Mater Dei TOURS



* F A Q ' S *
Frequent Asked Questions

❖ **What airline are we flying? Aer Lingus Irish Airlines**

❖ **What is our flight itinerary? Please see below.**

DEPARTURE FLIGHT

1) EI 124 > MON 17 MAY 27 > > > CHICAGO O'HARE 3:45 PM > DUBLIN, IRELAND 05:10 AM (next day)

CONTINUING FLIGHT

2) EI 476 > SAT 22 MAY 27 > > > DUBLIN 07:35 AM > > DUBROVNIK 12:00 NOON

RETURN FLIGHTS

3) EI 477 > THU 27 MAY 27 > > > DUBROVNIK 12:50 PM > > > > > > DUBLIN 03:25 PM

4) EI 125 > THU 27 MAY 27 > > > DUBLIN 4:45 PM > > > > > > CHICAGO O'HARE 7:15 PM (same day)

❖ **What is the Time Zone Difference at our destinations?**

Ireland is typically **SIX** time zones later than the US Central Time Zone (that is, when it's noon in Chicago, it's 6pm in Ireland). If you are in the East coast, it is only 5 time zones difference (Mountain is 7, and Pacific is 8

Croatia and Bosnia & Herzegovina are typically **SEVEN** time zones later than the US Central Time Zone (that is, when it's noon in Chicago, it's **7:00 pm** in Croatia and Bosnia). If you are in the East coast, it is only 6 time zones difference (Mountain is 8, and Pacific is 9 time zones).

❖ **How much luggage are we allowed to bring? Because of our bus/coach limitations and airline fare rules, the following apply:**

- **There are 2 Mater Dei Tours Luggage tags**: One for your checked luggage and one for your carry-on luggage.

➡**CHECKED LUGGAGE:**

- (**1**) One piece of checked luggage is allowed per person.
- Size Limit: 62 linear inches (158 cm). Linear inch = Height + Length + Width.
- Weight limit: No more than 50 lbs (23 kg) per piece of baggage.
- Restrictions: sharp metal items; matches, lighters, fireworks, flammables; compressed gases, aerosols; radioactive, toxic & corrosive substances; items with strong magnetic fields (check with airline for complete list).

➡**CARRY-ON LUGGAGE:**

- (1) One piece of cabin luggage allowed (sample size limit including wheels: 9.5" X 15.5" X 21.5" (Depth x Height X Length))
- (1) One personal item that fits under the seat in front of you (sample size limit: 8" X 10" X 13" (Depth x Height x Length))
- Weight limit: Aer Lingus allows up to 22 lbs (10 kg) per person (combined carry-ons)
- Packing Restrictions: sharp metal items, matches, lighters, fireworks, aerosol, compressed gas (check with airline for complete list).
- **3-1-1 RULE**: Beverages, liquids, shampoo, lotions, creams, toothpaste and other items of similar consistency, are allowed in **3** ounces bottles, enclosed in a clear **1**-quart sized 'zip-loc' bag, **1** bag per person.
  - **QUESTIONS:** Any questions regarding baggage, please contact our office at the numbers below.

Baggage rules & restrictions may change before departure. Please check directly with the carrier for most accurate up-to-date information.

Mater Dei TOURS

www.materdeitours.com

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Questions@materdeitours.com

IMPORTANT

❖ What kind of official documents do I need to enter these counties?

❖ To enter Europe, a US citizen needs of the following:

* **US Passport validity required! 6 Months extra validity required by EU Regulations.**
* Your first, ~~middle~~ and last names on the airline ticket (and your invoice) must match exactly the name as it appears in your US Passport. If there is any discrepancy, please call us immediately.
* ROUNDTRIP Airline tickets (these will be given to you with your final documents approximately 15 days before departure).
* If you are not a US citizen, please give us a call.

*** NOTE: It is a good practice to make photocopies of your passport picture page and driver's license and pack it in a separate place from where you keep the originals while you are traveling. Is case of a loss, this copy can help you speed up the process of obtaining a new emergency passport.*



❖ What do I need to know about European Union Immigrations & Customs?

