ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS OF WINE
FROM THE WINE BUFF

SUSAN STEELE - A LIFE FUELLED BY VITAMIN SEA
BY KATE RYAN

SEAFOOD CIDER LASAGNE RECIPE
COURTESY OF ELKE O’MAHONY

TEN OF THE BEST IRISH SEAFOOD EXPERIENCES
BY KATE RYAN

SURF AND TURF RECIPE
COURTESY OF DECKY WALSH, HEAD CHEF

EASTER RECIPE COURTESY OF DARINA ALLEN
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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to the latest edition of Irish Foodie, the free magazine that showcases the best of Irish produce and celebrates the wealth of creativity and talent of our artisan producers and chefs.

Easter heralds the start of the tourist season in Ireland with many festivals and food events to look forward to. The interesting and fabulous destinations from our airports augers well for a diverse and fascinating visitor season. Hopefully the month of "MAY" will see some resolve to the crashing bore that has become Brexit and we can look forward to British visitors as well!

We hope you enjoy the read in this edition of Foodie and you might like to try your hand at the Easter recipes inside. We also mention some places to visit, Kate Ryan looks at the new distillery in Cloonakilty and also gives some tips for the best seafood experiences.

If you are holding a food event or would like to contribute to our magazine with an article or recipe, please do not hesitate to contact us on 085 8060194 or email us on quincepublishing@gmail.com
Foodie will be back again for June. In the meantime enjoy the Easter Break.

Until next time
Bon Appétit!

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6th - 15th September 2019
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By Irish Tourism Industry Awards
atasteofwestcork.com
Welcome back. For those of you who practised what Paddy recommended in our second article, what did your friends and family think of all that chewing, slurping and drooling? Remember though, practise makes perfect, so, even if you are ridiculed, continue. In this issue we will discuss the essential elements present in wine.

White wines contain Fruit, Acid and Alcohol.

Red wines contain Fruit, Acid, Alcohol and Tannin. A “well balanced” wine simply means that all these elements are present in equal, or harmonious, amounts.

A “well rounded” wine means the elements present are tasted harmoniously all round the palate in a velvety smooth manner.

Tannin is found in the skin of the RED grape and is essential to good red wine.

Tannins give red wine its colour, structure and complexity, and also its ability to mature and evolve. Tannins however are not always the most pleasant of experiences for the novice wine drinker as Paddy discovered when moving to St. Emilion in 1988. His father-in-law, Rene Baylet, was voted the top wine maker in France that year for quality/price. To Paddy’s young palate, his wines tasted sharp and bitter, and he thought, if this is the best then please don’t give me the worst! It took two years to mature his palate because he refrained from drinking for most of that period. Then, one day, his brother-in-law, Jean-Marie, explained that the more complex a wine is, the better it is. To educate his palate he began by drinking older wines as the tannin breaks down with age and the fruit becomes a lot more expressive. And from then on there was no turning back.

Tannin is one of the most beneficial elements when wine is recommended for health reasons. The drinker in this case should be certain as to the origin of the tannin present. If the tannins are not extracted directly from the skin of the grapes used to make the wine, then not only do they not serve their purpose, but, they can also have an adverse effect. Have you ever noticed that when you drink clean wines you do not suffer from those unwelcome hangover effects the next day? If a young red wine does not leave a little dryness on the palate then question its authenticity. When you chew on a red grape, even the ripest of red grapes, you will notice dryness on your palate. When good red wines are made naturally this dryness must be present, if not, then either the skins were not macerated for a long period in which case the colour of the wines are extremely light, or an alternative chemical means has been used to colour the wines.

When red grapes are pressed the juice is either white or rose, but never red. Some Champagnes are made from a red wine grape, the “Pinot Noir”. To give red wine its colour the skins are macerated (soaked) in the juice of the grapes; the maceration period, which can last for up to a month, depends on the results required. The tannin acts as a dye, for this reason salt poured on a red wine spill absorbs the colour.

Acidity is also very important in a wine as it creates the sensations of freshness and crispiness on the palate. It is essential when ageing wines. As with tannins, the acid present in the wine should come directly from the grapes used in the winemaking to eliminate those nasty side-effects the following day.
Conveniently located near to the South Main Street entrance to The Riverview Shopping Centre, the Perfect Cup is a lively and vibrant cafe in the heart of Bandon town. Its outdoor seating area is a lovely place to sit and enjoy a coffee or catch up with friends while shopping.

The interior of the cafe is pleasant with an upstairs vaulted area ideal for holding business meetings and small parties until late by arrangement. Some visitors prefer to sit upstairs for their meal during the day.

The menu includes traditional and healthy breakfast options from a full Irish plate to toasted bagels, waffles or healthy organic porridge with honey and fresh cream.

The tempting lunch menu comprises of a range of sandwiches, savoury crepes and super fresh salads, all beautifully presented. Simple food but done very well and full of flavour.

The dessert menu is delicious from apple sponge, to coffee and walnut cake, sweet crepes, florentines to crushed meringue with ice cream and hot raspberries. All desserts are made in house and look beautiful.

A range of tea and coffees is served together with cold beverages.

The Perfect Cup is an ideal place for delicious food and coupled with excellent friendly service the visitor can ask for no more.

Howard Court, Bandon, Co. Cork
Tel: 023 884 2720
Open six days, from 9am - 6pm; closed Sundays
SUSAN STEELE - A LIFE FUELED BY VITAMIN SEA

Kate Ryan, Flavour.ie

Susan Steele is the Chairperson of the Sea Fisheries Protection Authority (SFPA), headquartered in Clonakilty, West Cork and with offices in strategic fishing ports right around the Republic. Dr Steele joined the SFPA in March 2013, a regulatory authority with the task of ensuring compliance with all Fisheries and Sea Food Safety legislation. It is a challenging role for the sheer scale of what falls under the remit of her regulatory control. And then, of course, there is Brexit. But for Susan, the daughter of Veronica and Norman Steele, founders of Milleens Cheese, Chair of the SFPA is the pinnacle of a career that started with her decision at the age of three to become a Marine Biologist.

