THE NEW YEAR

DECEMBER 2007

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www.griffin.ie
Let the games begin

2008 is almost upon us. The end of the decade has rolled clearly into sight. Christmas bellies are on show for all to see. The latest video game can be heard blasting from the door of uncles, aunts, grandparents, cousins and friends has ground to a welcome halt.

After a typically manic holiday period for most, things are adjust about getting back to normal. As the dust settles and the New Year looms, our thoughts begin to turn to the coming twelve months. What do we hope to achieve? Where will the New Year take us? What can we improve upon? Who do we want to be in 2008?

Seamus Heaney once said: “Even if the hopes you started out with are dashed, hope has to be maintained.” We all started 2007 with hopes and aspirations for the year. Did everything work out as planned? Some of us will nod our heads and proudly answer in the affirmative. Others could not really say that everything we set out to achieve in 2007 was achieved. Considering the shortcomings for some of us in 2007 then, what attitude should we carry into 2008? Should we set our sights on an easier target? Should we lessen our aspirations?

Heaney made a valuable observation about life in the aforementioned quote. It really struck a note with me because in effect, what he is saying is, when we have hopes and aspirations for something, set backs we incur along the way should not relieve us of the hope and drive which caused us to set those goals in the first place. With this in mind, we should look forward to 2008 and set our sights high.

Since the Celtic tiger first came into bloom, there has been an ever increasing number of people starting up their own businesses in Ireland. In today’s technological age, anyone can be an entrepreneur. Recently I read an interview with Mark Zuckerberg, the twenty three year old founder and now CEO of the social networking website, Facebook. He created the site in 2004. Just three years later and the site now has 58 million users worldwide. On October 24th, 2007, Microsoft announced that it had bought a 1.6% share of Facebook for $246 million. How much did it cost to get the site started? Barely $246 dollars. Not bad for a guy in his early twenties. Could you be the next Mark Zuckerberg? As 2008 approaches, it is becoming easier and easier to turn an idea into a realistic business venture. Set your sights high and who knows. My father recently informed me via text message that he had gotten the new iPhone in the States. I subsequently received an e-mail baring photos of his iPhone taken with his digital camera. Now there is a man who has decided to embrace technology. A mere two years ago he was incapable of sending a text message and had little interest in learning how to do so. Then something along the way sparked him into action and he hasn’t looked back since. The latest gadget will appear in the house often before any of us have even read about it in magazines. He has blue tooth hooked up to his car, an Apple Mac laptop, an iPod, and he happily ‘surs’ the web to book gigs, cinema tickets, flights and hotels. He’s even a Facebook user at this stage. If you haven’t already plunged into the technological pool that is the world we live in today, will you be dipping yours toes in the New Year?

Speaking of dipping toes, when was the last time you dipped your toes in for real? Following European trends, the last few years have seen the rise of the fitness conscious citizen in Ireland. New gyms are constantly popping up all over the place and more people in Ireland seem to be conscious of their weight and the weight of their children. No longer is exercise just for the sporty people amongst us. Anyone can join a gym, go for a walk, a run or play a game of football or golf. Inextricably linked to this new phenomena is the ever increasing trend of healthy eating which seems to be sweeping across the nation. Not that a good ol’ fish and chips doesn’t still feature as an integral part of every Friday evening in a lot of our lives, but we are more and more substituting the ready made microwave meal for the organic home cooked meal. These days, with the modern stresses we encounter on a daily basis, fitness and a health diet are becoming a must. As the end of the decade approaches, it is an inevitability that this trend will only grow.

Eating our greens isn’t the only green issue in our lives today. The health of the environment is more and more becoming an issue which we cannot avoid anymore. Al Gore just won the Nobel Prize for Peace, largely based on his aptly titled documentary, An Inconvenient Truth, which highlighted many of the ever increasing and ever real threats of today’s world pollution. The documentary opened the eyes of many people to the important environmental issues. Rent it out, watch it, tell your friends about it. In 2008, take care of yourself, and do your bit to take care of our depleting environment.
New Year, New You, New Zoo!

It’s a new year, there’s an air of excitement in Dublin Zoo and it’s not even feeding time!

The Zoo is changing and it’s changing fast. If it’s a while since you last visited — you may be surprised at what you will find.

Why not escape the endless repeats on the television and watch the antics of our chimpanzees, orangutans and gorillas instead. You’ll also see hippos, rhinos, rare monkeys, giraffes, lions and tigers and of course our beautiful baby Asian elephant, Asha.