When you arrive at your first European airport, the first checkpoint will be immigration where you will need to show your passport and complete any form given to you on your flight. After your connection flight, you will go through customs control, where you pick up your luggage and depart the airport together with the group. Customs operate on the green (nothing to declare) and red (goods to declare) system. Remember to make photocopy of your passport ID page and bring it stored in a secure place away from the originals. This copy will become handy if you need to apply for a new passport in case yours is lost while traveling. It is a good practice to bring a 2nd piece of ID (driver's license) but not required. Luggage may be examined upon entering and leaving EUROPE. Personal effects may be imported duty-free only on condition that they are for personal use and won't be sold, given away or traded. On your return to the USA, you may bring up to $800 worth of duty free items.



❖ Are there any important medical, prescription, or vaccination requirements?

If you are traveling as a US Citizen, presently, there are NO vaccinations required to enter CROATIA, BOSNIA or IRELAND or to re-enter the U.S.A. Prescription drugs MUST be accompanied by its prescription or be in its prescription bottle, and carried with your carry-on luggage in case of loss or delay of checked luggage. Please bring Ibuprofen and/or Tylenol with you as it can be difficult to find in Medjugorje.

If you need to bring syringes (maximum 4 on board) due to a medical condition, the passenger must:

1) Inform Mater Dei Tours right after booking your trip. We will contact the airline about your need to travel with syringes.
2) Present a doctor's note (written within 30 days prior to the departure date) at check-in time, explaining the necessity to carry syringes on board.
3) Ensure that the container is in proper condition to guarantee the safe transport of the syringes.

If you have any metallic implants please make sure you bring a Doctor's letter (preferably on Doctor's letterhead) or proper medical ID card stating your condition. Pharmacies across Europe can be easily spotted by looking for a green cross sign (sometimes luminous) outside the shop.



❖ U.S. Embassies:

U.S. Embassy, Ul. Thomasa Jeffersona 2, 10000, Zagreb, Croatia Tel: +385 1 6612 200	US Embassy Robert C. Frasure St 1, Sarajevo 71000, Bosnia & Herzegovina Tel: +387 33 704-000

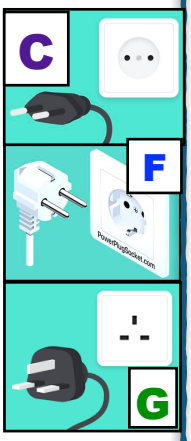
U.S. Embassy, 42 Elgin Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4 Tel: + 353 (01) 668 8777

Contact the Embassy if you need help reporting and obtaining a lost passport or any other type of government assistance as an American Citizen.
* Limited hours of operation.



❖ Do I need to bring any electric adapters or converters?

The electrical current in EUROPE is AC, the cycle is 50 and the voltage is **230v - 250v**. If you are carrying older electrical appliances you should obtain a **transformer or converter, and adapters,** available at stores like 'Target' before leaving the United States. Newer electrical appliances may not need a transformer (check the appliance to see if it says it is capable of 110v-250v). **In addition**, electrical wall outlets have different plugs, making an **adapter** plug necessary (obtainable at travel stores, Walmart or ACE). Here are the plug types per country:
[CROATIA - Types C & F] [BOSNIA - Types C & F] [IRELAND - Type G]. * Important: Adapters and converters are difficult to find in Medjugorje. Please make sure you have some with you before departure.
Some electrical appliances such as pressing steam irons and hair dryers are available at stores in the US, for use abroad without the need of separate transformers or adapters. Keep in mind that most hotels offer hair dryers in the room and also there is usually a 110 voltage socket only for electric razors in the bathroom.





❖ Does my cell/mobile phone work there?

Some US cell phones may work in Europe. Medjugorje uses GSM technology which is mostly used by T-Mobile & AT&T. Please ask your cell provider if your cell phone works in Croatia, Bosnia or Ireland. ALSO, ask how much is the per minute talking charge; the per text charge (incoming and outgoing); and the per MegaByte cell data charge. Ask if your phone is capable of using WiFi calling, available at most hotels. Smart phones should be able to download the WhatsApp application, which turns a phone into free calling and texting while on WiFi.

Both local and long distance calls require the proper area code before dialing the number.

WARNING: This description is a summary of EUROPE's useful telephone numbers. It is meant only a as a sample for information purposes. This information can change without notice, do not use as an exact resource.

