



ENGLAND TOUR

Q & A INFORMATION

1. When will the tour itinerary be sent out?

The specific daily tour itinerary will be complete around 3-4 weeks before departure. Once it has been finalized, it will be emailed to all families. Before that time, we will provide updates regarding what to expect on the tour.

*Please note: The tour schedule will be action-packed throughout the week. We do fit in lots of activities – and we are on daily excursions most days. The first 3 days specifically will be full-on with bus rides, flights, live professional game, training practice with a Premier League Academy Coach at a professional training facility. That said, players and adults are encouraged to grab a nap on the bus whenever possible – not stay up too late – and to be ready for early morning starts.

2. Who will be Directing the Tour?

Our Invictus Tour Directors are Dean Whitehouse and Tyra Vickers. Our Directors will address everyone in the UK (on the bus, at the stadiums, city excursions/visits, in the hotel lobby area etc.), so it's imperative everyone follows their instructions. Dean has spent 25 years as a coach at the Manchester United Academy, and has the necessary skills, credentials, and experiences desired to lead the tour successfully. In addition, Tyra currently plays professionally in England and has a wealth of coaching and youth development experience within professional academies in England. We politely ask everyone to show Dean and Tyra the respect they deserve throughout the tour – and to adhere to their instructions. We will be sharing their cell phone details when we arrive in England.

In addition, Team Coaches and other staff will also be helping to direct on the tour and will be accessible in any emergency. For those who don't know, all of our Invictus Tour Directors are originally from the North-West of England – and played professionally and semi-professionally in the UK. They have also been delivering

tours with his colleagues successfully for 15 years now, so they are well versed in the nuisances of the various aspects of the trip.

3. Does everyone have to adhere to the specified tour itinerary?

All players must attend all excursions and activities listed on the tour itinerary. The only exception to this rule is if a player comes down with sickness or serious injury. Adults are NOT mandated to attend every single excursion. There are lots of exciting trips to be made and lots of wonderful sights to see but – that said – it's the choice of every adult as to what they choose to attend. The only thing we do ask is that – if adults choose not to travel somewhere – they provide our Tour Director with prior notification. Please know that sometimes time is made for a specific day where people can relax or do something as a family outside of the tour.

4. As an adult traveling on the tour, can I request to travel somewhere not listed on the tour itinerary during a specific day trip?

If adults decide to get onto the bus and take part in the excursions or one of our planned day trips, we politely ask them to adhere to the plans already laid out. We have operated this tour very successfully for many years – and a main part of that is that everyone sticks to the plan. Therefore, we politely ask that adults refrain from offering ideas or opinions – unless opinions/views are asked for. We do not wish to create any unnecessary stress or extra work for anyone.

Every adult has the right to do what they want if they have chosen to have a day off from the regular schedule. However, we must stress that players **MUST** always adhere to the tour itinerary, regardless of what adults decide to do; primarily for safety and logistics.

5. Are Players allowed to leave the hotel alone?

No. Players are not permitted to leave the hotel grounds alone. All players must be accompanied by adult/coaches every time they leave the hotel. When we travel to stadiums, downtown areas, or visit towns and city centers, all players must be in groups with an adult/coach leading the group. No one should leave the group alone. The safety and welfare of everyone is absolute top priority – and further reinforcement of this crucial point will be sent out before the departure date.

6. What hotel is everyone going to stay at?

Everyone will be staying at The Village Hotel, Blackpool.

Address: The Village Hotel, E Park Dr., Blackpool, United Kingdom, FY3 8LL Phone: +44 1253 208870. Website: <https://www.village-hotels.co.uk/blackpool>

7. What amenities does the hotel have and what food will be provided?

The Village Hotel is akin to a U.S. resort-style complex. It is an excellent base for everyone – and the facilities/amenities include indoor and outdoor swimming pools, state-of-the art gym and studios, sauna, tennis courts, 18 hole golf course, squash courts, bar and restaurant, Starbucks, private dining banquet areas, and walking trail (2.7 miles around the complex).

Breakfast and Evening Dinner will be provided throughout the tour. *Please note the food choices and options at the hotel are excellent and plentiful.

