



HELPFUL HINTS

FOR YOUR TRIP

PLANNING AHEAD

Visas and Passports

All U.S. Citizens traveling in Europe must have a valid passport good for the duration of their visit. If you do not have a passport, apply for one at your local passport office, clerk of the federal state court, or designated post office. Allow several weeks for the government to process your application. **You do not need a visa for the United Kingdom or Ireland.**

Your passport will be inspected in your home city airport and again upon arrival into Europe.

As a safety measure, we would suggest that you photocopy the front pages of your passport, your traveler's check agreement (with check numbers), airline tickets and everything you will be carrying in your wallet. Leave one copy at home and carry one copy separate from your passport. This will be of immense help to you if your documents are lost or stolen.

GOLF EQUIPMENT

Caddies & Golf Bag

Caddies are self employed people and work when they want to work. They do not belong to the golf course. Even though we can request them in advance, there is no guarantee that they will turn up. Caddie fees start from £35 for Great Britain or €35 for Ireland. Appropriate tip is £5 – 10 for Great Britain or €5 – 10 for Ireland (depending on the quality of the caddie). Pull carts are available at approximately £3 for Great Britain or €3 for Ireland per round. Electric carts are scarce, but are available at some of the courses. A medical certificate might be required to obtain a cart.

Due to the above we suggest you take a small lightweight golf bag. It will be easier to carry and pack. We also recommend you do not leave your golf bag unattended at any time, either at the golf course or in your car.

Golf Accessories

Overseas clubs do not provide tees and pencils. You may wish to bring your own supply. Golf balls are more expensive in Europe. Once again, we suggest you bring your own supply. Other handy items: Band-Aids and sunblock. Two pair of golf shoes should be plenty – preferably soft spikes. Make sure they are well broken in before you travel.

Rain Suit and Umbrella

Although you will be traveling during the dry season, there is always the possibility of rain. We suggest you bring an umbrella and a wind-breaker.

GOLF COURSES

Most of the golf courses you will play will be private clubs. Please check-in with the starter/caddie master at least 20 minutes before play. Each club will advise you of individual rules and regulations. At some clubs, a coat and tie are necessary to use all the facilities of the clubhouse. It is not necessary to wear a coat and tie to play golf. Lunch is included in the green fees at Royal Troon and Western Gailes (except Sunday's). A coat and tie are not required for these lunches.

Handicaps

In most cases there is a handicap limit for men and ladies. This may vary, for men 18-24 and for women 30-36. Please carry your **handicap card** from your golf club with you at all times, as you may be asked to produce it to verify your handicap.

Slow Play

In both Scotland and Ireland all rounds of golf is expected to play in under 4 hours per round. Please try to enjoy your round and keep up with the players in front of you. If you fall more than a hole behind, please wave the group behind you through so the flow of play continues. Also, it is a good idea to allow the local members to play through.

Fitness

As most of the courses you will be playing do not have electric carts, you will be required to walk, and in some cases, you may have to also carry your bag. Each round may consist of walking up to 5 miles, we strongly suggest that prior to your vacation you begin a walking program of a few holes each time out until you are gradually walking the entire course. By the time you leave you should be able to easily walk and play 18 holes. This will make your golfing adventure more enjoyable.

WHAT TO TAKE

*Two words say it best **TRAVEL LIGHT**. You will enjoy your vacation more with a suitcase which isn't too heavy.*

Travel Documents

Don't forget to take your **AIRLINE TICKETS AND PASSPORT!** Always be sure to check your airline tickets as soon as you receive them to be sure that they are accurate and complete. **DO NOT** pack your airline tickets or passport in your suitcase and **DO NOT** carry your airline tickets around with you. It is a good idea to use the hotel safe for valuables.

Money

We suggest that you do not take large amounts of cash, but instead take a widely recognized brand of travelers checks and a well known credit card. Be sure to make a list of your credit card and check numbers and keep it in a separate place from your wallet, purse or passport. ATM machines are available in Europe and your US ATM cards can be used. Be sure to check with your bank what the charges will be. The banks are also a good place to change money and are open Monday – Friday usually 9:00am – 4:00pm. It is more expensive to change money at travel agencies or hotels.

Great Britain uses £ (Pounds) and Ireland uses € (Euros).

Clothing

Temperatures in Scotland and Ireland can range between 55 degrees in April and October, and 77 degrees in mid July and August. However, in Britain and Ireland the weather can vary and you should pack with this in mind. We would recommend a warm sweater, as there are cool winds usually present on the coastal courses. A summary of current weather conditions can be obtained by internet or by phoning the SGH Golf office.

