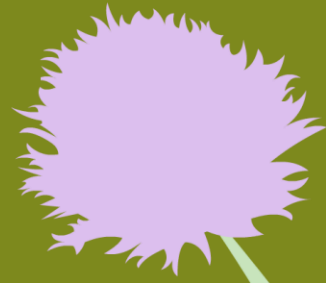




March
2021



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MEALS À LA MO



Ireland of the Welcomes

Since I was a young girl, I've had deep feelings of connection to Ireland that I couldn't explain. The feelings were strong enough that I chose to spend a semester abroad studying at Trinity University in Dublin, and I've returned to Ireland for weeks at a time to soak up the amazing warmth of a land that is often gray, or "soft," and a culture that truly welcomes "guests" to its shores, its towns and, often, into their homes.

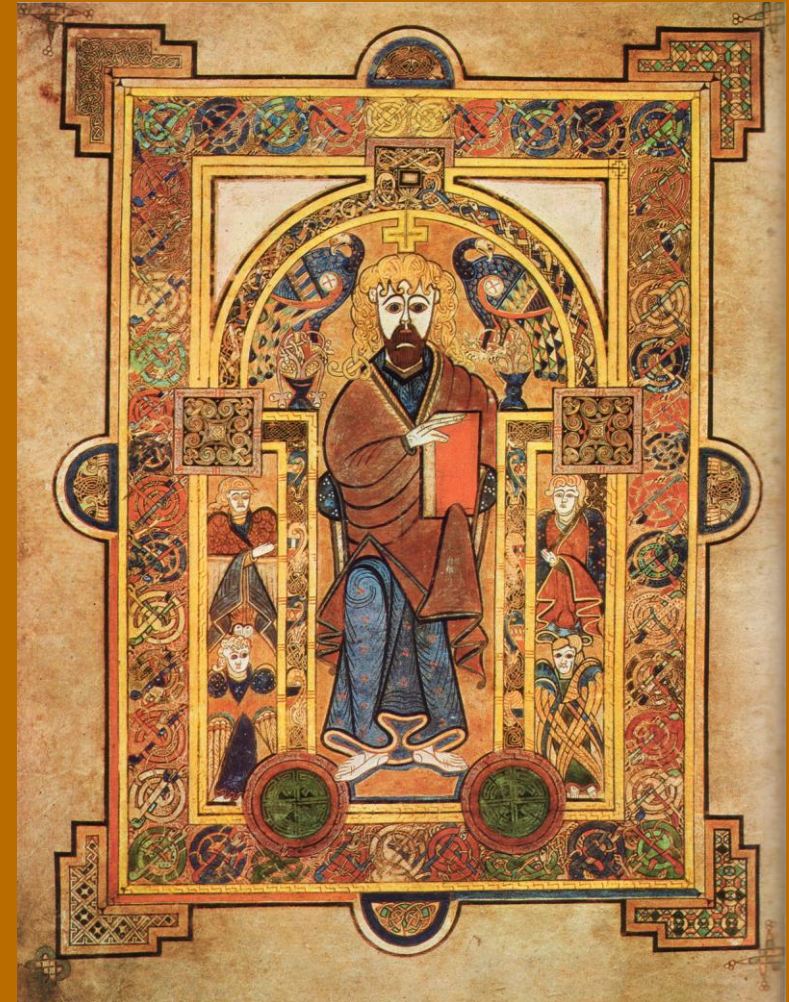
*As a student on a tight budget, I lived in a hostel that served hot, filling, family style breakfasts of oatmeal, homemade gooseberry or rhubarb jam, pots of tea, and lots of warm bread slathered with butter. Simple and delicious home cooking and baking have always been an important part of the **Welcome** to hearts, hearths, and homes of Ireland.*

I hope you'll enjoy this journey to some of the welcoming areas of Ireland I love best.

fáilte a chur roimh!



When I studied at Trinity University in Dublin, the *Book of Kells* was still on display in the Long Library. I loved spending time here on “soft” days, and outside on the lawn meeting other students when the sun shone warm upon our faces.



