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## Travel Like Royalty With Adams & Butler

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Through tour operator Adams & Butler, clients can dine with dignitaries and stay in exclusive properties

By: [Skye Mayring](#)

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President Obama learned Gaelic at The Merrion // © 2015 Merrion Hotel

Feature image (above): Luttrellstown Castle, where Taylor Swift stayed in 2011 // © 2015 Luttrellstown Castle

Glance at an Adams & Butler itinerary and you might see afternoon tea with Sir Charles St. John Colthurst in Blarney Castle; dinner with the fifth Duke of Abercorn, the most senior aristocrat in Ireland; or a whiskey tasting poured by the ninth generation of the Jameson Whiskey family in their ancestral home. The Virtuoso-preferred supplier wants to give each client the trip of a lifetime.

For Adams & Butler, luxury is more than high-thread-count linens and butler service. Clients can expect over-the-top experiences and exclusive access to the people and places that make each destination unique.

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“Unlike other destination specialists, we are the only specialist that can arrange private visits with aristocracy, famous authors, ministers of parliament and experts in their field,” said Siobhan Byrne Learat, founder and CEO of Adams & Butler, which specializes in high-end travel to Ireland, Scotland, England, Wales

world.

## The Details

**Adams & Butler**  
[www.adamsandbutler.com](http://www.adamsandbutler.com)

and East Africa. “Our Dublin guide used to guide Queen Elizabeth II when she visited Ireland. And just recently, we arranged for a client to meet the deputy prime minister of Ireland.”

The company organizes customized vacations for individuals, families, small groups and incentive groups that often include the services of a knowledgeable driver guide. Adams & Butler selects qualified, licensed guides who are amusing, intelligent and articulate.

“Our driver guides are considered the jewels in our crown. They spend more time with the client than either the agents or ourselves, and so it is of the utmost importance that we choose them well,” Learat said. “We empower our driver guides to change an itinerary whenever they feel it would be in the client’s interest — if they are tired, more energetic or if the driver discovers a new interest of the client’s that we had not known of before. None of our itineraries are set in stone.”

When creating a custom itinerary, travel advisors can select from hundreds of properties that Adams & Butler inspects every year, from five-star country farmhouses and historic hotels to exclusive castle rentals. The company ensures that the properties know which travel advisor or agency is responsible for the booking so that the advisor can continue to build relationships with suppliers.

“We also operate on contracted net rates with the properties and are not greedy — hence, a lot of clients find it as reasonable to book with us via their travel agent rather than booking directly,” Learat said.

On my Adams & Butler-arranged trip, I stayed at The Shelbourne Dublin, A Renaissance Hotel, overlooking St. Stephen’s Green city park. The Constitution of Ireland was drafted at The Shelbourne, and one of the two original copies of the historic document can be found in the Constitution Suite. After I checked out of The Shelbourne and discovered I was almost too close to my next hotel to take a cab, the bellman offered to walk me and all of my luggage to the The Westbury Hotel, just a half-mile away.

This high level of service continued at The Westbury, home to two of the city’s Michelin-starred restaurants. When my husband and I returned from dinner one night, we found rose petals strewn over our bed, as if we were newlyweds. It was an unexpected touch that made our stay truly memorable.

Adams & Butler can also arrange for guests to overnight in the same hotel where President Obama and the first lady stayed during their trip to Ireland in 2011. It was at The Merrion hotel in

Dublin where the president learned Gaelic phrases from the receptionist, who he discovered was from Moneygall, the same county as his ancestral homeland. Obama later used his newly learned language skills in an address to the nation, with Ireland's prime minister Enda Kenny by his side.

If you're anything like Taylor Swift, however, you might prefer an accommodation outside Dublin. For Swift, the Adams & Butler team arranged a stay at Luttrellstown Castle, a 15th-century castle estate that has served as a temporary home for royalty and dignitaries for centuries. The 520-acre property was also the setting for David and Victoria Beckham's wedding in 1999.

Adams & Butler can help clients make a grand entrance at their property of choice with helicopter transportation or the use of a private yacht (when possible). To add more depth to an itinerary, the company can also assist with genealogical research or tailor a trip toward special interests, whether that's Jewish history, Gaelic culture or ghosts and the paranormal.

"We are the advisor's advisor — we only work with travel agencies and some select operators," Learat said. "We understand travel agents and their priorities, and we always put them first and protect them, even if it's to our disadvantage. We also arrange fairs for agents at no cost to them. We are 100 percent committed to the agent and the travel trade."



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**Siobhan Byrne Learat** ·

President at Irish United States Alumni Association

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