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سفارة أيرلندا
١٨ ش حسن صبرى-الزمالك-القاهرة
ص ب ٢٦٨١-الرقم البريدى ١١٢١١
ت : ٢٧٢٨٧١٠٠٠
فاكس: ٢٧٣٦٢٨٦٣

Bill Linnane

Our Ref: FOI/Req/19/168

2 June 2019

Dear Mr Linnane,

I refer to the request which you have made under the Freedom of Information Act 2014 for access to records held by this Department as follows:

The Irish Embassy in Cairo hosted a whiskey tasting event on January 16. I would like to know how much was spent on the event, and specifically on Stuart McNamara's trip to Egypt, as he was there for a number of days.

I would like a full breakdown of costs borne by the State for the trip, as well as an itinerary of his trip as organised by the State.

I refer also to the acknowledgement of your request which was sent to you on 17 May.

I have decided to grant your request in full. Attached is the Itinerary and cost details.

The Whiskey Tasting organised by the Embassy of Ireland, Cairo on 16 January 2019 was part of the ongoing work of the Embassy to promote trade between Ireland and Egypt. A large part of this promotion relates to Irish food and drinks exports and the Embassy has worked closely with Bord Bia in this. This was the first whiskey tasting event held by the Embassy in Cairo, was a great success and was very well received by the attendees and across social media platforms.

The whiskey tasting was targeted at importers of alcoholic drinks, management of hotels and restaurants, social media influencers, lifestyle journalists and a number of whiskey aficionados. In total 42 guests participated in the event.

The tasting was led by Mr Stuart McNamara, a well-known Whiskey Writer, Blogger and Podcaster. He is the Editor of the IrishWhiskey.Com and the WhiskeyTrail.ie websites.

The structure of the tasting was devised by the Embassy in consultation with Mr McNamara. The Embassy also saw the opportunity to promote Irish food in pairings with the whiskeys being tasted and selected these independently.

The following whiskeys and foods were tasted.

- Single Malt / Single Grain Blend: Teeling Small Batch (Rum Finish) with Skeaghanore Smoked Duck
- Single Grain: Hyde 1916 with Smoked Salmon
- Single Malt: Pearse 5 Year Old Single Malt with Corned beef and Irish Potato Cake
- Single Malt/Single Pot Still (Champagne) Blend: The Irishman Founders Reserve with Gubbeen cheese and Sourdough Crouton
- Single Pot Still: Powers 3 Swallow with Milleens cheese
- Cask Strength: Redbreast 12 Year Old Single Pot Still with Clonakilty Black pudding and Paprika Grissini Sticks.

The whiskeys were chosen in consultation with Mr McNamara on the basis of availability and cost.

For space and logistical reasons the Embassy held the tasting at a hotel in Cairo, which offered substantially discounted rates on its usual function charges to provide table service, prepare food and provide security.

It had been intended at the planning phase that Mr McNamara would deliver a second tasting on 17th January but the majority of the intended audience were not available and it was folded into the tasting on 16th January.

Stuart McNamara stayed at the residence of the Ambassador of Ireland at no additional public expense. Mr McNamara declined a per diem payment and a speaking fee.

Right of Appeal

Should you wish to appeal this decision, you may do so in writing to the Freedom of Information Unit, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, 76-78 Harcourt street, Dublin 2 or by email to foi@dfat.ie . A fee applies for access to non-personal information; the level of this fee has been set at €30. For methods of payment, please contact FOI Unit at foi@dfat.ie , Or 01-4082857.

You should make your appeal within 4 weeks (20 working days) from the date of this notification. However, the making of a late appeal may be permitted in certain circumstances. The appeal will involve a complete reconsideration of the matter by a more senior member of staff of this Department.

Yours Sincerely



Shane Gleeson
Embassy, Cairo

