

It's interesting how the tide has turned...

In October last year, Dr Aseem Malhotra, an eminent cardiologist at Croydon University Hospital, argued, in a widely reported piece in the British Medical Journal, that it was time to bust the myth of the role of saturated fat in heart disease.

From his analysis of independent research he concluded that there is no argument to back up the theory that saturated fats from non-processed foods are detrimental to our health. He maintains that saturated fats have been 'demonised' ever since a landmark study in the 1970's concluded that there was a correlation between the incidence of coronary heart disease and total cholesterol. An entire food industry has evolved and profited from this low fat mantra for almost four decades. For more on this see my November 16th article in the [Irish Examiner](#).



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These findings caused quite a sensation. And it wasn't just Dr Malhotra and his colleagues who have come to this conclusion. A recent study from Cambridge University and the Harvard School of Public Health published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* reported that they found no link, repeat, no link between consumption of saturated fats and heart attacks or other cardiovascular problems. The 22-year-long Harvard University study of 80,000 female nurses, has confirmed Malhotra's findings: the total amount of fat in the diet, whether high or low, isn't really linked with disease. What really matters is the type of fat in the diet. In the US a recent University of California, Los Angeles study indicated that 75% of acute heart patients do not have 'high cholesterol'.

Blog Archive

- ▼ 2014 (8)
 - ▼ May (5)
 - [Butter is Back!](#)
 - [My Food Heroes Come to the Kerrygold LitFest](#)
 - [Tasty Words: The Dream Package for \(Wannabe\) Food ...](#)
 - [Short Courses at Ballymaloe Cookery School](#)
 - [Inside LitFest 2014](#)
 - ▶ April (2)
 - ▶ January (1)
- ▶ 2013 (33)
- ▶ 2012 (11)

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[Sizzling Chilis and Aromatic Spices at LitFest](#)

As you have seen from my blog over the past months I love to travel, and an integral part of every journey are the new foods and flavours I...

[A New Book...](#)

Apologies again for my long silence - apart from giving the Ballymaloe Cookery School my



I have spoken to many doctors, dieticians and health professionals who are presently in a state of confusion, having been preaching the benefits of a low fat diet for years, they are now not sure what advice they should be giving.

So it's clear that it's time to rethink the received wisdom on what "good" and "bad" fats are - which is exactly what two of the most respected writers and broadcasters on food issues: **Joanna Blythman** and **Ella McSweeney**, will be doing in conversation with **John McKenna** at this year's Kerrygold LitFest. The **Good/ Bad Fats: The Big Debate** 6.30-8pm on Saturday 17th in the Grainstore, Ballymaloe House

I simply can't wait. This promises to be one of the most interesting, important and ground-breaking sessions at LitFest this year. If you're interested in health for professional or personal reasons this is not to be missed.



We're also absolutely delighted to be joined by The **Butter Vikings**, an inspirational couple from Sweden, who are the chosen suppliers

almost undivided attention after the busy business of ...



Ballymaloe Literary Festival of Food and Wine

Oops, it's been a busy few weeks! On the May Bank Holiday weekend this year (3rd-6th May), we're hosting the first ever Ballymaloe...

Fluffy chicks.

We've have just hatched out a clutch of fluffy chicks in time for Easter. A few weeks ago, we put a batch of fertile eggs into the incub...

A blog at last, well almost!

I've been wanting to write a blog for years but simply couldn't seem to get started, a bit ridiculous considering I write a weekly ...

The Post LitFest

of handmade "virgin" butter for Rene Redzepi's legendary *Noma* restaurant. I met the **Butter Vikings** and Rene at the **MAD Food symposium** in Copenhagen and invited them to take part in LitFest - the response of both was an enthusiastic "*yes please!*"

And whilst we're on the subject of butter, the other great news is that **Kerrygold** have agreed to become our festival sponsors- how about that for a marriage made in heaven?



