

# TARGETING: French Holidaymakers

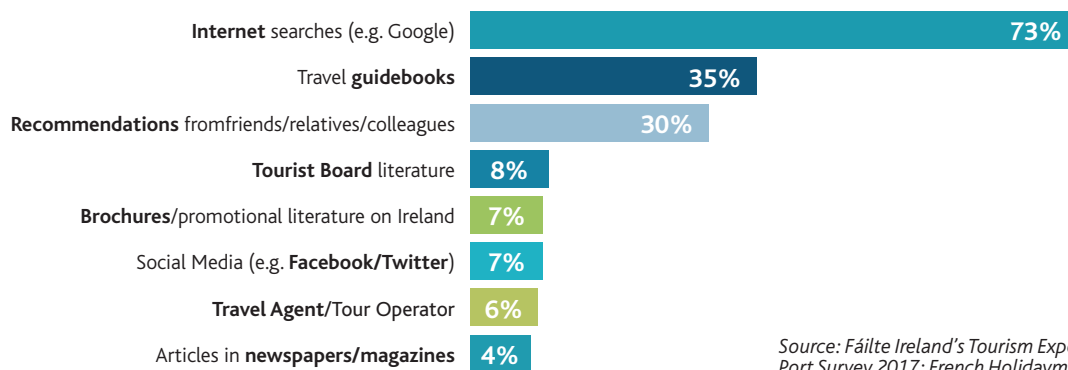


Deciding where to go on holiday is an elaborate process and many sources of information and influences come into play.

From the initial destination inspiration, holidaymakers start to look at what unique experiences are on offer, where they might stay and start to delve into the practicalities of the trip (cost, distances, reviews etc).

Sources of holiday information and inspiration are varied and fit together like a jigsaw to help the holidaymaker decide on a destination and then plan their visit.

## Important Information Sources when Planning a Holiday in Ireland



Source: Fáilte Ireland's Tourism Experience  
Port Survey 2017: French Holidaymakers

## IMPORTANT FACTORS CONSIDERED BY FRENCH HOLIDAYMAKERS PRIOR TO VISITING IRELAND (IN ORDER OF IMPORTANCE)

1. Plenty of things to see and do
2. Interesting history and culture
3. Ease of access (from France)
4. How easy Ireland is for touring





**FOR FRENCH HOLIDAYMAKERS TWO AREAS, MORE THAN ANY OTHERS, INFLUENCE TRAVEL:**

**BEFORE TRAVEL**

Getting the marketing messages right especially through digital channels is key - the right online content and visuals

**IN-DESTINATION**

By providing a world class experience and sending home happy holidaymakers:

1. nearly four in ten French holidaymakers return to Ireland for a repeat visit
2. their recommendations to friends, family and colleagues will attract new arrivals
3. high satisfaction levels will offset any potential value for money concerns

## Tourism Experience Research

Fáilte Ireland conducted online consumer testing (Summer 2017) with potential French holidaymakers to gain a greater understanding of:

1. What kinds of tourism experience they would consider for a holiday (within the next 3 years) and
2. What experiences motivate travel (for a holiday)

Taking the insights from this research and together with the **Tourism Ireland Paris Office**, key nuances were highlighted as important when targeting the French market.

## Market Overview

The French market is drawn to authenticity and therefore have a low threshold for any marketing or tourism experiences that they do not perceive to be credible. Promise marketing (i.e. making grand statements and promises) falls flat, this market prefers clarity on what about the experience is unique, different, or world-class etc.

**IMPORTANT HOLIDAY FEATURES FOR THE FRENCH MARKET**

**MARKET NUANCE**

**HOW TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF INSIGHT?**

**HOLIDAY INSPIRATION**

Why the French might travel to Ireland



The French go on holiday to recharge and escape stresses of life as well as to experience new destinations. They are looking for *dépaysement* ('the feeling that comes from not being in one's home country')

French holidaymakers enjoy getting off the beaten track, away from perceived tourist traps

This market is drawn to places that provide a sense of freedom and a means to explore

Variety is key, a sense of lots to see and do

- Give recommendations where this market can explore off the beaten path
- Promote remote or secluded areas of natural beauty for this market
- Cross promote where possible. Package multiple experiences together and join the dots to promote the vast array of things to see and do locally

