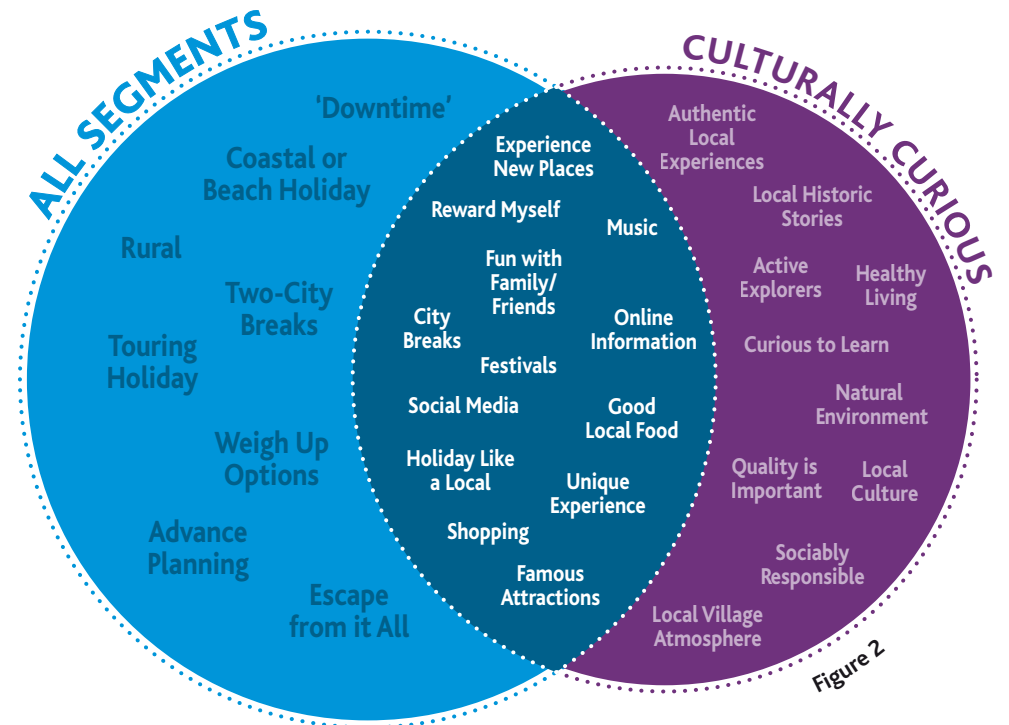


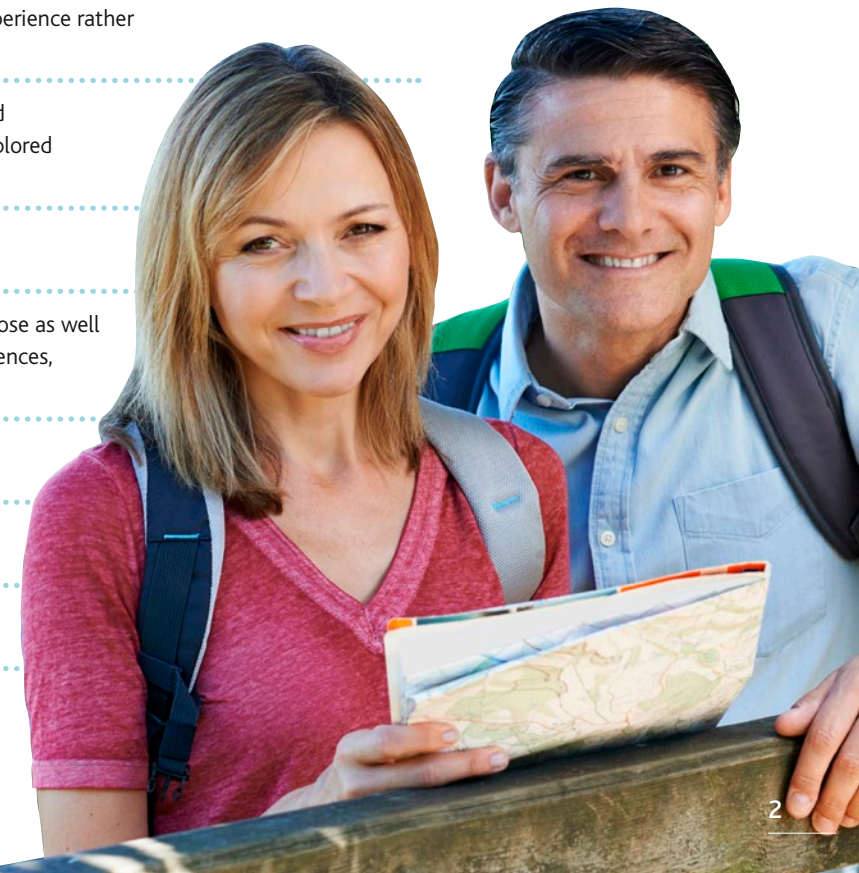
Figure 2

<sup>1</sup> Great Britain excludes Northern Ireland

# Culturally Curious highlights

## Culturally Curious are

- 1 Curious learners who want to visit new places and expand their travel experience by exploring landscapes, history and culture.
- 2 'Explorers' rather than 'tourists' – they are well travelled and want to discover the hidden stories and get under the skin of a destination.
- 3 They base themselves in a location, using mostly serviced accommodation, hire a car and travel around exploring the wider area during the day.
- 4 Looking for 'out of the ordinary' travel experiences. They want an interactive, local and personalised experience rather than the usual prescribed tour.
- 5 Travellers who want to relax, enjoy and explore the natural environment and experience the real Ireland by being active in scenic landscape (walking, cycling etc.). They want to go home feeling they really explored a place and feeling good about themselves socially, physically, mentally and spiritually.
- 6 Sociably responsible and environmentally conscious.
- 7 Quality conscious – quality is important to them in terms of quality of products and services they choose as well as the quality of life and wellbeing. They will pay extra for quality products such as personalised experiences, fresh local produce, hand crafted and organic products and recognise 'quality badges'.
- 8 Health conscious they look after themselves; going out of their way to eat healthy and stay active.
- 9 People that like to be recognised and acknowledged for having made a good, cultural holiday choice.
- 10 Individuals who like to share their special, personal experiences with others via word of mouth.



# Who are they and what motivates them?

Visitors who are connected to issues of society, the environment and self, and who will pay extra for quality

They are independent, explorative, travellers who tend to 'do a destination' in one holiday (e.g. 1-2 weeks), generally basing themselves in one location with good access and facilities from which they will explore the area quite extensively hiring a car and guiding themselves around.

They are motivated by their curiosity and a passion to **broaden their minds** by **exploring new places, and connecting** with the local **people**, their **way of life** and **learning through new experiences**.

Not surprisingly, they are well travelled and are the most selective in terms of types of holidays and activities they choose and are always looking for new places and experiences that are **intimate** and **'out of the ordinary'**.

They seek **rich, diverse and personal experiences** which allows them enhance their repertoire of intriguing life stories to share with family and friends.

