



# 8 U.S. cities where you can dive deep into Irish American culture

**From Boston to New Orleans.**



By Michele Herrmann • Mar 16, 2023 • 6 minutes read



The Irish Channel neighborhood of New Orleans • Image: [Paul Broussard/Courtesy of New Orleans & Company](#)

While Irish immigration to America traces back to colonial times, the Irish Potato Famine, also known as the Great Hunger, drove a significant wave to the United States in the 19th century. Now, one in 10 Americans claim Irish ancestry, according to [a 2021 survey](#) by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Over time, Irish immigrants and their descendants have made longstanding contributions to American history, culture, and politics, all while maintaining their Irish identity. Read on for eight places across the U.S. where you can learn more about their impact and traditions—well beyond St. Patrick's Day celebrations.

## Newport, RI



Exhibit in the Museum of Newport Irish History in Rhode Island • Image: [Allan Millora](#)

You'll find Irish history all over Newport, starting at Fort Adams, which was built mainly by Irish immigrants between 1824 and 1857 to defend Narragansett Bay against attack. Today, visitors to the site—which remains the largest coastal fortification in the country—can view the quarters where officers and their family lived, explore underground tunnels beneath the walls, and even stay overnight in the barracks.

Over the 33 years it took to construct Fort Adams, an Irish community developed in the nearby Fifth Ward neighborhood. Go there now and you'll find the Museum of Newport Irish History, which teaches about Irish immigration to Newport County from the 1600s to today through photographs, maps, and artifacts. The museum also hosts regular events like an annual “Irish Newport” trolley tour, with stops at important sites like the Barney Street Cemetery, and “Dancing at the Forty Steps,” which commemorates the informal dances Irish-Americans often held there in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Afterward, head to O'Brien's Pub, a Fifth Ward staple since 1945.