



# Virgil Grissom High School Marching Band

**Theo Vernon, Band Director**

**Performance Tour of Ireland**

**Including Participation in the Dublin St. Patrick's Day Parade**

**March 12 – 19, 2020**

## Proposed Itinerary – 8 Day Tour

**Day One – Thursday, March 12, 2020**

**Depart U.S.A.**

**Departure** Depart from Atlanta today for your performance tour of Ireland.

**Day Two – Friday, March 13, 2020**

**Arrive Dublin – Limerick**

**Arrival** Arrive in Dublin, Ireland, clear customs and claim your luggage. Meet your Gateway Tour Manager, who will be with you for your entire tour to handle travel and performance arrangements.

**Transfer** Travel across the Republic of Ireland to reach the western coast. You'll make stops along the way for free time, sightseeing and lunch on your own.

**Rock of Cashel** Combining spiritual grace, mysterious beauty, and scenic elegance, the Rock of Cashel is one of Ireland's most spectacular archeological sites. "Cashel" comes from the Irish "caiseal" meaning "fortress." The Rock of Cashel rises as a giant, circular mound 200 feet above the surrounding plains and meadows. A cluster of ruins is nestled on its crown, including a cathedral, chapel and tower.

**Blarney Castle** Climb to the ramparts of Blarney Castle to kiss the famous Blarney Stone, promising the gift of eloquence. Time will be allowed to shop for souvenirs at Blarney Woolen Mills.

**Limerick** Arrive in Limerick, which was founded by Vikings in 922 AD. This spot was chosen for its strategic location between the Shannon and Abbey Rivers. Over hundreds of years, Limerick was a witness to the endless battles of the Vikings and the Irish, and it was not until the 11<sup>th</sup> century that Ireland finally took over the island.

**Dinner** Dinner is included tonight at your hotel.

**Meals** Dinner

**Overnight** Limerick

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**Day Three – Saturday, March 14, 2020**
**Limerick**

<b>Breakfast</b>	A full Irish breakfast is included at your hotel this morning.
<b>Cliffs of Moher</b>	Visit the Cliffs of Moher on Ireland's rugged western coast. Six miles of rough-hewn cliffs plunge into the Atlantic from heights of up to 668 feet. The ocean has hammered these walls into one of Ireland's most majestic natural features.
<b>Bunratty Castle</b>	Bunratty Castle is one of the finest medieval castles in Ireland. Its strategic position on the River Shannon attracted centuries of battles. It was authentically restored in 1954 to its former medieval splendor, with lavish furnishings and tapestries. The adjacent Bunratty Folk Park recreates 19 <sup>th</sup> century rural Irish life, with reconstructed farm houses, cottages and shops.
<b>Dinner</b>	Dinner is included tonight at your hotel.
<b>Meals</b>	Full Irish breakfast; dinner
<b>Overnight</b>	Limerick

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**Day Four – Sunday, March 15, 2020**
**Limerick – Dublin**

<b>Breakfast</b>	A full Irish breakfast is included at your hotel this morning.
<b>♪ Limerick International Band Championship</b>	The Limerick International Band Championship is one of the highlights of the Limerick St Patrick's Festival. Marching bands from the US, Europe and across Ireland travel to Limerick to perform in the competition which takes place on Limerick's main thoroughfare of O'Connell Street every year. The competition is judged by an international panel of adjudicators. 2020 will mark the parade's 50th year; making it Ireland's longest running international band parade and competition. This is Ireland's largest St. Patrick's Festival outside of Dublin and attracts thousands of spectators each year.
<b>Transfer</b>	Depart Limerick and head back to Dublin. The journey will take 3 hours including stops.
<b>Dublin</b>	Arrive in the capital city of the Republic of Ireland. The city was founded by Vikings on the banks of the River Liffey more than 1,000 years ago. Today, the thriving metropolis is full of history and culture. During your free time, you may wish to wander around Temple Bar, an area that still maintains its winding medieval streets. You can also visit one of the many large city parks in the area or take a walk down Grafton Street, Ireland's largest pedestrian mall.
<b>Dinner</b>	Dinner is included tonight at your hotel.
<b>Meals</b>	Full Irish breakfast; dinner
<b>Overnight</b>	Dublin

