

Burren Food Trail Wins EDEN Award



Margaret Johnson

letters
@irishecho.com

Foodie friends in County Clare just alerted me to a major honor recently bestowed on the Burren Food Trail, a group of 22 establishments and producers who are committed to building a sustainable future for the region. The Food Trail was honored as the Irish winner of the 2015 EDEN (European Destination of Excellence) Award for developing a tourism offering based on local gastronomy and one that balances sustaining the local environment with the promotion of tourism. Minister of State for Tourism and Sport, Michael Ring TD, officially presented the EDEN award on July 22 at a ceremony at Hotel Doolin.

Ring said, "Only in its third year, the Burren Food Trail is still relatively new, but they impressed the judges with the importance they placed on making the Burren region synonymous with great food and great food experiences for visitors and the local community." The EDEN awards, an EU-wide competition, is themed differently every two years, and is designed to encourage and promote a more sustainable form of tourism development. The Burren Food Trail was one of four Irish destinations short-listed under this year's "Tourism and Local Gastronomy" theme, and as winners, they will represent Ireland at a showcase exhibition of the EDEN winners from all participating European countries in Brussels later this year.

Accepting the award, Tina O'Dwyer, coordinator of the Burren Food Trail said, "What really distinguishes us is the relationship between the Burren Food Trail and the wider tourism offering in the Geopark region. Through the Burren Ecotourism Network, food is integrated with outdoor activity and adventure, visitor centers and accommodation. It's a truly integrated local gastronomy experience."

It happens that two of my favorite foodie stops in Clare are



Flowers in the Burren. TOURISM IRELAND



Salmon on potato pancakes. BORD BIA



St. Tola cheeses. ST. TOLA

members of the Burren Food Trail — Burren Smokehouse and St. Tola Goat Cheese — so it's the perfect time to celebrate with great recipes featuring their fare.

GRILLED ST. TOLA TOASTS WITH APPLE-PEAR CHUTNEY

Serves 4

Save this recipe for all your entertaining needs throughout the fall and winter. The chutney can also be served with cold meats and on a cheese board.

- Apple-Pear Chutney*
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1/3 cup cider vinegar
- 1 tsp. chopped fresh ginger
- 1 cup (packed) brown sugar
- 1 cup golden raisins
- 1 small apple, cored and diced
- 1 small pear, cored and diced
- 2 tbsp. chopped walnuts
- Goat Cheese Toasts*
- 1 baguette
- 2-3 tbsp. olive oil
- 4 ounces St. Tola goat's cheese
- Mixed salad greens
- 4 tbsp. chopped pecans

1. To make the sauce, combine all the ingredients, except the walnuts, in a large nonreactive saucepan. Bring to a boil, and then reduce heat to medium-low and cook, uncovered, for 20-25 minutes, or until thickened.

2. Remove from the heat and stir in the walnuts. Let cool to room temperature. Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 weeks. Return to room temperature for serving. (Makes 1 1/2 cups)

3. To make the toasts, heat the broiler. Slice bread diagonally into 12 slices and brush one

side of each with the olive oil. Arrange the bread, oil side up, on a baking sheet and toast, about 4 in. from the heat source, for about 1 minute, or until lightly browned. Turn the bread over and spread with the cheese. Return to the broiler and grill for about 1 minute longer, or until the cheese is warm and lightly browned.

4. Arrange the salad on six plates and top each with two toasts. Put a spoonful of chutney on top and sprinkle with pecans.

BURREN SMOKED SALMON ON POTATO PANCAKES

Makes 12 small cakes

Salmon from the Burren Smokehouse is one of the most well known in Ireland. It's simply delicious served on brown bread with a squeeze of lemon, but it's really delicious on a potato pancake with a dollop of sour cream or crème fraîche.

Potato Pancakes
2 large potatoes, cooked and mashed

1 large egg, beaten
1 tbsp. all-purpose flour
1 tsp. baking powder
Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
1/4-1/2 cup milk
2-3 tbsp. canola oil for frying
8 oz. Burren smoked salmon, cut into 24 (1/2-in.-wide) strips
1/2 cup sour cream or crème fraîche

Fresh chives for garnish
Caviar or salmon roe for garnish
1. To make the pancakes, put the potatoes, egg, flour, baking powder, salt, and pepper in a food processor. Pulse 4-5 times to blend, and then gradually add enough of the milk to make a thick, smooth batter.

2. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat. Heat some of the oil. Drop spoonfuls of batter into the pan and cook for 2-3 minutes on each side, or until browned and heated through. Repeat with additional oil and remaining batter. Cakes can be served immediately or refrigerated, covered, overnight; reheat in a hot oven.

Continues on next page

Burren Food Trail Members

- Ballyvaughan Farmers' Market; Burren Brewery; Burren Fine Wine and Foods; Burren Free Range Pork Farm; Burren Gold Cheese at Ailwee Cave; Burren Smokehouse; Burren Nature Sanctuary; Clareville House Kitchen Garden; Doolin Cave Café; Galway Bay Bakery; Gleninagh Lamb; Gregans Casatle Hotel; Gus O'Connor's Pub; Hazel Mountain Chocolate; Hotel Doolin; Hyland's Burren Hotel; Kieran's Kitchen at Roadside Tavern; Kilshanny House; Kinvara Farmers' Market; Linnalla Ice Cream Café; Linnane's Lobster Bar; Neil Hawes Craft Butcher; Sheedy's Hotel & Restaurant; Stonecutters Kitchen; St. Tola Goat Farm; Wild Honey Inn and Wild Kitchen