

A toolkit

Make the most of a
mouthwatering year!



tourism
northernireland



We
Breed

We
Enjoy

We
Catch

We
Grow

We
Craft

We
Cook

Northern
Ireland

Year of Food
& Drink 2016

Ready for 366 days of delicious celebration?

Northern Ireland is a land of do-morers, go-beyonders and extra-milers. Just look around. This is a place made famous by its Titanic-creating ship builders, its giants and golfers, its mythical legends, music-makers, poets and Narnia-dreaming storytellers. Maybe it's the helter-skelter weather, maybe it's magic – but something here inspires ambition and spirit and the proof is on your plate and in your glass. From harvesting Comber Earlies to catching Lough Neagh Eels, distilling Bushmills Whiskey to rearing Glenarm Shorthorn, we go that little bit further for every single mouthful. We **craft, grow, breed, catch, cook** and **enjoy** it all with passion – to prove that the finest landscapes, in the hands of the most dedicated people, make for truly phenomenal experiences...

Northern Ireland. Relish the place.

Northern Ireland's Year of Food and Drink 2016 is a golden opportunity to showcase our tastiest produce and sell NI as a foodie destination. With useful info and inspiring ideas, this toolkit is designed to help you make the very most of the year. Here's what you'll find inside...

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Northern Ireland: Destination Delicious

Great things are happening in our food and drink sector

We're already a global player...

Plenty of our homegrown creations are classics – think **Armagh's Bramley Apples**, **Comber's Early Potatoes** and **Lough Neagh's Eels**. And with soda, potato and veda bread under our belts (often literally) we're well accustomed to using our loaf. Our **Glenarm Shorthorn Beef** is considered the best in the world and **Bushmills Whiskey** is an icon. Plus, British Airways Highlife Magazine recently listed Belfast as one of six food destinations to visit globally.

...and there's more deliciousness in the wings

We're experiencing a spectacular explosion of artisan food and drink companies in Northern Ireland and it's earning us a tasty reputation. **Shortcross Gin** from County Down recently scooped a silver medal at the San Francisco World Spirits Competition, **Glenarm Organic Salmon** is lined up on shelves in Harvey Nichols and **Abernethy Butter** is the dairy sweetheart of London's Michelin-starred chefs. And there's plenty more where that lot came from...



Apple picking in Armagh



Comber Early Potatoes



Abernethy Butter



Lough Neagh Eels



Noel McMeel, Lough Erne Resort & Spa

Let the numbers do the talking

Don't take our word for it. Check out these food and drink stats...



3

local producers were awarded the highest accolade of 3 GOLD STARS:

Dale Farm

for its Fivemiletown Ballyoak Cheese

Genesis Crafty

for its Supervalu Brown Soda Loaf



Baronscourt Estate

for its Wild Sika Venison French Rack

70

LOCAL COMPANIES scooped up almost

200

GOLD STARS



2

SUPREME CHAMPIONS

came from Moira:

Hannan Meats and

McCartney's Butchers

33%

of all spend by GB and overseas visitors to Northern Ireland is on food and drink

Delectable drinkables

From the time-honoured craft at **The Old Bushmills Distillery** to multiplying microbreweries, Northern Ireland is known for its brews, drafts, liquors and libations. We are so proud of our craft brewers and cider makers whose products are being recognised on the international stage – many of whom have only set up in the last 5 years! We are experiencing heady days of a craft beer revolution in many of our local bars. And it's not just our drinks that are notable; some of our most traditional pubs are winning awards for their food menus too. Good times indeed!



The year in a clamshell

A little history and context to the year

2016 is going to be a stellar year in Northern Ireland. Especially if you're hungry! For 366 days we'll be showcasing and developing the best of our food and drink, the people and the passion that goes into rearing, making, cooking and serving it. Here's everything you need to know...

A little background to the year

Northern Ireland's Year of Food and Drink 2016 was designated by the Minister of Trade and Enterprise in May 2015 – a year long celebration with the aim of improving the quality of the visitor experience and satisfaction, as well as telling our stories to build upon our reputation and share our successes. After all, food and drink is a phenomenal way to experience our heritage, landscape and culture.