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**Day Five – Monday, March 16, 2020**

**Dublin**

<b>Breakfast</b>	A full Irish breakfast is included at your hotel this morning.
<b>Dublin City Tour</b>	A guided tour of Dublin includes the Georgian squares with their colorful “Doors of Dublin” and a visit to Christ Church. Visit Trinity College to see the Book of Kells, one of the most famous books in the history of the world. Completed around 800 AD, the vellum (calfskin) manuscript contains transcriptions of the four biblical Gospels, lavishly illustrated and ornamented.
<b>Dinner</b>	Dinner is included tonight at your hotel.
<b>Meals</b>	Full Irish breakfast; dinner
<b>Overnight</b>	Dublin

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**Day Six – Tuesday, March 17, 2020**

**Dublin**

<b>Breakfast</b>	A full Irish breakfast is included at your hotel this morning.
<b>♪ St. Patrick’s Day</b>	Today is one that you will long remember, St. Patrick’s Day in Dublin. Today everyone is Irish and the color green is everywhere! You will have an opportunity to view the St. Patrick’s Day parade, which will be viewed by over 500,000 people.
<b>St. Patrick’s Festival</b>	Choirs, comedians, international street theatre, acrobats, samba and salsa bands perform throughout the parks, squares and streets of Dublin. Merrion Square is the site of the largest traveling fun-fair show in Ireland. The remainder of the day is free to explore Dublin, shop and take in the day’s festivities of the St. Patrick’s Festival.
<b>Lunch</b>	A boxed lunch is included for parade participants today.
<b>Dinner</b>	Dinner is included tonight at your hotel.
<b>Meals</b>	Full Irish breakfast; dinner
<b>Overnight</b>	Dublin

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**Day Seven – Wednesday, March 18, 2020**
**Kilkenny – Belfast – Dublin**

<b>Breakfast</b>	A full Irish breakfast is included at your hotel this morning.
<b>Kilkenny</b>	Stop in Kilkenny, home to a magnificent 13 <sup>th</sup> century castle high on the banks of the River Nore. Walk past Kyteler's Inn, the oldest house in Kilkenny and home of Dame Alice Kyteler, a wealthy lady accused in 1324 of witchcraft and poisoning her four husbands.
<b>Belfast City Tour</b>	Take a tour of Belfast including an explanation of the recent history and The Troubles, a period of ethno-political conflict and violence which took place in Northern Ireland from the late 1960s until the signing of the Good Friday Agreement in 1998. See the city hall as well as the Protestant Shankill Road and Catholic Falls Road.
<b>Titanic Belfast</b>	Belfast is the birthplace of the Titanic. Visit “Titanic Belfast,” an exhibition with over nine galleries highlighting the story of the Titanic. You will learn about its conception in Belfast in the early 1900s, the construction and launch, its maiden voyage and sinking. The exhibition takes you beyond the sinking to the discovery of the wreck. The Ocean Exploration Centre gives visitors a look into 21 <sup>st</sup> century technologies that now help to make ships safer.
<b>Crumlin Road Gaol</b>	The foreboding Crumlin Road Gaol used to be the home for many inmates. It has witnessed births, deaths and marriages and has been the home to executions, escapes, hunger-strikes and riots.
<b>Dinner</b>	A farewell dinner is included tonight at your hotel.
<b>Irish Ceili</b>	Gather for an energetic evening of entertainment with Irish dancers and live, traditional Irish music. The word “ceili” originally referred to a gathering of neighbors for an enjoyable time dancing, singing, and storytelling.
<b>Meals</b>	Full Irish breakfast; dinner
<b>Overnight</b>	Dublin

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**Day Eight – Thursday, March 19, 2020**
**Depart Dublin – Arrive Atlanta**

<b>Departure</b>	Transfer to the airport for your return journey. You will arrive in the United States later today.
<b>Meals</b>	Full Irish breakfast

*This is a sample itinerary and is subject to change. Performance venues may be subject to availability and/or acceptance.*