Monthly Climate Chart:

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D
<i>Average Daytime Temperature</i>	39	39	43	55	60	64	65	67	57	52	43	41
<i>Average High</i>	40	40	52	65	69	72	73	73	60	64	55	51
<i>Average Monthly Rainfall</i>	3.4	2.5	2.5	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.7	3.2	2.7	3.1	3.7	3.6

Packing Suggestions

For the men: Sports Coat (A jacket and tie can be required for dinner in hotels. Jackets may be required in some of the clubhouses). 2 or 3 pairs of pants, 2 sweaters - one for golf and one multipurpose, two pair of walking shoes, and several golf shirts. **Most courses do allow shorts with the exception of Royal Troon. However, we do not suggest that you pack more than one or two pairs of shorts as most of the time the weather will dictate that you wear pants.**

For the ladies: Dress code for dinner at hotels can be described as smart. Slacks are acceptable attire. Walking shoes are essential, as is a warm jacket.

Appliance Converters

You should ensure that all electrical appliances, such as shavers and hairdryers, can be used on British voltage, that is 240AC and Ireland voltage, that is 220AC. Some hotels will supply adapters upon request, although we recommend that you carry one.

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Baggage Allowance

Your international baggage allowance is two pieces checked, of which a golf bag counts as one plus one carry-on. These pieces should not exceed 107 linear inches, i.e. length plus width plus height, and should, if possible, be restricted to less than 44lbs per bag (check with airline). The airlines also require that your full name and home address is on the outside of your bag. It is also a good idea to put your name and address somewhere on the inside of your bag. We suggest you bring a golf bag, one suitcase and one carry-on flight bag. Use your flight bag for toilet articles and it is also a good idea to pack an extra set of clothing in your flight bag in the unexpected event that for some reason your suitcase is misplaced.

A golf bag should be contained in a secured bag rather than a hard carry case (hard carry cases can be a problem in terms of the space they take up in a rental car or mini bus). It is much safer for your golf equipment if you put a belt (canvas, plastic or leather) around the middle of the golf bag to keep the handle in its proper position. Bag covers are easily torn and clubs damaged when the bag handlers can't find the grip and carry (or toss) the bag by the cover.

Check In

You should check in for your international flight at least 2 ½ hours before departure.

Telephone Calls

Please note that telephone calls from your hotel room are charged at a higher rate than normal and can be expensive. Please check charges before calling especially long distance. Also local calls in Britain are NOT free. Most of the US long distance carriers now have 0-800 numbers in Britain that connect directly to a US operator. You can then charge the call to your own phone or credit card. This is the most cost effective way to call home. The international code from Britain to America is 001 and then the area code. The international code from America to Britain is 011 44 (drop the next 0).

Customs

Check at the airport your duty free allowances for Britain. On your return you can bring up to \$800 worth of duty and tax free purchases. Purchases up to \$1000 over your exemption will be assessed at a flat rate of 10%. Also unsolicited gifts with a limit of \$50 may be sent, duty free, to the U.S. - no more than one to the same address, and none to your home address.

Value Added Tax

VAT is a sales tax which is levied at a uniform rate of 17.5% on most goods and services a visitor buys. Some larger stores participate in a VAT refund scheme. When buying goods to take home, ask if the store participates in this scheme. If it participates, you can claim the 17.5% back. The store will give you a VAT form to fill out listing your goods and costs. You will mail this once you are in international departures in the custom and excise box and you will be refunded in approximately 6 weeks. We suggest that you retain a copy of this with the address of the stores on the form.

Please note : you can only reclaim on goods that you are bringing back to the US and you can not claim it back on services you have used in Europe.

Car Rental

Note: In both Scotland and Ireland there may be an additional charge for any additional driver over and above the main driver. Insurance is included, but there is a deductible of approximately \$700.00. This may be reduced by taking extra insurance from the car rental company of approximately £5.00 per day. Gas: When you receive the car you get a full tank of gas. You have the option of buying the gas then or returning it empty. You have the option of giving them a deposit for the gas, by returning the gas tank full the deposit will be returned to you. If you forget to fill the tank they will use part or all of the deposit.

There is age restrictions on car rentals for Scotland. Under 25 and over 75.

There is age restrictions on car rentals for Ireland. Under 25 and over 65 (for rental mini vans).

Tipping

Some restaurants include the gratuity in the price of the meal. This will be included in the total bill. If this has not been done, 10% of the total bill is appropriate.

Hotel Extras

Try to pay your extras (laundry, bar, bill etc) the evening before departure. You will have much more time to check your bill. Some hotels can't accommodate this, but try to do it wherever you can.

Cell Phones

The first thing to determine is whether your current cell phone will work in the country you are going to be in while you are overseas.

Do you have a multi-band GSM phone? GSM stands for Global System for Mobile Communications, the standard technology used by cell phone providers in more than 200 countries.

If you have a dual- or tri-band GSM phone you can make calls using a GSM network in other parts of the world, but this may be expensive. You'll be able to take your phone and your phone number with you on your overseas trip.

U.S. carriers selling GSM world phones include T-Mobile, AT&T, Cingular and Nextel. If you're using a multi-band GSM phone in the U.S. **you'll need to activate the phone so it works on international frequency bands. Be sure to contact your carrier before your trip.**