That said, they also want to visit historical sites that have an engaging story to tell, be active in nature but not do anything too strenuous. They want spontaneous access to culture particularly those for which a destination is famous and especially if they are presented in an authentic and environmental friendly setting. They are largely professionals, holiday longer and have the highest average income of all the segments. They therefore immerse themselves while on holiday and enjoy what is going on around them.

They spend **just over 7.66 days on average in Ireland** which is almost a day longer than the average holidaymaker. They spend €97.06 per person per day. They take the highest number of recent holidays but important to note they are selective in terms of where they go on holidays and what they do once they get there<sup>2</sup>.

They pre-plan aspects of their trip, and gather most information before their trip, more than the other segments. This may involve online research or offline, through the use of guidebooks.



Culturally Curious  
are explorers, who  
want to broaden  
their minds and have  
'out of the ordinary'  
experiences



<sup>2</sup> Fáilte Ireland Survey of Overseas Travellers, 2015

## Culturally Curious are active sightseers and want to explore a destination.

Core motivations of all Culturally Curious are similar across all age groups; they want to explore and be immersed in a place connecting with the locals and local customs so that they can discover the hidden gems of a destination. They are frequent travellers looking for something 'out of the ordinary', immersive and enchanting and are selective in terms of where they holiday. Older Culturally Curious visitors are less likely to do strenuous activities but moderate activities such as strolling and cycling appeals to all.



# 50% of visitors are from mainland Europe

Mainland Europe markets of France and Germany present a sizeable market opportunity of 30.8m Culturally Curious; 25% of all Culturally Curious who visited Ireland in 2015 came from Europe, with Germany being dominant. Being in the Eurozone with ever-improving access, and having a good understanding of Ireland's brand distinction and a greater propensity to travel a few extra days beyond Dublin, positions Germany and France as strong prospects for Ireland's destination experience offering.

The GB market, on the other hand has a smaller Culturally Curious market, in terms of numbers of people, at 4.7m. However, in 2015, 15% of all Culturally Curious visiting Ireland came from GB, which indicates that GB visitors have a greater propensity to visit given their proximity and ease of access. The recent uncertainty in relation to currency and value arising from Brexit, coupled with the need for Ireland's Ancient East and the Wild Atlantic Way to compete with GB in terms of an easier and evolved staycation market, presents significant challenges for the GB market in 2017 and beyond.

