

St. Patrick's Festival 2019

National Festival Parade, Dublin, March 17

HALF A MILLION CELEBRATED THE SPECTACULAR ST. PATRICK'S FESTIVAL PARADE TODAY!

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Street-theatre, pageant companies and marching bands from across Ireland and the world, more than 3,000 people in total, joined together today for the **National St. Patrick's Festival Parade - SCÉALAÍOCHT AGUS SEANCHAÍ – A Celebration of Irish Storytelling**. Half a million people lined the Parade route to enjoy the magnificent creations and flamboyant performances, more than 100,000 overseas visitors joining the home crowd to cheer on performers from across the globe. Inspired by the Festival's storytelling theme, a myriad of performers brought to life the ancient tales and contemporary narratives of Ireland and the Irish. Comedic storytellers Deirdre O'Kane and Jason Byrne had the honour of leading the Parade as Grand Marshals.

Six magical Pageant Companies wowed the crowds on the streets of Dublin - **Artastic** (Kildare), **Walk the Plank** (Dublin and Manchester), **Buí Bolg** (Wexford), **Spraoui** (Waterford), **Inishowen Carnival Group** (Donegal) and **Dowtcha** (Cork). They were joined by Marching Bands from across the world, weaving their way through Ireland's capital city in a dazzling spectacle of pageantry and musical scores, one of the biggest street festivals in the world.

The largest pageant was Donegal's **Inishowen Carnival Group with 100 performers**. The company is celebrating 26 years of carnival activity and have been taking part in the Dublin Parade for 22 years. Once again **Buí Bolg** from Wexford presented some of the largest Parade creations, a giant Fiddle (5 metres), Drum (4.7 metres) and Harp (4.2 metres) which played music to the attending crowds, while characters danced and swayed, becoming the living embodiment of the music.

Leading the Parade with 101 members was the **Wauwutosa East Red Raider Marching Band** from Wisconsin, U.S.A. which featured three drum majors and a choreographed colour guard. A show-stopping performance was seen by Iowa's **Panther Marching Band**, 133 members strong and almost 90 metres in length, featuring dancers and flag bearers. Bringing up the rear was the lively 61 member **Spirit of Saginaw** band, entertaining the crowds with true Texan enthusiasm!

Those who looked skywards mid Parade were in for an extra surprise when the **Irish Air Corps** conducted a flypast in Vic formation, their very first time taking part in the St. Patrick's Festival Parade. 3 Pilatus PC-9M aircraft flew from North of O'Connell Street at 650ft, flying over the Spire towards O'Connell Bridge, before turning towards Dublin Bay, flying over the Aviva Stadium and returning for a second flypast at a lower altitude of 300ft above ground. The formation travelled at over 240 knots which meant it covered 8km a minute.

Speaking about the Festival Parade, CEO of St. Patrick's Festival, Susan Kirby said; "the calibre of pageants and marching bands at the Parade each year is superb, and this year it was spectacular.

The Parade is a wonderful and proud reflection of the abundance of artistic talent that we have here in Ireland and also an incredible global showcase of our rich culture and heritage as the Parade is streamed live internationally. Many thanks to all of those who came along to enjoy the day and we hope many more will enjoy the full programme of events over the remainder of the Festival.”

Ardmhéara Bhaile Átha Cliath / Lord Mayor of Dublin, Nial Ring noted, *“Once again Dublin had a fantastic St. Patrick’s Day Parade. Great crowd, great atmosphere, great bands and pageants. It was amazing to see so many people out enjoying the spectacle. A rich part of our history, culture and heritage, the St. Patrick’s Day Parade is simply just part of what we are and part of what we do best – celebrate!. From sitting on my Dad’s shoulders to standing on a ladder to watch the Parade I have many fond memories of it. This year I was able to go in the Lord Mayor’s coach and review the Festival Parade from outside the historic GPO. Still pinching myself!”*

