



ENGLAND TOUR 2024

PARENTAL Q&A INFORMATION

1. When will the tour itinerary be sent out?

The specific daily tour itinerary is almost complete, and we anticipate it to be finalized in the next 4-6 weeks. Once it has been finalized, it will be emailed to all families. As a reminder, please refer to the informative video on our website – as this material summarizes what players, coaches, and parents will encounter during our April 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 session at Wolves' Premier League 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. How many Invictus teams are traveling to England?

We will have TWO boys' teams traveling to England in April. One team is predominantly made up of U16 players – and the other team will consist of U17/18 players. Each team will play three games throughout the week, against appropriately aged competition. Our Tour Director, and Invictus FC coach, Wyatt Scott will be leading the U17/18 team – and he will be ably assisted by Carlos Lourenco (FSC coach in Connecticut). Invictus FC coach, Ted Avramov, will be leading the U16 Boys team.

3. Who will be the lead person we report to and approach with any questions during the tour?

Wyatt Scott will be the Tour Director during the tour. Wyatt will address everyone on the bus, at the airports, at the stadiums, in the hotel lobby area etc., so it's imperative everyone follows Wyatt's prescribed instructions. Wyatt has the necessary skills, credentials, and experiences desired to lead the tour successfully. We politely ask everyone to show Wyatt the respect he deserves throughout the tour – and to adhere to Wyatt's instructions.

In addition, club owners and directors (Paul Mairs and Richard Shaw) will also be on the tour and accessible in any emergency. Both Paul and Richard are originally from the North-West of England – and played professionally and semi-professionally in the UK for many years. Paul and Richard have also been delivering this fantastic tour successfully for 11 years now, so are well versed in the nuisances of the various aspects of the trip!

4. 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. Adult chaperones 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 chaperone as to what they choose to attend. The only thing we do ask is that – if adult chaperones choose not to travel somewhere – they provide our Tour Director, Wyatt Scott, with prior notification.

5. As an adult chaperone, can I request to travel somewhere not listed on the tour itinerary?

If adult chaperones decide to get onto the bus and take part in the excursions, we politely ask everyone to adhere to the plans already laid out – which will be directed by Wyatt Scott. We have run this tour very successfully for many years – and a main part of that is that everyone sticks to the plan. We politely also ask that adult chaperones refrain from offering opinions or ideas – unless opinions/views are asked for. We do not wish to create any unnecessary stress or extra work for anyone.

Now, that said, if adult chaperones decide not to get on the bus on any given day, and choose to stay around the hotel, then we are not stopping anyone from getting a taxi downtown or to another area. 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 adult chaperones decide to do.

6. 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 chaperones/coaches every time they leave the hotel. When we travel to stadiums, downtown areas, or visit attractions in Blackpool, all players must be in groups with an adult chaperone leading the group. No one should leave the group alone. The safety and welfare of players is absolute top priority – and further reinforcement of this crucial point will be sent out before the departure date.

7. What hotel is everyone going to stay at?

Everyone will be staying at The Village Hotel, Blackpool. The hotel contact information is below:

Address: The Village Hotel, E Park Dr., Blackpool, United Kingdom, FY3 8LL

Phone: +44 1253 208870

Website: <https://www.village-hotels.co.uk/blackpool>

8. What amenities does the hotel have?

The Village Hotel is akin to a small 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, restaurant, Starbucks, private dining banquet areas, and walking trail (2.7 miles around the complex).

9. 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.

10. 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.

11. What is the room situation at the hotel?

Like all previous tours, two people will occupy one room (with two separate beds). Any adult chaperones who are traveling with their son 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 players they would like to room with. We will do our best to make sure players are comfortable and sharing with a friend.

12. Will I get the chance to purchase snacks, fluids, essentials for the room?

We will be stopping at one of the main supermarkets in Blackpool on the first day of arrival. 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 in downtown Blackpool and Liverpool etc.) to stop at stores and purchase essential items. Below are the links to what is happening in Blackpool and Liverpool (entertainment, shopping, things to do...), so please look when you get the chance. We will be in the downtown areas of Blackpool and Liverpool for a few hours on different days.

Blackpool tourism information: <https://www.visitblackpool.com/>

Liverpool tourism information: <https://www.visitliverpool.com/>

13. 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.

