



When deciding on a short holiday or tour, it can be hard to choose between soaking up a destination's culture and going out to have fun and party. If you like beer, you can do both at once. Beer has never been more popular than now, and brewery and pub tours give you an opportunity to enjoy great companionship while discovering an area's culture and history. Beer festivals and tours are becoming increasingly popular additions to a holiday, especially with groups of friends who travel together. You no longer need to separate your holiday time into culture and entertainment. Beer tours come in many forms, from tasting exotic brews at a small pub to tours of large breweries, or even full scale beer festivals. Whatever you fancy trying, there is something to tickle the taste buds of all beer enthusiasts.

No visit to many of the great cities of Ireland and the United Kingdom would be complete without visiting their famous and historic pubs. The culture surrounding pubs is a tradition in many countries and an important part of the social order. Pubs are often community meeting places where all manner of politics, religion and important matters are vigorously debated.

Although you might love beer and have sampled most varieties, you may not have much of an idea about the processes involved and the history behind a manufacturer. Beer and brewing has helped in part to shape many societies across the world. Beer and pub tours can provide a solid history lesson, which is why many tour operators also offer literary pub tours, walking tours and day tours centered around a city's pub culture. You will also, of course, get to try some great beer and food along the way. Whether you are mad about beer or just enjoy the odd pint, a beer tour or holiday is for you if:

- You like to try new beers and would like to learn more about the brewing process
- You enjoy socializing with new people and having a good time
- You want to experience the atmosphere and traditions of a country or city, including their food and drink
- Oktoberfest sounds like heaven





You can choose from so many different types of beer tours and holidays: whether you want to take a few days and relax while sipping a new drink in a pub or you want to really learn about how beer is made and the culture and history behind it, making a pub or brewery crawl part of your holiday is the stuff of many a great travel tale. Wherever you go, have your travel consultant check into organized pub and beer tours as well as find the best areas to sample the local flavor. Caddie Tours offers package prices for hotel accommodations and airfares in the off-season when prices are less expensive than high season - typically a Pub Tour would depart early November or February for 5 days/4 nights - depart on a Wednesday and return on a Monday.

The many types of beer tours cater to a variety of different needs, budgets and appetites. If you are short on time and want to tour an area, then a simple pub or bar tour where you can sample the local products is a great way to get started. You can organize these tours yourself by doing research, or just strolling from one place to another. Many tour operators provide beer and pub tours on a

designated tour route. In some countries, such as Ireland and Scotland, stops can be made at local distilleries to sample whiskey -; or whisky -; depending on your location. Old Middleton Distillery close to Killarney, Ireland, is where you can taste some Jamesons. Edradour Distillery in Pitlochry, Scotland is the place to sample a fine single malt whisky from that country's smallest distillery.

Many cities in Europe have organized "pub crawls" ("pub" being a shortened form of the term "public house", indicating a tavern licensed to sell alcohol) that use the atmosphere of the pubs as a way to meet new friends and introduce patrons to new bars. The most famous of all the pub crawls may be the Dublin Literary Pub Crawl, themed around the haunts of James Joyce, Samuel Beckett and Brendan Behan. These highly festive occasions are led by professional actors performing the works of the writers in various pub venues around the city.

If you are looking for something with a bit more information regarding the history of beer itself, then taking a brewery tour is a great option. In Dublin, for example, a visit to the Guinness



Storehouse is great fun. Arthur Guinness began brewing in Dublin in 1759, and Guinness has grown to be one of the most successful brands in history, generating modern day revenues of two billion pounds a year. As you travel through the St. James Gates into the Storehouse, head up to the Gravity Bar for a free taste and magnificent views of Dublin, and along the way learn about the brewing process from start to finish in all its glorious details.



Deciding on when and where to go can be a difficult decision, and your decisions will focus on how much of your vacation you want to be centered around beer. If you simply want to go on a few brewery tours or are curious about beer, then negotiating the crowds of Munich during Oktoberfest might not be the best idea. Instead, go where you can experience as little or as much beer culture as you want.

Destinations like Dublin, London or Brussels are ideal and permit others in your party to indulge in plenty of other activities like shopping or sightseeing. Ask your travel consultant about

"shoulder" and "low season" rates. During off-peak travel times, rates are almost always available at a sizeable discount over high season. The crowds are fewer, the prices better and the atmosphere in many destinations is much more intimate. However, the trade-off in weather and climate may be more than enough for you to decide to do your beer and pub studies during peak travel times.

Although many beer tours will allow younger people on tours of their facilities, there are often prohibitions on the consumption of any alcohol by persons under the age of 18. Also, be aware that while the US has a higher drinking age than most of Europe, this is not universally the case. Generally, holidays centered on beer festivals are only suitable for adults. If you intend on visiting breweries and pubs and you have children, definitely ask your travel agent to help you consider the proper logistics for your visit.

Need we suggest to a worldly person such as yourself that one of the first considerations of a beer and pub tour is that you drink in moderation? Overdoing it on the first day will only reduce your enjoyment of the holiday, as well as damage your health and potentially your relationship with any non-drinking traveling companion. Beer outside the United States often contains a higher alcohol concentration, so enjoy in moderation or suffer the consequences! But with that in mind...

So many beers, so little time.