Ciara Sugrue, Head of Festivals at Fáilte Ireland added, *“It has been a spectacular weekend of celebrations, with another great line up of events at St. Patrick’s Festival Dublin, from music and dance to theatre and art. We were delighted to be joined by international media from China, the USA, Great Britain and across Europe who captured and shared the excitement with a global audience. With significant investment from Fáilte Ireland, the Festival continues to be a fantastic showcase for Ireland and a great boost for the local economy.”*

St. Patrick’s Festival continues today Sunday and tomorrow, Monday 18th March. There’s lots happening on Merrion Square this year at the [Festival Village](#)! With a jam-packed programme of events for all ages, check out [Gaeltacht at Festival Village](#) for ceol agus craic with **Ballet Poulet, Mo Cheol an Sorcas, Ronald Fanzini, Gaelige Tamagotchi** and many more. Discover the enchanting world of science with workshops, explosive shows and enthralling exhibitions in the [Science Foundation Ireland Science Zone](#). Dig for ancient treasure at the [Village Big Dig](#); take on the machines at the [Actual Reality Arcade](#), a life size interactive zone for gamers young and old; explore large scale mathematical exhibits that encourage the wonder of discovery and investigation at the [Lifetime Lab](#); get down and dirty with molecular biology at the [Cell Explorers Workshop](#); marvel at extraordinary feats of circus, acrobatics and street theatre with a host Irish and international performers including **Pif Paf, Le Bistro, The Foolhardy Trio** and **Marcel So What**.

Enjoy a myriad of events at the **Ireland’s Finest: Family Programme** supported by Tesco including the breath-taking [Tumble Circus](#) at the Festival Village Big Top featuring extraordinary physical feats of circus skills where you’ll be enlightened and entertained, and the coolest small people’s disco ever, [Tiny Dancer](#) with Donal Dineen on the decks. And don’t forget the rescheduled [Céilí Mór](#) will take place on **Monday March 18th from 1pm – 3pm**, expect jigs and reels aplenty with a former Riverdancer!

Other events still to be enjoyed across the city on Sunday and Monday include:

Music

- **Seen & Heard:** a showcase of four of the most exciting and vital of contemporary female voices in Irish music featuring **Fehdah, Caoi De Barra (Wyvern Lingo), Anna Mieke and Dowry.** (*Pepper Canister, Sunday 6pm, €16*)
- **D1 Recordings 25th Anniversary Party:** For as long as there has been dance music in Dublin, there has been techno and out of this came D1 Recordings. Enjoy a night full of music from D1 Recordings’ artists, over 3 areas, featuring 20 live acts & DJ’s. (*Yamamori & Tengu, Sunday 8pm-3am, €20 + Booking Fee*)

- **Candlelit Tales:** Come and hear the stories of what happens when pagan warrior poets and Christian monks talk philosophy, when goddesses decide to settle down and build convents, and when the Devil herself gets run out of town, all told by a troupe of musicians, dancers, storytellers and performers with a passion for injecting new life into the old and sometimes forgotten stories. (*Whelans Wexford Street, Monday 8.30pm, €15*).
- **Abair Series: Through the City Singing Session:** Join Ian Drew and friends will host the final sing song of the festival exploring the oral folk traditions of Ireland. (*Mc Neills Chapel Street, Monday 9pm, Free*).

Art & Exhibitions

- **Eamonn Doyle - Irish Contemporary Photography:** a collection of works by the world-renowned Irish photographer that capture the cityscape and people of Dublin. While there, catch **Made in Dublin** a thrilling multi-sensory installation created using 10,000 photographs by Doyle, with design by Niall Sweeney, music by David Donohoe and words by Kevin Barry (*RHA, Sunday and Monday, 11am-5pm, Free*).
- **Made Ground:** a collaboration between artists Eva Richardson McCrea, Frank Sweeney and the Dublin Dockworkers Preservation Society (DDWPS). Taking the DDWPS online archive of over 3,500 photographs as its starting point, this two channel video work traces the changing geography of the Docklands area. (*Green On Red Gallery, Monday 10am - 6:30pm, Free*).
- **New Irish Works: Contemporary Photography From Ireland:** discover recent works by Irish and Ireland based artists, demonstrating the diverse range of practices coming from Ireland, a street-facing video installation with works by artists including Aisling McCoy, Cian Burke, Dorje de Burgh, Robert Ellis and Zoe Hamill. (*The Library Project Temple Bar Street, Monday 11am-6pm, Free*).
- **EPIC: Across the Waves - The Seafaring Irish Exhibition:** a new exhibition exploring the history of the Irish at sea and their stories of adventure, opportunity and tragedy. (*EPIC, Monday 10am – 6.45pm, Children €8, Adults €16*).

