

Dublin's Beautiful Beaches...

...and what they mean to me

Well before I was roaming Dublin's beautiful beaches, I ended up living by the water many times. Growing up over four hours away from the nearest sea, it was a privilege attending university with the Baltic Sea at my doorstep. Living in Hamburg afterwards, by the mouth of the river Elbe, and so close to the North Sea was another significant period in my life. A coincidence each time, like my journey that eventually brought me to Ireland.

The Beach that changed my Life

I remember sitting in a hotel room in Dublin on the October bank holiday weekend. That was usually reserved for meeting up with my Dublin girls who I had met when I came to Ireland for the first time in 2008 for a 6-months internship. The five of us had hit it off straight away and had spent the time of our lives together in Dublin. What would have been the fifth anniversary of our reunion, didn't happen for various reasons.





But I needed my annual Ireland fix and had taken the trip on my own. That morning in the hotel room I hit a low, wallowing in self-pity over our busted get-together. I had wandered the city plenty over the past few days and didn't fancy another stroll through drizzly Dublin.

But I certainly did not want to waste my precious last hours in Ireland in a hotel room. Hence I gave myself a kick in the butt and jumped on the Dart before I could talk myself out of it.

No turning back

It only took minutes on the train before the scenery changed from busy office fronts to the most amazing beach promenade. Even in the mist and with the rain drumming against the window, it was beautiful. The last time I had been to Killiney Beach, it was warm and sunny, nothing like this day. But still, the prospect of the fresh sea breeze lifted my spirit. I was a bit reluctant to step off the train and into the dampness, but I was here now and nobody else seemed to be. The beach was absolutely deserted and I stood sheltered for a moment, watching the choppy ocean. 'No turning back now', I thought to myself, not knowing how symbolic this would become for the walk.



For by the end of it the seed of moving to Ireland had been

planted. It didn't need a pleasant, lighthearted experience surrounded by friends. Just me, out there in inhospitable conditions, on the verge of loneliness, to show me that I can do it. I could emigrate to Ireland and be happy, despite rough waters and in the pourings of rain. All I needed was a kick in the butt.

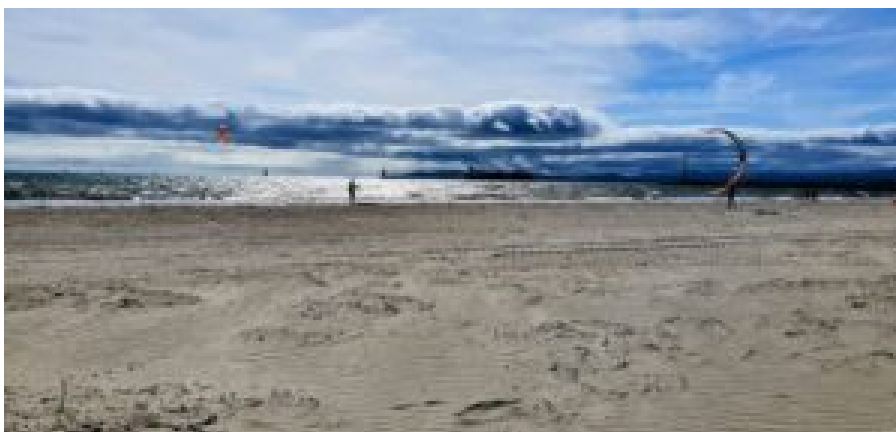
Collecting Shells and Memories

It didn't take me long to put my plan into action. Back home I applied for just one job in Dublin. Two weeks later I flew over for an interview. And by November I had decided that I was going to leave Germany for good and follow my heart to Ireland. As all new beginnings it was challenging. But once I was in Ireland, everything fell into place. And here I was again, exploring Dublin's beautiful beaches once more.





One of the first beach memories I made as an expat in Ireland was my visit to North Bull Island. Together with a friend I met on my first day in work, I walked the small peninsula in the north of Dublin City. Wrapped up against the icy wind, it was one of those autumn walks that I will treasure forever. And North Bull is a true treasure island indeed. Never in my life have I seen more, bigger and prettier shells than there. I just couldn't resist stuffing my pockets until they were hanging down, heavy with shells and dripping wet. Against the backdrop of the ferry slowly pulling into the harbour, surfers on the water, and kites in the sky, one of my favourites amongst Dublin's beautiful beaches.



My Slightly Different Hen Party

Within the first year in Ireland, I found happiness. An unexpected step up the career ladder secured my future in expensive Dublin. And even before that I met my soon-to-be husband. We got engaged on our first anniversary and started

[planning our wedding](#) soon after. With friends and family coming over from Germany and America, we wanted to show them some of our favourite spots, including Dublin's beautiful beaches. [Howth](#) already held a good few memories for me from previous visits. So we picked the peninsula with its gorgeous seafood restaurants for our rehearsal dinner. Up to then nothing had gone according to plan with our wedding. But the lovely meal in Howth, surrounded by our dearest, helped us to centre ourselves for the big day ahead.



After dinner we rushed up to the Summit with its lighthouse at

the tip of the headland, before it disappeared in the dusk. Enjoying one of the most scenic views in Ireland with a good friend by my side was a worthy ending to a wonderful evening. I was bursting with emotions. Excited about getting married the very next day. Nervous what else might go wrong. Proud to have family and friends over to show them my home of choice. And joyful over the turn my life had taken within a few months. "Welcome to your belated hen party, my dear", my friend said as she was giving me a tight hug.



A New Year's Day Tradition

Sandymount is another one of Dublin's beautiful beaches and an iconic one too. At least its two [red and white chimneys](#) are as a substantial part of Dublin's skyline and landmark. Ever since my husband John and I got our feet soaked in ice-cold water on New Year's Day, Sandymount found a place in our memory lane. It was great fun walking through squishy sand, jumping puddles and trickles once the tide was out. But we didn't notice the water slowly creeping up on us. Reluctantly I took off my winter boots and cosy socks as John was already wading through freezing water, laughing.



The photograph of our bare feet on Sandymount Beach on our first New Year's Day together became a well treasured one. So much that we went back on 1st January 2024, re-creating it with the additional feet we had grown in the meantime. Not surrounded by water this time, I was even more hesitant to expose my feet to the wet and cold. But it was worth it for having a keepsake of *that* day on Sandymount Beach too. More aware of the danger of the incoming tide this time, we safely got off the beach. Just in time to watch a coast guard

helicopter coming in, and scooping up a family who had not been that lucky.



An Abundance of Beaches

Of course there are many more beautiful beaches in and around Dublin. Portmarnock for example where I have watched spectacular sunsets. Forty Foot in Sandycove is probably the most popular spot for swimming in the Dublin Bay, and the Martello Tower with the James Joyce Museum worth a visit. Skerries in the north of Dublin is great for walks along the promenade, with its little harbour and plenty of cafes and restaurants.

We live in Wicklow now and I can't wait to write about my favourite beaches there. Email me or leave a comment about your favourite beach in Dublin. And subscribe to my Blog for more personal stories and travel tips!

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