Vision for the year

Celebrate the quality, innovation, creativity and entrepreneurship in our food and drink industry

Boost Northern Ireland's destination reputation by putting food and drink at the heart of our tourism experience

Inspire trade, growth and visitor spend

We Craft

We Grow

We Catch

We Cook

We Enjoy

We Breed

The word on the street

“We know how good our food is, which is probably why we enjoy eating out so much. The recent Barclaycard report showing Northern Ireland people spend more on eating out than the rest of the UK is proof of that. Now it’s time to build on our growing reputation for excellence and give visitors even more mouthwatering reasons to come here.”

Minister, DETI

“Tourists spend over £350 million per year on Northern Ireland food and drink and I believe there is significant room for further growth. We have some of the best produce, the best chefs and the best restaurants in the world and the potential this has when it comes to tourism cannot be underestimated.”

Terence Brannigan, Chairman Tourism NI

“Year of Food and Drink 2016 is a fantastic opportunity for Northern Ireland to shout about our excellent food stories, events, and culinary experiences, highlighting so many special things our climate and land allow us to produce. I hope this toolkit will help you to plan your part in this enormous community wide enterprise.”

Dr Howard Hastings, Hastings Hotels

We
Cook



OX Belfast, voted as one of the six top restaurants to visit in Western Europe and named as one of the 'hottest' restaurants in Europe by World's 50 Best List



Arriving hungry. Leaving happy.

How your business can make the most of the year...

Don't miss out on what's promising to be a brilliant year. Here are some simple and inspiring ways to get involved...

Showcase the logo

It's easy to get involved and show your support for the year. Simply download our logo and use it across the board – on your menus, brochures, leaflets, websites and more. Check out pages 16 - 17 for some helpful hints and guidance.

Throw your own event

Be inspired, get involved! Come up with a creative idea or join up with like-minded people to celebrate quality food and drinks from your local area. Check out the monthly themes in our calendar (pages 24 - 25) and see where you can best tie in.

Think festivals, food markets, tasting menus, cookery demos, baking competitions, edible challenges, community events, pop-up tastings and all other kinds of shindigs... But whatever you do, remember to be authentic and have quality local food and drink at the heart of it! Super-sized or small, this is **your stage**; the world is your Lough Foyle Oyster!



Be bespoke

Create a unique Year of Food and Drink 2016 menu, welcome hamper, product or foodie activity. Whatever you opt for, use your idea to showcase local producers and let guests know where all of the deliciousness is coming from.

Work together

If you aren't a food or drink provider don't worry, there are plenty of ways to get involved. Bring our heritage to life by joining up with local producers or restaurants and create a food trail which tells a local history story through food. Think about hungry visitors enjoying outdoor activities - how could food add value to their tourism experience? Perhaps creating a link with a local café, bakery or farm shop to supply a picnic or BBQ food could build a lasting business opportunity. Think of how food can enhance your story and off you go!

Champion others

Ah, the power of the group! Show your local food and drink providers a little love by showcasing their produce or promoting them in your business. Put leaflets and details on display. Have samples at the ready. Or go the extra mile and create your own 'top picks' print out. You can use it to highlight unmissable foodiness in your local area – complete with favourite dishes and maps. And don't forget to be social; get involved in conversations online, tweet and share pictures.



Using the brand

Some helpful guidelines and suggestions...

You can help create momentum and really show your support for the Year of Food & Drink 2016 by using the brand across your communications.

Our logo

Say hello to our primary logo. We have provided various colour options to suit differing needs and we would love to see it being used to celebrate and promote the year.

Size and scale

To make sure the logo can clearly be seen and is legible, its minimum size is 30mm.

The fine print

To view the logo and for details on how to download it and read all the terms, conditions and nitty gritty, visit: tourismni.com/yearoffoodanddrink

Full Colour



Full Colour with Strap



Mono White



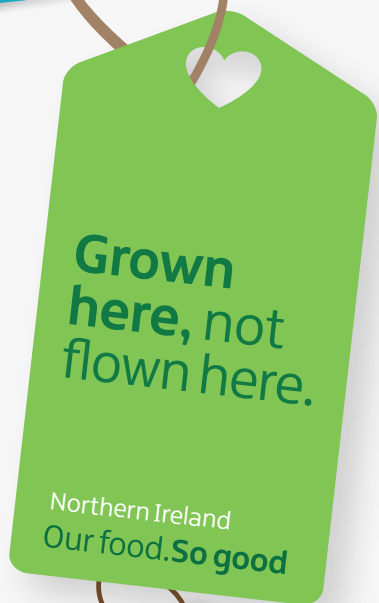
Our Food. So Good.