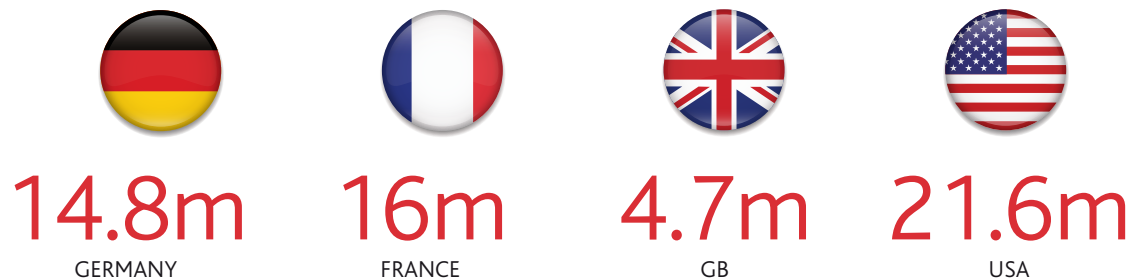
Given the overall geographical size of the USA it is therefore of no surprise that the USA is the largest source market for all segments. The importance of the USA market is borne out in past performance where 25% of all Culturally Curious to Ireland in 2015 came from the USA<sup>3</sup>. Although the USA is set to remain a dominant Culturally Curious source market, it is important to consider external factors that may impact on the American visitor coming to Ireland. Factors such as travel cost, journey time and, in particular, escalating safety issues, may impact on the likelihood and frequency of travel from the USA. Therefore, all markets are important.

€97.06

Culturally Curious average daily spend

Stay on average 1 night longer  
than the average overseas holiday maker

## Segment size by market, 2016 (millions)



<sup>3</sup> Source: Tourism Ireland GTI Survey, 2016



## Some barriers to choosing Ireland

There are barriers to choosing Ireland as a destination other than the issues discussed above (i.e. Brexit, safety issues and the evolved staycation market) that visitors may consider before coming here. These barriers can conjure up a negative image of Ireland whilst the visitor is deciding to come here or not. The main barriers that have been cited by visitors are:

- ➔ There is low awareness of the **basic geography** of Ireland, getting here and travelling around Ireland. Visitors are not sure where the regions are, what the journey time is between regions and/or cities and how long a trip to Ireland and certain regions and/or cities would actually take. There is a lack of distinction between the cities other than Dublin which can have a narrowly defined bad reputation as a party town with high prices.
  - ➔ Thus, from a UK perspective Ireland presents an unknown quantity beyond Dublin.
  - ➔ For the USA and German Culturally Curious visitors who are likely to travel outside of Dublin by car this means more time, more planning and effort and more money spent planning a trip to Ireland.
- ➔ There are few or no specific details on **unique experiences** offerings (visitor attractions) that stand out as 'world class' or 'must see'. For some visitors, this can indicate there is not that much to do in Ireland once you arrive.
- ➔ Ireland can often lack a clear cultural distinction which allows it stand out from other destinations with similar cultures (e.g. Scotland).
- ➔ There is no clear sense of **distinctive, quality cuisine**. Visitors assume we have a weak reputation for quality food even though they know we have good ingredients.



**German Culturally Curious**  
**DID YOU KNOW?**

- most interested in: Wild Atlantic Way 62%, Ireland's Ancient East 51%.
- show the highest intention to visit Ireland.
- are the most active and enjoy exploration and meeting locals.



**French Culturally Curious**  
**DID YOU KNOW?**

- most interested in: Wild Atlantic Way 61%, Ireland's Ancient East 55%.
- most enjoy exploration and meeting locals.



**GB Culturally Curious**  
**DID YOU KNOW?**

- seek more stimulation and want to broaden their minds.
- they are relatively warm to the idea of a holiday in Ireland. But they are least assured by the specifics of what they would actually do, what's different, and why they should visit; they show the lowest intention to visit in the near future.



**USA Culturally Curious**  
**DID YOU KNOW?**

- most interested in: Dublin 65%, Wild Atlantic Way 58%, Ireland's Ancient East 54%.
- are the most interested in everything Ireland has to offer.
- are the most active and enjoy exploration and meeting locals.

# What are they seeking from a holiday in Ireland?

Ireland features highly on their list of places to visit behind destinations such as Italy (Tuscany, Rome, Venice) and parts of the USA (New York, California) and ahead of England and the Scottish Highlands due to their diverse and renowned culturally offering.

City breaks to one or more cities, along with a rural holiday are cited as among the most popular holidays in Ireland for the Culturally Curious. They will base themselves in a town or city and tour around or explore the area by hiking, walking or biking.

**Culturally Curious are curious to learn** about local **Irish culture, traditions and interesting historical stories**, with a desire to meet the local Irish people, to learn about their lives and hear their stories. They are most likely to visit **built heritage** i.e. castles, ancient sites, stately homes and historic houses but will enjoy getting the **insider perspective** through meeting locals, hearing storytellers relay history in a personal way and watching stories brought to life through re-enactments.

They place high value on the environment and enjoy immersing themselves in the **Irish landscapes and seascapes** through activities such as walking, cycling, boat trips to rugged islands off the West Coast, dolphin watching etc. They like to be active but nothing too strenuous; enjoying the beauty of the natural landscape is the most important thing.

**Culturally Curious are explorers** and seek to venture **off the beaten track**, avoiding usual tourist spots and opting to sight-see independently and in a more relaxed manner.







They will hire a car and travel distances to experience first-hand the local culture and the 'local ways'. They enjoy visiting **Ireland's small towns and villages**, which provide a more relaxed side to their own holiday and give them the authentic experiences they are looking for. They can be found happily spending an afternoon strolling through a picturesque village, enjoying local food/pubs, exploring the local scenery by foot or bike and experiencing the sights and sounds of Ireland which aren't found in the guidebooks.