Useful Phone Numbers (Croatia):
112 or 192 Police
112 or Fire
112 or Ambulance
195 Sea Search & Rescue
11888 Directory Service

Useful Phone Numbers (Bosnia & Herzegovina):
122 Police | 123 Fire | 124 Ambulance

Useful Phone Numbers (Ireland):
999 Police, Fire, Ambulance and Coast Guard
11811 Directory Service (10 Operator Assist)
114 International Operator

Example: To call using a USA cell phone:
0+(country code)+area code+ phone number
* USA's country code is: 01
* Croatia's country code is: 385
* Bosnia & Herzegovina 's country code is: 387
* Ireland's country code is: 353



❖ What currency do they use and what is the exchange rate?

The official currency of **IRELAND** (& **CROATIA**) is the **EURO**, which comes in bills of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500; coins of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 50 cents, and also in 1 and 2 Euro. Currently the bank to bank exchange rate is averaging US **$1.13** per 1 Euro. This means that at retail, you should get around **$1.23** or so. The official currency of **BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA** is the **KM Konvertible Mark**, which comes in bills of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 200, and 500; coins of 1, 2, 5, 10, 20 and 50 cents, and also in 1 and 2 Euro. Currently the bank to bank exchange rate is averaging US **$0.57** per 1 Mark. This means that at retail, you should get around **$0.47** approximately. In Medjugorje, virtually everyone accepts US Dollars and Euros. So there is no need to change money into the Bosnia Mark. **However**, you should try to obtain Euros in advance at your local bank (some banks require at least a 24 hours advance notice). If you arrive in IRELAND or CROATIA without foreign currency, you can try to obtain Euros by exchanging US Dollars at local banks, although in recent years, most banks are not accepting US Dollars due to its declining value; If accepted, there will typically be a bad exchange plus a high fee/commission. US cash may be exchanged for Euro currency at some hotels and exchange offices (available at airports, seaports and railway stations and in main city streets), but their exchange rates plus their high commissions make these convenient locations the worse places to get your money's worth. We recommend you get Euros before you leave the USA. You can also try to obtain Euros by accessing ATM machines (using your 'ATM' cards or Debit Cards – with your 4-digit pin number). The best rate of exchange is obtained at the ATM machines, however, recently, many banks started introducing a 3% fee for foreign debit card transactions. Eliminate the need to carry extra cash by using your credit card for purchases everywhere it is accepted (Visa & Master Card are favorites). But while credit cards guarantee the current rate of exchange, most credit cards are also charging a 3% foreign exchange fee for all your purchases abroad, **AND** the credit card charging system in Medjugorje is unreliable and deficient causing many merchants to only ask for cash.



❖ BANKING HOURS

Banks in BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA (and CROATIA) open from 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM, Monday through Friday, while IRELAND are generally open from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM (some banks open until 5 PM), Monday through Friday with some closing between 12:30 pm and 1:30 pm. With all countries, some open half day on Saturdays. Closed on Sundays and on national holidays.



❖ Can I use my ATM (debit card) in those countries?

As an alternative to carrying unnecessary cash (or the almost obsolete traveler's checks), Automated Teller Machines (ATMs) are available throughout Europe in several city locations (usually outside a bank); and allow anyone with a debit or credit card to withdraw in local currency. Cirrus and Plus network, as well as Master Card and Visa, are the most popular networks supported by most machines, but several other networks are accepted as well. Exchange rates are updated daily, and ATM fees average $3 (less than the standard transaction fee for currency exchange - *however, recently, many US banks started introducing a 3% fee for foreign debit card transactions*). **Please remember your "pin number"** well as you will only have 3 tries to get it right (the machine will 'eat' your card otherwise thinking someone is attempting to guess your code). Remember you have a daily maximum withdrawal limit established by your bank; keep in mind the exchange rate and the transaction fee when determining your withdrawal amount (Remember the ATM machine thinks in local currency and dispenses only the local currency). Bosnian Mark is very difficult to exchange back into US Dollars when returning home. **Call your bank to advise them that you will be using your card in IRELAND, BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA and CROATIA.**



❖ Important Advice for Credit Card & Debit Cards (ATM Card) users:

Please make sure you contact your card issuing bank to let them know you will be in **Europe (specify countries)** from the beginning to the ending date of your trip**.** With this call your bank will place a note of your record allowing you to use your cards overseas. Also make a note of your bank's long distance number in case you need to call them from overseas (due lost cards, declined credit problems etc.). *The Credit Cards widely accepted in Europe are Master Card and Visa. American Express is a distant third choice (sorry no Discover).*



❖ How much cash should I bring?

