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Dublin's EPIC Museum explores the Irish emigrant experience and features resources for researching your family tree.

HAVE A WEE DRAM

You can feel as though you've entered a Celtic castle at the downtown pub Underdog, courtesy of Knappogue Castle Irish whiskey. Their first single malt, was released in 1951, and since 1968 has been housed in the 13th-century castle in Co. Clare. The brand has partnered with the pub to create a lower-level "secret" bar, built out to mirror the castle's historical decor, complete with trappings like maps of Ireland, faux rock and ancestral portraits, guests can sip on curated cocktails like the Emerald Old Fashioned, made with Knappogue Castle 10-year-old malt, green Chartreuse and ginéppy. Food offerings are a twist on the usual pub fare.

Branching out

Trace your heritage and find your family tree on a visit to Ireland

By VANITA SALISBURY

FOR such a wee country, the extended Irish diaspora is impressively far-flung. By 1990, 40 percent of Irish-born people had migrated abroad, and in 1992 the first person shuffled through Ellis Island was 17-year-old Annie Moore from Cobh, in County Cork. Today more than 80 million descendants sip their ancestrally-earned Guinness, from Australia to Argentina, and heritage tourism to the motherland is booming.

The Emerald Isle heartily embraces the interest. In 2016, EPIC: The Irish Emigration Museum in Dublin's Docklands opened its doors. A visit (\$19) can include delving into emigrants' letters and historical videos, or immersing yourself in the narratives of offspring, like Barack Obama, whose third great-grandfather emigrated from Mayo.

EPIC also houses the Irish Family History Centre (\$22, or \$39 combined with EPIC), where visitors can access digital records and consult privately with genealogists (\$62 for a half hour, or \$106 for an hour).

Aer Lingus offers a "Discover Your Roots" package beginning at \$1,441 per person for a six to eight-night package, which includes a ge-



A stay at historic Shelbourne consultation with their "ge-



nealogy visit at the Irish Family History Centre, admission to the EPIC Emigration Museum, accommodation and a rental car, so after sleuthing you can "road trip through your roots," perhaps even to a specific address.

The museum lives in a grand, five-star property historically significant as the birthplace of the Irish constitution in 1922, takes concierge services to the next level. Since 2007, the hotel has been offering the world's only "genealogy butler," Helen Kelly, on staff.

A member of Accredited Genealogists Ireland, Kelly's services include an hour-long consultation, or "empowerment session," for \$206. Guests wishing to participate fill out information before their stay, like the name and approximate

"Walk gently," she advises. And be patient. "One needs to spend a little bit of time. You just never know. We have long memories in Ireland."

Long memories were extremely advantageous for Jim Regan. When the 72-year-old retired banker started his research in 2002, online records were scarce, but knew a little about his heritage: his great-

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children of Ireland, Visitation Office and the Registry of Deeds. Even if she finds no current relations, Kelly encourages a visit to the ancestral land to perhaps have a chance encounter that would lead them to a living relative.

Then there's commercial indexes like Ancestry.com, the UK-based FindMyPast.com, and FamilyTreeDNA.com. You can also search the Facebook pages of Ireland's county genealogy groups.

The Knappogue Club pop-up football whiskey in new incarnations, like the Emerald Old Fashioned.

Full coverage on pages 4-6