If Tammy Wynette sang about fisheries protection rather than the latest object of her desire, she may well have echoed Susan’s sentiments that “sometimes it’s hard to be a Regulator,” because no matter what, she says, “we always get the blame!” Despite this, Susan has a symbiotic relationship with her role and with her field of expertise that means no matter what the day throws in her path she has the tenacity to take it on; to see the positive in every challenge and still find the energy to keep learning and working on her own personal development too.

Under the sea...

“For every acre on land, there are ten acres under the sea,” explains Susan. “We have the richest, most nutrient dense waters in Europe, so what we get from our waters is really incredible.”

The remit of SFPA is laid down by legislation. “Farmers have their land but fishing utilises a shared resource and a need for someone who is independent to look after this shared resource so if there is an issue there is an independent, fair and effective regulator they can talk to.”

Managing fisheries is only one side of the remit. “We work under an agreement with the Food Safety Authority of Ireland (FSAI) to ensure that all seafood produced by Irish factories is safe to eat and everything that is exported is certified.

“There are countries that have illegal fishing, a global issue that is one of the greatest threats to sustainability and the planet. We have a unit that covers illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing that ensures when you buy a can of tuna fish from the supermarket, for example, you don’t have to worry about that as a consumer because we know where it was caught and we know that it’s legal.”

Sustainable Fishing

Sustainability is the buzzword of our current times, but what happens if fish stocks are not managed? The Marine Institute, based in Galway, is the science arm of fisheries management. They monitor fish stocks and fish landing data, the results of which is given to the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine who create the legislative policy which is regulated by the SFPA.

“I went to Newfoundland a few years ago, I was teaching over there. I drove along the coast and saw Capelin, Minke whales and Puffins - it was beautiful but all the houses were deserted. A failure many years before of the cod fishery there meant the coastal communities were completely destroyed as a result.

“If we don’t look after the shared marine resources in Ireland, it’s not the people in the cities that will be affected, they’ll still be able to buy flown-in fish, but our coastal communities will suffer. In areas such as Castletownbere or Killybegs, you have to have a certain number of people living in a community to keep the local primary school or a local community hospital open. Tourism’s wonderful but fishing is the backbone to these communities, so if the stocks collapse, like in Newfoundland, they will never come back; and when they do collapse there is the knock on effect to the community at large. People start to leave then gradually there is no one living in these coastal communities, nothing for tourists to visit and the whole thing becomes a vicious circle. So in the SFPA we always say “Coasts full of jobs, and seas full of fish”, it’s all about achieving a balance.”

Brexit – preparing for the unknown

How does SFPA prepare for something uncertain to happen, or how, or when? Under the Common Fisheries Policy, Irish vessels are free to fish in UK waters. It’s an example of the shared marine resources that is lucrative, worth several hundred million Euro’s to the Irish economy.

“Roughly a third of all fish landed by the Irish fleet is caught in UK waters. If there is a hard Brexit, immediately Irish vessels will lose access to those waters. Losing one third of the potential revenue for Irish fishing industry will lead to massive job losses in our coastal areas.

“There are massive potential outcomes that SFPA will have to deal with. Anything Ireland exports outside of the EU are supplied with a health certificate from us, the extra certification we will have to do as an organisation if the UK leaves the EU and becomes a third country will be huge.”

For now, the only thing to do is, ironically, stay calm. No-one knows what the outcomes could be, but the impacts will resonate in access to fishing waters, our coastal communities, and fish export businesses. “I don’t really want to contemplate the outcome without [an agreement]. To be the regulator in this situation is going to be very, very difficult. There are 14,000 people employed in the seafood sector in Ireland, and Minister Creed said in a recent speech that Brexit could see four-thousand of those going, it’s heartbreaking.”

How do you manage the pressures of a job with such challenges?

“The job is so important, I want to do it to the best of my ability so I’m always striving and asking what can I do to look after what’s out there. I get to do a job that I feel is really important and sticks with my values, and requires resilience.

“I’m a great believer that our habits make us, so I keep trying to cultivate really good habits! So every morning I wake up at 5.30, put on my running gear and I don’t take it off until I’ve done some exercise; a run or a session of cross fit and every day I swim in the sea. Work is hard because you have to look equally at the big picture and the smaller details too so I’m always balancing. I’ll keep working until my husband tells me it’s time to stop, puts on a movie and shuts off!”
SEAFISH CIDER LASAGNE

by Elke O'Mahony Bia Sástá

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 550g mixed fish like haddock, sole, plaice, cod etc.
- 120g prawns
- juice of a lemon
- 2 leeks, cleaned and finely sliced
- 4 tbsp butter
- 60g plain flour
- 300ml cider
- 300ml cream
- 1 tsp mild mustard
- 200g grated cheese like mozzarella
- 450g lasagna sheet (fresh if possible)
- 60g parmesan, finely grated
- Seasoning

Method

Put the fish and prawns in a bowl and drizzle over the lemon juice. Set aside while you make the sauce.

Melt the butter in a large saucepan and add the leeks. Cook over a medium heat, stirring to prevent sticking and burning until translucent but not yet browned. Add the flour and cook while stirring for a minute. Gradually add the cider and cream, stirring to combine well with the flour to make a thick and creamy sauce (you might not need all of the liquid).

Preheat the oven to 180°C.

Stir in the mustard and grated cheese and cook for a further few minutes until the cheese is nicely melted. Take the pan off the heat and add the fish and prawns (the pan needs to be off the heat, don’t be tempted to bring the mix to a boil as the lemon in the fish will curdle the cream).

In a lasagna form, alternate fish sauce and pasta sheets finishing with the fish sauce on top. Finally sprinkle the parmesan evenly over the lasagna and bake in the oven for 30 mins. Serve immediately.