8. Do the hotel rooms have fridges/freezers?

No. Typically speaking, you will not find fridges/freezers in hotel rooms in England. Please plan for this – and avoid purchasing foods (milk, cheese, deli meats etc.) that require refrigeration. Due to having breakfast, lunch and dinner being provided each day, this significantly diminishes the need for refrigerated snacks to be in the hotel room.

9. Can I have my laundry cleaned?

Generally, laundry is not an option at the hotel. However, hotel management staff can be spoken with if laundry needs to be cleaned. Typically speaking, no one has used laundry facilities on previous tours. Please pack enough items for each day.

10. What is the room situation at the hotel?

Two players will occupy one room (with two separate beds). Any adults who are traveling with their son/daughter will automatically be paired in the same room. For players not traveling with their parent(s), we will be disseminating a rooming form so everyone can list which player they would like to room with. We will do our best to make sure players are comfortable and sharing with a close teammates/friend. For families traveling with 3 or 4 family members, family rooms can be provided.

11. Will I get the chance to purchase snacks, fluids, and essentials?

We will be stopping at one of the main supermarkets early in the trip. This will provide everyone with the chance to grab some essential items (fluids, snacks, toothpaste, toothbrushes if needed etc.). There will also be other opportunities (when we are visiting towns and cities) to stop at stores and purchase essential items.

12. Will everyone get the chance to utilize the gym, fitness and swimming pool facilities?

Yes. Although it will be an action-packed week, players and adults will have some opportunities throughout the week to relax and use the excellent swimming pools, sauna, gym, Starbucks, and recreational areas of the hotel.

13. Is tipping in restaurants and dining places etc. required?

No. The public places we will be eating/drinking in (e.g., The Village hotel, stadiums, eateries etc.) do not expect you to tip after ordering drinks and food. For example, you are not obliged to tip the server 20% for food or leave a dollar (about 80 British pence) after ordering food or a drink. That said, this does not mean you cannot leave a tip – the choice to do so is down to everyone.

14. Is the process of ordering food in restaurants the same as in the U.S.?

In many places you could visit to order food and drinks while in England, they will often not have servers coming over to your table to take your order. As a rule of thumb, you make a note of the table number (small table number icon on tables in most places etc.) and then – after looking at the menu – you simply walk up to the register/bar, place your order, and provide your table number.

15. What specific electronic devices do I need for the trip?

Please bear in mind that different electrical outlets and plugs are used in England (THREE-PRONGED PLUG). That said, we strongly encourage all players and adults traveling to have at least TWO UK plug adapters for the hotel rooms so you can charge electronic devices. You can simply go onto Amazon and type in 'U.S to UK plug adapter' or 'adapter plug for UK' and purchase them relatively inexpensively.

In previous years, players have traveled with phones, iPad's, laptops etc. Obviously, the choice to travel with electronic devices is down to the individual, but obviously

everyone is responsible for the safety and security of any devices they travel with. We recommend traveling with only the devices that are deemed essential for daily use. Please note that all rooms also have standard and contemporary micro-USB ports.

16. Communication (while in England).

Our communication tool while we are in England will be Teamsnap. Please make sure you have this application on your phone.

Regarding general cellphone usage, an international calling/text plan is strongly recommended – and we encourage you to contact your provider for more information. International plan prices differ – but can be purchased for around \$10-15 per day. International plans also allow for communication away from the hotel. In around the hotel – the Wi-Fi is strong, and Skype, FaceTime, and WhatsApp are all common and effective options to communicate with family back in the U.S. If anyone needs anything urgently while in England – our Tour Director will be the first port of call.

Please BE MINDFUL THERE IS A 5-HOUR TIME DIFFERENCE IN THE UK! So, for example, 8:00am (Eastern U.S. time) equates to 1:00pm in the UK!

Updates and pictures from the tour will be added to the Invictus Instagram, just so parents/families get to see what's taking place. As a reminder, our Instagram handle is @invictusnewyork. We encourage everyone to follow us on social media platform for regular tour updates.