They recognise and expect quality and are willing to pay extra for this (e.g. handmade, organic, locally produced goods, crafts and produce). Food is an important part of their holiday experience and although they may not associate Ireland with a strong reputation for cuisine, they do expect **quality, fresh, well prepared local Irish food**.

## Dublin

There is 56% interest in Dublin which is not surprising for a capital city offering a wide range of things to see and do, a rich history and long standing capital city culture. However, this interest drops when measured in terms of its ability to provide a strong landscape offering to the Culturally Curious visitor. This presents an opportunity for Dublin to elevate and present the scenic natural resources of its bay, coastal villages, waterways and surrounding mountains. Dublin's UNESCO status is important to this cohort as is highlighting the city's environmental achievements (Dublin Bay Biosphere) and cultural reputation (City of Literature).



## WATCH OUT

- Culturally Curious appreciate historical stories but do not want a long history lesson, nor do they want to visit a long list of old, historical buildings and museums. They already have an historical appreciation and most seek the 'untold local nuggets and stories' shared in an engaging and entertaining way. They want to understand Ireland's culture and way of life more so than Irish history which means they want food, music, dance, arts, theatre, storytelling, local pubs and local entertainment.
- Culturally Curious explore extensively during the course of their holiday; hence they are unlikely to to the same area. It is therefore important that these visitors leave Ireland, knowing that there is more to see and other distinctive destination brands to visit. They therefore need to be actively targeted with new compelling reasons to return.
- Culturally Curious from GB feel they have 'similar' and perhaps 'bigger and better' cultural and heritage choices at home. Making it more challenging to persuade them to choose Ireland. The 'Brexit' factor will present even greater challenges for Ireland in the GB market, particularly on value. Ireland's experience brands (Dublin, Ireland's Ancient East and the Wild Atlantic Way) therefore need to focus more on points of distinction, particular in the area of 'living culture' – music, dance, storytelling, local towns and villages and the local experience, which can only be experienced in Ireland.



## Ireland's Ancient East

51% of all Culturally Curious indicate a strong interest in Ireland's Ancient East. A destination offering 5000 years of European history, brought to life through storytelling, local people, food, crafts, music and festivals set against a backdrop of lush green landscape that is easily accessible appeals strongly to the Culturally Curious segment – especially the US market. Visitors from France and Germany indicate a strong interest in Ireland's Ancient East, while GB visitors show only moderate interest (consistent with the GB response to Ireland in general).

Culturally Curious refer to an interest in visiting more than one city; which can be presented as a strength for Ireland's Ancient East given the number of small, distinctive cities i.e. Waterford, Kilkenny, Cork, Athlone etc. However, 'cities' can cover a large town where there is a good tourism service base; places to stay, good access and lots to see and do.

For this segment, top things to see and do include unearthing cultural and historical stories in an entertaining and engaging way through locals, guides and visual displays (e.g. re-enactments and actors); wandering through a local picturesque town or villages, 5km walks and cycles, boat trips through inland waterways, local food markets and festivals; pubs and Irish music.

## Wild Atlantic Way

60% of all culturally Curious express strong interest in visiting the Wild Atlantic Way. Visitors from France and Germany indicate a high interest while GB respondents indicate a more moderate interest.

The promise of being immersed in an Atlantic culture, stunning landscapes and having the longest coastal touring route is very appealing to the Culturally Curious, highlighting their strong desire to witness local, authentic cultures which they can learn about and enjoy. Although Galway is the only City on the Wild Atlantic Way, Limerick and Cork can function equally as a City base for the Culturally Curious as can large, well serviced towns such as Killarney, Westport and Donegal. Whereas Culturally Curious generally base themselves in one central 'touring' location, it is equally feasible for them to stay in more than one location along the Wild Atlantic Way to allow for longer touring. Top things to see and do include walking along the tallest cliffs in Europe, wandering through a local picturesque town or village, dolphin and whale watching, boat trips to rugged islands off the west coast etc.



# What influences their holiday decision?

The holiday ideas and choices of the Culturally Curious are largely influenced by the experiences of other people. Hence the importance of word of mouth via friends and family.

**Internet browsing** is the second most important channel to target this group; they will search online via Google and other sites. They tend to use the internet for **practical/factual** information to endorse their decision and to assess detail such as availability, ease of access and cost of flights and accommodation. **Consumer reviews** are seen to be the most trustworthy sources. They want to see **images** of the real Ireland – its culture, places and people so that they can visualise themselves in Ireland.

