

LIMERICK STRAND HOTEL FIRST IN LIMERICK TO BE CHINA READY

Limerick, September 24th 2018: The team at Limerick Strand Hotel have worked tirelessly to complete the challenging task of being Limerick's first "China Ready" hotel.

They are one of the very few Irish tourism businesses to complete Fáilte Ireland's *Get China Ready* programme and delighted to receive their certificates from the national tourism development authority.

The **China Ready Programme** is aimed at educating Irish tourism businesses about the opportunities available from the Chinese tourist market and is part of Fáilte Ireland's work to assist tourism businesses with market diversification and reduce the risks currently posed by [Brexit](#). The Programme is an initiative of Fáilte Ireland in cooperation with Tourism Ireland and Tourism Northern Ireland.

Presenting the certificates, Paul Keeley, Director of Commercial Development at Fáilte Ireland said that Irish tourism businesses are beginning to see an increase in the number of Chinese visitors since direct flights from China started in June 2018. He emphasised:

"China is one of the fastest-growing outbound travel markets in the world with numbers predicted to grow to 200 million by 2020. Last year, an estimated 70,000 Chinese visitors travelled to Ireland but with the advent of the new direct flights from Beijing and Hong Kong that number is expected to substantially increase. The aim of the 'China Ready Programme' is to ensure that the Chinese visitor is warmly welcomed to Ireland and that tourism businesses are prepared and culturally aware of the requirements of our Chinese visitors."

Stephen O Connor, General Manager of the Strand Hotel in Limerick added:
“Over the last number of weeks the team at the Limerick Strand Hotel have worked very hard to achieve this special accreditation and we are delighted to be the first hotel in Limerick to do so. This programme has been a fascinating journey for our team and we really delighted to gain an understanding of the cultural needs of our Chinese guests so that they have a wonderful experience but also a great opinion of Ireland as a tourism destination. This also coincides perfectly with the EU-China Year of Tourism 2018 initiative, for which we are delighted to offer our support. Recent data released by Fáilte Ireland has shown us how important the Chinese tourism market is becoming and the Limerick Strand Hotel is fully ready to welcome our Chinese guests”

Executive Chef Tom Flavin has relished the idea of feeding Chinese guests, creating specific menus and offering Congee at breakfast. The hotel has also produced welcome packs in Mandarin which came in handy over the weekend when they welcomed their first Chinese group to stay at the hotel and the 25 trained staff putting their learned Mandarin phrases into working practice!

www.strandlimerick.ie

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NOTE TO EDITORS

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The Limerick Strand Hotel is an award winning four-star hotel ideally located on O'Callaghan Strand in the heart of Limerick City Centre. With stunning vistas of The River Shannon and a birds-eye view of every landmark in the historical city the Limerick Strand Hotel is the ideal venue for both business and pleasure trips.

Executive Head Chef, Tom Flavin and his culinary team pride themselves in serving the finest quality of Irish and international cuisine, with an emphasis on fresh, seasonal produce with all the food traceable and where possible with an emphasis on using locally produced products. With incredible conference and banqueting facilities, the Limerick Strand is the preferred venue for weddings, events and meetings.

The Energize Health Centre is the top spot in Limerick to boost your fitness levels or simply enjoy laid-back leisure. Energize boasts not one but four pools, including a 20 metre swimming pool, sauna and jacuzzi.

Limerick Strand is a proud member of MHL Hotel Collection of unique and individual hotels and hostels in key locations in Ireland. The Limerick Strand hotel is part of the Irish owned and managed MHL Hotel Collection, which is a collection of unique and individual hotels in key city and resort locations throughout Ireland, who are committed to delivering exceptional hospitality and facilities to all our guests.

In Dublin the collection offers the 5* Westin Hotel, the Spencer Hotel, the Morgan Hotel, the Trinity City Hotel as well as the 5* InterContinental Hotel, the Hilton Dublin and the Beacon Hotel. And in Galway the MHL Hotel Collection recently acquired The Galmont Hotel and Spa (formerly known as the Radisson Blu Galway) to join its Harbour Hotel and Glenlo Abbey Hotels in Galway City. See www.mhlhotelcollection.com for further details.