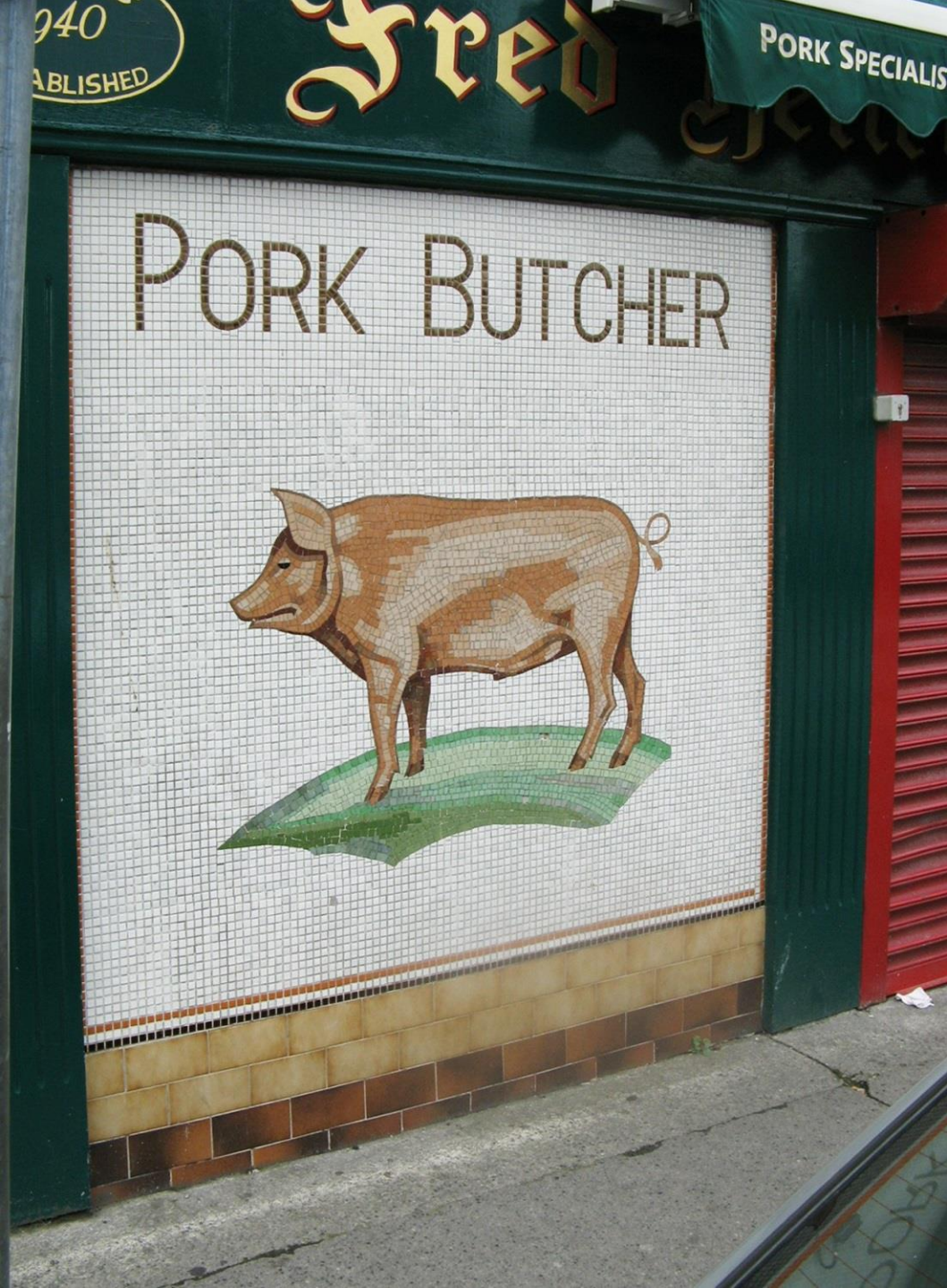
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Potatoes and Ireland

Another important part of Ireland's history, of course, are the blessings and curses of the humble potato. Also known as "Murphys" or "praties," potatoes were the mainstay of the Irish diet for centuries, providing very good nutrition with only minor time and attention to cultivate – until the Great Potato Famine of 1845-1850. More than one million people perished, and another million left Ireland as refugees and immigrants, many of them settling in the United States.

Today, potatoes still play an important role in Irish cuisine. Fancy restaurants now create elegant galettes and souffles, but home cooks make the most of them for soups, chowders, pastries, and breads. This is the Irish Potato we will celebrate today.