I remember my first fish – fish fingers from the freezer. They came in a pack of ten and made a great snack while I was reading my favourite book at the time. When I got a bit more sophisticated, I created a plate of mashed potatoes, fish fingers and cucumber salad – yes, I was that posh at only 11 years old and how grown up I felt when I ordered prawn toast for the first time in a Chinese restaurant. My taste in fish has changed over the years and I can’t even remember the last time I ate fish fingers as these days I love a perfectly cooked slice of salmon, maybe with a lemon herb crust or plaice with a citrus butter drizzle.

In Cork City, we are lucky to have the English market with K. O’Connell, Ballycotton, Frank Hederman and William Martin whose Demneh’s in Blackpool is now run by the second generation with the third being already trained in. In West Cork we have to mention Sally Barnes of Woodcock Smokery and Anthony Crestwell of Umera Smokehouse offering superb fish products.

When buying fish, fresh fish is superior to frozen fish and I personally recommend going to your local fishmonger, which doesn’t have to be more expensive than the supermarket alternative. The fishmonger is able to filet the fish in front of you and you can see for yourself if the fish is fresh or not. The eyes of the fish should be clear, bright and moist. The gills should be bright red or pink and not dull or grey and the fish should smell of sea and nothing else. This can only check at a fish counter and not on a vacuum-wrapped package. Frozen products have one advantage over fresh fish, as it can be stored. Fish does not like too be kept in a fridge which tends to have a temperature of about 5°C as fish is best stored at 0°C. If you have to buy your fish in advance, freezing is the best option but oily fish is the least successful fish to freeze.

I tend to buy a fish mix from the fish counter when I am planning to make a fish pie. These are offcuts from different fish and are normally available for a low price. If you are not afraid handling a fish, buying a whole fish is usually cheaper and most of the time, the monger will have already scaled and gutted it so that you can just go ahead and place some lemon slices and herbs in the cavity and cook it to your liking.

Fish has experienced a growth in Irish retail in recent years with retail sales of fish outshining lamb and pork despite the higher price point. This is astonishing as over 60% of Irish seafood is being exported to 72 countries worldwide with France being one of the strongest markets (Bord Bia 2017). It is easy to understand why countries are so eager to buy Irish fish, our waters are cleaner and our native fish is second to none.

Over the years, fish has been endangered by our love for specific types of fish and are now on the list of fish to be avoided to enable the natural recovery. If you are not sure if the fish you are buying is declared sustainable or not, check out the Irish Wildlife Trust.
We may not be able to count on the weather, but as far as experiences and activities go, Ireland is one of the best places in the world for getting out there and experiencing something completely unique.

Ireland’s phenomenal reputation for the best and freshest seafood in the world is resulting in increased consumer demand, giving rise to the curious consumer who wants to find out more about where and how Irish quality seafood is sourced, grown and crafted.

And industry has answered the call in a fantastic way. All aspects of the industry are coming up with innovative ways to showcase the industry through tours, activities and experiences. The bonus to giving one a go is the excuse to take off on a great Irish road trip and visiting some of our most stunning locations: river deep, mountain high; majestic fjords and sea borne adventures.

It’s all there for the taking, so why not craft your weekend getaway this year around these ten seafood experiences, and end the year a master oyster shucker, seaweed forager or tackling the basics of fish smoking!

1. **Sligo Oyster Experience**
   - [www.sligoosterexperience.ie](http://www.sligoosterexperience.ie)
   A guided experience with a literary angle as your guide regales you with stories of summers spent in Sligo by WB Yeats on a short walk across Hyde Bridge over the Garavogue River. A visit to the eponymous café where an oyster shucking demonstration will take place, and a talk about the Oysters grown locally. An Oyster tasting rounds things off nicely, served with a glass of crisp white wine or a locally brewed craft beer. Off season, the Oyster Tasting only is available at WB Yeats Café.

   Guided experience is bookable in advance; no booking required for the tasting only.

2. **Atlantic Sea Kayaking – Secrets of Seaweed Tour**
   - [www.atlanticseakayaking.com](http://www.atlanticseakayaking.com)
   Book in with the multi-award winning kayaking tour with Atlantic Sea Kayaking in West Cork. This half day excursion takes place during low tides, when Husband and wife team Mag and Ger Kirwan are abundance and learn to identify them, how to pick sea vegetables. Kayak to where they grow in with Atlantic Sea Kayaking in West Cork. This half day excursion takes place during low tides, when Husband and wife team Mag and Ger Kirwan are abundance and learn to identify them, how to pick sea vegetables. Kayak to where they grow.

   There is a visitor centre on site which is open for drop in visitors during business hours. Larger groups can also be accommodated if booking in advance with packages that include the guided tour of the fishery, tastings and even a light lunch.

4. **Visit a Smokehouse**
   - (check websites for details)
   There are some wonderful smokehouses located all around Ireland. Every time you visit a smokehouse there is something to learn because no two masters of the craft will do the same thing! With so many to select, these three have visitor centres and run guided tours year round, or at least with a little notice. Learn about sourcing fish: wild, farmed and organic; bringing, hot and cold smoking, the skill in slicing and, of course, tasting too!

Frank Hederman, Belvelly Smokehouse, East Cork [www.frankhederman.com](http://www.frankhederman.com)

Burren Smokehouse, Lisdoonvarna, Co Clare [www.burrensmokehouse.com](http://www.burrensmokehouse.com)

Ummera Smokehouse, West Cork [www.ummera.com](http://www.ummera.com)

5. **A visit to K O’Connell Fish Merchant in the English Market**
   - [www.koconnellfish.com](http://www.koconnellfish.com)
   Best friends with the Queen of England, The Obama’s and The President of Ireland, Pat O’Connell has turned a humble fish stall into a must-stop; must-see on everyone’s visit to the People’s Republic whether you’re the head of the free world or looking for this evening’s dinner inspiration. The fish stall has even been beamed into millions of homes across Ireland and the UK courtesy of the smash hit comedy series The Young Offenders.