Food NI is passionate about promoting the best of Northern Ireland's food and drink. They have a wealth of experience on showcasing the finest food and drink from Northern Ireland, and constantly work to promote the people who produce it, rear it, make, catch and cook it.

Food NI publish a range of guides including the award winning 'World Gourmand Taste of Ulster Guide', 'Producers Guide', 'Street Food Handbook', and 'Drinks Guide'. Everything you need to help you plan your quality food event! You can download them from www.nigoodfood.com



Download 'Our food. So good' toolkit at tourismni.com/yearoffoodanddrink



"Northern Ireland's reputation for high quality food and drink is going from strength to strength based on local businesses recognition in awards from The Guild of Fine Foods. With two supreme champions within the whole of the UK and Ireland (McCartney's of Moira and Hannan Meats) and European recognition of our Comber Early Potatoes, Armagh Bramley Apples and Lough Neagh Eels, it really is something to shout about.

Our fresh local produce adds value and a real stamp of authenticity to the visitor experience. By linking with local produce there is a huge opportunity for Northern Ireland to grow its reputation on the global stage as a great place to visit and eat. After all, everybody remembers that time they had an exceptional food experience."

Michele Shirlow
from Food NI





Rayanne House

Using their loaf

Inspiring stories from across our food and drink industry

Food and drink inspired ideas can be powerful tools in the marketing mix. But don't take our word for it, have a look at these savvy sorts...

A Titanic Menu at Rayanne House

With unique views of Belfast Lough, you can see the spot where Titanic sailed out of the city in 1912 – this gave the owner Bernie McClelland an idea! To mark the Titanic centenary year, Chef Proprietor Conor McClelland recreated the last meal served on the ship and put the 5* B&B on the map. Wildly successful, his Titanic Menu brainwave has taken Conor, his food and the Rayanne House name to London, LA and beyond.

Hastings Ballygally Castle Hotel



Winter is coming at Ballygally Castle Hotel

Celebrating the success of 'Game of Thrones®' and their unique position on the Causeway Coastal Route, Ballygally Castle Hotel have recently launched their Game of Thrones Afternoon Tea. With the show's popularity reaching fever pitch and fans travelling to Northern Ireland in their droves to see the film locations, it's great timing – and a great example of using food and drink to tap into a trend. Try the Dothraki Trifle with mini Dragon's eggs...



Raise a glass

It's a good day when gin from down the road is winning awards in San Francisco. Husband and wife team, Fiona and David Boyd-Armstrong built their own baby distillery and started making gin only a couple of years ago. Using botanicals grown in their own garden at Rademon Estate, Shortcross Gin is Northern Ireland's first premium craft gin and it's getting rave reviews. Shortcross was voted the best Gin and Tonic at Dublin's 2015 G&T Fest. We'll drink to that.



You're up next!

So, what can you do to make your mark? Just be brave, be proud and celebrate all that is special about Northern Ireland's food and drink. Do the simple things brilliantly. Our traditional food heritage is our point of difference – so use local and give visitors an authentic experience. Think of our great bread making and baking traditions, our grass fed beef and lamb, as well as a local preference for a strong cup of tea! Simple local dishes prepared and presented well will impress visitors.

Local baker Mark Douglas making soda bread for tourists arriving into Belfast

Here's the plan...

With monthly themes and key events already in the diary, the year is shaping up to be an extraordinary one.

Have a look at our brilliant themes month-by-month to help you plan your activity...



JANUARY
Breakfast
Month



FEBRUARY
Love
Local

Yellow Door Deli



MARCH
Heritage &
Traditions



APRIL
Brewing &
Distilling



MAY
Landscape
& Places



JUNE
Love
Dairy



JULY
Seas, Rivers
& Loughs



AUGUST
Love
NI Meat



SEPTEMBER
Bread &
Baking



OCTOBER
Harvest



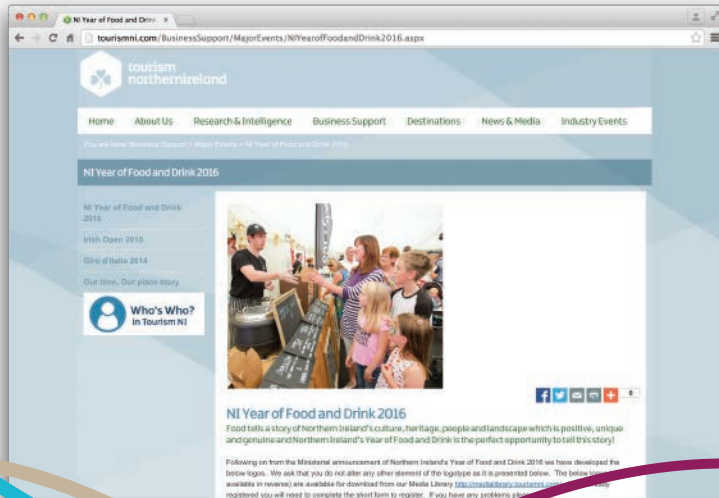
NOVEMBER
Legacy &
Learn to...