The delightful 100kg (now nearer 500kg!) new arrival bounced into the Zoo in May. Her arrival has attracted visitors from far and wide - desperate for a glimpse of the very first elephant to be born on Irish soil.

See her and her family on the Kaziranga Forest Trail - a wonderful new habitat for elephants and for people.

Dublin Zoo is now recognised as one of the most modern Zoo’s in Europe. You’ll find that you are no longer just a spectator but you are transported into the animal’s habitat.

Crucially though — it’s a great day out for all the family.

New Year’s Resolution 2008: Be Your Own Boss?

The DCEB 'Start Your Own Business' course is a great foundation for building your idea into a business. “It opened up my eyes to what I needed to do to start my own business and puts me on the path to success” Andrew Excell.

“The Financial Management course helps me a lot in reading and analyzing a P&L and a balance sheet, especially thanks to our fantastic trainer. As a non-native speaker, this course is also the opportunity for me to become familiar with the most common financial vocabulary. The workshops and the discussion are very start-up oriented, with plenty of tips and advices, which is also why I loved it so much. Eventually, I want to add that it is a really amazing price for the money! It is so helpful for new businesses, as we all know that the financial aspect is always challenging at the beginning. A big thank you to the FAS as well for financing this professional training!” Hélène Quénivet.

One Step Up – Enterprise Training

1,188 people attended Dublin City Enterprise Board training in 2007. Dublin City Enterprise Board is the state agency for assisting start-up and micro businesses with up to 10 employees in Dublin City. The funding through the FAS, One Step Up Programme made the professional, high quality training available at a low cost.

The variety of training options on offer is virtually comprehensive for today’s entrepreneur’s needs. The popularity of the courses and modules is a reflection of their quality, low cost and rate of referrals from satisfied participants.

Announcing the 2008 programme, Mr. Greg Swift, CEO, Dublin City Enterprise Board, said that the cost of the courses would be subsidised by an average of 70% by FAS, thereby making it possible to offer fully professional courses at very low cost to participants. “The fact that our courses cost from between €30 and €275 has been made possible by FAS, who recognise as we do, the vital importance of ongoing training for start up and growing businesses, Mr. Swift said.

In response to demand, there will be at least 12 Start Your Own Business courses (€275) held in 2008. Other courses include: Financial Management (€200), Growing a Business courses (€275) Sales & Marketing (€200); three courses; Management Development (€225); New Product/Service Development (€30); Business Ideas Generation Workshop (€30); Commercial Website Development (€175). All courses are FETAC accredited and therefore, participants may gain credits to higher qualifications.

The half-day training modules cover topics and will be held throughout the year. The topics include: Internet Marketing; Health & Safety for Small Businesses; Customer Care; Writing a Business Plan and Funding Your Business.

Full details of all courses and modules may be obtained from the Dublin City Enterprise Board website www.dceb.ie Participants may book online.
Buying the Engagement Ring

When someone talks about proposing, the mind usually jumps to the romance of the occasion; candlelit dinners, surprise gatherings, getting down on one knee, producing a diamond ring and popping the question. Most people know where and when they should propose, but when it comes to the, seemingly obvious, practical question of “where do I buy the engagement ring?” very few people even know what kind of choices they have.

To make it simple, there are basically three options out there – high street shops, internet retailers and, more recently, custom designers.

For some couples, a day visiting jewellery shops and trying on rings to find the perfect fit is something of an event in and of itself. You pick out goldsmiths and retailers to visit, trying on rings you may have been window shopping for only a few weeks before. Not to mention the indulgence of spending the entire day trying on, what is probably going to be, the most expensive piece of jewellery you have ever owned. Unfortunately, this can also be one of the most stressful parts for the entire proposal. If you are something of a traditionalist and decide to buy the ring without the input of your partner – either by going on subtle hints they have dropped or because you have faith in your own taste – this only adds to the stress. The choice can be so large as to be confusing and shop sales people rarely know more about diamonds than their customers. Most people aren’t even aware of the range of diamonds available let alone styles of rings, the differences between gold and platinum or the, seldom explained, “4 Cs” of diamond grading.

