

## Gathering FAQs

### **What is The Gathering?**

The Gathering Ireland is not one single event. It's an exciting year-long celebration of Ireland, its people and all that is great about its connections, both at home and abroad. The Gathering Ireland invites anyone who has a link to Ireland or just a love of the country, to come to Ireland for a series of events throughout 2013.

### **Who is behind it?**

The Gathering Ireland was launched by the Irish Taoiseach, Tánaiste and Minister for Tourism in May 2012 and is being supported by Fáilte Ireland and Tourism Ireland. It promises to be the biggest tourism initiative ever staged in Ireland.

### **Aren't the people of Ireland being encouraged to get involved too?**

Yes. At the heart of it, The Gathering Ireland is a people-led project. Everyone is being encouraged to create local gatherings and invite connections abroad to come and visit Ireland in 2013.

### **Why should I bother?**

Ireland has had its share of doom and gloom the last couple of years. The Gathering is an opportunity to do something positive for our country and help stimulate local industries. More importantly, it's an excuse to host parties, festivals and celebrations!

### **When is it happening?**

Right now and all throughout 2013. Check out the calendar of events on [www.TheGatheringIreland.com](http://www.TheGatheringIreland.com) to see what's on.

### **Where is The Gathering happening?**

All over Ireland - check out the map to see specific locations.

### **What kinds of events are happening?**

There's lots going on, but there are two main types of events:

#### **1. Gatherings**

These are being hosted by the people of Ireland. A gathering can be as little as you inviting back an old school friend to visit Ireland in 2013, or your local GAA club asking Toronto GAA to come over for a match.

## 2. Festivals and events

The Gathering Ireland will bring together hundreds of festivals and events throughout Ireland that celebrate the best in Irish music, art, literature, dance, culture, heritage, sport, film and food. The Gathering Ireland's first sponsorship was The Emerald Isle Classic, an American football bout between Notre Dame and Navy held in Dublin's Aviva Stadium on September 1st.

**Top tip!** [www.TheGatheringIreland.com](http://www.TheGatheringIreland.com) will be a hub of info that pulls together festivals and events throughout Ireland in 2013. It's a great resource if you simply want to know what's going on and when.

### **Will there be any new festivals and events for The Gathering Ireland, or will it be the same as every other year?**

Ireland has always been great for festivals, but 2013 is going to be bigger and better. Existing festivals like St Patrick's Festival and New Year's Eve Dublin will have a few surprising, international twists, plus The Gathering team is also working to create a number of signature themed event programmes – all based around what Ireland is famous for like literature and music.

### **I live in Ireland, how can I get involved?**

Think about who you'd like to invite to Ireland in 2013 and what you'd like to do. This will totally depend on your own interests and it can be as simple as setting up a Facebook event and hosting a family reunion or challenging an overseas company you deal with to come over for a five-a-side football tournament. Whatever you're into, centre your gathering around it.

If you tell us about your event on our site, The Gathering team can offer you support and guidance. Even if it's just a seed of an idea, we can help flesh it out!

### **What's this I've been hearing about Community Meetings?**

The Gathering team have been facilitating meetings across the country to hear ideas. We've just finished one round and there's another round to go in September. From these meetings, some great ideas were bounced around. From an 'Away With the Fairies' festival celebrating rich local folklore in Roscommon to hosting a series of "awfully posh" garden parties around Wicklow, the garden of Ireland, exciting events are afoot.

### **What happens after everyone throws around ideas at a Community Meeting?**

Each meeting has a steering committee formed by locals who aim to get ideas from the page to reality. If you need help with your idea or want to get involved more, you can contact your own county co-ordinator who heads up your local steering committee. You can get their details here.

### **I don't live in Ireland, how can I get involved?**

Whether visiting Ireland is on your bucket list or you've been before and always wanted to return, why not make 2013 your year to visit?

Maybe you have an Irish name or relative? Or you enjoy taking part in an Irish hobby? Maybe you've studied or worked in Ireland or maybe you simply love the music or literature? 2013 is the perfect year to come to Ireland and experience the céad míle fáilte (one hundred thousand welcomes) that the Irish are famous for.

Take a look at [www.TheGatheringIreland.com](http://www.TheGatheringIreland.com) and see if any gatherings or festivals match your interests. Like soul music? Time your visit to coincide with Dublin City Soul Festival. Love running? Why not take part in the Great Ireland Run? It's totally up to you!

Families and clans are meeting all over the country and Ireland's favourite festivals have developed exciting new programmes to help visitors truly be part of it. If you're planning an event for 2013, plan on having it in Ireland.