17. Will everyone be dining at the hotel?

During our stay in England, we will be dining at the hotel most, if not all of the nights (schedule dependent). The hotel staff are very professional, and we have reserved own private banquet room which will offer an excellent buffet- style dinner each evening (with multiple different options each night). If we are on the road late for any reason, we will make other arrangements based upon our itinerary, which will also be excellent options.

18. What will the weather be like in England?

The weather can be very unpredictable in the North-West of England (especially being close to the Irish Sea). Some years, we have experienced glorious 70-80F days and sunshine – and other trips we have encountered wind/rain, and cooler

temps of around 50-60F. The only thing we can say is to prepare and expect for the unexpected.

19. What packing and luggage allocation should I plan for?

Typically, travelers will be able to check one piece of luggage weighing up to 50lbs, and one carry-on weighing up to 22lbs, and one personal item (small handbag, laptop bag, changing bag, plastic bag etc.) that fits under the seat.

We work with the following airlines:

Aer Lingus
Delta
British Airways
Air Transat
Iceland Air
Air Canada
Westjet

Players should be prepared to train 2-3 times throughout the week and – as pointed out – teams will be playing games against competitive local competition. Therefore, players must also bring the following:

Footwear

Plan for every type of surface: Running Shoes, Flats, Cleats. In the past we have trained and played on wet/dry grass, hard surfaces, turf, and even the beach. Be prepared for different surfaces.

Socks and shorts

For training, players should wear their own socks and shorts.

Shinguards

Shinguards are required for all training sessions and all games.

Small backpack or bag

Please ensure you pack a small backpack or small bag so you can travel to practices and games with items stored safely.

Game jerseys

We will communicate with all team managers and coaches regarding jerseys and uniforms for games.

Soccer Ball

Please pack a size 5 soccer ball. Make sure to take most or all the air out of the ball for the flight. Please bring a small ball pump too.

Additional clothing items for players and parents:

Casual wear

Both players and adult should pack accordingly for an 8-night trip. Pack jeans, casual pants, a light sweater, shirts, shoes, toiletries etc. at your discretion. Be mindful not to pack too much gear – but equally make sure enough comfortable clothing items (aside from the official tour gear) are packed.

Swimming trunks/gym gear

As stated, there will be opportunities to use the indoor and outdoor pools (if the weather is good). Please pack swimming trunks or swimming gear if you plan to utilize the pool facilities. For those who like to workout – please ensure you pack suitable gym gear too.

Medical gear

If needed, players should pack tapes, knee braces, bandages, sports cream, Advil etc. Any prescription medications need to be disclosed on the medical form that will be sent out soon. In addition, coaches will have medical bags (which will contain first aid gear) at all practices and games.

20. Do we need to travel by public transportation?

No. We will not have to use public transportation at any time during the trip (aside from the flights). We have a private/chartered bus usage for our airport transfers, and we have access to our own private/chartered bus each day in England. We kindly ask that everyone respects the cleanliness of the buses we use by removing trash at the end of each excursion, and we ask that everyone also respects the drivers we use throughout the tour.

21. If people are late for the bus departure times (in England), will the driver wait?

No. Please note that the bus driver is adhering to a tight schedule – and all players and adults **MUST** be in the lobby, or at the designated pick up point, at least 5-10 minutes before the stipulated departure times. Unfortunately, the bus driver cannot wait for late arrivals, and so anyone who is late for the bus will miss out on the day's activities. We kindly ask that everyone turns up on time. **In the case of an emergency, please contact our Tour Director.*

22. Spending money

First, the amount of money individuals will need is subjective and differs from person to person. In the past, some people have spent \$500-600 throughout the trip, and others have spent more (\$1500-2000). One size does not fit all.

*Please note (at the time of writing) \$100.00 U.S. dollars = approximately £80.00 British pounds.

Breakfast, lunch, and evening dinner is included on this tour.

As we will be visiting a number of cities, stadiums etc. players and families will be able to sample the local foods and culture at their leisure. Obviously, depending on where you go to eat lunch (as prices can range based upon where you go and what you order), generally speaking, food can be purchased at most places for around 10-15 pounds. *Please note while back at the hotel there are additional/optional bar menus, Starbucks, localized fast food delivery options.