Star struck or not, this stall is a sight to behold. Piles of fresh fish shining from the icy mounds, plucked and filleted just the way you need it right in front of you along with some expert advice on cooking and flavours. Visit the myriad fishmongers in the corner of the market and the healthy competition and banter flying across the walkways.

6. **Irish Atlantic Seaweed Tour**
   - [www.atlanticirishseaweed.com](http://www.atlanticirishseaweed.com)
   In the beautiful village of Caherdaniel, Co Kerry, the tour begins at the seaweed discovery centre with a guided walk to forage and identify different species of seaweeds. Nibble on freshly picked seaweed from the icy mounds, plucked and filleted just the way you need it right in front of you along with some expert advice on cooking and flavours. Visit the myriad fishmongers in the corner of the market and the healthy competition and banter flying across the walkways.

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Finish with a tasting lunch with a vast range of seaweed dishes savoured with ‘live’ beverages such as seaweed and fruit Kefirs and Kombuchas. A laminated seaweed ID chart is your take away home gift to get you started on your sea veg journey.

7. **Lunch at Harry’s Shack, Portstewart**
   - (find on Facebook)
   Situated right on the beach in Portstewart in Co Donegal, Harry’s Shack has become a place of pilgrimage for the seafood loving gastronome. Its fresh seafood served unpretentiously; chow down whilst taking in the scenery. Put it on the bucket list.

8. **A Seafood Banquet at Michael’s Mount**
   - [Merrion www.michaels.ie](http://www.michaels.ie)
   The freshest fish landed daily and served up in sumptuous dishes that frequently hit the shortlists of food critics and diners alike for the best place in Ireland to dine on the bountiful produce from Ireland’s pristine seas. The seafood platter is an experience in and of itself!

9. **Delphi Lodge – Seafood & Farming Traditions Day**
   - [www.delphilodge.ie/activities/seafood-day](http://www.delphilodge.ie/activities/seafood-day)
   The beautiful Delphi Lodge is located in the stunning ruggedness of Connemara and offers a range of activities to both residents and day-trippers alike. Their Seafood and Farming Traditions Day starts with a pick up from Delphi Pier by powerboat for a tour of a mussel farm in Killary Fjord, a sheep shearing demonstration, lunch, sightseeing by boat, a fishing experience and lending a hand at lifting and checking the Lodge’s very own lobster and crab pots – hopefully with something to bring back to shore for dinner after!

10. **Kilcullen Seaweed Baths**
    - [www.kilcullenseawebaths.net](http://www.kilcullenseawebaths.net)
    There are many places popping up around the coast of Ireland where one can experience a seaweed bath, but shorely (see what I did there?) none can hold a candle to Ireland’s oldest seaweed bath house in Enniscrone, Co Sligo.

    There are many benefits to seaweed bathing, not least of all the benefit of taking time out to indulge in an age old treatment for curing whatever is ailing you! The mineral rich baths are good for skin and hair and is said to offer relief for symptoms of arthritis and rheumatism.

    Lastly, a date for your diary! SeaFest 2019 is coming to Cork! [www.seafest.ie](http://www.seafest.ie)

    From 7th – 9th June, Cork will come alive with this hugely popular festival of the sea! Regatta’s, markets, conferences, events and activities suitable for anyone at any age will fill three whole days to celebrate the abundance of Ireland’s ocean wealth. Not to be missed!
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Peeled prawns, fresh and smoked salmon
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GLENMAR

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Tel 028 33828 | Fax 028 33099
email thefishshop@glenmarshoffish.com

Kilcrohane, The Sheep’s Head Peninsula, Co. Cork
Tel: 027 67139 | Mob: 087 264 8919 / 086 199 8554

This stylish, family run cafe and restaurant is situated in Kilcrohane, overlooking the stunningly beautiful Dunmanus Bay. Offering clever, creative cooking and baking, served in the light and airy cafe, or on the balcony overlooking the river. Making use of locally sourced ingredients wherever possible, locally-reared meats, fresh fish and home grown produce.

The combination of great friendly service, beautiful art adorning the walls and wonderful food and drink will make the visitor want to linger in the homely, Sheep’s Head Heaven. If you require lunch, fresh cakes and fine coffee or evening meal cooked with flair and passion, you will be looked after at The Old Creamery.

West Cork on a Plate

With a tradition and deep understanding of food and service Fernhill House Hotel want to make your dining experience exceptional.

The West Cork location offers fresh fish from pristine seas, most from green pastures and wonderful artisan produce.

Vintage afternoon tea is available for a touch of luxury.
All dietary requirements can be catered for only make this known to a staff member.

For further information contact:
Fernhill House & Gardens
Clonakilty, West Cork
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E: info@fernhillhousehotel.com
www.fernhillhousehotel.com

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Five years in business and Matthew Brownie, the Kiwi Chef, who owns The Skibbereen Food Company (TSFC) gets his first international deal in Pembrokeshire, West Wales with his four lines of Scratch My Pork crackling products.

A new website with online shop, a new national distributor for retail, with Matthew looking after 25 places himself one wonders how he does it all. Matthew is also employed as a production manager with a local company in Skibbereen with working part time for The Simply Better Brand stationed at Dunne Stores in Bishopstown along with writing for The Irish Foodie Magazine.

How he does it is unimportant, but Matthew says a balance and putting his family first is the key to his working life. Matthew explains

"By dropping business when my family needs me is the key to myself moving forward. In other words switching off all together from all work and focusing on my family not only gives them me but gives me a break from everything. I am highly disciplined these days and I'm making sure I keep up with everything without putting things on the long finger. I'm doing things my way and doing business when I'm ready."

Going back 5 years when The Skibbereen Food Company supplied their first local stores

Fields SuperValu were Matthew’s first store and he realises that without local establishments and their consumers there is nothing to move forward from. By supporting local stores with tastings and social media the Scratch My Pork range has been a success. Gordon Benn from Drinagh Co-op in Skibbereen also was a real great supporter of Scratch My Pork and both stores continue to sell it with the product selling well today.

