



Connecting Lives, Sharing Cultures



AFS & INSTITUTE OF STUDY ABROAD IRELAND SUMMER CULTURE STUDY PROGRAM

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS & PARENTS

The Campus is located in County Donegal, on the Atlantic Coast. This area of Ireland is famous for breathtaking scenery, wonderful history and the friendliest people in Ireland. Although we are based in Donegal, we travel to many other parts of Ireland, including Dublin City and the counties of Meath, Cavan, Fermanagh, Sligo, Leitrim and Derry.

County Donegal is one of the most one of the most historic, beautiful and scenic counties in the Republic. We are right beside the beaches, with excellent surfing, sports and very friendly people. We are in the town of Bundoran, which is famous for surfing and for a traditional Irish welcome. There are shops and banks, a cinema and bowling alley, a funfair and beautiful surf beaches just seconds from our door. There are many beautiful places nearby, which we visit on our tours.

The Adventure Campus is in the village of Bundoran, and our centre is warm, comfortable and teen-friendly. The centre has free Wi-Fi and internet access, TV's and DVD screen. Rooms are shared between 2 -4 persons, and there is full supervision at all times. Rooms are en-suite and students can request to stay with friends, if travelling together.

There are three meals served each day: Breakfast of cereal, tea/coffee, toast & fruit; a hot lunch, and a two-course dinner. Students also have access to local stores and can stock up on favourite snacks and suppers. Vegetarians are easily accommodated. Other dietary considerations should be advised in advance.

There are church services available here to most denominations. We will help arrange this for students if they wish to attend services.

A word on Northern Ireland.... We are located in County Donegal, which is in Southern Ireland. Since 1994, we have been blessed with a peaceful and wonderful resolution of past troubles between North and South. There are now no borders between Northern and Southern Ireland, and Irish people travel very comfortably between both places.

SAFETY TIPS

Ireland is a friendly country, and generally speaking, tourists are well treated. Your students will be well supervised at all times, but it is worth noting the following:

Dublin is a busy, modern city, and especially busy in the summer. Like every city, there are people who will target tourists, with their wallets, phones, cameras etc. Students should not carry all of their money, passports, cards in one place, and a waist-bag or inside pocket is recommended for money.

The same caution that applies to talking to strangers, making sure you are always with the group, and behaving in a safe and responsible manner applies as much in Ireland as it does anywhere else.



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Bundoran, in Donegal is a holiday town on the coast. Students are supervised at all times, but will be participating with other students from Ireland, England and continental Europe. Students are expected at all times to be respectful of others from different communities, as the same respect will be extended to them.

The Irish summer climate is changeable- students used to a hot and humid summer will not have that experience here. Summer weather is generally mild, sunny and warm, but it also can be rainy and windy. The ocean is warm enough for swimming in a swimsuit, and summer wetsuits are provided for surfing and kayaking.

We discourage students from spending too much time on Facebook, other social media sites, or generally online. We like them to be engaged with the program. Students must not post photographs or video taken in changing rooms, bedrooms, or in any circumstance which is not a responsible and respectful vacation photograph. Students must not post any comments or images that could be construed as disrespectful or mean to students, staff or other people connected with the program.

A Facebook blog will be posted on the Institute Study Abroad Facebook page. We ask your permission to use photographs taken during the trip for our blog. We do not post detailed names, addresses or personal information. If you would prefer that your student is not photographed or videoed, please advise us of same in writing.

Homesickness can be a factor for the first few days. Students travel a far distance, and tiredness, nervousness and uncertainty can often kick in. We ask parents to wait for a few days before reacting, as it can take this time to settle in. We need a little bit of time to get to know everyone and for us to get to know them. We work extremely hard to make sure every student here is happy and enjoys the experience. Students should talk to their AFS Program Leader or ISAI staff if there is anything bothering them. We are very experienced, and very conscientious, and everyone should look forward to the trip.

Occasionally, students are nervous about activities like surfing, sports, talent shows etc. Please understand that nobody is forced to do anything they don't want, but everyone is encouraged to try things. The water activities like surfing are at beginner level, in shallow water, and are ok for non-swimmers. Climbing & Cliff Jumping are easy and safe, but we have no difficulty with students deciding to just observe.

Finally, this program is one in which everyone is respected and included. We encourage laughter, teamwork, kindness and fun. We do not tolerate discrimination or bullying of any kind. We will discourage cliques, disparaging comments, and any behaviour that might make life uncomfortable for students, staff, and local people. The reward is a wonderful immersion program in a rich and rewarding culture. Thank you for signing up!

Niamh Hamill

Director Institute of Study Abroad Ireland