If price is a major consideration for you then you have probably been looking up internet diamond retailers. Many of these can usually offer lower prices for rings than retail and give you the option of finding what you are looking for from the comfort of your own home. Unfortunately, cost is usually where the good news ends; in the case of many of these retailers, you don’t get to see what you are buying until it arrives at your door and the specifics online can be vague and difficult to work with. There is no human connection there and all too often the only thing you have to go on if everything doesn’t work out perfectly is a generic email address.

Custom made

The third option is custom design. Although it sounds very much like an option only available to the privileged few, I was pleasantly surprised when I spoke with Tom Beurghs, managing director for Diamant, Merrion Square, I arranged an appointment to find out more.

The first thing he did for me was clarify “the 4 Cs” that diamonds are graded by; Cut – how well proportioned the diamond is, Colour – how white the diamond is, Clarity – how included the diamond is and Carat weight – how big the diamond is (one carat is equal to one twentieth of a gram). “The most important ones are Colour and Cut, because that’s what people see more than anything. A good cut is essential for a sparkling, brilliant diamond” Tom informs me, as he spreads a small collection of samples out on the table. The next “C” is Clarity “nearly all diamonds have inclusions so for clarity all you have to do is find a diamond where they are not visible to the naked eye. After that you are paying for something you just can’t see”.

Fluorescence

He also informs me of fluorescence, which I never knew was even a factor. “Most diamonds fluoresce, which gives them a hazy appearance that you don’t want. It takes away from the sparkle. You should always look for one with medium to no fluorescence”.

On the matter of cost I took him to task, assured that this is where the private jeweller would fall down. Apparently I was wrong “without the overheads of a high street shop, our costs are at least 25% lower than theirs” he boasts. It seems too good to be true, so I assume it is and asked him what the catch was.

“The only thing the high street shops have over us is that you can walk out with a ring the same day; but if you have to get it resized or anything, it’ll probably have to stay with them for a few days anyway. Here it takes two weeks, it’s custom made to fit your finger and it’s your own unique design. If you want a ring urgently, or on the spur of the moment, then fair enough; but if you are looking for something special, unique and properly priced then this is honestly your best choice”.

When it comes to internet retailers he’s even more assured, “Madness” he calls it “you have no recourse if it’s not what you wanted and the only point of contact you have is an email or a call centre. You don’t meet anyone, you don’t know for sure what you bought until it arrives and you get a band that was stamped out by a machine” – when he puts it like that I can’t help but admit it’s not the most romantic thing I’ve ever heard.

I’m not surprised he’s selling custom made diamond jewellery to me but I can’t deny the sense behind it. I asked him if he had any final advice for prospective knee benders – “ask questions, make sure you know what you’re paying for and make sure the retailer knows what they are selling. Never buy from someone who doesn’t know what they’re talking about.”

Diamant has been making custom diamond jewellery in Ireland for the past three years and is located on Merrion Square.

Diamond Engagement Rings

- Top Quality Antwerp Diamonds
- Priced at least 25% below high street
- Designed and set by Antwerp Goldsmith
- Diamonds certified by IGI, HRD and GIA
- Conflict Free Guarantee
- Private consultation for every customer
- Full after-care service included
- Specialists in all diamond jewellery
- Eternity rings, earrings
- Wedding bands, necklaces

Diamant Ireland
Merrion Square, Dublin 2
(01) 647 11 19

Glentworth Street, Limerick
(061) 400 008
In the last few years there has been a monumental increase in the variety of music available to public. Gone are the days when you had a choice of one, maybe two genres of music on Saturday night.

In Ireland, jazz music has soared from its modest upbringing to the current situation, where the country boasts some of the brightest musical talent in Europe. Michael O’Connor talks to the internationally renowned musician, composer and teacher Ronan Guilfoyle about jazz music – how it got here and where it’s going.

MO: What do you think is the main reason for the burgeoning growth of jazz in Ireland?

RG: I think it’s a combination of things. First of all, the country is much more outward looking than it ever was. Not just in term of music but in terms of everything. For example, if you go to eat out in Dublin, the difference between now and ten years ago is phenomenal. Look at the sheer variety of food, the broader palettes and the broader tastes that people have. The same goes with music. You have a situation where the media has changed. Now you can listen to anything you want - music that you never would have heard before the advent of the internet. In previous times, to hear jazz in Ireland you had to know someone who knew the music and could tell you where to go to listen to it. You had to go and find specialist record shops where you could buy the records. Nowadays, there is so much more accessibility. I think that this is a kind of barometer of the time. Now jazz is more accessible and also incredibly broad, much broader than most people imagined. People hear things they wouldn’t have heard before and they’re surprised firstly, by how it sounds and secondly, how they can find a style of music within the broad church of jazz that they find particularly appeals to them.

