



# Coffee and Conversation for ESL Listening



with Donielle and Khrystyna

## Episode 16: Discovering Ireland

Hi! If this is your first time listening to our podcast, this is an opportunity for upper level English learners to practice listening skills and learn new vocabulary by listening to authentic conversations. For more information about ways to use this podcast, download notes for [students](#) or [teachers](#).

In today's episode, Khrystyna shares with Donielle all about her fantastic vacation to Ireland!

Here are a few images from Ireland (mostly taken by Khrystyna on her trip) with some references from the conversation:

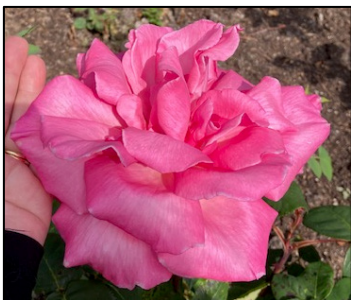


Kylemore Abbey in Galway

Sheep grazing on a mountain



One of many roses in the gardens



Beautiful Irish Countryside

Check out how beautifully maintained the road is! (no *potholes* - Take note U.S.!) ← 😊



winding road

3-Tier Tower of Treats!



See the following pages for vocabulary and language focus from this episode. →

## Vocabulary: Words and Phrases Used in the Conversation

<b>I have not [heard] a thing</b>	<p>This simply means “I haven’t heard anything” but using this construction adds emphasis, similar to “absolutely nothing”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Khrystyna is just back from her trip to Ireland, and <u>I have not heard a thing</u> about it yet.</li> </ul>
<b>have/has been up to</b>	<p>used to talk about what activities a person has been doing lately, especially since the last time you spoke with that person</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I’m super excited to hear what <u>she’s been up to</u>.</li> </ul>
<b>go for it</b>	<p>put forth the necessary effort or energy to do or pursue something, especially in the face of any doubt or hesitation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We’d been talking about going to Ireland for so long, and we finally decided just to <u>go for it</u>.</li> </ul>
<b>take a page out of [someone’s] book</b>	<p>do something in the way someone else would do it; to behave or act like someone else</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I <u>took a page out of your book</u>. (because you travel a lot)</li> </ul>
<b>[something] is synonymous with [something else]</b>	<p>used to explain that there is such a strong connection between 2 things, people, etc. that it’s difficult to think of one without thinking of the other.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I feel like <u>travel is synonymous with you</u>.</li> </ul>
<b>put things in a new light/perspective</b>	<p>cause you to look at or consider something in a different way</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• That experience <u>put things in a new perspective</u> – I realize I want to travel now rather than waiting until I’m older.</li> </ul>
<b>I’m on it.</b>	<p>ready to take action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If someone asks me to go on a trip, <u>I’m on it</u>.</li> </ul>
<b>drive off</b>	<p>more informal way of saying “drive away”</p>
<b>It was very refreshing</b>	<p>describing something that was pleasantly different from what you are used to.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The drivers in Ireland were very polite; <u>it was very refreshing</u> to see. (because I am used to drivers being rude)</li> </ul>
<b>roundabout</b>	<p>(Also called a traffic circle, esp. in the U.S.) a circular area where three or more roads meet that you have to drive around in one direction in order to get onto another road</p>
<b>winding</b>	<p>describing something with many twists and turns – most often used to describe a road (see image on first page for an example of a winding road.) Note: the first I has a long vowel sound similar to “mind.”</p>
<b>pull over</b>	<p>move one’s car to the side of the road and out of the path of traffic.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• On the narrow roads, if someone sees another car coming in the other direction, they will <u>pull over</u> and let you pass.</li> </ul>
<b>wing it</b>	<p>Informal: do or try to do something without much practice or preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did you make reservations and plans ahead of time, or did you just <u>wing it</u>?</li> </ul>