The whole of Munster have been great and the Musgraves Food Academy gave me the opening needed to grow the company to where it is today on a national level.

SECAD Funding
Christmas 2018 Matthew was awarded funding from SECAD in conjunction with LEADER and the Cork County Council which is something very precious to TSFC. It allows Matthew a new product range that will be hitting the Irish Market April 2020. Ross Curley from SECAD saw Matthew’s need for the funding which not only brings new product ranges aboard but employment into The Skibbereen Food Company in the future along
with services needed and expenditure spent within Ireland due to the funding given.

Wales and The BUCANIER Project
Matthew was approached by BIM at The Cork and Kerry Food Market at City Hall late last year and was offered a place on The BUCANIER Project which is an EU funded project that helps support’s SMEs with a connection with Pembrokeshire Tourism in Wales. An opportunity arose for a tradeshow in Pembrokeshire which TSFC attended and sealed a deal with Upton Farm a few weeks later. Keith Adie from Upton Farm in Wales was delighted to take on Scratch My Pork and a great new partnership has formed not to mention the growth in other areas throughout the UK, thanks to Upton Farm at The BUCANIER Project in the future.

Cork Institute of Technology
It marks almost 8 years since the idea of Scratch My Pork was created thanks to CIT and Matthew’s Culinary Arts Degree, due to his product development module where he also won The Best Business Plan at the CIT Innovation Award. Matthew was invited back in March for this year’s Innovation Week to talk to students based on his Journey of becoming a Food Entrepreneur to help fellow students and to shed light on being a food producer in Ireland.

The Skibbereen Food Company’s Business Model
TSFC business model is perhaps a different model to others within Ireland as Matthew manufactures his Scratch My Pork products in the UK and is delighted with how the model has formed. Matthew explains.

“An out sourcing business and my products are created to my specifications. My model keeps changing due to my learnings and mistakes I have made, but I do know where my business is going. By keeping things where I can manage them is the way forward and I am delighted that my products are selling well in the Irish market.”

A Recap on The Skibbereen Food Company’s Products (Scratch My Pork)
A clever name, branding & packaging, Scratch My Pork provides Irish consumers with a new and exciting alternative to crisps, bacon frites, and popcorn that is currently not available on the Irish market. Scratch My Pork is a delicious hand-cooked, Gluten, Dairy, MSG Free & Naturally High in Protein savoury snack in 4 distinct flavours. (Salted, Smokey, Salt & Vinegar, Cajun).

The Skibbereen Food Company’s Partners
A special thanks goes out to the following organisations that has helped TSFC where it is today
AIB Bank / SECAD ALEADER / West Cork Development Partnership / SuperValu Ireland / Leo Cork City & North West Enterprise Board / FDC Group / BUCANIER Project / Pembroke Tourism / O’Leary Insurance

Challenges
The biggest challenge in Ireland for most food companies is food distribution. Matthew explains
“I have to say it’s getting to a point where it’s time the module should change. I know companies that have lost their businesses due to bad distribution, non-payments to small food companies along with just bad distribution after all the producer’s hard work to grow their brand.”

“You can’t rely on a distributor alone, and you have to keep an eye on everything. I work a Monday to Friday job to make sure my family is looked after and my business is dealt with after these hours. I make sure I spend time at night with my family every night and my weekends are mine.”

Some people may think that I should be running my business differently, but to be honest they can think all they want, I do it in my time, my terms and when I’m ready.

The Future for The Skibbereen Food Company
“I am really happy where my company is today, but it has been hard work, personal sacrifices have been made with a lot of mistakes, but I have a good balance these days.”

I look to concentrate on the UK market going forward and my online sales along with looking after the Irish retailers that always helped me in the beginning.

Matthew is also delighted to announce that a new product range will be ready for the Irish Market early next year.

Small steps at a time, making sure my family comes first.
Summer is coming, time to get out in that fresh air and cook where cooking is done best, outside, but remember this can all be done indoors on a griddle pan if the weather does not permit.

First off, the BBQ or grill you use doesn’t have to be anything special or expensive, but the charcoal is very important, try to source a good chemical free lump charcoal. The bags of briquettes charcoal you buy in all popular hardware stores will be full of nasty chemicals and will affect the taste of your beautiful food. The Irish Charcoal Company have a great product on sale in Ireland.

Ok then get your charcoal lit, the time between lighting your coal and it being ready to cook over depends on a few different things, the actual grill you use and the weather conditions.

The coal is ready when it’s bright red, or even starting to ash over. Pop your red onions straight onto the coal. With a long tongs, cover them slightly with a few pieces of coal too. Have a beer or a elderflower cordial and sit back for 10 to 15 minutes, then pop your peppers straight onto the coal also. When your peppers are starting to soften and totally black from the fire, your veg is ready. Take your onions out and place into one bowl, peppers into a separate bowl. Wrap the bowl with your peppers with some cling film. The moisture from the heat of the peppers will help you peel them later.

Have a little melted butter on the side, careful not to spill into the fire. Get your rosemary and thyme together in one bunch, tie with string to make a little brush, even attach to the handle of a wooden spoon for extra reach (safety). Get your mushrooms straight onto the grill bars, make sure they’re clean and hot, turn your mushrooms every minute or two. Hit your mushrooms with a little butter from the herb brush every time you turn.

While your mushrooms are grilling, peel your peppers by scraping the black skin away with the back of a small kitchen or butter knife. Don’t wash your pepper, you’ll only wash away all their flavour. Likewise remove the outer layer or two of the onion to reveal the beautiful soft insides. At this point your mushrooms should be just ready. Place all in a metal bowl or tray and leave on a cooler part of the grill, just to keep them warm for serving.

Now for the main event, get your steak and fish straight onto your hot clean grill, season nicely with some good quality sea salt and cracked black pepper. Steak needs between 3 and 5 minutes on each side or until rare to medium, giving it a little love from the herb brushes each turn. Let to rest for at least 5 minutes.

