

POLITICALTOURS

Travel beyond the headlines

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Northern Ireland & Brexit

Dates:

August 2019, Saturday 3rd to Saturday 10th

Londonderry/Derry, Belfast

Post Brexit we trace the steps that led to the historic Good Friday Agreement, and look at what now for Northern Ireland as the waves of Brexit are felt from across the Irish Sea?

Northern Ireland has experienced a period of significant stability, almost two decades on from the end of “the troubles”. Once irreconcilable foes are all represented at Stormont, the region’s parliament, and the chance of a return to violence is remote. But significant differences between the province’s two main communities remain.

Our tour traces the steps that led to the historic Good Friday Agreement; from secretive talks between church leaders and paramilitaries, through to the signing of the agreement in 1998 that paved the way to power sharing.

At meetings with politicians, community leaders, former paramilitaries and ordinary people we ask what’s next for Northern Ireland? The UK’s uncertain political future will also have an impact. The province becomes the only part of the UK to share a land border with the EU after Brexit. And the Conservative coalition with the DUP (Democratic Unionist Party) negotiated after the UK’s June 2017 election could put strain upon the delicate balance of power.

Price: £3910.00

Single Supplement: £500.00

Most meals and all accommodation are included in the price. Flights are not included and need to be arranged with your own travel agent. We will advise you as to which flights best fit the itinerary nearer to the tour.

Like all our tours the itinerary is focused on current affairs. Events on the ground may change and the final schedule may be adjusted accordingly.

Itinerary

Day One: *Derry/Londonderry*

Welcome dinner and introduction briefing by Political Tours on Northern Ireland today. *Overnight Derry/Londonderry*

Day Two: *Stroke City*

Derry/Londonderry (take your pick depending on your allegiance) as the city is called by locals is as good a place as any for an introduction to “The Troubles”. We get a guided tour of the city walls and Apprentice Boys Hall and the Bogside. This is where some of the earliest clashes of the troubles took place, including the infamous shooting by the British Parachute Regiment of demonstrators on Bloody Sunday. We’ll also get a briefing on early contacts between nationalist and loyalist groups. Talk with community activists from the Catholic Bogside, and Protestant Waterside. *Overnight Derry/Londonderry*

Day Three: *Causeway and Belfast*

We head east and for Belfast via the Giant’s Causeway. Lunch at Londonderry Arms Hotel, Carnlough. Drive to Belfast. We get an introduction to the geography of the city and presentation on pattern of the Troubles in Belfast and their timeline. Dinner with guests. *Overnight Belfast*

Day Four: *Belfast Tour and The Troubles Legacy*

Tour of the city, chronologically – east Belfast where the city’s prosperity has its foundation – including Parliament Buildings at Stormont – to west where the Troubles spilt on to the streets. Victims of the violence talk about the legacy of the conflict and their lives now. A former senior officer talks about the difficulty of policing in a divided society, the issues faced by the RUC and why policing was overhauled as part of the Good Friday Agreement. Night out in an historic Belfast pub. *Overnight Belfast*

Day Five: *The Settlement and Challenge from Brexit*

At Stormont we review the power-sharing agreement that apparently made the best of friends out of two men who were once the worst of enemies – Martin McGuinness of Sinn Fein and Ian Paisley – both now deceased. We’ll also review the challenges faced by the UK’s decisions to leave the European Union. Nowhere does the issue pose more problems than in Northern Ireland – both in practical and constitutional terms.

Day Six: *Prisoners, Parades and Continued Divisions*

How the prisons became a battleground and sparked the political rise of Sinn Fein. Tour of Crumlin Road Prison close to Belfast city centre. Now closed to inmates, the Victorian-built jail served as a remand prison for much of the Troubles. Meet the prisoners – two men from very different backgrounds describe their personal experiences, the problems that now confront them and their hopes for the future. A representative from one of the many voluntary groups working directly in communities speaks about the difficulty they face on the ground in a divided society. July is part of the parades seasons. Discussion with a BBC journalist on the difficulties that have been posed and continue to be posed by the parading issue. *Overnight Belfast*

Day Seven: *Out of Belfast*

We meet with some key politicians and journalists to address key questions from the week. And weather permitting we’ll get out of Belfast to Carlingford Lough, a local beauty spot – where we look back over the week over beer and picnic. *Overnight Belfast*

Day Eight: *Tour ends*

Breakfast and farewells.