**IMPORTANT HOLIDAY FEATURES FOR THE FRENCH MARKET**
**MARKET NUANCE**
**HOW TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF INSIGHT?**
**LANDSCAPE**

What about the land/ seascape appeals



Unspoilt landscape resonate with the French (crowded experiences are unappealing)

Iconic coastal scenery appeals as well as dramatic green nature

The French are particularly attracted to all forms of water – both coastal and inland

Connemara is well known and epitomises the perception of a typical Irish type of landscape- lakes and mountains

- Promote 'only available in Ireland' experiences against a coastal backdrop, mountain views or green landscapes with dramatic vistas
- Recommend ways to get on or near the water (but not in the water i.e. watersports)
- Short boat excursions are very relevant for this market
- Cross promote and position your experience in relation to nearest body of water

**ACTIVITY**

Getting active on holiday



The French are not overly active on holiday. They prefer sedate activity, at a relaxed pace

Boat trips appeal to the French as a means to get a new perspective of Ireland's dramatic scenery and an easy way to sightsee

- Provide recommendations for how the French can get close to the water in a way that suits all ages and abilities
- Remote, unspoilt landscapes offer the French a chance to feel a sense of freedom

**ATTRACTIONS & HISTORY**

Role of history & attractions on holiday



History plays a supporting role to the landscape in terms of appeal for this market however interesting and unique history does have its audience among the French

Like other markets, it is the story that is key

- Don't assume any knowledge of Irish history
- Human interest stories are the way to tell history, it does not need to be date heavy
- The French are wary of what they perceive to be staged interpretation (e.g. actors etc), again it does not fulfil their desire for authenticity

**CULTURE / PEOPLE**

Importance of Irish people & hospitality



Meeting Irish people while on holiday is not a core reason to travel for this market, however it will enhance their experience when in Ireland

Authentic experiences with Irish culture are important (*friendly, open hospitality when they want to engage with Irish people*)

The pub is seen as a gateway to access local people and culture

- Do not over-stretch the promise of interaction with locals to 'friendship'. It is seen as neither credible nor wanted
- Not all French are confident in their language capabilities, any effort to converse in French is welcomed

**IMPORTANT HOLIDAY FEATURES  
FOR THE FRENCH MARKET**
**MARKET  
NUANCE**
**HOW TO TAKE  
ADVANTAGE OF INSIGHT?**
**LANGUAGE IN TEXT**

How to position  
experiences



Adapting copy or text for a French audience is important. Accounting for the nuance of language is key to convey the tourism message

The French see right through a sales pitch, therefore use superlatives (*that might work for other markets*) sparingly. Vague statements of greatness are just that for the French. If directly translated, they can also inadvertently change the tone of the text

Show don't tell. Allow the French to see themselves there. Portray the things to see and do that evoke a feeling in a physical sense e.g. *what you feel not how you feel - "feel the wind in your hair etc"*

Visual language, when credible works well

Back up superlatives with third party proof and credentials where warranted (*Lonely Planet, National Geographic, Tripadvisor etc.*)

- Don't using automated translation services from English to French, unless you can have text double checked by a native speaker
- Represent distances in time, e.g. two hours from Dublin
- Some specifics around language
  - If something is 'unique', be clear about why it is unique
  - Avoid describing cities as 'compact' – negative interpretation of small
  - Don't describe pubs or venues as 'lively' as it's perceived as busy and loud. Warm is a better description
  - 'Surprising' is perceived as a hollow descriptor, it doesn't ring true
  - 'Unexpected' is perceived as something unwelcome
  - Idyllic or 'Idyllique' is seen as too Disney in its interpretation

**IMAGES**

Pictures speak  
volumes



The French (particularly) prefer images with not too many people in them. They are attracted to unspoilt scenery and not a tourist hot spot

- Let the landscape speak for itself, it is the star of the show for the French
- Images of people should be natural (not staged) and should not detract from the focus of the landscape
- People can be used effectively in middle ground to show perspective of scenery and credibility that people can actually get out in the dramatic landscape portrayed