This is a proverbial question! Over the years, we have found out that the amount of cash is actually a personal formula:

- ✓ First, determine how many meals are not covered in the itinerary. Then determine how many of these personal meals will be at places were Visa and Master Card are not accepted (usually small outfits selling sandwich or pizza slice style of fast food). If it is a sit down place with servers, it is most likely that credit cards are accepted (usually with a minimum purchase quota - meaning that they won't let you pay a single soda with a credit card). Multiply the number of possible cash meals times $15 to $25 per person.
- ✓ Keep in mind that the credit card merchant system in the area may be unreliable at some places.
- ✓ If you like to buy small souvenirs crafted by local street vendors, keep in mind that these items will be sold for cash only. Bring an extra amount of Euros **(Ireland & Croatia)** and US dollars (**Medjugorje, Bosnia**) for these occasions.
- ✓ Keep in mind that if you take too many US dollars, you can always bring them back to the US for future use. With this in mind, any Euros you bring back home, can be exchanged back into US dollars but you will always lose value in the transaction (the bank aways wins).
- ✓ We recommend you **do not bring bill denominations larger than $20 Dollars or €20 Euros**. Please do not bring any US hard coins as they have no value in Europe.
- ✓ Offertories will be collected at Masses and any paper currency is accepted (NO foreign hard coins are accepted).
- ✓ Tips: Please read the section below to determine how much cash you should prepare for staff tips.



❖ What tips are not include in the package price?

IMPORTANT

- **Tips for your Medjogorje Local Tour Guide are not included (suggested $10 USD per day/per person, or $60 total per person).**
- **Tips for your local Driver(s) are not included (suggested $6 per day, per person).**
- **Housekeeping/Accommodation tip at Medjugorje's pilgrimage house (suggested $36 per person, total).**
- **To help the Parishes or Shrines where Mass is celebrated, an offertory basket may be passed around. US paper currency is welcome at offertories (but NO US hard coins please, only paper money).**

Please budget for this cash money and have it prepared in advance. A volunteer pilgrim will collect your tips at the appropriate time. If our driver changes, someone will collect driver tips at the end of that driver's day. For independent restaurants, the policy is usually printed on the menu - either a gratuity of 10% to 15% is added to your bill or, otherwise, no tip is included, leaving it up to you. Always ask if you are in doubt. Tips

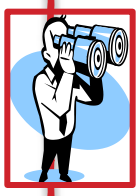
IMPORTANT

NOTE: Although a motor-coach is provided for some of the tours, it is important to point out that all Pilgrimages require a considerable amount of **walking.**



❖How much walking are we expecting?

Although a motor-coach is included for some of our tour transportation, it is important to point out that pilgrimages require a considerable amount of walking. The **Irish portion** of this trip may be more relaxed than the rest, but be prepared for daily walking totals of 3 to 4 miles (approx.). In **Medjugorje**, our pilgrim house is a 25 minutes walk to the **St. James Church**, and about 8 minutes to **Apparition Mountain**. Taxis are available for about $6 USD per car ride (up to 4 persons may split the cost, if they fit in one car). The **climbing of Apparition Mountain** is very strenuous and can be dangerous for some. It is composed of small to medium sized jagged edged rocks, along with some big boulders (there is no nice walking path). After 5 joyous mysteries stations, you are on top where the 1st Apparition was recorded in Medjugorje. **Cross Mountain** is almost 3 times as long as Apparition Mountain, and it is composed of similar rocks. After completing the 14 Stations of the Cross, you will be on top where there is a big cross. Usually, only 5 to 7 pilgrims ed up climbing Cross Mountain. There are occasions where you may certainly stay behind resting but we suggest that you should prepare physically about 4 weeks before departure, by walking vigorously 1-2 times a day. Any physical limitations must be reported to us immediately.





❖STAY WITH THE GROUP! AVOID BEING LOST! BE ON TIME!



Mater Dei Tours provides you with a team of escorts to help you experience a wonderful pilgrimage tour. Please listen to all staff instructions, especially concerning times and meeting points. While most activities are done as a group, there is plenty of personal time. Mater Dei is not responsible for lost persons, and for any expenses incurred while being lost. Each traveler assumes the responsibility for staying with the group. The group needs to maintain the contracted schedule. Please be considerate to your fellow pilgrims by listening to instructions and being on time. Personal deviations to the group itinerary must be reported **DIRECTLY** to the Tour Director (example: you decide to stay at the hotel instead of going on a day tour).



