

## Celtic Knots - Irish Destination Weddings



Ah, weddings. Dreams and decisions. White dress, or ivory? Tie and vest, or cravat? 20 guests, or 200? Chapel or castle in Ireland? Really? With some planning a destination wedding in Ireland seals the deal in an amazing country surrounded by centuries of heritage.

More and more brides and grooms, as well as couples renewing their vows, choose to take a different path than the chicken dinner for two hundred, and celebrate with an intimate group of close family and friends in a wonderful, exotic, romantic setting. The focus is on quality of experience, not quantity of guests. The celebration and vacation can be planned with every detail in mind - from choosing the perfect setting, means of transportation, hotels, meals, sightseeing - all the way to the rarest and most perfect flower on each table - with the right travel partner at your side.



An experienced travel agent and tour company can help you through the process from faintest dream to final reality. The right travel partner needs to be able to provide a myriad of services that will support that celebration: first, to help you pick the perfect hotel, garden or castle -one that has extensive experience in fulfilling every bride's dreams; second, to be able to plan your itinerary so that your group can enjoy all of the sites in your special location; third, to be able to transport you and your guests to and from and around your dream destination in style; fourth, to be diligent, thorough and hands on so that when you step onto that plane to start your journey, you can focus on your partner, your family and your friends. Perhaps your family heritage will shape your decision as to where to tie the knot - the Celtic knot?

What separates Ireland from its neighbors is the arresting beauty of the land, the turbulent history of the island, the broad smile that welcomes your arrival and the heartfelt farewell that signals your departure. This is a land of history and folklore, of ancient ruins and modern trade, of misty landscapes and hearty fun. This is a land that will embrace a new couple with open arms and will make your wedding a fairy tale. With a castle as your backdrop, and the spectacular scenery of the Cliffs of Mohr, or the Ring of Kerry, or the gardens of Wicklow, the hardest decision will be to settle on the perfect spot. Pick a location as grand as Glenlo Abbey in Galway, or as intimate as Ballyseede Castle in Tralee, or as wild and wonderful as the fields of Connemara or the Cliffs of Mohr at sunset. Each location is as beautiful and as awe-inspiring as the grandest of cathedrals.

The official marriage process will start with your local minister, priest, or rabbi. The rules and regulations of having an actual legal civil or church wedding abroad can be daunting. Many couples

choose to fulfill their legal and church requirements at home at a simple service, and then plan a personalized ceremonial celebration abroad. If you choose, however, to have a legal or church ceremony, the following information from the website of the Consulate General of Ireland may be useful in preparation for the process:

Getting married in Ireland is complicated but worth negotiating. Here are some tips to help you get through the formalities from a distance.



**Three months' notice** - To marry in the Republic of Ireland, three months' written notice of the parties' intention to wed must be given to the registrar for the district in which you wish to be married. Occasionally, exceptions are given, but they must be applied for at the Circuit Family Court Office or the High Court Office. There is no cost for this service.

**Residency** - Residency is a must, whether for a religious ceremony or civil marriage, and requires at least one visit to Ireland prior to the actual ceremony to complete all the administrative. Both parties must be over eighteen years of age on the actual wedding day to be married in the Republic of Ireland. To establish residency qualifications for marriage by license, one of the parties needs fifteen full days of residency, the other party need to reside in the area seven days before notice is served, and then the wedding can take place eight days later.

If the parties choose to get married without a license, the residency requirement is shortened (seven full days for each party), but the waiting period is much longer. Notice is served on the eighth day, but the marriage cannot take place until twenty-two days later. These requirements apply to the county of Dublin. Interested parties planning to be married elsewhere need to ask about the residency requirement in the district of their choice.

**Registrars** - In all cases of civil weddings, both parties must make an appointment with the registrar in their county of choice and produce all necessary documents which might include: Birth Certificates, if divorced, a copy of the Divorce Absolute (in English) and Birth Certificate. There are two sets of registrars, one for Roman Catholic marriages and another for Protestant and civil marriages. A list of registrars for the former is obtained from the health board of the area concerned, while the other is made up of a list of solicitors in each county. (Ask for form FLA.1.96.) Both lists are available from:

The General Register Office  
Joyce House, 8/11 Lombard Street East  
Dublin 2, Ireland

After making the registration, the planning of the ceremony may commence. For marriage in a Catholic church, it will be necessary to establish some linkage with that particular parish and church. Some residency will be required, so immediately after the registration is made would be the time to contact the parish priest who will know details of any other diocese qualifications. Of particular importance is the fact that divorced persons may not marry in a Roman Catholic Church; however a Church annulment permits a ceremony in the Church.

Marriages in a Roman Catholic Church proceed by one of four means: by Episcopal license; after the publication of banns; by ordinary ecclesiastical license, or on production of a certificate from a register of civil marriages.

The process is a bit different for Church of Ireland marriages where at least one of the parties must be Protestant Episcopalian. It should be noted that the Church of Ireland strongly discourages persons coming from abroad just to get married in Ireland.

A civil ceremony is an alternative to a religious ceremony and is more administratively convenient, if lacking in atmosphere. Aside from the three months' notice of intent to marry, the residency requirements for the area in particular must be met.

Cost of the ceremony is relatively cheap--£32.50. This applies to both civil and religious ceremonies.

Listed below are some addresses which may be useful. Note the Dublin City and County Marriage Registrar's office is scheduled to move. It is not listed in the telephone directory, however, a recorded message with the new address and telephone number should be on the line, and letters will be forwarded to the new address.

Dublin City and County Marriage Registrar  
31 Molesworth Street  
Dublin 2, Ireland  
Tel.: (01) 676 3218

Circuit Family Court Office and High Court Office  
Four Courts  
Dublin 7, Ireland

Department of Foreign Affairs  
80 St. Stephen's Green  
Dublin 2, Ireland  
Tel.: (01) 478 8022