MO: The Newpark School has also been a main proponent for building jazz in Ireland. What kind of individuals are you looking for in the school?

RG: There are the three things needed to do well in the B.A. in Jazz Performance: an interest in the music, a degree of talent, and a willingness to work.

MO: The jazz degree was a diploma until recently. Would you say that the fact that the diploma course has now been turned into a degree reflects the growth of jazz music?

RG: The idea of a degree in jazz music is very common in most of the EU and the United States. It came later here but this is a sign of the maturing of the establishment. People now recognise the importance of jazz education. It is a liberal arts education. It’s quite specialised but the skills you learn make you extremely employable as a musician throughout every genre. This makes it a practical proposition for an aspiring musician and this is why it has become the second most popular way to learn music, after classical training. In terms of education, classical music has dominated for the last four hundred years but, in the last forty years, jazz has been galloping up behind it. For example, in Denmark, people studying jazz in third level education outnumber people studying classical music.

MO: Tell me about the course itself, what particular areas do you focus on?

RG: You study your instrumental technique or vocal technique (depending on whatever your principal instrument is). You also work in ensembles or groups. For example, your typical group would have bass, drums, guitar, piano, voice and saxophone. You work in a group in the course of each year for four hours a week. You also study subjects like harmony, theory, composition, rhythm studies, general musicianship and jazz history.

MO: What kind of teaching methods are used? What way to go about communicating with students?

RG: Three different ways.
1) The instrumental or vocal class is one on one. This class mostly deals with technique. For example, teaching you techniques that help you to improvise.
2) The group situation - where the teacher brings in material to play and you learn the techniques necessary to play it.
3) Lecture/Group class - For example, teaching harmonic techniques on a blackboard.

MO: The current crop of young musicians like Sean Carpio, Ciaran O’Rourke and Daniel Jacobsen indicates that there are great things to come from Irish jazz in the years ahead. How can we support that in the New Year?

RG: Jazz should have an even break. It’s never going to commercially viable the same way pop music is, however it is something that is very desirable within our culture. It needs to be supported, through the funding bodies like the Arts Council. The Dept of Education could do more.

MO: And from the perspective of the public itself, what can we do this year to help encourage this development?

RG: Go and hear the music live. That’s it. It’s all about the live experience.
Laser Eye Surgery has been performed since 1983 and over fifteen million procedures have been performed worldwide on people from every walk of life including celebrities Tiger Woods and Richard Branson as well as airline pilots, successful sports-people and countless others who are now enjoying the benefits of a life without glasses or contact lenses.

Paul Byrne, Manager of Optilase Eye Laser Surgery Clinic in Ely Place, Dublin says that surgery with a laser can produce immediate and tangible benefits to vision.

‘Since the advent of laser surgery, it has been possible to re-sculpt the eye in order to change how it sees the world,’ he says.

“Basically what we do is bring people in for a one hour assessment with our laser optometrist prior to any surgery and the laser optometrist would do a number of tests with the patient” says Byrne.

“Once they are deemed suitable, they meet the surgeon for a twenty minute pre-op consultation. All patients should meet the surgeon prior to surgery. The surgeon checks the health of the eyes and goes over the file. Here, the patient is briefed on the pros and cons of the treatment. The surgery itself is over in around 15-20 minutes. Drops are placed in the eyes to numb the eye. Generally, laser optometrist will recommend that the patient can go back to work after three days to a week. The doctors try to make it as easy an experience of possible.”

What about results? Byrne says that “97 percent of patients would have driving standard vision within a week of surgery and 99 percent after 2 weeks.” Considering the trouble people have with glasses and contact lenses these are admirable statistics.

It is important to understand the facts to make a fully informed decision whether to proceed with surgery to eliminate or reduce dependence on glasses or contact lens. The highest standard of care with a highly experienced team of surgeons, nurses, laser technicians and optometrists is paramount to perform successful eye surgery. This New Year will give the opportunity to undergo eye laser surgery using the latest generation in Laser Technology.

Conveniently located in the city centre of Dublin, less than 100 yards from St Stephens Green, Optilase offers the full range of treatments for laser eye correction.