Milk Order
30 x 1ltr milk
1cs x 1lb butter
blks
3 x 2Ltrs cream

2

In Galway, as in many Irish towns, artisan butchers, cheese mongers, bakers, seafood sellers, and dairy farmers abound. Each identifies the farm or local source of their products.

Restaurants can post their dairy orders on their front windows for delivery to their door and, today, restaurants and home cooks can order online for delivery in the wee hours of the mornin'

Colcannon – the Ultimate Comfort Food



Ingredients

6-8 medium potatoes (about 2 pounds)
1 small head green or savoy cabbage
1 ¼ cups milk
1 onion, diced

2 Tbl butter
2 scallions, sliced diagonally (white and green parts)
Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation

In a pot large enough to hold them, cover potatoes with cold, salted water. Bring to a boil. Cook for 20 minutes or until tender. Remove potatoes. Let dry, then mash.

Chop cabbage finely. Boil separately in salted water about 3 minutes, or sauté in butter.

In a saucepan, heat milk with onion.

Drain cabbage and add to mashed potatoes.

Stir in butter and scallions and season with salt and pepper.

Pour warm milk and onions over potatoes and heat together until creamy.

Fun fact: Colcannon is a traditional Irish comfort food that changes with the whims of the cook and the produce available. Some choose cabbage; some choose kale. Some add onions; some add leeks – or both. But, always – ALWAYS, there's plenty of good Irish butter!



Galway and the Aran Islands

The Aran Islands are on the west coast of Ireland in County Galway – an hour-long boat ride across the rough Atlantic waters, but worth it for the experience. Some consider the Aran Islands the last outpost of traditional Irish culture, and Irish is still the first language. There are only a handful of cars and farm machinery – most residents (and visitors) walk, bike, or take a horse-drawn cart throughout the island.

In the 1800s, half of Ireland's population slept under the thatched roofs of these stone cottages. Less than 1,500 thatched cottages remain in Ireland today. The roofs are constructed of overlapping layers of sod over timbers with straw on top. The straw may be a mix of wheat, flax, hazel, or willow, carefully cut and threaded by a thatcher. It's a trade passed down through generations. Roofs can last anywhere from 5 to 20 years.

The other construction materials varied from region to region and depending on the wealth of the family – usually lime mortar walls or mud mixed with straw or reeds for strength.



Dún Aonghasa

This prehistoric archaeological site was built during the Bronze Age (1,200 BC or earlier). The “Fort of Aengus” was named for a god of Irish mythology associated with youth, love, summer, and poetic inspiration.

The massive walls are dry stone construction, originally enclosing 14 acres of land (some of which has since crumbled and fallen into the sea below). The name may seem misleading as it was not a battle ground, but likely used for religious and ceremonial purposes – seasonal rites by Druids and bonfires that could be seen from mainland Ireland. It was also a good site for coastal trading via the water “highways.”

