

Contact

special St Patrick's 2011 Edition

St Patrick's Global Celebrations Launch Major Spring Overseas Tourism Drive

The London Eye, the Moulin Rouge in Paris, Burj Al Arab in Dubai and Table Mountain in South Africa are just some of the iconic buildings and attractions around the world which turned green on St Patrick's Day, kicking off a major €28/£23 million spring promotional drive to restore overseas tourism to growth. The 'greening' of icons captured the imagination of media everywhere, reaching 250 million potential visitors around the world with positive publicity and excellent reasons to visit.

Tourism Ireland's St Patrick's programme spanned Great Britain, Mainland Europe, North America, Australia, as well as developing markets including China, India and South Africa. With saturation coverage of the island of Ireland across the airwaves, in newspapers and digital media, St Patrick's Day provided a truly invaluable boost for our overall overseas tourism drive.



Queen Elizabeth II And US President To Visit

On St Patrick's Day in Washington, US President Barack Obama announced his intention to visit Ireland in May. This follows the recent announcement that Queen Elizabeth II will also visit in May.

Niall Gibbons, chief executive of Tourism Ireland, said: *"The visits by Queen Elizabeth II and President Obama will be a wonderful opportunity to showcase the island of Ireland to a huge audience of potential holidaymakers across the globe and have the potential to deliver a major boost for tourism in 2011 and beyond. A large media contingent will travel here to cover both visits, bringing the stories to millions of people in Britain, the US and elsewhere around the world, providing a unique opportunity to highlight Ireland as a wonderful holiday destination."*

Prime Minister Cameron Celebrates St Patrick's Day

At a reception in the House of Lords in London to celebrate St Patrick's Day were Niall Gibbons, chief executive of Tourism Ireland; designer Louise Kennedy; British Prime Minister David Cameron; and Joan Burton T.D., newly appointed Minister for Social Protection. Leaders of the Irish community living in London, as well as influential travel trade, business tourism and media contacts were invited by Tourism Ireland to attend the reception.



Turning The World **GREEN**

Tourism Ireland arranged for major landmarks and iconic sites around the globe to go green as the sun set on 17 March, to mark St Patrick's Day.

The first celebrations kicked off in New Zealand, when the Sky Tower in Auckland was bathed in green light. The 'green wave' continued, with Burj Al Arab in Dubai and Table Mountain in South Africa next to go green; then it was the turn of the Moulin Rouge in Paris, the Puerta de Alcalá monument in Madrid, the London Eye and the Nelson Monument in Edinburgh; followed a few hours later by the Empire State Building in New York and the CN Tower in Toronto. Niall Gibbons, chief executive of Tourism Ireland, said: "We aim to bring a smile to the world and to convey the message that the island of Ireland continues to offer a warm welcome, fun and spontaneity, alongside fantastic scenery and cultural activities."

PUERTA DE ALCALÁ Madrid



CN TOWER Toronto



SKY TOWER Auckland



BATTERSEA POWER STATION London



NELSON MONUMENT Edinburgh



MOULIN ROUGE Paris



THE LONDON EYE



BURJ AL ARAB Dubai



TABLE MOUNTAIN Cape Town



Social Buzz For Island

Online and social media was exploited to the full to connect with the global online community around St Patrick's Day. Social media allows Tourism Ireland to play to our strengths, demonstrating the fun and friendliness for which the island of Ireland is renowned and helping to differentiate us from other destinations.

How Green Will You Go?

In advance of the big day, Tourism Ireland in Australia ran a fun campaign on Facebook and Twitter, called *How Green Will You Go?* The campaign invited people all around Australia to be part of the 'green' picture, challenging them to declare what they intended to 'green' in honour of St Patrick. It included a 'Green Yourself' app on Facebook, to help fans turn their profile pic green for 17 March.

And, just in case fans were at a loss for 'greening' ideas, Tourism Ireland had some helpful suggestions, such as ... *get a green manicure or pedicure; eat only green food for the day; dye your hair green; turn your company's homepage green for the day; all staff should wear something green; change all the lightbulbs in your building green; or maybe add a green signature or shamrocks to your emails.*

New Facebook Game

Tourism Ireland's new game for Facebook, Ireland Town, went live on St Patrick's Day and was played by in excess of 100,000 people in the first five days. The game brings the holiday experience here to life for Facebook fans across the world and provides another valuable platform to promote the island of Ireland overseas.

In Ireland Town, Facebook fans are invited to create their own idyllic town, with the help of 'tour guide' Sally. They can then explore iconic sites and visitor attractions around the island, completing various challenges in order to progress to the next level of the game. With 32 destinations and nine different tasks to be completed at each destination, fans can interact with the island of Ireland in a fun and memorable way. For those who make it through all of the tasks, there is the chance to win a 'real world' prize of a holiday to Ireland.