For patient convenience Optilase also offer a financing option to help make laser eye surgery affordable and manageable.

A new you for 2008
Laser Eye Surgery From €995 Per Eye

Imagine starting 2008 without having to wear glasses or contact lenses. You can join the 15 million satisfied people around the world who have benefited from this life changing laser procedure by calling Optilase today. Income tax relief is available on the cost of this treatment.

At Optilase we have a dedicated medical team of over 30 professionals consisting of surgeons, optometrists, nurses, laser technicians and clinic staff in our exclusive five-story Georgian building on Ely Place, just off St. Stephen’s Green.

For a FREE consultation call 01 603 0905 or visit www.optilase.com

Open 7 days a week
Open late nights
Mon 9am – 9pm
Tue Wed & Thur 9am – 8pm
Fri 9am – 5pm
Sat & Sun 9am – 9pm

Optilase Laser Eye Clinic
19 Ely Place, Dublin 2.

Visual Freedom With Laser Eye Surgery
Do you have lots of clothes and nothing to wear? Ever watch makeover shows on TV and wished it could be you? Now it can be. You can get the superstar treatment and you don't have to go through the trauma of stripping down to your underwear!

As an inspiration behind Colour & Image Academy - a unique centre that specialises in all aspects of makeup and image consultancy – Joan Cashman is recognised for her expertise in the image business. Her training techniques and unique approach enable both men and women to excel in this competitive world.

"Whether we care to admit it or not we are judged on the way we look," says Joan. "The way we dress speaks volumes about our personalities, it's our way of saying this is who I am. If we make an effort in the mornings and we're turned out well, it makes us feel and feel great and radiate confidence."

That all-important first impression lasts. Research shows that 55% of the impact we make depends on how we look and behave, 38% on how we speak, and only 7% on what we actually say. (Source: Silent Messages, Prof Albert Mehrabian).

The fashion savvy woman understands the importance and appropriateness of what she is wearing and how it works for the occasion, the season, her body shape, lifestyle and colouring.

Many women, no matter what her age can find shopping for clothes frustrating and end up buying items that they never wear. With constantly changing fashions it can be difficult to know which of the new styles suit you. Nothing is more expensive than the thing you only wear once. Being well dressed does not mean dressing expensively but buy cleverly and things will last.

A style consultation is a fantastic last experience that will show you how to develop your unique personal style and look your very best. "I show real women how to put together realistic, trendy looks that work for their shape, colouring, personality and lifestyle. The existing core wardrobe can be added to and transformed season after season," says Joan. "She will learn how to save money by buying the right outfit first time, expand her wardrobe by mixing versatile pieces from different outfits and transform her work suit for a night out on the town to dressing for the wedding, party or interview. She can dress with confidence whatever the occasion."

The other key to have you looking great is learning how to choose the most flattering colours for your clothes and makeup. When you come for a private colour consultation at the Colour Image Academy, they'll start by testing your skin tone to see if you have warm or cool tones and how much strength of colouring you can take, based on the colour of your hair, eyes and skin. Once this is determined you are taken through your full selection, showing you how to combine and mix and match colours to make your wardrobe more versatile. You even take home your own personal colour swatch wallet.

"This season has been awash with grey clothes everywhere" says Joan. "There is no need to be afraid of grey as it is a wonderful background colour that you can accessorise with other colours and it looks stunning with bold jewellery."

Blonds, will look best in the paler shades of grey (think dove, pewter). These shades will look stunning when you mix them with purple and dusty pinks.

Dark haired, you will look striking when you mix charcoal grey with red accessories to avoid the 'school uniform' look.

Red heads will wear charcoal most successfully when you mix it with all those lovely olive greens, aubergines and daimsons we are seeing in the collections.

When it comes to make-up every woman has a unique beauty and the trick is identifying her best features and making the most of them. Applying make-up properly is an important skill and it has been reported recently that a quarter of employers admitted that they were more likely to employ a woman who wore make-up than a woman who didn't. "Carefully chosen makeup is guaranteed to make you feel and look wonderful," according to Joan. "It should compliment your features and skin tone. Don't waste time on trendy looks unless they also look great on you. Nicole Kidman embraces her porcelain skin and always wears pastel colours. It's time for an update when you have a couple of dozen lipsticks all in the wrong shade."