Cong, or “Quiet
Man,” Bridge in
County Mayo



HERBERT J. YATES
presents

JOHN FORD'S GREATEST TRIUMPH

THE Quiet Man

starring
**JOHN
WAYNE**
MAUREEN
O'HARA
BARRY
FITZGERALD



WITH
WARD BOND
VICTOR McLAGLEN
MILDRED NATWICK
FRANCIS FORD

ARTHUR SHIELDS and ABBEY THEATRE PLAYERS

A REPUBLIC PICTURE

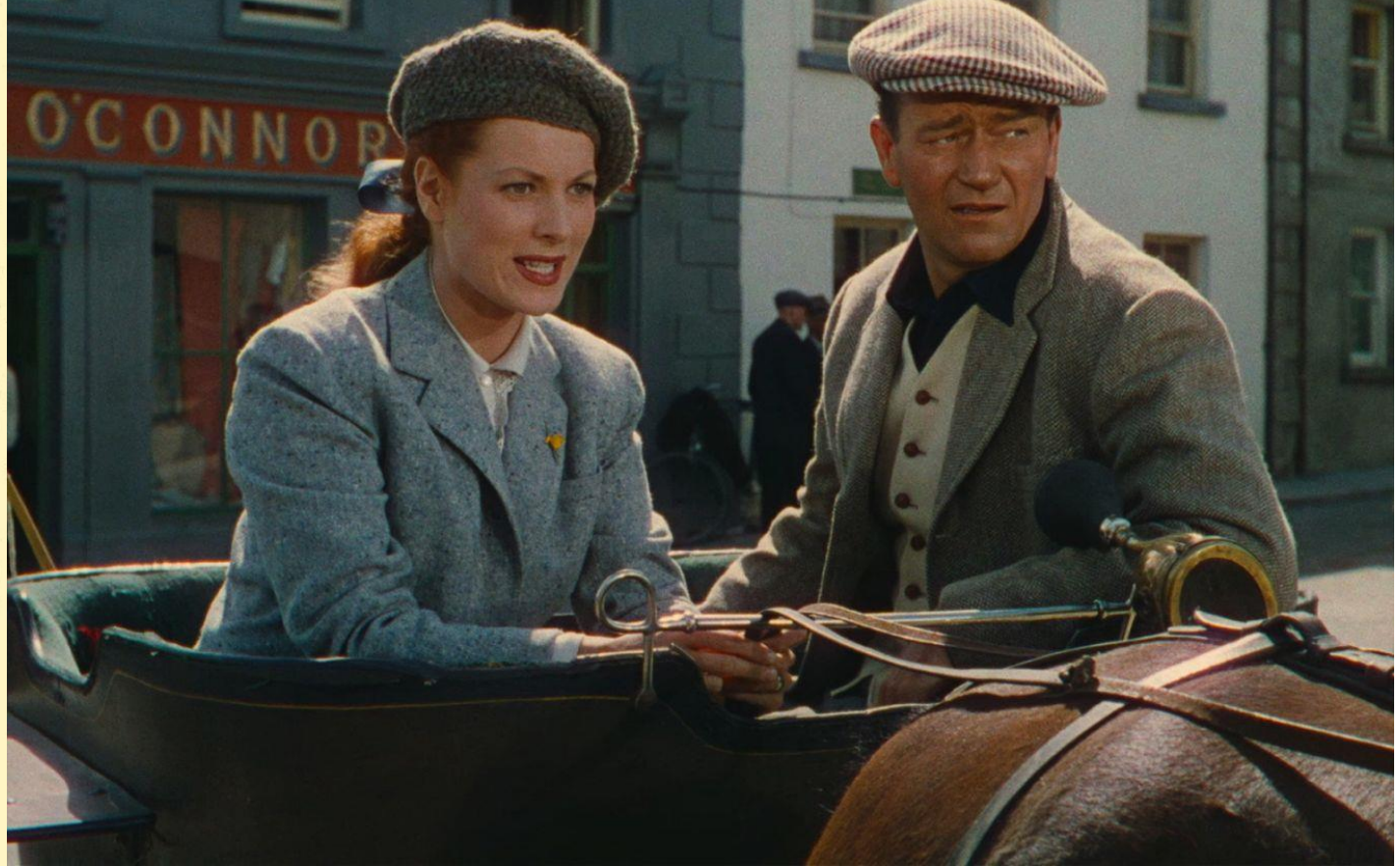
Color by **TECHNICOLOR**

Directed by
JOHN FORD

Screen Play by FRANK S. NUGENT

From the story by MAURICE WALSH

Produced by MERIAN C. COOPER



1952 Classic
Filmed in Cong

Meet Jack...





Celebrating Seafood

Ireland and the Pacific Northwest have much in common – from the weather to the lush greens of our landscapes. The bounty of berries, mushrooms and, of course, potatoes is well known.

So is the abundance of fresh fish and seafood that's celebrated across the country. You can enjoy the Dublin Bay Prawn Festival in March or the Galway International Oyster and Seafood Festival in September.

Bantry Bay mussels are famed the world over for their exceptional quality and flavor, as are Penn Cove Mussels from Whidbey Island, and fishing for Salmon and Sea Trout is popular.



Monk's Fishing House
at Cong Abbey



Crab and Clam Chowder



Ingredients

32 oz fish stock

16 oz clam juice

2 lbs. fresh clams; steam and
remove from shells and chop

1 onion, diced

½ cup celery, diced

½ cup new potatoes, diced

½ tsp fresh thyme

½ tsp Tabasco

½ tsp salt

½ tsp freshly ground black pepper

Roux

1 cup flour

½ lb. butter

½ quart half and half or cream

1 lb. Dungeness crab meat

Preparation

Sauté onion and celery until they
begin to get translucent

Add stock, clam juice, potatoes,
thyme, tabasco, pepper, salt, and
bring to simmer.

Add chopped clams and simmer
for 30-35 minutes, or until
potatoes are tender.