JR - a butter devotee and Ballymaloe pastry chef - in his Kerrygold bow tie at the LitFest launch in Dublin last week.



**Blues...
The
LitFest**

was such a blast - the whole event went into orbit! We'd been hoping for 2,500-3000 people over the weekend, but in the en...

**A Food Writer's
Paradise**

If food writing's your thing then you're in for a treat at the Ballymaloe LitFest . We are focusing on every aspect of the literature of ...



**Cronuts in
New York**

I can't
believe
I'm

queuing in the rain with another hundred plus people to buy a 'cronut' at Dominique Ansel bakery in Spring Str...



**Collecting
sea
urchins on
Inis Meán**

I'm sure

you could count the number of restaurants in Ireland easily on one hand that offer sea urchins on the menu - Ballymaloe fe...

**Winter Sun in Puerto
Escondido, Mexico**

We've had a wonderfully relaxing week here at Punta



Posted by Darina at 14:18 No comments:



Labels: [ballymaloe](#), [butter](#), [Buttermaloe](#), [cholesterol](#), [cream](#), [Examiner column](#), [farming](#), [food issues](#), [forgotten skills](#), [good fats](#), [litfest](#), [research](#), [Simply Delicious](#)

Thursday, 8 May 2014

My Food Heroes Come to the Kerrygold LitFest

Zicatela doing virtually nothing except reading , swimming and chilling out, I...

My Blog List

One of the most exciting parts of the Kerrygold LitFest is getting to bring absolute food heroes of mine here to Ballymaloe. Some are less well-known to many here in Ireland, but who are living legends in their fields, so I want to take a little time to properly introduce them to you.

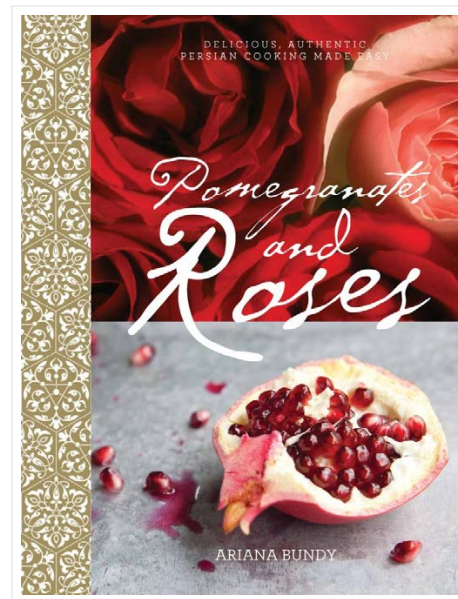


This is a once in a life time opportunity to see **Diana Kennedy** (do read all about [my visit to her in Mexico last year](#)), who is, I'm sure she won't mind me telling you 90 this year. Diana is one of the most iconic food writers in the world, branded the Julia Child of Mexican cooking, having written the standard works on Mexican food and has been decorated for her services by the Mexican government. She's electric, she has such a presence and a wealth of knowledge to share. She doesn't do cookery demonstrations any more, so we were very fortunate to persuade her to come all the way over from Mexico to join us. Don't miss her, rush to the website and [book now](#).

STOP PRESS - news just in, Diana has just won the [James Beard Life Time Achievement Award](#)! We are soooo delighted for her!



Maggie Beer is a well-known Australian chef, she has written nine books, has her own TV series as well as making appearances on the Australian Masterchef. She is the incredible woman behind the verjuice revival and has established in Australia a similar thing to what we have here at Ballymaloe: she's all about simplicity and great produce. Don't miss her. She will be involved directly in two events at Litfest: as **Guest Chef for Saturday lunch** in Ballymaloe House (now sold out) and doing a **Cookery Demonstration** on Sunday at the Ballymaloe Cookery School for which there are still a few places left.



We all know that Middle Eastern cuisine is hot right now, due to the **Ottolenghi** effect (his demo and pop up dinner are completely sold out, but there is still room in the **Grain Store** to hear him speak, along with **Sami Tamimi** and **Ariana Bundy**).