## MARKETING TIP

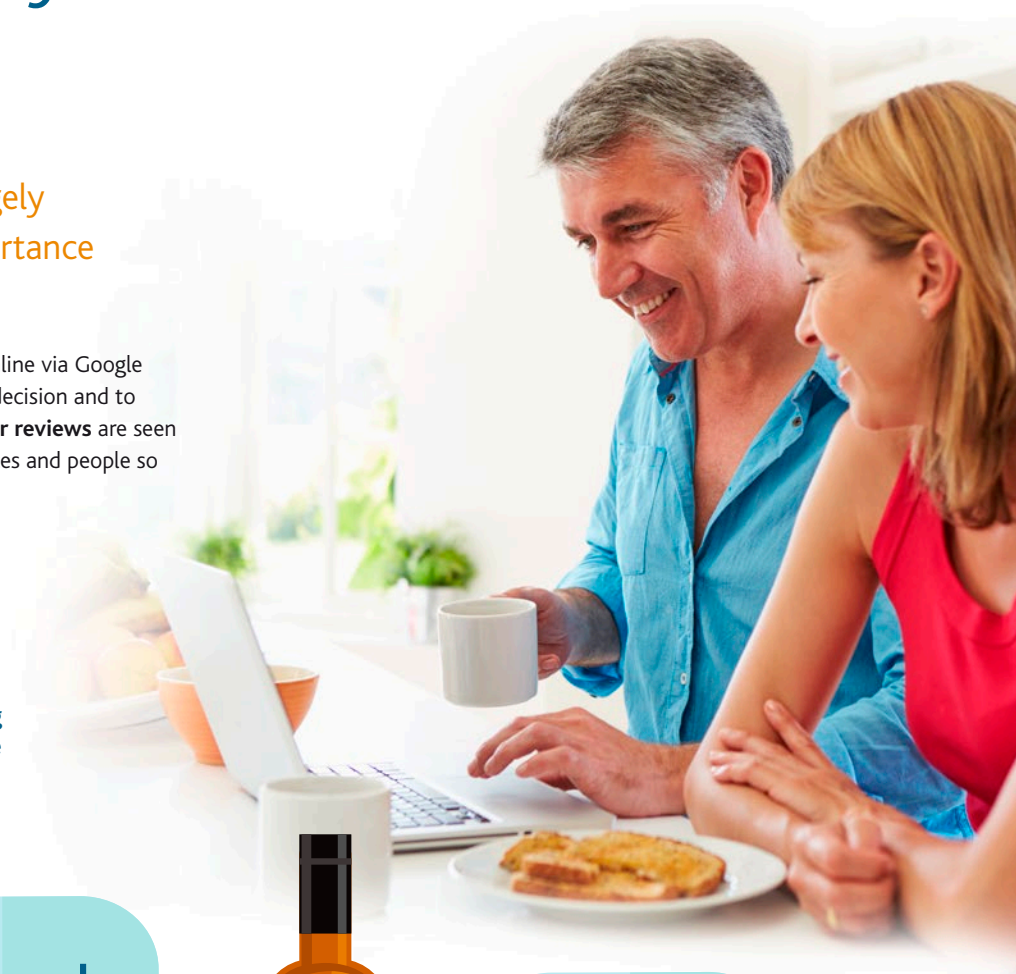
Targeting the Culturally Curious requires a use of language, imagery and tone which creates a strong emotional connection with the place and its people helping them visualise themselves immersed in the sights, sounds, smells and tastes of the local environment. The language also needs to conjure up a series of benefits for the visitor such as a more enriched mind, body and spirit.

Sights

Smells

Sounds

Tastes



# The visitor journey

The visitor journey depicts the stages a visitor typically goes through when taking a holiday.

The initial **motivation** can range from simply needing downtime or perhaps a celebration. They consider a number of countries and destinations in their minds and categorise them under 'good for culture'; 'good for scenery' 'good for hiking' etc. Once the need for a holiday is triggered, this consideration list is called upon. Hence the importance of international marketing of Ireland, the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Ancient East and Dublin by Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland. However, destination influences come from a wide mix of sources such as recommendations from people we know, documentaries, magazines, Irish music and the arts etc.

