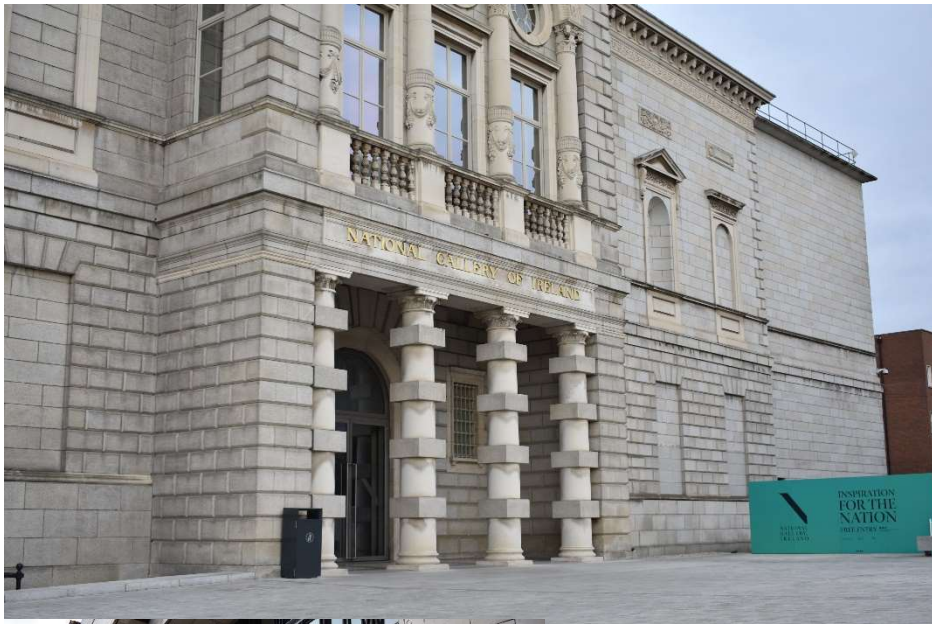


No-Brainer: National Gallery of Ireland



Entrance fee:

Free

How to get there:

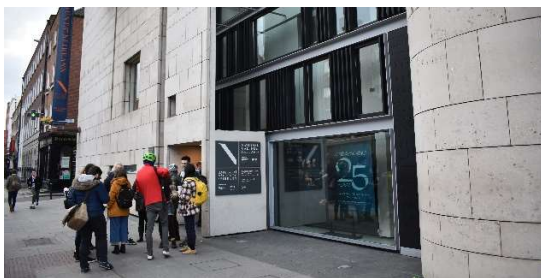
Walk

Value for time:

Yes

Rating: 4 / 5 stars

The Merrion Square (main) entrance of the National Gallery of Ireland. Photograph taken by Walter Proulx.



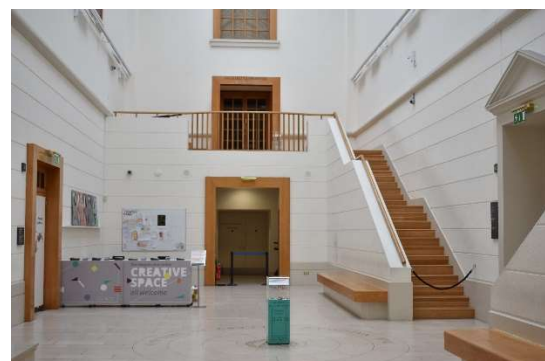
Clare Street (side) entrance to the gallery. Photograph taken by Walter Proulx.

Hiding next to Trinity College is a must-see gallery for everyone. With the “steep” price of free admission, there is no reason to not take a peek inside this gallery. I would highly recommend getting a map from the very nice attendants at the information hub located at either entrance, as the transitions between different rooms can sometimes be inconspicuous or confusing. There were multiple times when I questioned whether or not the next

exhibit was behind closed door. (Apparently doors between exhibits are closed by default. Considering that there were many employees policing the halls, I was hesitant to start opening up random doors.) Once I got over my fear of walking into the right place, the whole experience was amazing.

Being the early bird I am, entering the building at 9:15AM when the gallery initially opens up allowed me to have most rooms to myself. There was no pressure for me to move before I read the neat descriptions and context every piece of art has accompanying it. I found myself particularly astounded by the detailed drawings of various beautiful landscapes of Ireland located in the “Irish Art 1835-1965” section of this gallery.

Walking around for an hour was not nearly enough time for me to truly appreciate the Archives and Stained Glass and Paintings and floors more worth of rich, historical art of Ireland. With free admission and flexible hours, I am sure to come back again and again to appreciate the stunning masterpieces decorating the beautiful halls of this museum.



The Creative Space by the Clare Street (side) entrance of the gallery. Photograph taken by Walter Proulx.

House of Lords: More Than Just a Room



Entrance fee:

Free

How to get there:

Walk

Value for time:

Yes

Rating: 5 / 5 stars

The right cannon located outside the Bank of Ireland. The right entrance is next to this cannon that leads to the House of Lords. Photograph taken by Walter Proulx.

One massive building that can be easily confused with Trinity College is the Bank of Ireland that originally housed Parliament. Although much of the building has been converted into a bank, there is still a room hidden on the right side of the building that has been practically untouched: The House of Lords. There is little advertising of the room and even less mentioning of the tour you can get if you show up at the right time. On Tuesdays at 10:30AM it is possible to get a tour of this room and the history behind everything in the room. (Do keep in mind that the room is contained inside the bank, so there will be many staff walking around. If you are unsure where to go, feel free to ask the staff for help!)



The left tapestry depicting the Battle of the Boyne. Photograph taken by Walter Proulx.



The head of the mace used by Parliament. Photograph taken by Walter Proulx.

Even without a tour the room is breathtaking. Two giant tapestries cover wide walls on either side of the room. These tapestries have been hanging for 300 years and are still visible because of the lack of direct sunlight hitting these beautiful pieces of art!

Looking up in the middle of the room, it is possible to see a one of two unique chandeliers (the other chandelier being housed at Trinity) and the beautiful, preserved architecture that made this room a truly unique capsule of Ireland's past. The only thing that

has not been preserved are the benches that were originally in the middle of the room.

If you happen to be at the right place at the right time, there is little reason to not stop by and take the free tour.