Some women, when they come to a crossroads in life - be it the breakup of a long term relationship or just wanting a fresh start - decide to change their hair colour and style. "Before you rush out on impulse and go platinum blonde, come and have your image done and we will advise you on the best hair colour and style to suit you face shape and colouring. We also give advice on what kind of glasses will suit your particular face."

It is clear that Joan takes women every step of the way to finding their best looks, colours, clothes, accessories, makeup, hairstyles and more.

Joan Cashman, the inspiration behind Colour & Image Academy

If it’s a new make-up look that you need or a whole new wardrobe overhaul, have a makeover with the Joan Cashman Colour and Image Academy and you will be a new woman. Joan also provides personal shopping with her clients, runs group, corporate, and men’s image consultations. The New Year? The New You! Make it your New Year’s Resolution and leave the past behind.

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Ten reasons to get out and about and visit Dublin!

1. Go to www.visitdublin.com the official online tourist office for Dublin to begin planning your day in and around Dublin. Here, you will find information on events and attractions; you can book golf tee times or even download walking tours to your MP3 player.

2. Alternatively visit the Dublin Tourism Centre in the former Saint Andrews Church on Suffolk Street (just off Grafton Street) in the city centre. Apart from giving you the opportunity to view this beautifully restored building, we have a wide range of services to assist you in planning your visit to Dublin City, Dublin County.

3. See more for less – The Dublin Pass is your passport to Dublin giving you loads of great features in one great value package, including: FREE entry to over 30 of Dublin’s top visitor attractions, FREE airport transfer to Dublin city with Aircoach and over 25 special offers for eating, shopping, entertainment and tours. All this and an 84-page guidebook to Dublin...and you can jump the queues too!

4. Tour Dublin – Discover more of the city on one of the hop-on-hop-off bus tours. If you want to get away from the hustle and bustle, coach tours will take you to the surrounding countryside or coastal villages, just a 20-minute drive from the city centre. If you prefer to discover the city for yourself, download an iWalk to your MP3 player and take things at your own pace. If you don’t want to download a walk why not try the ‘Rock & Stroll’ self-guided tour that stops at the many significant sites associated with Dublin’s world famous musicians, rock group and pop artists?

5. Visit a Castle – Step back in time and visit a selection of ancient and historic fortifications situated both in the city and throughout Dublin County e.g. Malahide Castle.

6. Discover the story of Dublin – A wealth of museums hold an array of information and artefacts recounting to you the history of this ancient capital.

7. Visit Georgian Dublin – The Georgian door is a well recognized symbol of ‘Welcome’ in Dublin. In the 18th century (Georgian Era) the city acquired this beautiful and distinctive style of architecture. Stroll through the elegant streets of Merrion and Fitzwilliam Squares, as fine examples of the great Georgian period.

8. Eat Out – Dubliners like to eat, and the past ten years has seen the emergence of a cosmopolitan and chic food culture, which is mirrored in the hundreds of restaurants you will find throughout the Dublin region.

9. The Children’s Dublin Pass

Visit Dublin Zoo with its African Plains and reptile house. Climb the Chimney Viewing Tower to see a 360° view of the city or see Tara’s Palace, one of the world’s most significant dolls houses. All of these attractions can be visited using the Children’s Dublin Pass.

But that’s not all – see Dracula himself in the Bram Stoker Dracula Experience. Be prepared for a thrilling, spine chilling encounter! Or why not visit the National History Museum, where over 10,000 animals are on display, some of which can still be seen today with others long extinct.

10. Sample some local brews. – Have a pint of Guinness or a shot of whiskey in one of Dublin’s 1000 pubs! Discover how our world famous are made with visits to the Guinness Storehouse and Old Jameson Distillery.

11. Shop ’til you drop! – Dublin offers a wonderful array of products ranging from the traditional to the contemporary in its many shops, boutiques and department stores.

12. Party the night away! – Dublin has one of Europe’s most vibrant and exciting nightlife cultures. So whether it’s the traditional pubs with Irish music, or the hip and trendy bar and club scene that you’re after, you’ll find it all here in Dublin!

Dublin is also famous for its playwrights and choice of theatres so if drama’s your thing why not check out what’s on?!

