

luck of the irish

Special report

Pints and pies to fuel the craic

Carla Grossetti asks Eamon Eastwood - founder of Taste Ireland, which imports Irish ingredients - to recommend his favourite national dishes and where to find them.

Colcannon

There are many food trends and fashions that come and go. And then there are ancient dishes such as colcannon that, according to Cassell's *Dictionary of Cookery*, have been in favour since the late 1800s. Get it wrong and it will likely prompt an Irish purist into a fit of pique. Get it right as Irish-born chef Colin Fassnidge does at 4Fourteen and you have a carborific cult dish on your hands. Fassnidge's take on the dish is fairly true to its roots as it comprises potatoes, young cavolo nero and parsley and "more butter than normal".
4fourteen.com.au, 72a Fitzroy Street, Surry Hills, 9331 5399.

Crunchy curry chips

McDonnells Curry Sauce is like Vegemite to Irish expats, which makes crunchy curry

chips akin to crack. This is a nostalgic nod to an Irish-inspired dish that acts like a sidekick to the usual suspects such as ale-battered fish, oat penny cakes or red soil spud nachos. The Cat and Fiddle guarantees the Guinness will be flowing all day along with its famous Irish breakfast with all the trimmings including black and white Clonakilty pudding.
456 Darling Street, Balmain, 9810 7931, catandfiddle.com.au

Twenty 8 Acres

The sunny back streets of Darlington are a long way from county Cork. But for those who aren't planning on taking an RDO to paint the town green, Twenty 8 Acres is a great place to connect with Sydney's Irish community.

The cafe is co-owned by chefs with Irish heritage who will transport you to those rain-soaked fields of green countryside with the full Irish breakfast, which includes sausages and black and white pudding sourced from The Irish Butcher in Penrith and stand-out soda bread baked in-house. The cafe also sells Club Orange and Rock Shandy.

Shop 1, 74-80 Ivy Lane, Darlington, 7901 9690, twenty8acres.com.au



Beef and Guinness pie

If you want to drown your sorrows over the cancellation of this year's St Patrick's Day parade, head to PJ O'Brien's on the corner of King and Clarence where you can also wolf down a beef and Guinness pie. "The pie has a rich Guinness gravy and the pastry is light and crisp and it is served with a nice dollop of cream potato in the middle and Irish soda bread on the side," says Eastwood. For those who want to gleefully recognise their heritage with a full Irish breakfast and pint of Guinness, the doors open at 8am.
57 King Street, Sydney, 9290 1811, pjobriens.com.au/sydney

Braised lamb shoulder

Irish backpackers may want to award the blue ribbon for highest achievement as the "place to go for a good craic" to PJ Gallagher chain The Criterion. If you're partial to wearing a silly hat and lopsided grin this is the place to be. Treat yourself to a traditional Irish dish such as the slow-braised lamb

shoulder, cabbage, baby carrots and pea mint puree which Eastwood describes as "the real deal". Expect Guinness, trad Irish tunes and a golden Gaelic time.

PJ Gallagher's Criterion, 260 Pitt Street, Sydney, pjscriterion.com.au

The humble potato

If you're not one for buying into the balladry and bodhran beats, turn your back on tradition and whet your appetite for the starchy plant tuber at Mad Spuds instead. Potatoes are, of course, ten-a-penny. But a safe bet is also the full Irish breakfast which features pork sausages, black and white pudding, potato bread, soda bread and rashers of bacon, baked beans and mushrooms.

479 Crown Street, Surry Hills, 9698 8108, madspuds.com.au

To source ingredients such as Tayto Cheese & Onion Crisps, Barrys Tea, Real Milk Chocolate or McDonnells Curry Sauce, visit TasteIreland.com.au



BLACK GOLD

Here are 11 places to go for a pint of Guinness on St Patrick's Day in Sydney.

Porterhouse Irish Pub is where fans of Gaelic football and Guinness served just so are "gunna head". Here, classic Irish pub grub is the go. 233 Riley Street, Surry Hills, 9211 4454, porterhouse.com.au

The Royal Hotel, Paddington is all about Irish drinks and a menu that hero-worships the humble potato. 237 Glenmore Road, Paddington, 9331 2604, royalhotel.com.au

The Collaroy will celebrate St Pat's Day with special Irish drinks such as the whisky-based Exotic Irish. 1064 Pittwater Road Collaroy, 9982 3924, collaroyhotel.com.au

The Woollahra Hotel is offering a Luck of the Irish drinks list and live Irish music from 7.30pm. 116 Queen Street, Woollahra, 9327 9777, woollahrahotel.com.au

PJ O'Brien's Irish Pubs Expect Irish beers and orange wigs and hearty pub fare at PJ O'Brien's. 57 King Street, Sydney, 9290 1811, pjobriens.com.au

PJ Gallagher's Those who enjoy a pint of Gat while in a field of green people should head to The Criterion. 260 Pitt Street, Sydney, pjscriterion.com.au

The Fiddler Rouse Hill Folks who really enjoy a glass of the dark stuff should be rooting for this Rouse Hill pub, which takes its Guinness seriously. Make time for a jigger of whisky and a jig in The Irish bar. Corner Commercial and Windsor roads, Rouse Hill, 9629 4811, thefiddler.com.au

London Hotel Pour your heart out to the bartender where you will find a perfect pint of the dark stuff on tap. 234 Darling Street, Balmain, 9555 1377, londonhotel.com.au

Lord Dudley When the sky turns as pitch-black as a pint of Guinness, head to the Lord Dudley and let the shenanigans begin. 236 Jersey Road, Woollahra, 9327 5399, lorddudley.com.au

The Trinity Bar Prop up the bar after a few pints of Guinness or shots of Mickey Finn Sour Apple. Lay claim to a plate of McDonnells Curry Chips. 505 Crown Street, Surry Hills, 9319 6802, trinitybar.com.au

From top left: Full Irish breakfast at Twenty 8 Acres; Irish atmosphere at The Fiddler Rouse Hill; a pint of Guinness goes with everything; The London's good for a gathering.