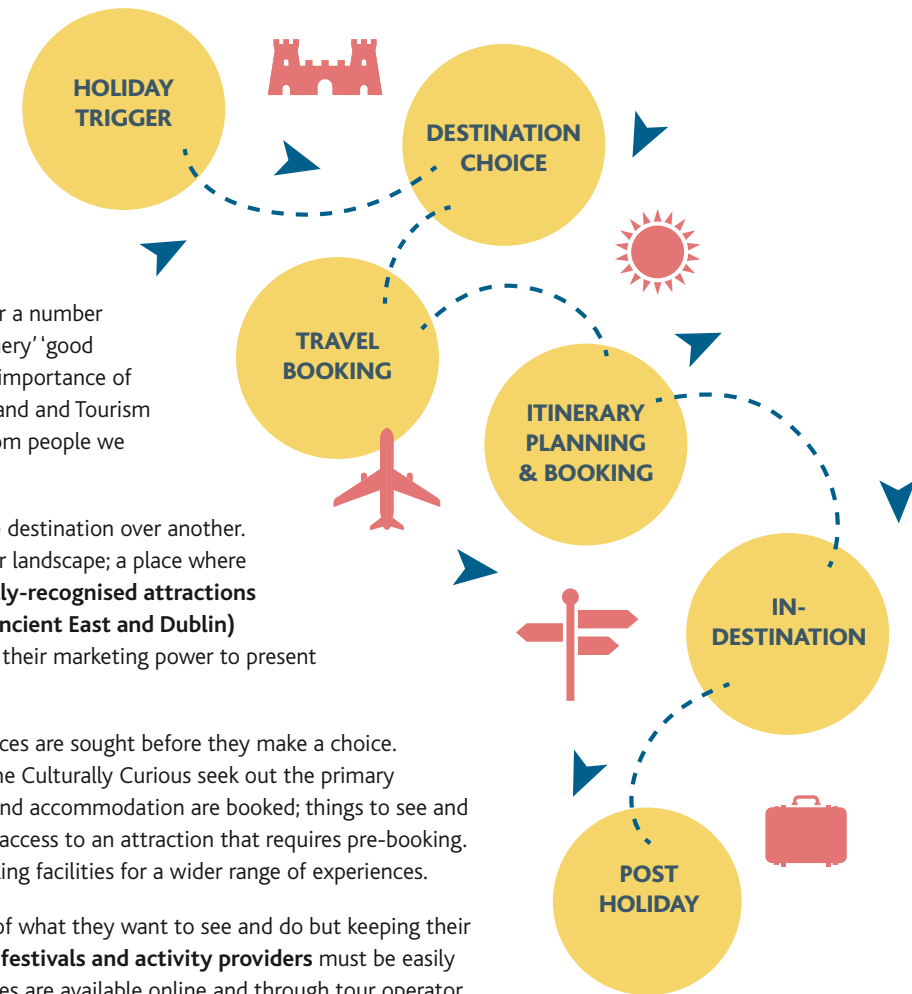
Culturally Curious largely seek inspiration and ideas from people they know in helping them choose one destination over another. They will be particularly interested in destinations with cultural richness, distinction and a reputation for landscape; a place where they can explore, 'go local', experience new things and broaden their minds. Here the **top internationally-recognised attractions ('biggest', 'oldest', 'best') along with distinctive destination brands (Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Ancient East and Dublin)** come to the fore. Therefore, it is important that tourism businesses are aligned with the brands and use their marketing power to present their own business experience to an international audience.

The travel booking stage is quite complex; a variety of on and offline sources of information and influences are sought before they make a choice. They must be easily able to conjure up a **mental map** of a place with lots to see and do. At this stage the Culturally Curious seek out the primary practical information that is important to them to do and see. Generally, transport (including car hire) and accommodation are booked; things to see and do are not booked in advance unless central to the holiday, such as concert/festival tickets or to ensure access to an attraction that requires pre-booking. However, this is set to change as more and more online tour operators (OTAs) are starting to push booking facilities for a wider range of experiences.

Itinerary planning is the fun part. Culturally Curious will have a loose itinerary, capturing the highlights of what they want to see and do but keeping their options flexible to allow for spontaneity and authenticity and avoiding the 'tourist' routes. **Attractions, festivals and activity providers** must be easily found online in order to feature on proposed itineraries. It is important that business offers and incentives are available online and through tour operator channels at this stage to ensure businesses feature on initial itineraries.

On arrival, **the destination must work and live up to the promise**. Businesses who work together, cross-sell and proactively work to ensure visitors have lots of choice and receive the very best destination experience will benefit most. Local accommodation providers, tourist offices, restaurants/bars, taxi drivers etc. should be an advocate for your business to ensure you capture business in-destination. Cross referencing and cross selling is particularly important in maximising the opportunity from the Culturally Curious as they are explorative and inquisitive visitors, seeking local advice and local experiences and will travel to unplanned hidden gems. However, if they check online they are more likely to use Tourist Board sites as they prefer to use a trustworthy and official source.

**The post-holiday experience** is often overlooked and an important opportunity to maintain a connection with the visitor for mutual benefit – their memories and choices are reinforced through word of mouth and your business experience is widely promoted. The Culturally Curious have high expectations and are very likely to write a review if they have had a bad experience but word of mouth would generally be the key communication channel for this segment – particularly when they have had a good experience.



# The Culturally Curious journey



## CULTURALLY CURIOUS INSIGHT

I need downtime ... to do something really different, broaden my mind and enrich my life.

## DESTINATION PRIORITY

Increase on and offline publicity particularly focusing on the destination's cultural and environmental profile.

Encourage word of mouth via Trip Advisor and other review sites.

## INDUSTRY PRIORITY

During the holiday trigger stage the visitor prioritises where they are travelling to – the destination, rather than the business.





#### CULTURALLY CURIOUS INSIGHT

##### Influenced by

Recommendations from colleagues, peers, friends, family

Social media groups, peer groups

Cultural media

Environmental media

Cultural events and festivals (e.g. music, food, arts)

Recognised famous sights/must see attractions and famous historical events

**Must feel easy to get to and navigate around.** Require mental map of destination for reassurance before booking. Happy to get off the beaten track but need assurance of quality destination infrastructure and services.

