

Leitrim shortlisted in Top 10 Foodie Destinations in Ireland

CALL FOR EVERYONE TO GET VOTING

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Leitrim has been revealed as one of the Top 10 Foodie Destinations in the country, according to the Restaurants Association of Ireland.

Taste Leitrim brings together over 80 businesses including restaurants and food and drink producers and includes 59 video profiles, 5 Taste Leitrim Trails with videos and maps, a dedicated website www.tasteleitrim.com as well as strong social media presence on Youtube, Facebook and Twitter.

The county faces some stiff opposition in the nationwide competition which is why Leitrim County Council, The Food Hub - Drumshanbo and the whole Leitrim food community are imploring everyone who loves Leitrim or has had a good food experience here to go online and vote to make Leitrim the best foodie destination in the Ireland. Fergal McPartland of The Food Hub explains "Public voting constitutes 50% of the scoring in the next round of the competition so we would love for everyone to get behind us, go online and cast your vote for Leitrim by visiting

www.foodiedestinations.ie/city/leitrim. Voting closes at 12pm on Friday 9th of September. Given Taste Leitrim was launched just 10 months ago, this is an excellent endorsement that Leitrim is on the right track as a serious food destination contender."

Putting the people behind the businesses at the forefront is a very important aspect of Taste Leitrim. Frank Curran, CEO, Leitrim County Council explains "By personally introducing you through the power of video to our chefs, makers, producers, food entrepreneurs, distillers, brewers, baristas and farmers we are sending out the invite to experience an insider's view into the people behind Leitrim's diverse food offering. This is something that none of the other destinations in the competition are doing so it definitely gives us an edge"

Leitrim's food businesses are also getting on board to encourage voting. Aisling Stone of The Grass Roof Cafe explains "This is such a huge achievement for a small county and as a gesture of thanks we are giving away a free ice-cream to everyone this weekend who lets us know they voted."

To win the coveted prize, Leitrim will have to not only gather the most public votes but it will also need to impress a panel of judges who will visit the county on Sunday, 11th September. Joe Lowe, Leitrim LEO urges people to get behind the event and support the initiative on social media, "

"Food and tourism are vital to our local economy. Taste Leitrim brings together the gastronomic excellence available in the county. Our main message to the judges is that Leitrim may be Ireland's smallest populated county but we pack one serious culinary punch!"

This culinary punch is something that Aisling too alludes to, "Our little county is often overlooked in the grand scheme of Irish tourism. But in a tiny population of 25,000, we have so much to offer: Sham Hanifa - Euro Toques Chef and Best Chef in Leitrim

according to the Restaurant Association of Ireland, The Oarsman - Best Gastropub in the Country, Lena's Tea Room - former Irish Times Best Cafe in Ireland, The Organic Centre, The Courthouse Kinlough, 12 Quail Farm and so many others. We have heart and everyone needs to know about us!"

The Foodie Destination competition was won last year by The Burren, who again made the Top 10 this year and are going for a two-in-a-row. They along with Leitrim, Boyne Valley, Cong in Co Mayo, Derry, the Dublin coastal villages of Howth, Malahide and Skerries, Kilkenny, Monaghan, Sligo, and The Loop Head Peninsula in Co Clare make up the shortlist of competing locations.

Fergal McPartland sums up "Being crowned the Best Foodie Destination would just be a huge boost for Leitrim's food businesses and for our tourism offering, please vote Leitrim all the way."