

Last night in Limerick

TITLE: A day of twisting thoughts:

Our last night in Limerick we celebrated by enjoying dinner at the Savoy New York Hampton Restaurant which was located in the lower level of the former George Hotel and is part of the Savoy complex. It was such a wonderful experience! I enjoyed a delicious lamb shank which is something that I haven't had for a long time.

Watching a constant flow of people was also fun! Kevin was laughing at my expressions and comments (mostly nice). Again, I was struck by the simple elegance of the women in Ireland. I could live here no problem at all.

Back to the room by 10 pm. and off to bed to be ready for our departure in the morning

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Today had a reasonable departure time so we enjoyed a final breakfast at the Savoy. I am getting addicted to grilled smoked salmon and asparagus.



It was raining a bit so we decided to hire a cab to take us to the railway station. Good move on our part! We caught the 10:50 train to Limerick Junction where we transferred to another train that would take us to Cork where we will spend the next 3 days with excursions every day to some of the areas we wanted to visit. We are definitely getting used to the trains, and we are both very impressed by this way of getting around.

We were met at the Cork station by our sign bearing guide, Deakin Day (Dayh?) who in a very strong Irish brogue welcomed us to Cork. Cork is a much larger and busier city than I had anticipated. Deakin told us a little about the history of Cork City Centre as he drove us to our hotel. Another city with a lot of history. Our hotel is located a short drive from the core of the city, actually in the University area. We were told that the University of Cork (formerly Queen's University) has pretty well bought up all the land around the area, and will continue to purchase property in the area to help accommodate its 20,000+ student body, which is growing year by year. We are thinking of doing the walking tour of the University on our free day.



We were definitely unprepared for the world of simple elegance that met us as we drove through the wrought iron gates of Hayfield Manor.

Here are a few shots of Hayfield Manor. This might blow your minds away just as it did ours. Beautiful, old world elegance.



Though it is the type of accommodation that I love (old world elegance), I felt that I did not have the wardrobe for this type of hotel. Nothing prepared me for this. I really felt uncomfortable and wondered how I would make out for 3 days in these surroundings without going shopping for more elegant clothes.

There were several “events” going on when we arrived and the clothing being worn was unreal. The receptionist said that Irish women are very stylish - it was very obvious.



The Gardens: They are absolutely beautiful and go on forever. Tables are set all throughout the gardens so you can have lunch/dinner wherever you want.

Beautiful flowers, statues... everything. The service is perfection. Never have I been treated like this. I give this hotel a 10+ rating.

Our bedroom is beautiful. And the king size bed is the most comfortable bed I have ever been on. Quite an explanation of the down filled pillows, the mattress etc. So, as I said to Kevin I am going for a lay down.



My stress level went up a bit, and because I have found myself here without my medication (my stupidity) I am a bit nervous. I decided, after a very expensive lunch that I needed to chill out and allow my body to calm down. (lunch consisted of a shared bowl of soup, a glass of wine each and a mini sandwich cost us \$50 Euros which is about \$70 Canadian.)



We have no tours planned today so we literally spent the afternoon in our room and just relaxed. Around 5:00 o'clock we decided to take a walk around the area. The walking is hard on Kevin but he was a trooper. We just took our time.



We asked for some directions from a lovely lady who was out walking her dog. She told us about the best pub to stop into “The Abbey” and she gave us perfect directions. She was right, I felt like we had stepped back in time. Lots of college students, and professors. It was a fun place. We had a couple of drinks and were getting a little hungry but there was no food on offer at the pub.

Another pub customer told us and gave us directions to a new restaurant that had just opened that served some traditional Irish food. So, since the first pub didn’t sell food we decided to go exploring to find this restaurant. I thought she said the name of the restaurant was ‘Pig Alley’, so when we couldn’t find it we stopped a young man and asked him if he could help us. He had never heard of it so he told us about a pizza joint, Tom Barry’s”, so we gave up on Pig Alley and headed to Barrack Street. The hill walking up to the restaurant was difficult for Kevin but he made it. We did make one wrong turn, and so had to ask again, it seems we turned right instead of left... BUT “yur right alongside the best chippie shop”. But take a look to the left and that there blue building ya see down, over there is Tom Barry’s. Loved this.



We found Tom Barry’s but it was wild, and only served pizza which I can’t eat. We had however seen Pegalle (Pig Alley) which was almost right next door and went in there. It was wonderful, typical Irish food, good wine, wonderful ambiance and perfect. Had a wonderful meal! Mussells which we shared, I had a delicious bed of fresh, local asparagus and feta and Kevin enjoy a beef short rib. They were all starter dishes, so nothing huge. So delicious.

We then retraced our steps - about a 15-20 minute walk. It probably took us longer as we had to stop several times, but we did get back before dark. There were some lovely old, colourful buildings that I saw on the way down that I wanted to photograph.



There was also a really neat sign that caught our eye.



We made it back to the hotel before dark and when we collected our key the clerk on duty invited us to have a wee dram before heading up to our room. A blend of mead and whiskey. It was quite good and a house specialty. A nice way to end our evening.



Once we were back in the room I decided to go to the outdoor hot tub. On my way there I found the indoor heated pool which was huge and the saunas. Beautiful. Kevin missed out on a relaxing end to our evening. I will try to talk him into going down tomorrow night, but he isn't into that type of relaxation mode that I am.

I did talk to the clerk on duty and he told me not to worry about the "dress code" that really doesn't exist even though a lot of people dress to the nines when they come there. In his own words "come in your PJs if you feel comfortable". I won't take it to that extreme but it did make me feel much better.

We have two very full days coming up, so it is time for bed. The day has turned out better than I thought it would and so the next three days will be wonderful.

K & J