Finally, spending money will also be needed if players/adults want to purchase extra items, UK souvenirs or Premier League jerseys etc. when we are visiting stadiums/club stores, cities, museums, etc. Obviously, everyone's tastes for the English culture will differ and so use your own discretion.

23. Should I exchange any dollars?

We do recommend everyone changes some U.S. dollars (for British sterling/pounds) while in the U.S. You should be able to change a relatively small amount (\$100-200) at most U.S. banks, just so you have some British currency when you land in the UK. If you do not get the chance to change any money while in the U.S., there will be opportunities to exchange money at the airports or in England. That

said, we do not want the group to be delayed (in airports) because people are exchanging money. Please try and get organized before we depart.

In addition to changing some funds before you travel, we do recommend the use of credit/debit cards in the UK (obviously ensure the card is ready for use before you travel and that players know PIN #'s). There are many ATM machines in downtown/city centers etc., if players need to withdraw funds from the machine. Please know that the Euro is NOT ACCEPTED in the UK.

24. Medical information and passports.

Any dietary requirements or medical needs (medications etc.) must be disclosed before we travel. A medical waiver form will be sent out around 4 weeks prior to departure – and this form must be completed and returned before the departure date. In addition, we will also be requesting that everyone makes a copy of their passport and keeps it on their phone or printed off in their bag..

25. Do I need travel and medical insurance?

Travel insurance is optional, and each family will decide based on what is best for them. In previous years, some families have chosen their own travel insurance option – while others have utilized Allianz travel insurance to cover the trip. The Allianz travel insurance information can be accessed at the following address:

<https://www.allianztravelinsurance.com/>

*Please search 'Great Britain' as the destination if you require a single trip quote.

Everyone should have U.S. medical insurance coverage before we travel. If you do not already have coverage, you must take care of this immediately. If anyone is not covered by a medical insurance provider by the time we get to the UK, it is your responsibility to take care of any medical costs incurred if any medical issues/emergencies arise during our time in England.

26. Are there medical facilities/hospitals in Blackpool?

Fingers crossed, everyone stays fit and well during our trip. That said, our hotel location is situated very close (less than a mile) away from the biggest hospital in

Blackpool (The Victoria Hospital) should anyone need to visit for a medical issue. The Victoria Hospital facility has emergency/medical processes and equipment on equal to what is typically found in the U.S.

If anyone experiences any dental pain/emergencies while in England, there is the Whitegate Dr., emergency walk-in center that can be utilized, and this modern facility is located about 2 miles from the hotel. This medical facility is akin to the urgent care facilities found in the U.S. and is staffed by top-level doctors and professionals.

27. Player conduct/behavior

It goes without saying that we expect players to be always on their best behavior throughout the tour; top drawer conduct is both demanded and expected. Players will be treated like adults – and we hope for them to grow and develop on a personal level through the opportunities and cultural experiences afforded to them.

There will be times when players will be in and around the hotel – and it's these moments where players must be respectful AT ALL TIMES to other guests and staff in the hotel. Any running around the hotel, overtly loud and raucous behavior, or general boisterousness will not be tolerated. Equally, no players are permitted to drink alcohol at any time. Our staff, along with team coaches, will be helping to make sure the standards are high in terms of behavior.

Please make sure your son/daughter understands and respects the rules and the hotel, the staff, their teammates, and the tour group. Player behavior on past trips has been impeccable – and we expect standards to be maintained.

IMPORTANT: In the off chance of players behaving inappropriately, they will be spoken to, and if need be, they will be disciplined in regard to playing opportunities in games being taken away from them. We also have the ability to make arrangements for players to fly back early with one of our staff members.

28. Traveling through the airport.

Although we are traveling as a group and will collectively have an amazing time being together and representing our team, we ask all families, when traveling through the airport, to check in just with their family and go through security. Any players traveling alone, will be guided through the airport by a team coach or

Invictus Tours chaperone. This makes the check-in and security check processes much easier than to have our large groups all go through at the same time. We will send specific instructions of where and when to meet as you travel through our communication app teamsnap.

As always, we look forward to another amazing tour!

Thanks,

INVICTUS TOURS