The fish is ready once it starts to pull away from the bone. Check this by applying a little pressure down the rib cage from the back bone with a knife of spoon. Again don’t forget to baste your fish with your herb brush.

Serve alongside your grilled veg and garden salad.

Just before digging in, wrap your bananas in tinfoil with a little sprinkle or chocolate or a drizzle of honey. Put them straight onto the coal and they’ll be ready just in time for dessert.

**DOES & DON’TS**

- Do season everything with salt & pepper, tasting along the way
- Do use your long handle tongs and towel
- Do baste regularly
- Do use a probe where available; between 55°C & 60°C for medium rare steak. Above 80°C for the fish
- Don’t use lighter fluid, again nasty chemicals taint your food
- Don’t use excessive butter for basting or you’ll get flare up from your fire
- Don’t overcook your steak or fish

And most importantly:
- Don’t forget to have fun and enjoy

HolySmoke, Little Hanover street, Cork.
021-4273000 | www.mardyke.com/holy-smoke/
In a breathtakingly beautiful and tranquil setting in Bandon Golf Course, it is hard to imagine a more scenic backdrop for a restaurant.

Simplicity is the order of the day at Anusha’s Restaurant, where locally sourced West Cork artisan produce is cooked skillfully, without pretension, drawing maximum flavour from quality, seasonal ingredients.

Throughout the day Anusha’s serves breakfasts, lunch and dinner. All dietary requirements can be catered for and there are options for vegetarians and vegans.

Homemade pizza with the freshest of toppings is available. Over the summer a light, tapas style menu will be introduced, such as fish in a basket, this will be to accompany a drink in the bar.

Sunday lunch is a firm favourite. Anusha’s is family friendly so children can be catered for. All desserts are homemade on the premises, with gluten free baking options if required.

Anusha’s is the ideal place for private functions and celebrations. An outside catering service is available for birthday parties, family celebrations and private functions. Delivery can be arranged. Telephone or text 089 448 1541

Bandon Golf Course, Bandon, Co. Cork
Tel: 023 8841 111
email: anushasrestaurant@gmail.com
CLONAKILTY DISTILLERY

Kate Ryan, Flavour.ie

I first heard about Clonakilty Distillery back in April 2016. I was attending a Local Enterprise Office event in Inchydoney. During the panel discussion, a question was asked which included the words “Whiskey Distillery in Clonakilty.” The question had been asked by Helen Scully, as astute and proficient a business woman you are ever to meet, and married to business man, entrepreneur and farmer, Michael Scully. Together, the Scully’s were curating a vision to open a Whiskey Distillery in Clonakilty utilising barley grown on the family’s ancestral land in the shadow of Galley Head Lighthouse. Ever since, I have been waiting in earnest for this vision to become a reality.

Fast forward to February 2019, and I am delighted to be taking the very first tour of the new Clonakilty Distillery Visitors Experience. It has been a long road for the Scully’s and their team to get to this point, and likely that it wasn’t always plain sailing, but the resultant product is one that they can be surely proud of.

Clonakilty Distillery inhabits a cluster of two modern buildings built just before the recession. Originally designed as apartments and retail spaces, this potential never fully materialised instead languishing empty for the most part. The distillery works around the existing footprint finding a way to link the two seamlessly together, and in the process creating a sense of odyssey.

The tour begins with an exhibition setting the scene for Clonakilty’s historical importance from rebels to the family heritage of iconic American presidents. The Scully family history reads as though lifted from dusty historical tomes, and their inspiration for the distillery - the eighth generation Scully family barley fields overlooking the Atlantic Ocean ten minutes from the distillery itself, reveals this operation as a field to bottle distillery.

A short film features stunning aerial footage of the local coastline; the tour continuing up and out onto a mezzanine from where the hand-forged copper pot stills can be viewed in all their glory. We are told about the significance of the barley grown on the Scully family farm, the malting and milling process and how both malted and unmalted barley are used to create whiskies of different characters.

Along one side of the mezzanine is a neatly ordered regiment of miniature copper gin-stills, soon to the Gin School. Participants will be able to flavour pre-distilled whey spirit and add to it from a collection of botanicals to create a uniquely flavoured gin, bottled to take away with you.

From the mezzanine, we head down onto to the distillery floor. It is rare to find yourself amongst pot stills, mash tuns and fermentation tanks of a working distillery, and given a unique perspective of what it takes to turn water into Ulse beatha. We are taken through the process of distilling whiskey; drawing the head, hearts and tails until a final high-proof, triple distilled pure spirit has been produced. Onwards to the Cask Room and how oak barrels mature, change and impart flavour into the new-make spirit; from selecting barrels that will provide a distinct flavour profile to charring and the angel’s share – or, as our guide put it, The Mermaid’s Share.

Finally, we arrive in the Testing Room – a kind of lavish speakeasy, where our samples are ready laid out for us in specially designed glasses set on specially designed boards. We taste the Clonakilty Single Batch Irish Whiskey; a premium whiskey created from hand selected 8-year-old grain and 10-year-old triple distilled malt; and the Single Grain Bordeaux: the distilleries first Single Grain whiskey expression using a premium 9-year-old grain finished in Bordeaux casks. There is also a glass with water and a pipette so we can taste the whiskey au naturel, or cut it with water to help open up the distinct flavours of each whisky.

There are three levels of tour to choose from. Our tour was the Classic Tour for an hour and includes a tasting of two whiskies for €15. The Premium Tour includes three whiskies for €18, and the Connoisseur Tour includes the Classic tastings plus a tasting of the 15-year-old Single Malt and the Cognac Cask finish which is a distillery exclusive for €22. The Gin School Experience is €90.

And what of the Whiskey? The Head Distiller is Corkman, Paul Corbett. He arrives back to his home county from Teeling’s Distillery and brings a wealth of experience with him. His long term vision is to experiment with grains, wood and cask finishes to produce a wide range of distinctive Whiskies.

