



THE LOOK OF THE IRISH

BY JESSICA COLLEY CLARKE

THERE IS MUCH MORE TO DUBLIN THAN ITS HISTORIC CULTURAL ROOTS. YOUNG CREATIVES, INFLUENCED BY GLOBAL FOOD, FASHION, ART AND INTERIOR DESIGN TRENDS, ARE REDEFINING WHY TRAVELERS SHOULD VISIT THE IRISH CAPITAL NOW.

A youthful spirit is changing the face of daily life in Dublin. Enter a restaurant, cocktail bar, design-forward boutique, or art gallery in the capital city and one thing becomes clear: Dublin is in the midst of a powerful creative moment.

The reach of this energy spreads far beyond St. Stephen's Green in the city centre, from the newly-minted Creative Quarter to the trendy, tech-focused, Dubliners-dubbed Silicon Docks. Creative tentacles are reaching farther than ever before, as chefs, designers and art enthusiasts open the doors of new businesses in sometimes unfamiliar corners of the city.

Dublin isn't shunning its cultural roots—there are still classic pubs for a pint of Guinness and following in the footsteps of literary icons such as James Joyce—but the historic streets now have a

distinctly contemporary air. Many young Dubliners, after living and traveling abroad, have returned home with globally inspired ideas. Presented with a local spin and signature Irish hospitality, the best of Dublin is more international than ever, but also with a strong foundation of hometown pride.

The five-star Conrad Dublin, too, turned to the dynamic city as its inspiration for a far-reaching renovation project, which was completed in spring 2016. Iveagh Gardens sparked the redesign of the hotel lobby, while Irish literary traditions are honored in the ground-floor bar and lounge, designed with Jonathan Swift and *Gulliver's Travels* in mind.

In this compact city, you can explore on foot. Whether you're hungry, thirsty, or in the mood to shop—here's where to go. »

WHERE TO FIND ART & DESIGN TO SEE AND BE SEEN IN

Galleries in Dublin are about more than art—they're also gathering places for the local creative community. Pop into the RHA Gallery to see a contemporary art exhibition, or plan your visit around one of its chic, see-and-be-seen exhibition openings (check the website for details, and while there, do a search for 'Lost Fridays'—a popular evening of cocktails and art). Up-and-coming artists join established artists on the walls of Kevin Kavanagh, a gallery in

Dublin 8 that exhibits both Irish and international work. In addition to solo shows and a group show throughout the year, this gallery also hosts artist talks, screenings and performances. Temple Bar is the home of Graphic Studio Dublin, a printmaking studio and spacious gallery. The work of Irish artists at all stages of their career are celebrated in this space, focused exclusively on original fine-art prints including screen-prints, lithographs and etchings.



WHERE TO EAT LOCAL FLAVORS, GLOBAL INSPIRATIONS

Creative minds in the kitchen and the superior quality of local ingredients have ignited big changes in the Dublin dining scene. Crowds are giddily following talented chefs outside the city's core to new restaurants, including Bastible, opened in late 2015 by Chef Barry FitzGerald in Dublin 8. Come for the 48-hour fermented sourdough bread; stay for three courses of delicately presented plates (we love the grilled monkfish with mushroom broth and wild mussels). The family-style Sunday roast lunch is particularly lauded by locals. Bold, fresh flavors found an unfussy home at Sister

Sadie, an instant hit on Harrington Street. A stylish crowd fills this casual café for satisfying brunch dishes, such as Baklava French toast or an Overnight roasted pulled pork sandwich; simple suppers are served, too. In the heart of the Creative Quarter, **Drury Buildings** hits several high notes: there are craft beers to sip in the heated garden, cheeses and charcuterie for nibbling in the cocktail bar, and feast-worthy Italian-inspired fare (think: Pappardelle with black truffle and Roast suckling pig belly with fondant potato) in the sleek upstairs dining room.

GALLERIES IN DUBLIN ARE ABOUT MORE THAN ART—THEY'RE ALSO CHIC, SEE-AND-BE-SEEN GATHERING PLACES.



PREVIOUS PAGE: The Samuel Beckett Bridge on the River Liffey.

THIS PAGE LEFT TO RIGHT: Royal Hibernian Academy, Drury Buildings. Window displays and eclectic installations at Scout in the Creative Quarter.

WHERE TO SHOP TRULY UNIQUE BOUTIQUES

A resurgence in Irish design and craft is proudly on display at boutiques across town. One of the most charming is the **Irish Design Shop**, located on Drury Street in the Creative Quarter. Founded by two local jewelers, the shop has a ground-floor retail space—stocked with Irish-designed-and-made jewelry, accessories, stationery, and housewares—topped with metalwork studios on the upper floors. Vintage finds share the shelves with independent Irish clothing labels (and some

international labels, too) at **Scout**, a boutique on Smock Alley Court in Dublin 8. This curated shop offers much to covet, from vintage bags to cozy wool blankets. Two brothers with an eye for design and enthusiasm for craft are behind **Makers & Brothers**, an online shop showcasing contemporary handmade objects. Make an appointment in advance to go behind the scenes for an exclusive peek inside their Dublin workshop (and keep an eye on their website for seasonal events and pop-ups). »



WHERE TO DRINK

IRISH PUB ALTERNATIVES

Guinness is no longer the only libation flowing steadily in Dublin. The Irish capital is currently riding the wave of the craft cocktail, with several watering holes offering a polished atmosphere in addition to a stiff drink. On South Great Georges Street, what was once a pharmacy at the turn of the 1900s is now **Chelsea Drugstore**, a buzzy, brick-lined cocktail bar. Some tipples showcase Irish whiskey while others are globally inspired (try *The Truth Behind Augustus*, with Bulleit Rye, Amaro Meletti, Fernet Branca, and grapefruit). The subterranean labyrinth **Liquor Rooms** is the first bar in the Republic of Ireland to be recognized by the Tales of the Cocktail Spirited Awards. After a spin on the

dance floor in the burlesque-inspired Black Rabbit room, settle into a private snug in the Blind Tiger room for a drink. We love the *Potent Potable*, with Jameson Black Barrel, ginger, apricot, spiced porter syrup and chocolate bitters. It would be easy to walk right by the **Vintage Cocktail Club** (only VCC on a nondescript door designates the entrance to this speakeasy-style bar) but once you ring the doorbell and climb the stairs, a vintage-inspired drawing room is revealed. Choose your poison by era, or jump right to the VCC signature cocktails, such as the *Eire Beag* with Powers Single Pot Still Irish Whiskey, Glendalough Poitin, rhubarb liqueur, VCC Bad Weather tea and fresh citrus. ♦

CHOOSE YOUR POISON
BY ERA, OR JUMP RIGHT
TO THE VCC SIGNATURE
COCKTAILS.



RIGHT:
Liquor Rooms.

THIS IMAGE:
An apéritif served
at The Vintage
Cocktail Club.

BELOW:
The Lobby at
Conrad Dublin.



FOR MORE THINGS TO DO WITHIN REACH OF CONRAD
DUBLIN VISIT DUBLIN.STAYINSPIRED.COM