## Vocabulary: Words and Phrases Used in the Conversation

<b>faint</b>	<p>suddenly become unconscious</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>My husband told me he had scheduled a call with a travel agent, and I almost <u>fainted</u> because I know how expensive they can be.</li> </ul>
<b>put [one's] foot down</b>	<p>Idiom: say very firmly that someone must do (or not do) something</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>After my husband told me the price, I had to <u>put my foot down</u>; there was no way we were doing that.</li> </ul>
<b>sneaky</b>	<p>done secretly, or in a way that the true motive was not known</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>He talked to the tour company, not to book a tour, but just to get some ideas. – Ooh, <u>sneaky</u>!</li> </ul>
<b>go straight to [one's] head</b>	<p>It makes one feel too proud or overly confident.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I thought it was a genius idea, but of course I didn't tell him because it would <u>go straight to his head</u>.</li> </ul>
<b>impromptu</b>	<p>not prepared ahead of time: made or done without preparation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was an <u>impromptu</u> decision.</li> </ul>
<b>blows [one's] mind</b>	<p>strongly affect someone with surprise, wonder, or amazement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For people like me who have lived our whole lives in America, the idea of these medieval castles <u>blows our minds</u>.</li> </ul>
<b>stand out</b>	<p>be more noticeable, better or more memorable in some way than other items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How was the food? Did you eat anything that really <u>stood out</u> for you?</li> </ul>
<b>intact</b>	<p>not broken or damaged; still having all the parts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some of the castles were still pretty much <u>intact</u>.</li> </ul>
<b>[eat, drink, laugh, etc.] [oneself] silly</b>	<p>do something to such an extent that you are unable to think clearly or behave with good judgment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>we all <u>ate ourselves silly</u> because we barely rolled out of there.</li> </ul>
<b>bummed</b>	<p>Informal: disappointed or upset (generally for something that is not serious)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I'm really <u>bummed</u> that I never got to experience a high tea when I was in England.</li> </ul>
<b>pothole</b>	<p>a deep, round hole in the road</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sometimes we see a <u>pothole</u> on our street and it gets bigger and bigger until the city finally comes to fill it.</li> </ul>
<b>[someone is] good to go</b>	<p>Whatever problem that there was is fixed, and now things can work smoothly again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The city fixes the potholes and we think <u>we are good to go</u>, but then in a couple weeks, there's another one.</li> </ul>

## Cultural Note: Talking about impressive or extraordinary things

During the conversation, we noticed that there were quite a few times when talking about some of the sights and activities during Khrystyna's trip that we used the word "awesome" to express how great we thought something was. Americans use this word very frequently, but other English speakers use different words. For example, in England, people can often be heard using the word, "brilliant" in much the same way. While doing a little research to prepare these notes, we discovered that in Ireland, it's common to say, "deadly" as an exclamation in response to something great. Although it sounds like something negative or even scary, it's actually a positive response, so we thought that was a fun fact to share!

To learn more about phrases and slang that are unique to Ireland, you can find some interesting information [HERE](#) and [HERE](#).

### Join the Conversation

- Have you ever visited or lived in Ireland? If so, what are your impressions of it? What places have you visited? What did you enjoy most about it? If not, would you like to go? What do you know about Ireland? What are some things you would like to do and see there?
- In the episode, Khrystyna mentions that she had talked about going to Ireland for a long time. Is there a place that you've always wanted to visit? Where is it, and what is it about that place that appeals to you? What would you like to do there?
- Take a look at the pictures on the first page of these notes. Discuss the images that you see; which images stand out to you the most? Why?
- When you travel, do you like to organize and plan everything ahead of time, or do you prefer to wing it? Or do you sometimes do a combination of both?
- Did you ever take a vacation, and you were bumped because you weren't able to go to a certain place or do a particular activity as you had hoped?
- In the United States, it's slowly becoming more common to see roundabouts (or traffic circles) replace 4-way stop signs. Which do you prefer? Do you think one is easier to navigate or safer than the other?
- Have you ever traveled to a place and saw or experienced something that blew your mind? What was it, and why did it affect you so strongly?