Whilst you'll all no doubt be familiar with the names of the Ottolenghi boys, you might not know Ariana, author of the simply beautiful book *Pomegranates and Roses*, who I especially invited to give us a taste of exquisite Persian food. She will be doing a fragrant Cookery Demonstration alongside our own **Rory O'Connell** on Saturday afternoon at the Cookery School.



This is only a tantalising taste of the multitude of demonstrations, workshops, talks, meals and readings that we have planned for the weekend of the **Kerrygold Ballymaloe LitFest of Food and Wine**, we look forward to seeing you on the weekend of the **16th of May**.

Posted by Darina at 11:17 1 comment:



Labels: [Ariana Bundy](#), [Australia](#), [cookery school](#), [Diana Kennedy](#), [food heroes](#), [litfest](#), [Maggie Beer](#), [Mexico](#), [Ottolenghi](#), [Persian](#)

Wednesday, 7 May 2014

Tasty Words: The Dream Package for (Wannabe) Food Writers at LitFest

There's never been a better time for those who want to write. You can just tap away on your keyboard or iPhone, and publish it immediately - on a blog, on Facebook, or email it to an editor. Anyone anywhere can write about what they're passionate about.

And it's so great that a lot of people have got that message - there really is some incredible stuff out there... but there's also a lot that "needs more work".

LitFest is a haven for writers, wannabe writers, bloggers, journalists, food photographers. We celebrate food, books and words. Here's just a taste of what we have in store:



[Read more »](#)

Posted by Darina at 11:21 No comments:



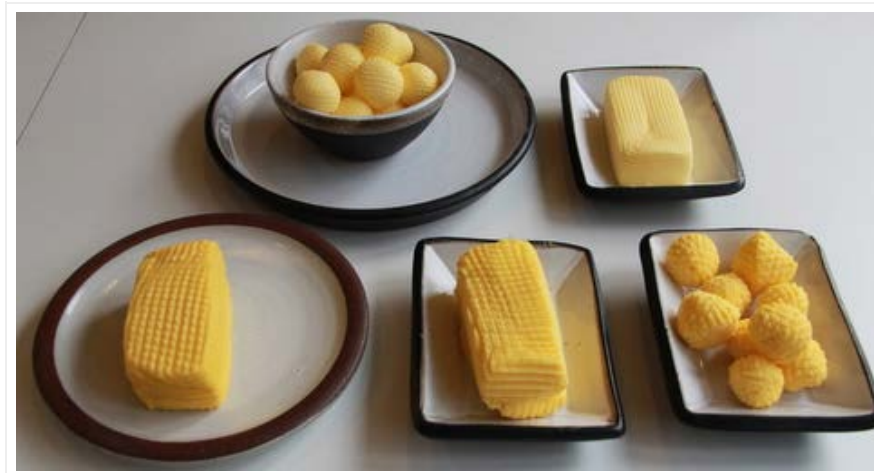
Labels: [blogs](#), [Donal Skehan](#), [Elizabeth David](#), [food heroes](#), [food photography](#), [food writing](#), [Jill Norman](#), [John McKenna](#), [Lilly Higgins](#), [litfest](#), [Nessa Robins](#), [Tom Doorley](#)

Monday, 5 May 2014

Short Courses at Ballymaloe Cookery School

Ballymaloe Cookery School is well known for its [12 Week Certificate Course](#) - but we also run dozens of [shorter courses](#) throughout the year where you can learn a new skill and soak up inspiration.

I'm aware that many of you will be coming down to East Cork for the [Kerrygold Ballymaloe LitFest of Food and Wine](#), and might be interested in extending your stay for a few more days to take a short course with us.