There are three main Whiskey expressions available on the market: Single Batch Irish Whiskey, Port Cask finish and Single Grain Bordeaux. All have very different aroma, mouthfeel and taste. They are fresh and vibrant with great spice and warmth. My favourite of the three expressions is the Single Grain Bordeaux. Rose gold in hue with substantial legs, faintly honey-like in both mouthfeel and flavour. There is also an uplifting zingy raspberry/strawberry flavour and mulled spices on the long finish.

Michael and Helen Scully and their dedicated team should be more than proud of the amazing work in bringing the Distillery, Whales Tail Bistro and now the Visitors Experience to life. Their vision and determination, attention to detail and an appreciation and respect for their position in the landscape and the town is to be applauded. There is much to be learned on the Visitors Experience for both locals and visitors from near and far alike. I’m looking forward to returning time and again to try new whiskies as they become available and also, of course, I hope to come first in class in the Gin School.

To find out about the Bistro, Distillery, Drinks and to book into a tour or a place on the Gin School, visit www.clonakiltydistillery.ie
Arundels by the Pier
Ahakista, Durrus, Co. Cork | Tel: 027 67033

Food served all day on weekends from Easter.
Kitchen will be open full time 7 days from 20th May for the season.

There is nothing to encapsulate the flourishing food scene on the stunning Sheep's Head Peninsula, in deepest West Cork, than a visit to Arundels by the Pier. Until recently this part of the county was overshadowed but over the last while an impressive food scene has blossomed with places like Arundels giving it momentum. Based in a fabulous location as one enters the attractive village of Ahakista, directly across from Dunmanus Bay, it is a heavenly spot to sit outside with something to eat and drink on a fine sunny day.

Bar food is served both downstairs and upstairs in the restaurant area in line with being gastropub style.

Above all a visit to Arundels by the Pier is fun filled often with impromptu singing songs in the bar. Over the summer there will be pop ups from guest West Cork chefs. A warm welcome is assured from the friendly and attentive staff making the visitor want to return again and again.
Darina Allen’s

Simnel Cake

Simnel Cake is a traditional Easter cake. It has a layer of almond paste baked into the centre and a thick layer of almond icing on top. The 11 balls represent 11 of the 12 apostles - Judas is missing because he betrayed Jesus.

225g (8oz) butter
225g (8oz) pale, soft brown sugar
6 eggs, preferably free range
300g (10oz) white flour
1 teaspoon mixed spice
65ml (2 1/2fl oz) Irish whiskey
350g (12oz) best quality sultanas
350g (12oz) best quality currants
350g (12oz) best quality raisins
110g (4oz) cherries
110g (4oz) homemade candied peel
50g (2oz) whole almonds
50g (2oz) ground almonds
rind of 1 lemon
rind of 1 orange
1 large or 2 small Bramley Seedling apples, grated

Almond Paste
450g (1lb) ground almonds
450g (1lb) caster sugar
2 small eggs
a drop of pure almond extract
2 tablespoons Irish whiskey

Line the base and sides of a 23cm (9 inch) round, or a 20.5cm (8 inch) square tin with brown paper and greaseproof paper.

Wash the cherries and dry them. Cut in two or four as desired. Blanch the almonds in boiling water for 1-2 minutes, rub off the skins and chop them finely. Mix the dried fruit, nuts, ground almonds and grated orange and lemon rind. Add about half of the whiskey and leave for 1 hour to macerate.

Next make the almond paste.
Sieve the castor sugar and mix with the ground almonds. Beat the eggs, add the whiskey and 1 drop of pure almond extract, then add to the other ingredients and mix to a stiff paste. (You may not need all the egg). Sprinkle the work top with icing sugar, turn out the almond paste and work lightly until smooth.

Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas Mark 4.

Cream the butter until very soft, add the sugar and beat until light and fluffy. Whisk the eggs and add in bit by bit, beating well between each addition so that the mixture doesn’t curdle. Mix the spice with the flour and stir in gently. Add the grated apple to the fruit and mix in gently but thoroughly (don’t beat the mixture again or you will toughen the cake).

Put half of the cake mixture into the prepared tin, roll about half of the almond paste into a 21.5cm (8 1/2 inch) round. Place this on top of the cake mixture in the tin and cover with the remaining mixture. Make a slight hollow in the centre, dip your hand in water and pat it over the surface of the cake; this will ensure that the top is smooth when cooked. Cover the top with a single sheet of brown paper.

Put into the preheated oven; reduce the heat to 160°C/325°F/Gas Mark 3 after 1 hour. Bake until cooked, 3 - 3 1/2 hours approx., test in the centre with a skewer - it should come out completely clean. Pour the rest of the whiskey over the cake and leave to cool in the tin.

NOTE: When you are testing do so at an angle because the almond paste can give a false reading.

Next day remove the cake from the tin. Do not remove the linning paper but wrap in some extra greaseproof paper and tin foil until required.

When you wish to ice the cake, roll the remainder of the almond paste into a 23cm (9 inch) (23cm) round. Brush the cake with a little lightly beaten egg white and top with the almond paste. Roll the remainder of the paste into 11 balls. Score the top of the cake in 4cm (1 1/2 inch) squares or diamonds. Brush with beaten egg yolk, stick the ‘apostles’ around the outer edge of the top, brush with beaten egg. Toast in a preheated oven 220°C/425°F/Gas Mark 7, for 15-20 minutes or until slightly golden. Decorate with an Easter Chicken. Cut while warm or store for several weeks when cold.

NB: Almond paste may also be used to ice the side of the cake. You will need half the almond paste again.

This cake keeps for weeks or even months, but while still delicious it changes both in texture and flavour as it matures.

