



St Patrick's Day Is My Fiesta.

Having lived nearly half his life abroad, Irish ECP coach Darren Lynch explains what will be going through his mind today, Saint Patrick's Day.

spuds (n): potatoes
crave (v): to have an intense desire for
pier (n): a platform projecting from the shore into the sea
peckish (adj): somewhat hungry
unwind (v): to become relaxed
hurling (n): a traditional Irish game resembling hockey and lacrosse, played with sticks and a ball between two teams of 15 players each
knockout (n): a competition in which competitors are eliminated progressively

We Irish are famous for our love of Guinness, whiskey and **spuds**. No doubt we love the pub too and just like Spanish fiestas, St Patrick's Day is a great excuse to party. Not that we really need one.

However, as much as I'd love to be at home celebrating St. Patrick's Day with my friends and family, other things will also be going through my head today. I'll be thinking about things I really enjoy doing when I'm at home in my native County Clare.

First up, to start the day, is an Irish breakfast. During the year I **crave**, especially on Saturday mornings, a fry up. I long for bacon, sausages, fried eggs, grilled tomato, black pudding, white pudding and sautéed potatoes. So, when I'm in Ireland I tend to take full advantage and happily wash it all down with a cup of tea.

Then I'll begin to imagine the coast line. One of my favourite places to spend a couple of hours is a place called Ballyvaughan. It's a tiny village situated in the northwest corner of the Burren. I imagine the smell of the sea as I walk down the old **pier** overlooking Galway Bay.

When I'm feeling **peckish**, I go to the Tea Rooms where I always order the same thing. Smoked salmon on Irish brown soda bread and a pot of tea. Heaven. There is no better place to **unwind** than to sit in the Tea Rooms looking out at the unique Burren landscape while in the company of my family.

Then I'll drive down the coast, maybe stopping off at the Cliffs of Moher for a quick look. Lets be honest, they are too good to pass by. Up to a million people visit the cliffs every year. Standing at 214 meters at their highest point they stretch for 8 kilometres along the Atlantic coast and are truly spectacular.

As I have not been to a **hurling** match for many years, this summer I'm hoping to get to see my county team play a game. Hurling is the most popular sport in Ireland but the most important competition in the sport is on a **knockout** basis. Therefore, the team needs to keep winning if I have any chance of seeing them play when I get home on holiday.

A guaranteed good night out is to go and watch my local rugby team play in Thomand Park. My friends and I meet up for dinner before going to the game. Sitting in the stadium on a cold December night usually calls for a hot whiskey to warm us up. Then, hopefully after a good win, it's time to hit the bars. I'll worry about the sore head in the morning.

Anyway, back to reality. Happy Paddy's Day everyone!

"Let's chat about that!"

- *If you lived abroad, what things would you miss about your country?*
- *Do you believe homesickness is a common problem? Why/Why not?*
- *What are the greatest problems people face when they move abroad?*
- *In your opinion, would you say the pros outweigh the cons when living abroad? Give reasons for your answer.*

Weekly English Practice

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English Coaching Projects S.Coop.

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See the amazing [cliffs of Moher](#). Some of the most spectacular scenery in Europe!

Top ten facts you never knew about Saint Patrick’s Day

1. St. Patrick was not Irish. He was from Wales.
2. The humble shamrock was originally a teaching tool. St. Patrick is said to have used the three-leaved plant to explain the Holy Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) to the pagan Irish.
3. The first St. Patrick’s Day parade took place in New York in the 1760s.
4. For many years, blue was the color most often associated with St. Patrick. Green was considered unlucky. St. Patrick’s blue was considered symbolic of Ireland for many centuries and the Irish Presidential Standard is still blue.
5. For many years, Dripsey in County Cork had the world’s shortest parade, just 77 feet, the distance between two pubs – The Weigh Inn and The Lee Valley. Currently, the town of Hot Springs, AR claims to have the shortest parade – a 98 foot route on Bridge Street.
6. In 2010, the Sydney Opera House went green to mark the 200th anniversary of St. Patrick’s Day there. In Sydney, St Patrick’s Day was first marked in 1810, when Lachlan Macquarie, the Governor of New South Wales, provided entertainment for Irish convict workers.
7. Irish flee the country. In Ireland on March 17, you’ll find many public figures, musicians, and dancers have traveled abroad to work on lucrative gigs elsewhere. Politicians also travel to drum up trade.
8. In Chicago every year, the Plumbers Local 110 union dyes the river “Kelly” green. The dye lasts for about five hours.
9. Traditionally, every year, the Irish leader hands a crystal bowl full of shamrock to the US President. The shamrock, grown in Kerry, is immediately destroyed by the Secret Service after the exchange.
10. Guinness sales soar on St. Patrick’s Day. Recent figures show that 5.5 million pints of the black stuff are downed around the world every day. On St. Patrick’s Day that figure doubles

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Where: English Coaching Projects S.Coop
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When: Thursday 17th March at 20:30

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