#### DESTINATION PRIORITY

Accentuate the unspoilt landscape – scenic unpopulated images, environmental designations, accolades such as UNESCO.

Show images of outdoor activity within the landscape (walking/hiking etc.).

Present a unique and accessible local culture, through local pubs, music, festivals, crafts etc.

Focus on distinctive and important historical stories and events.

Promote easy-access, ease of touring, friendly locals and quality accommodation.

Supported by a clear mind-map of lots to see and do and how visitors can get there, including transport options, journey time, distance, weather, recommendations and all relevant information.

Highlight quality, fresh local food, sustainably produced, well prepared in local restaurants and bars.

Be active on digital marketing; present a strong image and video bank; curate and re-purpose blog posts and ensure influential peer sites such as Trip Advisor are advocating the right message.

#### INDUSTRY PRIORITY

Ensure your business is visible on Fáilte Ireland's websites: Visit Dublin, Ireland's Ancient East and the Wild Atlantic Way websites offering compelling, targeted experiences specific for Culturally Curious.

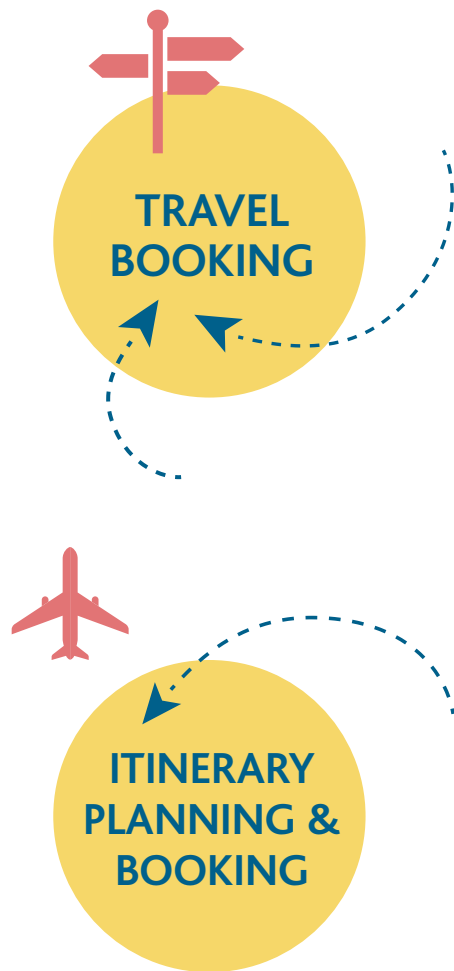
Curate and re-purpose blog posts.

Invest in Web optimisation and paid searches using key phrases.

Ensure positive recommendations on advocacy sites such as Trip Advisor.

Optimise on and offline publicity from any angle possible (cultural media, the arts, environmental, nature and travel media). Watch for topical trending opportunities and link them to your business or location where possible.





**CULTURALLY CURIOUS INSIGHT**

Book primarily online. May seek reassurance from travel agent but essentials such as transport (flights, ferry) car-hire and accommodation are primarily booked directly through online channels.

**DESTINATION PRIORITY**

Ensure the destination visibility and top experiences are strong across all on and offline media channels and ensure that everything on offer can be easily and instantly booked online.

**INDUSTRY PRIORITY**

Accommodation and transport providers in particular must be mobile ready and must be present on as many booking sites as possible (including OTAs) with compelling and competitive offers.

Use social media and trending tools to ensure the destination is constantly trending with relevant messaging and experiences for Culturally Curious.

All booking platforms must be mobile enabled.

**CULTURALLY CURIOUS INSIGHT**

Plan a full but loose itinerary in advance of arrival to ensure they see as much as possible.

**DESTINATION PRIORITY**

Ensure the destination offers and communicates a large array of varied things to see and do, highlighting the top attractions and the most locally distinctive cultural experiences including local entertainment, sport (GAA), Gaelic language and islands.

**INDUSTRY PRIORITY**

Be present and visible on all digital platforms – the business must be mobile ready.

Will leave some space in itinerary to allow for much anticipated “off the beaten track” local experiences.

Stimulate demand with quality personalised, ‘limited edition’ experiences.

Your website must have a user-friendly booking mechanism.

May book essential attraction tickets in advance if advised for availability.

Promote tactical events and offers to drive sporadic bookings.

Offer tactical incentives and packages to encourage impulse-buying.

Ensure activities and attractions can be booked easily and directly on mobile.

Partner with another business from your area to enhance the overall offering and make it more compelling.

Stand out and be different.

Use, curate and repurpose blog posts.

Invest in Web optimisation and paid searches using key phrases.

Ensure positive recommendations on advocacy sites such as Trip Advisor.



## IN-DESTINATION

### CULTURALLY CURIOUS INSIGHT

Stay in a central location (city or town) and explore from there by hiring a car.

Although will visit some famous 'must-see' attractions, generally avoid tourist traps and will opt for more personalised and interactive tours.

Enjoy social activity; preferably where the locals go. Local restaurant, bars, festivals and cultural/sporting events.