DECEMBER
Christmas
& Premium
Foods

This is only a flavour

There are plenty more fantastic happenings going on throughout the year. See the complete picture with our interactive calendar at tourismni.com/yearoffoodanddrink



Add your event

Planning your own event or Year of Food & Drink celebration? We can help you promote it by popping it on our website tourismni.com/yearoffoodanddrink and adding it to the calendar. Just get in touch and tell us all about your plans.

E: events@tourismni.com

Foodie partners

Your food and drink support system

Our food and drink sector wouldn't be so fantastic, and this year long celebration wouldn't be possible without these organisations. Check them out and see how they can help you better promote your business...



Niall McKenna at Hillsborough Oyster Festival cooking demonstration

Food NI

Please take a look at pages 18 - 19 for information on how Food NI can support you.

www.nigoodfood.com

Local Authorities

Local Authorities have a unique opportunity to showcase their local destination through their food experiences. A Local Authority can provide leadership in their area to improve the range, quality and availability of food tourism experiences, festivals and events and other activities that will help drive visitor satisfaction and deliver the long-term growth and sustainability of tourism across Northern Ireland.

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) aims to promote sustainable economic growth and the development of the countryside. DARD assists the competitive development of the agri-food, fishing and forestry sectors of the Northern Ireland economy, having regard for the need of the consumers, the welfare of animals and the conservation and enhancement of the environment

www.dardni.gov.uk

The Department for Employment and Learning

The aim of the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) is to promote learning and skills, to prepare people for work and to support the economy. It is responsible for policy, funding, corporate governance and service delivery across the spectrum from employment through training, careers advice, further and higher education, research and innovation, all underpinned by employment rights.

www.delni.gov.uk

Invest NI

Invest NI is committed to enhanced food and drink promotion, highlighted by the PfG and in the Agri Food "Going for Growth" Strategy. The Food and Marketing Team secures new and first time sales for NI food and drink companies in specified export markets. The commercial targets driving the team provide a Return on Investment of approximately 80:1. The team also works with a large number of stakeholder organisations, including; Dairy NI, The NI Meat Exporters Association, Livestock Marketing Commission, Food NI, and The NI Food & Drink Association.

www.investni.com

Over to you

How to share your brilliant plans

We're here, fired up and ready to help you make the very most of Year of Food and Drink 2016. Hopefully this toolkit has explained a little more about what's in store and given you some ideas. Ready, steady, GO!

Get online

If you're throwing a themed event which you'd like us to pop on our consumer website discovernorthernireland.com, simply email the details through to us for consideration. Or perhaps you're thinking of something special that could run during the year or tie-in with a monthly theme? If so, just email us the details or call the Visitor Information Unit on:

E: events@tourismni.com T: 028 90441512

Get creative

The world really is your oyster when it comes to ideas and ways to get involved – and you don't need to be a food and drink provider to join in. Go solo or tie up with other businesses and get creative with your ideas. The more going on the merrier the year will be.



Get social

Join in the conversation on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and share your updates. From chats, to photographs and videos, find all the latest news on our website and social channels. And lastly, drop us a line for digital promotional opportunities and content sharing.

E: digital@tourismni.com

For food related updates throughout the year, visit:
tourismni.com/yearoffoodanddrink

Your handy checklist



Everyone has a role to play as an ambassador for food and drink. Are you and your staff ready?

- Check online for tips, news and assets at tourismni.com/yearoffoodanddrink
- Check out our calendar and share your ideas with us
- Have you downloaded the powerpoint and shared the video to inspire others?
- Check online to view the logo and for details on how to download it
- Check if your event is eligible for support from the Tourism Event Funding Programme (2016-2017)
- Check online for the toolkits
 - 'Our Food So Good' Toolkit
 - 'Knowing Your Customer and Growing Your Business' Toolkit
 - 'Year of Food and Drink Events' Toolkit