Tourism Ireland is the first national tourism board in the world to launch a social game, tapping into the huge popularity of games like FarmVille and CityVille. Visit www.facebook.com/irelandtown



Fans could share their 'green' efforts by posting photos, videos and comments on Tourism Ireland's Facebook and Twitter pages.



Tour guide Sally – aka Dearbhail Hogan – with Brian Harte and Mark Henry, Tourism Ireland, at the launch of Ireland Town.



Tour operator Insight Vacations took up Tourism Ireland's challenge and painted one of their coaches green, in honour of St Patrick's Day.



Of Ireland

Tourism Ireland's Facebook fanbase soared to over **300,000** around St Patrick's 2011

100,000+ visits to **discoverireland.com** on 17 March

Sydney Commuters Left Reeling!

Unsuspecting commuters passing through Sydney's Central Station on St Patrick's Day were in for a surprise when Tourism Ireland's 'flashmob' of Irish dancers brought the busy station to a standstill. The performance was posted on YouTube and at time of going to print had been viewed by over 700,000 people around the globe. Go to <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jxEB48jY3F8>



Where's The After Party?

A fun email campaign to Tourism Ireland's database after St Patrick's Day invited revellers around Britain to come and attend the 'after party' in Ireland.



On The Menu Around Europe

In France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden, Spain and Italy, Tourism Ireland joined forces with Bord Bia to showcase 'culinary Ireland' through a new online game called *St Patrick's Cooking Challenge*, which was played by over 100,000 people across Europe.



Celebrating St Patrick In GB

Tourism Ireland's St Patrick's celebrations in the all-important GB market aimed to create a tremendous buzz and excitement about the island of Ireland as an appealing destination for British holidaymakers. This year's programme included a number of high impact promotions which helped to showcase what makes the island of Ireland different, encouraging British people to come and sample it for themselves in 2011. St Patrick's promotions took place right across Britain – from Glasgow to Birmingham, Cardiff and London – and capitalised on this unique opportunity to put Ireland in a positive publicity spotlight.

Northern Ireland Sales Blitz In Glasgow

Tourism industry operators from around Northern Ireland joined Tourism Ireland in Glasgow recently, for a three-day roadshow aimed at raising awareness of Northern Ireland as a fantastic holiday and short break destination.

The roadshow targeted some of the major Scottish coach tour operators, as well as consumers around the Glasgow area, and provided a valuable opportunity for the participating Northern Ireland tourism businesses to showcase their products in Scotland.

Northern Ireland



Alex Mebaffy, Giant's Causeway Visitor Centre; Vanessa Markey, Tourism Ireland; Mary O'Neill, Ramada Hotel, Portrush; and Simon Gregory, Tourism Ireland, during the Glasgow sales blitz.

Schools Help Spread The Word

Once again this year, Tourism Ireland worked with the Greater London Authority (GLA) to run a competition for school students, to portray their image of the island of Ireland through drawing, painting or sculpture.

St Patrick's Parade In London

Jimmy Deenihan T.D., newly appointed Minister for Arts, Heritage and Gaeltacht Affairs, joined Niall Gibbons, chief executive of Tourism Ireland, to watch the St Patrick's parade in London. Tourism Ireland and industry partners promoted holidays and short breaks at the St Patrick's Festival in London, with Ireland ads running on the big screen at Trafalgar Square on the day.



Lights, Camera, Action

Tourism Ireland's publicity drive in GB was stepped up considerably over the St Patrick's period, targeting national and regional print, broadcast and online media (including prominent bloggers) throughout Britain with positive stories about Ireland.

Millions of potential holidaymakers saw or heard Tourism Ireland CEO Niall Gibbons highlight the island of Ireland on high profile shows like BBC Breakfast, LBC (London Broadcasting Corporation) News and BBC Radio 4's *You and Yours*. Live broadcasts from the Dublin St Patrick's Day parade were syndicated to national and regional radio and TV channels across GB. Gráinne Seoige broadcast live from the Guinness Storehouse on 17 March; Dana was on Premier Christian Radio; Daniel O'Donnell took part in a number of live and recorded interviews which will run on BBC regional radio stations throughout the year; and competitions for holidays to Ireland ran on popular TV and radio shows, including *Daybreak* and *Loose Women* on ITV.



Daniel O'Donnell, pictured with Tourism Ireland CEO Niall Gibbons in London, where he recorded a series of radio interviews which will air to millions of potential holidaymakers on BBC regional radio stations.

Targeting The Travel Trade

Tourism industry partners from around the island of Ireland joined Tourism Ireland at the 'Best of Britain and Ireland' (BoBI) travel trade show at the NEC in Birmingham, on 16 and 17 March. Leading GB coach operators and group travel organisers, as well as key media contacts including members of the British Guild of Travel Writers, attended the B2B event.