The Dublin Pass

The Dublin Pass is the official visitor card for Dublin which enables you to gain free entry to over 30 of the city’s top attractions! As well as this the Dublin Pass entitles you to a variety of discounts and added value offers at a selection of shops, restaurants and service providers. Not only does the pass offer great value and convenience, it also allows you to be a VIP and skip the queues at major attractions. The passes are available for durations of 1, 2, 3 and 6 Days for both Adults and Children. From the minute you arrive in Dublin Airport, you can experience the advantage of having a Dublin Pass by travelling free to Dublin city on the Aircoach. From there, experience the delights Dublin has to offer for a fraction of the cost!

Saving the environment starts with small steps

JSK is an Irish Company based in Cork. We are introducing a whole new concept in chemical free cleaning to the Irish Market by taking advantage of the latest advances in cleaning science, which in turn we are sharing with our customers. We are able to deliver a wide range of environment friendly cleaning products to every corner of Ireland, for your home or business.

JSK have moved away from conventional cleaning products and practices. From our many years of experience in the cleaning industry we have found that generally they don’t work very well.

JSK products drastically reduce the consumption of cleaning chemicals in your home or office, while also cutting down your family or staffs exposure to toxic fumes released from conventional sprays, creams or polishes.

JSK ultra microfibre cloths are ideal for cleaning and polishing all your furniture, sinks, taps, worktops, tiles, baths, showers, leather etc.

We have introduced a new concept in cleaning floors, wooden, ceramic tiles, marble, granite, vinyl, laminate etc. by just using water and our ultra microfiber floor cleaning system.

To show how committed we are about the environment and our customers safety we are soon launching a revolutionary new multi purpose cleaner, which is derived from plant extracts and most importantly a 100% chemical free. This product will be totally non toxic and safe to use all around the home or office and it works really well.

The objective of our web site is not only to introduce a wide range of safe to use cleaners but to also educate our customers on the proper usage by showing on line demonstrations at JSKcleaning.ie.
New Training Methods for the Modern Workforce

Human capital is the greatest asset to any organisation. When this fails, the organisation fails.

In order to sustain and develop one’s workforce, organisations need to constantly train and equip their employees. However, training is resource intensive. Current training models are expensive, time consuming, difficult to organise, inflexible and not directly relevant. Often courses include an excessive amount of information covering a wide range of topics within a narrow time frame leaving participants confused and jaded. To make matters worse productivity decreases as employees are out of the office training. It’s easy to understand why many organisations feel the benefits of training do not merit the resources needed.

When choosing a training programme that best suits your needs, it is advisable to ask yourself the following question: do you feel it is better to know a lot about a little or a little about a lot? The answer to this will radically alter your approach to education.

“Learning is an exercise that requires constant practice if one is to reap the benefits,” says Stephen Milford from Griffin Training. “Cramming the night before an exam is only good for one thing: insomnia! As time passes the knowledge fades, skills become rusty and the effort is wasted. Courses designed to cram as much information as possible, have very little long term practical results. If an organisation wishes to make the most of its limited resources it makes sense to choose shorter focused courses and to train regularly. Often the benefits of a single two hour session outweigh the practical results of a two-day intensive training seminar. Employees who regularly attend short, focused, training sessions gain knowledge and skills more efficiently and retain them for longer periods. If an organisation chooses the right training partner, these short focused courses can prove convenient, resource-efficient and cheaper while being more effective.”

There are a few training organisations in Ireland who are radically changing the way training is conducted. By allowing companies and organisations to choose the length, content and structure of their corporate training these training organisations are maximising the benefits of training while minimising the negative impact. Some of these companies even allow on-site training at a time and date that suits their clients at a cost lower than that required by off-site training. This efficient approach to training means that employees are frequently exposed to short training sessions, thus, improving the short and long term results of workforce training. They say you learn something new everyday. This year make every day count.
The Dublin local authorities are in the process of making radical changes to the management of waste with major infrastructure planned so that the region’s recycling targets can be met.

A new Materials Recovery Facility to process 100,000 tonnes of dry recyclables is under construction at Ballymount and is due for completion by mid-2008. The facility will process the dry recyclables collected in the Green Bin and from recycling centres.

“Recycling has taken off in Dublin” according to Matt Twomey. “The recycling rate when we introduced the Green Bin in 2001 was less than 10%. It is now over 40% and growing and we have a target in our Waste Management Plan of 59%. The contamination rate is low by international standards which reflects the care that Dubliners take when segregating waste. We are now rolling out a fortnightly service and plastic bottles are being accepted”.

Full details of all bring/recycling centres and the materials each accept are available at www.dublinwaste.ie.