14. 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.

15. Is the process of ordering food in restaurants/eateries the same as in the U.S.?

No, it's not the same process. Again, the places we will be visiting to order food and drinks generally will not have servers coming over to the tables 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, place your order, and provide your table number.

16. 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.

17. Communication (while in England)

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 to contact us urgently while in England – please text or call our Tour Director, Wyatt Scott (**315-399-7421**). Wyatt will have an international text and call service if anyone requires anything urgently. Please BE MINDFUL THERE IS A 5-HOUR TIME DIFFERENCE IN THE UK! So, 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 FC Instagram and Facebook pages daily, just so parents/families get to see what's taking place! As a reminder, our Instagram handle is [@invictusnewyork](#), and we can be found on Facebook as [Invictus New York](#). We encourage everyone to follow us on social media platforms for regular tour updates!

18. Will everyone be dining at the hotel every night?

During our 8 nights in England, we will be dining at the hotel on 5 of these nights. 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). On the other 3 nights, we will be on the road and having pizza nights etc.

19. 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 70-75F days and sunshine – and other trips we have encountered high winds, rain, and cooler temps of around 45-50F. The only thing we can say is to prepare and expect for the unexpected.

20. What gear do I need to pack for the trip?

First, each traveler will be able to check one piece of luggage weighing up to 50lbs, along with brining on one carry on item. All players and adult chaperones will receive official Puma England 2024 tour gear. This package includes pants, 2 x tees, a warm-up zip sweater, and rain jacket. This official Puma gear will be handed out during the preparation practices in March. In addition, players should be prepared to train 4-5 times throughout the week and – as pointed out – teams will be playing three games during the week too. **That said, the following gear needs to be packed:**

PASSPORT

Don't forget your passport!

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 and games, you will need to have navy and/or black socks and shorts. We recommend players bring 2-3 pairs.

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

Please bring BOTH YOUR Invictus FC game jerseys (blue and yellow). **Connecticut based players will be provided with game jerseys when we arrive in England.** Along with the game jerseys, you should plan to bring any gear you need under your jersey (Under Armor tops etc.). Plan on cool, cold, wet weather and you can adjust based on conditions.

Soccer Ball

Plan to 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.

Casual wear

Both players and adult chaperones are expected to pack accordingly for an 8-night trip. Pack jeans, casual pants, sweaters, shirts, shoes, toiletries etc. at your discretion. Be mindful not to pack too much gear – but equally make sure enough comfortable/warm 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 (if the weather is good) pools. 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.

21. Are players and adults expected to wear the England tour gear all the time?

Players and adult chaperones must wear the England tour gear when traveling to and from the UK, and when we go to facilities to play games. In addition, we do expect everyone to wear tops (zip top and/or jacket) on trips to stadiums etc. This is crucial for visibility purposes. That said, players and adults can wear other casual gear in and around the hotel – and other types of pants/jeans choices are permitted too when we travel. The wearing of a top/jacket is the most important factor when leaving the hotel and walking around stadiums etc.

22. 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.

23. 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 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.

24. 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 not (at the time of writing) \$100.00 U.S. dollars = approximately £80.00 British pounds.**

Breakfast and evening dinner are included in the tour and – apart from the first Sunday when lunch is also provided – everyone should expect to purchase lunch at the hotel or at stadiums etc. (around \$10-15.00 per day). Spending money will also be needed if players/adults want to purchase extra food, drinks, UK souvenirs or Premier League jerseys etc. when we are visiting Blackpool, Liverpool, stadiums club stores etc. Obviously, everyone's tastes for the English culture will differ and so use your own discretion.

25. 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 ATM machines in downtown Blackpool, Liverpool, Manchester etc., if players need to withdraw funds from the machine. Please know that the Euro is NOT ACCEPTED in the UK.

26. 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 soon – and this form must be completed and returned before the departure date. In addition, we will also be requesting a copy of everyone's passport for our records and for the airline. An email regarding the medical form and sending copies of passports will be sent out very soon.

***Please note** that ALL player passports will be handed to our Tour Director, Wyatt Scott, before arriving at the hotel in England. Wyatt will make sure everyone's passport is locked away in the safe – just so no one travels around with their passport and loses it. Passports will also be handed to Wyatt when traveling to Boston Airport, again, just in case anyone misplaces their passport in transit to the airport.

