

**Ireland’s Ancient East Webinar – 1st December 2020**

**Q&A**

*Tourism Ireland, along with our partner Fáilte Ireland want to show you that the island of Ireland is ready to welcome visitors back to our spectacular shores when the time is right. This webinar featured the following industry partners from across Ireland’s Ancient East.*

*• Slane Estate - Distillery, Castle & Rock Farm Slane, Co. Meath*

*• Hill of Uisneach, Co. Westmeath*

*• Irish National Stud, Co. Kildare*

*• Hook Lighthouse, Co. Wexford*

*• Spike Island, Co. Cork*

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| Question | Answer |
| Can I book all three activities through Carina? Would you allow a full day for all activities on the estate? | Yes, or via either info@slanecastle.ie or info@rockfarmslane.ie. We would recommend at least one full day for any two activities on the estate.  *Slane Estate - Distillery, Castle & Rock Farm Slane, Co. Meath* |
| Can you elaborate on your accommodation offering particularly glamping and castle stays? | We have 5 yurts and 3 x 2-man cabins (shepherd huts etc) on the Glamping (https://rockfarmslane.ie/book-now/glamping) as well as group accommodation.  Everything except the 5 Yurts are all year-round accommodation. Yurts are bookable between April and October inclusive. We are currently upgrading some of the rooms at the castle and will have 4 main rooms and 2 children’s bedrooms available to book privately from June 2021.  *Slane Estate - Distillery, Castle & Rock Farm Slane, Co. Meath* |
| How can our special interest groups get involved in the summer fire event? | We have a mailing list and the link can be found on our website, on the landing page, called 'Friends of Uisneach'.  Here we put out presale tickets to our subscribers to ‘Friends of Uisneach' but they can also learn of any upcoming events or workshops, before it goes out to the general public, from here.  We have two busy social media platforms on Facebook and Instagram that are updated regularly, as is our website.  Many of our guests at the Bealtaine Fire Celebration will come in dress-up, as a regular thing. We encourage this as when taking in a workshop or listening to any of our many heritage, archaeology, history, folklore and mythology talks, among many other interactive happenings; it creates a sense of community and enjoyment - being in the moment.  We are available also through email for any guests to contact us on: office@uisneach.ie, where we are more than happy to answer any queries our guests may have.  *Hill of Uisneach, Co. Westmeath* |
| Is this experience suitable for coach groups particularly over 70s? | We receive many active guests that are over 70. Our older guests will be aware that it is a roughly 3 km, 2 hours, easy to moderate walk over grass.  We will always slow down a tour if a guest/s requests this as we understand for many, this may be a once in a lifetime chance to visit from overseas and we strive to make their visit as memorable and as enjoyable as possible.  We encourage a chat with the guide after the tour so anything that guests may want to elaborate on or learn more about, is always welcomed when having a cup of tea or coffee in the cosy comfort of the Visitors Centre.  We can comfortably accommodate up to 10 large busses/coaches in our carpark.  *Hill of Uisneach, Co. Westmeath* |
| How do you work with overseas FIT operators who would like to include your activity in a package?  Ticketing logistics?  Booking possibilities? Voucher acceptance? | Tickets can be purchased through our new ticketing system and we are exploring discount codes for FIT agents.  However, we will always communicate with agents through email for specific needs if necessary. Vouchers can be accepted on request. Various payment accepted also. We have been working with both FIT and group operators for over 50 years. We encourage all our visitors to take tours around the farm and we provide free public tour throughout the day. We also provide pre booked private tours when requested. This coming year we have introduced a new Ultra LUX VIP tour.  *Irish National Stud, Co. Kildare* |
| How many can you accommodate in your café and do you serve a full lunch for groups? | We can accommodate approximately 180 visitors both inside and, on our veranda, overlooking the gardens. The restaurant serves a wide variety of home cooked produce from soup and open sandwiches, to a three-course meal. Groups can avail of our self-service or table service.  *Irish National Stud, Co. Kildare* |
| Please give more details on the sunset/sunrise tours? Are these for private groups only or can we book for FIT? | The sunset/ sunrise tours start with a drink’s reception in our conservatory. Maximum numbers are 24. The tour is led by our head guides who spend additional time on the explanation of our history and visitors can spend if they like on the viewing platform at the top of the tower. The colours reds, purples, yellows are incredible. Watching the sun rise over the Saltees Islands. And for the sunset seeing the sun set over the Waterford Mountains. The guide is always on hand if the visitors have any questions after they finish their tour. They stay with the party in the Watchtower at all times. The sunrise tour finishes in the watchtower where there are panoramic views of our coastline. Where our visitors can savour buck fizz, prosecco, tea and coffee along with a selection of breakfast canapés made from the finest local produce. Including Ballyhack smokehouse salmon on homemade brown bread. The Sunset tours also start in the conservatory with a drinks reception, being lead on tour of the lighthouse and again finishing in the watchtower, the canapés for this again are all local produce, salmon mousse, crab claws, smoked chicken and much more with vegan/vegetarian and all dietary requirements catered for. We set up the Sunset/Sunrise experiences during the year where FITs can book. We will also cater for individual parties or groups. These experiences that we put up as our own events are for strictly over 18’s.  Any privately booked experience we will cater for all ages if required.  *Hook Lighthouse, Co. Wexford* |
| How long would you recommend for a group tour to spend at Hook Lighthouse? What else is close by? | The experience can last anything up to 2.5 hours. We let the visitors make their own way out as this is quite a soothing experience. We would recommend on a normal visit at least 2 hours this give you time to go on tour, grab a bite to eat, see the views and experience everything we have here on our site, ie, maritime museum, play area for children.  *Hook Lighthouse, Co. Wexford* |
| Is the ferry on scheduled departures? For groups can we book private sailing and for FIT how often is the sailing? | The ferry has scheduled departures 7 days a week May to September, and weekends and half terms from February to November.  The ferry can be booked 363 days a year for a private sailing and tour with a minimum group size / spend.  We sail at least 3 times a day September to May and at least 7 times a day June / July / August.  *Spike Island, Co. Cork* |
| I note on your website the After Dark Tour, is this still available? | Absolutely, this very popular and engaging tour can be run any time of the year with minimum group size.  The tour is generally scheduled for February / March / April / October / November to take advantage of earlier sunsets, but its content can be delivered year around.   The experiences usually take up to 2.5 hours at times we find visitors linger especially for the Sunrise tours as they usually head back into the conservatory for a last lingering view of the colour changes.  Nearby is Tintern Abbey with beautiful woodland walks and the Abbey is open for tours. Bally hack Castle,Duncannon Fort, Baginbun Head where the Normans landed, Fethard Trails at Fethard Castle, Loftus Hall, over twenty beaches in the area, JFK arboretum, Dunbrody Famine ship and Homestead.  *Spike Island, Co. Cork* |

*The information contained in this Q&A and the accompanying webinar is correct as at the date of the webinar. For the most up to date and reliable sources of information please refer to the following Government websites.*

[www.hse.ie/eng/](https://www.hse.ie/eng/)

[www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/75d92-covid-19-travel-advice/](https://www.gov.ie/en/campaigns/75d92-covid-19-travel-advice/)

[www.publichealth.hscni.net/](https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/)

[www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-advice](https://www.nidirect.gov.uk/articles/coronavirus-covid-19-travel-advice)

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