❖Do we get an automatic wake up call each morning?

Most hotels no longer make wake up calls for our groups. Besides, there are always chances for missed calls, or broken phones in the rooms. We strongly recommend that you bring your own travel alarm clock or smart phone to wake you! Make sure you have the correct local time! Please be considerate to your fellow pilgrims and be on time for every group event.

❖What is the weather like during our month of travel?

City	High / Low Temp	Inches of Rain
Dublin	61 hi / 45 lo F	1.96”
Knock	57 hi / 42 lo F	2.30”
Dubrovnik	73 hi / 62 lo F	0.87”
Kravica	74 hi / 57 lo F	3.23”
Medjugorje	74 hi / 53 lo F	0.40”

If you wish to receive more updated weather information as we approach our departure date, you can go online and visit weather.com or simply give us a call at (608-440-3700)



❖What should we wear? Do you have any clothing advice?

When packing, bear in mind the time of year when you are traveling and the climate that you come from in North America. It is always a good policy to bring clothing that is as comfortable as possible while keeping in mind the different temperatures of the day in each region (usually cooler in the morning and at night). Dressing in layers provides most comfort as you can shed or add items if the temperature fluctuates. Travel light, dress comfortably and pack easy care items. Casual clothes are appropriate for daytime travel, but we must also keep in mind that most Europeans are conservative in clothing, plus we will be visiting holy places that require respectable attire. **In some locations, guards may deny access to a holy place if attire is believed to be revealing.** Tank-tops, shorts and short skirts are never welcomed at any Shrine. Hotel dining rooms tend to be more formal. A good guideline is to wear what you would if you were going out to a good restaurant at home.

In addition to your typical travel items, please consider packing the following:

- All weather coat with removable lining or water proof wind breaker jacket and/or a small folding umbrella.
- A hat, sunglasses, sunscreen lotion (and Swimming Suits in case you wish to use the pool)
- Comfortable shoes that support your feet (also comfort soles)
- A safety/travel wallet (hangs around your neck and lies inside your shirt - Mater Dei provides one).
- Travel alarm clock
- Washcloths – most hotels do not provide them
- Travel Toilet Paper in case some public toilets are out. Be prepared when going to public restrooms!
- *** Big Zip-Loc Bags in order to transport any Holy Water bottles securely in your checked luggage.

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Questions@materdeitours.com

✳How do I Sign up?

1) Fastest: Type the answers on the registration form in your computer.
If you have your signature stored on your PDF program, then sign it, save the file to your computer, and email it to us at registrations@materdeitours.com.

Otherwise you may type your name as an electronic signature.

2) Fast (2 ways): You may also want to print the form, fill it out (unless you pre-typed it on your screen), sign it and send it one of the following ways:

2a) Fast: With your Smart Phone, take a good and clear photo of the two registration pages, and email them to registrations@materdeitours.com. This email comes to the registration department directly, and we know how to handle it securely. Because your information is sent to us in an attachment, your private information is safer than if it were typed on the email. If you do not want to put the full credit card information on your form, we recommend that you leave a portion of the credit card's middle digits empty. Then, send a separate/different/new email (or call) us with the missing numbers. We will complete the form for you. The reservation will not be finalized until we receive the full form of payment.

* If you wish to pay with a check, please go with step **#2c**, however, please text or email your registration with a picture of the check that is being mailed. This way we will save a spot for you.

2b) Fast (Fax): Send your filled out registration sheets by secured fax to **1 (608) 849-3396.** Your registration arrives directly to our office. If you do not have a fax machine, The UPS Store, FedEx/Kinko's Store, Office Depot/Office Max, or Staples, typically offer a faxing service for a fee.

2c) Slow (Mail): B*ecause of the time constraints that may exists between now and registration deadline, we do not recommend this option)*: Send your registration papers via mail to the address on the registration (**Mater Dei Tours % Juan Landa, 215 S. Century Ave. #211, Waunakee WI 53597**). If you do not wish to put all the credit card information on the forms that will be mailed, we recommend the same procedure as descried above, where you do not fill in a portion of the credit card middle digits on the form. Then, send an email with the missing numbers or just call us. We will complete the form for you.

This information has been compiled for your convenience by your friends at: Landa Cleary Travel Company, Inc. Tourism Ireland the shamrock club