Joan Burton T.D., Minister for Social Protection (second from right) and Niall Gibbons, chief executive of Tourism Ireland (right) met with Caroline Munro, Shearings (coach operator), Brenda Byrne and Liz Fahy, Holiday Ireland Hotels at BoBI in Birmingham.



Dressed For The Occasion

The famous Manneken Pis statue in central Brussels donned Irish tweed on St Patrick's day, with a civic reception hosted by the city's Mayor.



Mary Robinson Turns On The Lights

Former President of Ireland Mary Robinson turned on the lights to 'green' Table Mountain in Cape Town. She is pictured with Kader Asmal, a South African politician and former lecturer at Trinity College where he taught Mrs Robinson.



'Wunderbar' Promotions In Germany

Ireland was on air on popular German radio station HR1, in the run-up to St Patrick's Day, courtesy of a joint Tourism Ireland-Aer Lingus promotion which reached about 200,000 listeners each day during the two-week campaign.

In Munich, Tourism Ireland joined forces with Aer Lingus, Guinness and the German Irish Association Bayern (GIAB) for the St Patrick's Day parade, which was attended by about 25,000 people. Also in Munich, 35 top buyers from the Bavaria region attended Tourism Ireland's business tourism networking event.

And in Berlin, industry partners from around the island of Ireland joined Tourism Ireland at ITB, the largest travel show in the world; 120 influential German travel writers attended our annual media event during the show; and Tourism Ireland CEO Niall Gibbons addressed the Berlin International Economics Congress 2011 during ITB.

Niall Gibbons and Barbara Wood, Tourism Ireland, with Úna Young, Select Hotels of Ireland, at ITB Berlin.



Ireland On The MAP In Paris

Simon Coveney T.D., newly appointed Minister for Agriculture, Marine and Food (sixth from right) joined tourism industry partners and Billy Condon, Tourism Ireland (right) at MAP – Le Monde à Paris – one of France's biggest travel shows.



On Your Bike

Tourism Ireland joined forces with Bord Bia in France on St Patrick's Day, with liveried 'demo' bicycles in La Défense (the major commercial district of Paris) promoting holidays to the island of Ireland and our food, with culinary blogger Donal Skehan on hand performing cookery demos.



Stockholm - Let's Dance!

Stockholm's Central Station was taken over by Tourism Ireland on St Patrick's Day when a group of Irish dancers brought a smile to the faces of Swedish commuters in the busy station.



56 influential media contacts – including TV, radio, print and online journalists – from seven countries visited for the St Patrick's Festival 2011

JetBlue's Green Celebration

Tourism Ireland and Aer Lingus joined forces with airline JetBlue for a two-day St Patrick's promotion at Terminal 5 in JFK Airport in New York, which included a *Live from T5* concert in the central marketplace. And Ireland TV ads were shown on all JetBlue flights for a two-week period in March.

Publicity Spotlight In The US

Tourism Ireland's packed publicity programme in the US over the St Patrick's period shone a spotlight on the island of Ireland, helping to boost interest in holidaying here.

Highlights included travel 'guru' Peter Greenberg, host of the CBS radio show *Peter Greenberg Worldwide*, who broadcast from Dublin to an audience of over 3 million across the US. Tourism Ireland sponsored live coverage of the New York St Patrick's Day parade on NBC, with inserted film clips on Ireland and interviews with Tourism Ireland CEO Niall Gibbons, as well as various tourism partners including Dr Tim Campbell of the St Patrick Centre in Downpatrick and celebrity chef Catherine Fulvio. Catherine Fulvio also appeared on the Channel 8 news in Washington DC and on NBC's *The Today Show* on St Patrick's Day, while another of our well-known chefs, Darina Allen, featured on Martha Stewart's radio show.

Seven million viewers of top US morning TV programme, NBC's The Today Show, tuned in to chef Catherine Fulvio of Ballyknocken House on 17 March.

Actor Pierce Brosnan at a Tourism Ireland-sponsored event at the Royce Hall in Los Angeles.



JetBlue's Live from T5 St Patrick's concert featured in The Huffington Post, which has about 25 million unique readers each month.



Pounding The Pavements For Business

Our 2011 series of sales blitzes in the US kicked off in Boston and Chicago with a programme of B2B events which included sales calls, trade and consumer promotions and media networking.

Showcasing Northern Ireland In Canada

Northern Ireland Tourism Minister Arlene Foster addressed a group of influential travel trade and media contacts at a business breakfast in Toronto. Pictured with Minister Foster (centre) are Alison Metcalfe, Tourism Ireland; Conor Duffy, Royal Irish Tours; Alana McQuaid, Lough Erne Resort, Co Fermanagh; Eric Drinkwater, Merit Travel Group; and Sinéad Murray, Tourism Ireland.



Jason Powell, Causeway Coast & Glens; Róisín Wallace, Manor House & Irish Country Hotels; Alison Metcalfe, Tourism Ireland; and John Colclough, Adams & Butler, at the 'Flavors of Ireland' event in Chicago.