Culturally Curious want to feel they are among people who are interested in them; they feel more connected and fulfilled.

Expect good quality accommodation and a high level of customer service.

The local food experience is very important: good quality local food and service excellence.

Will post negative experiences on social media.




## POST HOLIDAY

### CULTURALLY CURIOUS INSIGHT

Openly relay their experience – positive reviews are relayed face-to-face to friends and family.

Will actively encourage others to visit.

Will only return if they believe there is 'another' Ireland which they didn't yet explore.

### DESTINATION PRIORITY

Provided good on and offline visitor information.

Daily "what's on" listings are critical, particularly related to the local scene rather than 'tourist information'.

Culturally Curious prioritise recommendations from locals e.g. concierges, publicans, cafe/restaurant staff etc.

### DESTINATION PRIORITY

Continue publicity on and offline to reinforce positive memories.

Promote another of Ireland's destination brands, warranting another 'journey of exploration'.

### INDUSTRY PRIORITY

Ensure all visitor facing staff are fully informed to be able to advise on where the locals go and the truly authentic 'must-see' experiences.

Be interested and politely personal. Make the visitor feel special and interesting. Staff should refer to them by name wherever possible.

Ask for contact details to develop a data base which can be used for further marketing.

Work with your local tourist information office.

Encourage visitors to share positive reviews.

Surprise them with something free and unexpected to make their experience more personal.

Cross promote with relevant local industry partners to upsell experiences; keeping it local and keeping it real.

Ensure local accommodation providers are fully aware of and advocate your business.

### INDUSTRY PRIORITY

Share a social media memory and invite them to return and recommend to family and friends.

Hotel groups or business with a number of properties should proactively target visitors to return to Ireland for a different holiday experience.

Gather user-generated content for your website.

Engage in social media conversations.

Run competitions to promote advocacy i.e. share a photo or a caption about something you did on holiday.



# Destinations need to

- Offer an authentic experience that shows the real Ireland and life of the Irish people.



- Highlight 'Big Ticket' items; famous attractions and events with world-wide reputation which reinforce the 'quality' and depth of the destinations. Include accolades which elevate the destination's international status around culture and the environment such as UNESCO status and protected areas designated with special environmental and wildlife qualities.



- Show engagement with the landscape through gentle activities such as walking, cycling, hiking and gentle water-activities including boat trips and don't forget to highlight what's special about the land/seascape in terms of flora and fauna.



- Present 'hidden gem' experiences that are beyond the tourist trail and used by locals, including local cultural, sporting and community events.



- Showcase experiences that tell and demonstrate historical and cultural stories of Ireland. Particularly draw out opportunities to present the story in the form of 'a shared history' between Ireland and the visitor nation helping to create a strong affiliation with Ireland.



- Promote access to Gaeltacht areas to allow visitors experience the native language first hand in a relaxed, community setting.



- Promote the islands off Ireland's West Coast as a very unique and authentic cultural and environmental experience.



- Promote and tell the local stories of regional historical sites.



- Be welcoming and appreciative of visitors as a community, recognising their importance economically and striving to ensure the experience is the best it can be.



- Highlight easy access to and around destinations via car.



- Include estimated times it takes to get from A to B by car, foot and train, public transport links taxi fares etc. in promotional material.



- Offer a range of accommodation options which are located in the centre of key destinations.



- Provide concise activity information, relevant and readily available; referencing what's on locally.



- Make it easy for visitors to find information on where the locals go, highlighting good value for money, locally sourced food and drink, storytelling etc.



# Businesses need to

- Align your business offering with an Ireland destination brand ('Dublin. A Breath of Fresh Air'; the Wild Atlantic way and/or Ireland's Ancient East).



- Where applicable with a world famous international attraction or activity – tip: use ... the Biggest ... Oldest ... First ... Last ... in Europe or in the World where possible.



- Use impactful images and video content – not only as a means of attracting business, but also while the visitor is with you and after they leave to keep the conversation going. This encourages wider sharing and promotion of your business experiences.



- Think of how you can either present your current business offering or modify your offering to make it stand out more. Attract Culturally Curious attention by being different, a hidden gem full of local history and culture. Build in 'the insider perspective' moment, a hidden treasure full of informative nuggets.



- All businesses need to offer service excellence: making the visitor feel they are important with their needs pre-empted and being addressed by name.



- Offer and promote excellent quality food such as organically grown, locally produced etc.



- Focus on digital sales and marketing platforms and strategies.



- Know how to manage the yield in your business in order to effectively and profitably work a number of channel intermediaries. Online tour operators (OTAs) are an established booking channel particularly for accommodation; but many are adding 'things to see and do' to their booking platforms which present new international sales opportunities for a wider mix of tourism businesses.



- Work as a community – both a 'business community' cross selling offerings and a 'tourism community' ensuring there are local advocates or ambassadors within the community to pass on the inside track to visitors.



- Ensure the local tourist information office is aware of and promoting your business with the correct information.



- Speak specifically to Culturally Curious core motivations by tapping into their curiosity via 'living history and culture' their need to experience out of the ordinary.