26. 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 medial issues/emergencies arise during our time in England.

27. 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.

28. 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.

Please make sure your son understands and respects the rules and the hotel, the staff, their teammates, and the club. Player behavior on past trips has been impeccable – and we expect standards to be high again in 2024.

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.

29. Travel Plans

Pick-up: Bus travel to Boston Airport

All Syracuse-based players and adults should plan to be at **Wegmans, 6789 E Genesee St., Fayetteville, NY 13066** no later than **9:45am** on Friday, April 19th. Our chartered bus will depart Wegmans at **10:30am**.

All Connecticut-based players should meet at **Big Y World Class Market, 10 Pleasant St, Lee, MA 01238** no later than **1:15pm**. Our chartered bus will pick up Connecticut-based players from the Big Y (Lee, MA) and depart Lee at **2:00pm**.

***Syracuse players and adults will also be allowed to stretch their legs and use the restroom etc. before departing from the Big Y in Lee, MA.**

***Please note that ALL PLAYERS AND PARENTS (picked up in Syracuse or Lee, MA) must hand their passports to Wyatt Scott before they get on the bus. This is to ensure that no one has forgotten their passport, and/or misplaces their passports while traveling to Boston.**

Drop-off: Bus travel back to Lee, MA, and Syracuse

Full flight details can be observed below, but it's important to know that the return flight is scheduled to **land in Boston on Sunday, April 28th at 6:50pm**. Once everyone has smoothly transitioned through customs – and reclaimed baggage – we aim to have the bus depart Boston Airport around 8:00pm.

Connecticut-based players will be dropped off at the **Big Y World Class Market, 10 Pleasant St, Lee, MA 01238** around **10-10:15pm**.

Connecticut families should plan on arriving at the Big Y (Lee, MA) on Sunday, April 28th no later than 9:45pm.

Syracuse-based players/adults will be dropped off at Wegmans, **Wegmans, 6789 E Genesee St., Fayetteville, NY 13066** around **1:30am (early hours of Monday, April 29th)**.

Syracuse families should plan on arriving at the Wegmans (Fayetteville, NY) no later than 1:10am (early on Monday, April 29th). Flight information (we are flying with Icelandair in 2024.

Departure flights:

Flight 1:

Friday, April 19th Boston to Reykjavik-Keflavik (Flight # FI630), departs at 8:50pm (EST).
Scheduled to land in Reykjavik (Iceland) at 6:05am on Saturday, April 20th.

*Short lay-over in Iceland of about 2 hours between flights.

Flight 2:

Saturday, April 20th Reykjavik-Keflavik to Manchester (Flight # FI440) departs at 8:00am.
Scheduled to land in Manchester (England) at 11:40am (GMT) on Saturday, April 20th.

Return flights:

Flight 1:

Sunday, April 28th Manchester to Reykjavik-Keflavik (Flight # FI441), departs at 1:05pm (GMT).
Scheduled to land in Reykjavik (Iceland) at 2:50pm.

*Short lay-over in Iceland of about 2hrs 20mins in Iceland between flights.

Flight 2:

Sunday, April 28th Reykjavik-Keflavik to Boston (Flight # FI631) departs at 5:10pm. Scheduled to land in Boston at 6:50pm (EST).

30. Will Syracuse and Connecticut players meet before departure?

Yes. That is the plan. As a reminder, we have organized TWO meet and greet sessions on the following dates and at the following location:

Session 1: Sunday, March 3rd (11:00am – 12:00pm) followed by a 15–20-minute coaches/players meeting.

Session 2: Sunday, March 17th (11:00am – 1:00pm).

Location: Accelerate Sports Complex, 5241 Judd Rd., Whitesboro, NY 13492

***Please note** that official Puma England tour gear will be handed out at these sessions. We anticipate all players and adult chaperones to attend both sessions. If you cannot attend on any of the above dates, please let us know by emailing info@invictusfc.com ASAP!

We are looking forward to an amazing tour – which will be packed with a variety of fantastic excursions and experiences! We hope this document covers all topics and questions and puts everyone's minds at ease! We look forward to seeing everyone at the first meet and greet session at the Accelerate Sports Complex on Sunday March 3rd!

See you all soon!

Thanks, **INVICTUS FC**