Make roux by slowly stirring flour
into melted butter until well

combined. Add a small amount
of warm clam broth and mix. Add
back to chowder to thicken.

Simmer for 10 minutes more. Add
half & half or cream and stir to
combine.

Add crab meat just before
serving.

Irish Potato Drop Biscuits



Ingredients:

2 cups potatoes, peeled and chopped in cubes
2 ¼ cups organic unbleached all-purpose flour
1 Tbl baking powder
½ tsp salt

Preparation:

Cook potatoes in boiling water for 8 mins or until tender. Drain and rinse in cold water. Rough mash (2-3 times). Let potatoes dry slightly in pan.

Preheat oven to 350 F

Combine flour, salt, and baking powder in large bowl. Add buttermilk, egg, EVOO, chives, and parsley.

Gently fold in potatoes and cheese.

Use scoop to drop biscuits on parchment-lined baking sheet.

Bake 20-23 minutes. Serve hot.

1 egg

4 Tbl Extra Virgin Olive Oil

1 ¼ cup buttermilk

3 heaping Tbl fresh chives, chopped

3 Tbl fresh parsley, chopped

½ cup (Irish) Cheddar, grated







Muckross House – Killarney

Muckross House and Gardens is in the heart of Killarney National Park – Ireland's oldest national park, which includes the Lakes of Killarney, mountains, and woodlands. It was one of our stops along the amazing 111-mile Ring of Kerry Scenic Drive. (My 10-year-old collie is named Kerry after this awe-inspiring part of Ireland.)

In 1861, the Herbert family developed the gardens substantially to impress Queen Victoria on her visit to Killarney and stay at Muckross House.



Irish Brown Bread

Irish Brown Bread, also known as Wheaten Bread, Brown Soda Bread, or just Brown Bread, is a real staple of Irish cuisine and holds fond memories for me. I bake it regularly.

Everywhere I've traveled in Ireland, and particularly at every B&B or hostel where I have stayed, a loaf of Irish brown bread, butter, jam, and a pot of tea has been offered to soothe the weary traveler, welcome a new friend, or ensure a hearty start to a day of adventures.

Every baker has their own recipe (often guarded in secrecy – or simply because they make it from memory more than a written recipe). Irish folklore implores the baker to cut a cross in the top of the loaf before baking. This is done to allow fairies to escape the bread, or as a blessing to ward off mischievous spirits and prevent them from burning the bread in the oven.

Irish Potato Bread (Farls)



Ingredients

½ cup organic, unbleached flour
2 Tbl cold unsalted Irish Kerrygold butter,
cubed
Kosher salt, to taste
1 ½ cup mashed potatoes (about 3 large
potatoes, boiled and mashed)

¼ cup milk
2 scallions, thinly sliced crosswise, for garnish

Irish Potato Bread is a regular part of a Full Irish Breakfast, particularly in the North of Ireland in Ulster, that includes rashers (bacon), the distinctive black pudding, eggs, sausages, and tomatoes. Traditional Ulster Farls are rolled into a circle and cut into pie-shaped fourths.

Preparation

Heat oven to 400 F

Combine flour, cold butter, and salt in a bowl and mix until pea-sized crumbs form.

Add mashed potatoes and milk, mixing to form a smooth dough.

Roll out onto a lightly floured surface into a 9 ½ " x 9 ½ " square.

Cut into 20 squares (2 ½ " square each), re-rolling dough as needed.

Bake on a parchment-lined baking sheet until lightly golden (20 minutes) rotating pans halfway through.

Transfer to wire rack to cool.

Heat butter over med-high heat and cook bread until warmed through and golden, flipping once at about 2 minutes.

Serve warm with scallions on top.

Potato and Leek Soup



Ingredients

- | | |
|---|--|
| 2 Tbl butter | 2 tsp salt |
| 3 leeks, chopped (white & light green parts only) | Freshly ground black pepper |
| 3 stalks celery | 2 cups whole milk, half & half, or cream |
| 2 cloves garlic, crushed | 2 Tbl Chopped parsley or chives |
| 2 lbs potatoes | ½ tsp freshly ground nutmeg |
| 3 cups chicken stock | |

Preparation

Melt butter in large pot over medium heat. Add leeks, celery, and garlic and sauté until soft.