Walks, Talks & Runs

- **Dublin UNESCO Poetry Trail:** Walk, recite and celebrate the breadth and diversity of Dublin's living poets including **Felispeaks, Dagogo Hart, Colm Keegan, Ciara Ní É, Stephen James Smith, John Cummins**, Scottish poets **Leyla Josephine, George Gunn and Janette Ayachi, with the students of Trinity Comprehensive Ballymun**. (*From The Gutter Bookshop, 1pm, Free*).
- **In the Footsteps of St. Patrick with Pat Liddy:** special walks in celebration of Ireland's national Patron Saint, in the company of professional and enthusiastic guides led by the renowned Dublin historian Pat Liddy taking in ancient sites including those around the two great medieval cathedrals of Dublin, Christ Church & St. Patrick. (*From the Molly Malone Statue, St Andrew Street, Monday 10.30am & 2.15pm, €16 / €14 concession*).
- **St. Patrick's Festival 5K Road Race:** And for the more energetic festival goers, take part in the annual Festival 5K Road Race! This fast and flat course will take you right through the heart of historic, beautiful Georgian Dublin; an ideal race for families, fun runners and dedicated athletes. (*From St. Stephens Green, Monday 12pm, Free*).

More Fun For The Kids

- **Treasures from the Bog: Story-Making Workshop:** Get creative with an inventive story-making workshop, Treasures from the Bog, with writer Kate Heffernan and illustrator Duffy Mooney-

Sheppard, inspired by the interesting things found in Irish bogs. (*The Ark, Monday 11.30am & 12.15pm, €11.50 / €8.50*).

- **EPIC: Slime Labs with Catherine McGuinness:** there's a slime and a place for getting messy. Come along, get creative, get a little green and learn something new in this fantastically disgusting workshop with Catherine McGuinness. (*EPIC, Monday 12pm & 2pm, €8*).

Tickets to St. Patrick's Festival events can be purchased through the festival website. See www.stpatricksfestival.ie. Any unsold tickets will be available at the door of venues.

For the full programme of events at the Festival Village see www.stpatricksfestival.ie *Festival Village Merrion Square / Sunday 2pm-6pm & Monday 12pm – 6pm / Free entry, though some events are ticketed*

The National St. Patrick's Festival is made possible by the generous support of **Fáilte Ireland**, the National Tourism Development Authority, as it identifies festivals as a key component to continue to grow tourism through its National Festival Programme, **the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, Dublin City Council and the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht**. Alongside long-term commercial partners **Renault** and **Irish Ferries**, this year the Festival also welcomes **Tesco Ireland** in a two-year Cultural Partnership, and **Hennessy** as partner on many of the Festival's musical highlights.

St. Patrick's Festival events are supported by many partners including **The Arts Council, Science Foundation Ireland, Dublin UNESCO City of Literature, Foras na Gaeilge, Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht under the 20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language 2010 -2030, Conradh na Gaeilge, Guinness Storehouse, Scottish Government, British Council, Embassy of Switzerland in Ireland, Fundación MAPFRE Madrid, Fingal County Council, Dublin Airport, Irish Hotels Federation – Dublin Branch, RTÉ Supporting the Arts, The Irish Times, FM104, Do Dublin and Actavo.**

- Ends -

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The Dropbox will be updated with live images and videos from Festival events and Parade as they take place.

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