The materials accepted vary but in general are glass, hazardous wastes (batteries, paints, oils etc) and dry recyclables such as cardboard, paper, cans and plastic bottles. In addition electrical and electronic waste and bulky DIY waste is accepted at the Recycling Centres.

The Dublin Authorities also provide glass banks at 325 locations in the Region. Clothes and other recyclables are accepted at some of these facilities. “Glass is a product that can be recycled again and again provided it is colour segregated”, according to Matt Twomey. Un-segregated glass cannot be recycled as glass.

Reduce, Reuse
In order to prevent waste the Local Authorities are encouraging the reuse of materials rather than disposal. A successful initiative taken by the authorities is to establish a “virtual” reuse centre, FREE Trade on the www.dublinwaste.ie website. This service encourages reuse by allowing members to exchange unwanted items free of charge. In the first year over 5,000 items were reused which represents about 240 tonnes of waste diverted from landfill. Furniture accounts for 50% of the items. The authorities also support a number of community based reuse initiatives such as Sunflower Recycling, Clondalkin Recycling and Project HEATSUN.

The local authorities also provide a wide range of other waste services. Education and awareness are important aspects of waste management and the Dublin authorities employ Environmental Awareness Officers who work with local communities, businesses and schools in developing good waste management practices. These officials have been very successful in promoting good recycling practices and this is one of the main reasons why recycling in the Region has been so successful.

Biological (Organic) Waste
The separate collection of biological waste in the brown bins is the method being adopted by the Dublin Authorities to divert organic waste from landfill so that the Region will meet EU and national requirements in relation to diverting organic material from landfill.

These materials will be processed at two Biological Plants which are currently being procured, one in the Fingal area and one in the Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown area. “The Brown Bin is another important element of our waste strategy” according to Matt Twomey. “We have already started rolling out this service in the City Council and in the Fingal Areas and the response from householders has been very encouraging”. According to Mr. Twomey, organic waste produces toxic emissions when landfilled and it is extremely important therefore for environmental reasons that it is diverted from landfill.

Landfill
Landfill is the least favoured manner of disposal in the waste hierarchy but there will always be some materials that will need to be landfilled. To cater for this requirement a new regional facility is proposed at Nevitt in Fingal and it is estimated that this facility will cater for about 16% of the regions waste.

Charges and the less well off
The Dublin authorities operate a pay by use system in relation to household waste.
The authorities are aware, however, that waste charges can be a particular burden on low-income families and for that reason each of the authorities operate a waiver scheme in respect of such families. Approximately 70,000 households in the region benefit from the waiver schemes. The authorities are particularly concerned that private waste companies who have started household collections in the region are "cherry-picking" the customers who can afford to pay for their service and expect the councils to subsidise the low-income households. As well as social grounds, the councils are also of the view that a “free for all” household waste collection market is unsustainable on environmental and economic grounds and they have signalled that they are considering amending the Waste Management Plan to deal with the situation.

Illegal Activities, Enforcement of Standards etc.
The vast majority of households are dealing with their waste in an environmentally acceptable manner but fly-tipping continues in some areas. The local authorities provide a service to remove dumped materials from laneways, open spaces and other areas. In order to reduce dumping some of the authorities operate a door-to-door bulky household collection service. For example every road within the City Council area is provided with this service at least once every three years.

There are local and regional enforcement units in place who carry out a wide range of activities including audits at waste facilities and road checks to deter the illegal disposal/transportation of waste.

Extra Services at Christmas
Householders in all four authorities can leave bundles of dry recyclable materials beside their Green Bins on collection days until the end of January. These bundles should be safely secured to avoid littering and heavy cardboard should be cut into smaller pieces before being bundled. The authorities have also made special arrangements for householders to recycle their Christmas trees. These arrangements have been publically advertised and are also available on www.dublinwaste.ie.

Come on the Dubs
The Dublin local authorities wish to thank their customers for their cooperation in 2007 in dealing with their waste in a sustainable manner and for contributing to the Region’s high recycling rate. In 2008 the authorities are, in particular, looking for public cooperation in the implementation of the Brown Bin Strategy.

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IF YOU BEHAVE LIKE A PIECE OF FILTH THAT'S HOW THE WORLD SEES YOU

LITTER IS DISGUSTING. SO ARE THOSE RESPONSIBLE.

On behalf of the four Dublin Local Authorities and the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.