Names of the Apostles
(1) Simon (also known as Peter)
(2) Andrew (Simon Peter’s brother)
(3) James
(4) John (James’s brother)
(5) Philip
(6) Bartholomew
(7) Thomas
(8) Matthew (tax collector)
(9) Judas
(10) Thaddeus
(11) Simon the Cananaean
(12) Matthias

Copyright Darina Allen, Ballymaloe Cookery School
The Golden Pheasant is a delight in the stunning, coastal village of Courtmacsherry on the Wild Atlantic Way. Enjoy freshly baked, delectable cakes and scones, made to order sandwiches using the highest quality ingredients, light lunches, tea and coffee.

A new conservatory has recently been added, providing much more comfortable seating space, in an airy and bright atmosphere. The conservatory is available for hire to groups for afternoon tea and pizza parties. The cafe holds a wine licence and is the perfect place to enjoy a glass with your food.

Homemade Baking is available to order. Wedding cakes a specialty. Also available in free from gluten. All dietary requirements can be catered for.

The wild garden and aviary houses two American Eagle Owls, a great horned owl and a variety of pheasants all waiting to make your acquaintance.

Open throughout the year, low season November - March hours
10.30am - 5.00pm Monday / Friday.
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Extended hours March - October
The Easter Bun that has a Cross on it
by Matthew Brownie

Recipe
500g strong white bread flour
½ tsp salt
2 heaped tsp mixed spice
50g caster sugar
50g butter, chopped into cubes
200g mixed dried fruits
7g sachet easy-bake dried yeast
200ml milk
2 eggs

For the crosses & glaze
3 tbsp. plain flour
2 tbsp. water

Honey or golden syrup, for brushing

Method
1. Tip the flour into a bowl and stir in the salt, mixed spice and sugar.
2. Rub in the butter with your fingertips. Stir in the dried fruit, then sprinkle over the yeast and stir in.
3. Warm the milk so it is hot, but still cool enough to put your finger in for a couple of seconds. Beat with the eggs, and then pour into the dried ingredients.
4. With a blunt knife, mix the ingredients to a moist dough, then leave to soak for 5 mins. Take out of the bowl and cut the dough into 8 equal pieces.
5. Shape the dough into buns on a floured surface. Space apart on a baking sheet, cover loosely with cling film, then leave in a warm place until half again in size. This will take 45 mins–1 hr 15 mins, depending on how warm the room is.
6. When the buns are risen, heat oven to 220°C/425°F.
7. Mix the flour with 2 tbsp water to make a paste. Pour into a plastic food bag and make a nick in one of the corners. Pipe crosses on top of each bun.
8. Bake for 12–15 mins until risen and golden. Trim the excess cross mixture from the buns, then brush all over with honey or golden syrup. The buns will keep fresh for a day. After that they are best toasted and served with butter.

Chefs Tip:

Like I said this is more of a complex recipe, but the result is excellent.

I have never been a sweet tooth, even as a kid especially in my teens instead of eating biscuits after school it was the left over mash with melted butter heated in the microwave I was after. Funny enough it was like that at Easter time I would forfeit all the chocolate Easter Eggs and ask my mum to buy extra hot cross buns. She would stash them away in the freezer and they would last for a month or two.

Apart from a religious holiday, it’s another time in the year where no shops are open and it’s a great time to spend with all our family and loved ones.

With Easter not far next week I feel it is appropriate to talk a little about my favourite cinnamon bun and this year the kids and myself are going to do some baking at home over the Easter break.

Hot cross buns are a spiced sweet bun made with currants or raisins and marked with a cross on the top. Traditionally eaten on Good Friday in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, the Caribbean, South Africa, India, and Canada, and now available all year round in some places. Hot cross buns may go on sale in Australia as early as New Year’s Day, or after Christmas.

In many historically Christian countries, buns are traditionally eaten hot or toasted during Lent, beginning with the evening of Shrove Tuesday (the evening before Ash Wednesday) to midday Good Friday. It was a universal custom (and still is in Catholic countries) to mark a new loaf of bread with the sign of the cross before cutting it, in order to bless it and thank God for it.

In England, from the end of the fourteenth century, buns were baked with a cross marked on them. They are said to have originated at Saint Albans Abbey in 1361, where the monks distributed them to the poor. Whatever their origin, these “hot cross buns” became a famous Good Friday feature in England and Ireland, and later in other countries. They were made of spiced dough, round in shape, with a cross made of icing on the top. In recent times these cross buns are sold not only on Good Friday but all through Lent.

Interestingly, an entry at the Food Timeline seems to suggest that the cross was originally scored in the top of the bun with a knife and that the pastry or icing cross was a modern decorative feature.

It is so interesting to dig into the history and traditions based on food! Whether your Hot Cross Buns are adorned with an icing cross, scored with a cross, or store bought, I know your Good Friday is deep reflection of the Lord’s Passion and Crucifixion.

I always liked to make Chelsea Buns but when it comes to Hot Cross Buns it was always not knowing which ones to buy purely for quality purposes. As I live in West Cork I’m quite lucky as the choice of homemade at markets and bakeries seem to add their own twist and it’s not that expensive.

Anyway the history & knowledge of this article is quite interesting and the recipe I have added is quite a complex method but the result will make your Easter all the better.

Happy Easter everyone.

Anyone that would like to write to me or anything that they might want me to answer please use the Facebook URL to become a friend of mine.

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Dine in Cobra with a Cobra Indian Beer also available as King Cobra. Why not try a kebab? Lamb or BBQ chicken on our fresh Naan Bread.

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A takeaway service is available with free delivery in the Kinsale area. For those dining in the restaurant, an extensive bottle beer and wine list is available which enhances the cozy and intimate atmosphere of Cobra.

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The award winning restaurant specializes in local artisan produce, for which West Cork is renowned. All seafood is sourced locally from Castletownbere or Union Hall. The dinner menu changes frequently to reflect the freshest of seasonal food. The wine list has been carefully selected to complement the exceptional food served.

The newly opened Seaweed Bath House helps the visitor relax and rejuvenate with seaweed based treatments and scrubs for that extra bit of pampering.