

Why duty-free shouldn't be a free-for-all for causing chaos on last flight home



Holiday snaps
BY JIM MURTY

NOW I like a beer as much as the next man... or woman. And there was a time when I would occasionally overindulge.

Back in the day you could get gratis beer on trans-Atlantic flights... and this thirsty student and his pals apparently drained the supply somewhere above the middle of the Atlantic. Only the air crew had a secret stash - in a curtain beside the toilet. Happy Days... until we hit the humidity on landing.

I no longer drink on board - not because I've taken the pledge but because the price is in direct variance to the quantity. And there's the rub. To circumvent this there are those who'll drink their duty free on board.

That, of course, leads to rowdiness, which is

why Ryanair has now insisted on passengers on UK-Ibiza flights putting duty-free in the hold. This follows a previous similar Aer Lingus ban on Ibiza flights. I saw 'Duty-free Drinker' up close on the last Friday plane back from the UK recently with my family. Maybe it's me getting older, but their cursing and peanut-throwing antics seems so much more anti-social than pilfering from the air crew's stash behind a curtain at the back.

■ **IRELAND** has never been so popular... 4m tourists visited our shores between January and June 2014, that's up 407,100 on the previous figure. Eighty-five thousand are from Canada and the US. In fact almost ten per cent of all North Americans who visit Europe choose Ireland as their destination. As your columnist lays out the green carpet for his third set of US cousins in the last month I can't help feeling rather popular... either that or the exchange rate is in their favour.

■ **CATCH** John Creedon's Wild Atlantic Way on RTE One - the second part of which is tomorrow at 6.30pm. While John relies on his old VW camper van for the 2,500km trip, you can always hotfoot it. Irelandways.com. has se-

lected the best trails from The Beara Way and The Dingle Way to the Aran Islands and the Bluestack and Slí Cholmcille trail. For cyclists, they have divided it into 11 cycling sections. There is a 5% discount for booking now.

■ **YOUR correspondent and the always doughty Mrs M** got our walking boots on to join the Camino.ways.com Walking festival from Laragh at the weekend joining the Wicklow Way en route ... eight kilometres, if you don't mind. That should prepare us for the extra 100kms of the English Way from Ferrol-Santiago. Now, If the organisers could just make sure there's a bowl of paella ready after every eight kilometres like you did at the weekend. Gracias!

■ **IF you've been saving for a holiday for Australia or are planning on joining the hordes of Irish still going out there, then you'll no doubt be asking the right questions of Aussies you know, friends and relatives out there and the Embassy here.** Not like these wide-eyed wanderers featured on Amazing Australia website. Q: Can you send me the Vienna Boys' Choir schedule?; Do You Celebrate Christmas in Australia? or Which direction is north in Australia? To be fair the question: Do you find kangaroos in the streets? is not as outlandish as it first seems, a YouTube film of two marsupials fighting on an Aussie avenue is as good a calling card for the country as any I can think of. Have a G'day!