Add potatoes and stock and simmer over medium high heat until it comes to a light boil. Reduce heat and simmer gently for 25 minutes, or until potatoes are soft.

Turn off heat and puree in a blender or with a hand blender until just smooth.

Add salt and pepper. Stir in milk, half & half, or cream and stir until combined.

Heat through.

Serve with garnish of chopped parsley or chives and some freshly ground nutmeg.

To prep leeks, slice in half lengthwise and clean under cold, running water to remove any dirt. Slice or chop, using white and soft, light green parts only.

The Burren and the Wild Atlantic Way



Our guide – Jack the Border Collie – welcomed us to Gleninagh Castle, a 16th Century Tower House overlooking Ballyvaughan Bay. At four stories high with a basement and an attic, it was the stronghold of the O’Loughlin Clan. The thin openings are arrow slit windows.





Poul nabrone Dolmen or Portal Tomb

The Burren, or Boireann for “great rock,” is home to some of the most interesting artifacts in Ireland. The craggy terrain is made up of exposed limestone, darker siltstone, shale, and sandstone. And, yet, this rough terrain is fertile ground for beautiful wildflowers.



It's also home to megalithic tombs. There are four types of these in Ireland: court cairns, wedge tombs, passage tombs, and portal dolmens. The Poul nabrone Dolmen is a portal tomb dating from 3,800 BC. Not far from here, a farmer found one of the most beautiful Bronze Age artifacts – the Gold Gleninsheen Gorget.





Doolin's Picture Walls

Doolin is the “Home of Music” in County Clare, as well as the home of ancient rock walls overlooking the Wild Atlantic Way, and the home of Mattie and Carmel Shannon, who were our hosts at the Rainbow Hostel. Mattie is a (now retired) Officer in Charge of the Doolin Coast Guard. No small task when you have miles of coastal waters and the Cliffs of Moher to watch over.

Mattie took us on a wild ride – and walk – along the coast (with a impromptu “rodeo” to return a big bull to his home – ask me the story). Mattie grew up in Doolin and his pride of home made him the perfect guide to court cairns and passage tombs, wildflowers and these unique “picture walls” along the coastline. To view them properly, Mattie had us lie on our stomachs to see the many different “pictures” the long stretch of hand-placed rocks offered. You can view a great video of Mattie talking about Doolin at <https://doolin.ie/download/meet-the-locals-mattie-shannon-doolin-coast-guard/>

Following our day with Mattie was a traditional Irish Cèilidh – a perfect Irish Music Jam Session at one of the local pubs, featuring fiddles, tin whistles, banjos, and bodhráns...



My Bodhrán from Malachy Kearns – Roundstone Music

While in Connemara, I made a pilgrimage to Roundstone Musical Instruments, housed in an old monastery. There Malachy Kearns, the only fulltime bodhrán maker, creates these beautiful Irish drums adorned with Celtic designs.

Bodhráns are similar to the handheld drums we see here in the Pacific Northwest created by skilled Coast Salish Tribal artists. In fact, my bodhrán has a place of honor in my home next to a Native American drum that is a cherished gift.

Bodhráns are made of goat skin pulled around a wooden frame. Malachy Kearns has made drums for many musicians, including the Chieftains.





Summer Sensations

I'm dreaming of warm Summer Days and all the mouthwatering produce that the sun coaxes to its peak.

Join me next time as Meals à la Mo celebrates
Summer Sensations –

- Heirloom Tomatoes
- Ripe Strawberries bursting with flavor
- Nectarine Panzanella
- Watermelon paired with some intriguing partners

And some favorite old-time Lemonades and Limeades.

Sharing good food with wonderful friends
is a great joy.

Let me know if you try any of these
recipes – and share your own recipes and
creative cooking tips for favorites that
warm your heart and home.

Maureen

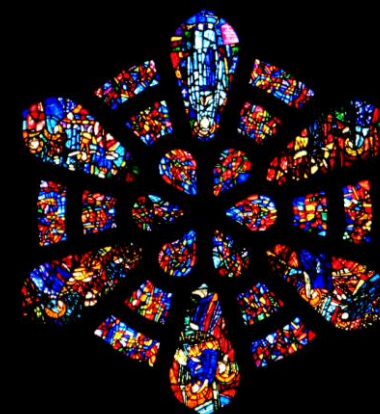
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MEALS À LA MO

Cliffs of Moher
County Clare





MEALS À LA MO



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