Coming up over the next couple of weeks you can:

- [Get Blogging](#) - make a start on that food blog you've been dreaming about...
- [Learn how to make butter, cheese and yoghurt](#)
- [Learn all about gluten free cooking with Rosemary Kearney](#)
- [Build your repertoire of irresistible breakfasts](#)

Posted by Darina at 09:41 No comments:



Labels: [12 week course](#), [blogs](#), [cookery school](#), [forgotten skills](#)

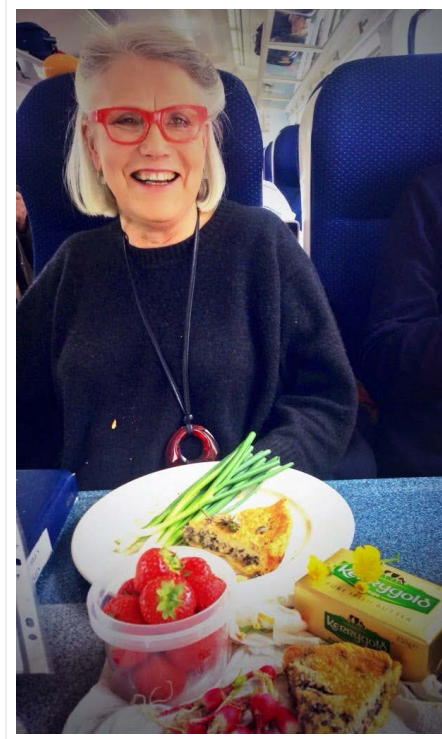
Thursday, 1 May 2014

Inside LitFest 2014

I've been dying to lift the curtain on [LitFest 2014](#) for you. So here goes...

Things are hotting up here! The ace [LitFest team](#) have been working flat out for months now, drawing up the programme, planning one exciting event after the other. The excitement is reaching fever pitch at this stage.

Last night we had the official launch up in Dublin - the whole team headed up on the train...



Never go anywhere without a picnic and a cushion darling!

Now we're officially launched... we're counting down the days before the influx of speakers and guests arrive. There's a real buzz about the place already.

As before, the event will be held at Ballymaloe: the Cookery School in Shanagarry, the Grain Store at Ballymaloe House, and the new Drinks Theatre at Ballymaloe House. Dozens of food and drink heroes will be flying in from all over the world, to join our home grown legends in a celebration of food, drink and words. It was a a great boost to get a shout out in the Observer last week as one of their Top 50 Food Events of the summer. And I'm looking forward to sharing more about a few of the events over the next couple of weeks, so stay tuned!

We're absolutely thrilled that Kerrygold have joined us as festival sponsors this year. For us it's a completely *sympathique* partnership with a company that has always been known for its quality... that spreads a taste of Ireland all over the world.



We were so excited with our line up last year, and it was quite a challenge to match... and top it... this year. Judging from the reaction it seems we have done it again in spades. My brother Rory keeps joking about my little black gastro-book!

We were so delighted by the reaction to so many of our food heroes who responded so positively to our invitation. Without exception they had heard of last year's event. Word seemed to have spread like wildfire through the global food community. And those who have already committed were begging to come back again next year. I'm not going to share names now, but we are VERY excited!

Posted by [Darina](#) at 12:54 1 comment:



Labels: [cookery school](#), [literary festival](#), [litfest](#)

Wednesday, 30 April 2014

And the winners are...

Thank you for all the competition entries and your enthusiasm. Choosing was hard. But the winners are...

Niamh Mannion for the Food and Wine Blogging event tickets.

My Favourite Things for the Good Fats, Bad Fats tickets.

Please can you make contact with the LitFest box office (info@litfest.ie) ASAP and give them your name, email and address so they can send them out to you!



Posted by Darina at 10:45 2 comments:



Labels: giveaway, litfest

Saturday, 19 April 2014

LitFest 2014... just around the corner. WIN TICKETS!

Oops, it's been a busy couple of months... and can you believe it, it's almost that time of year again!



The **KerryGold Ballymaloe Literary Festival of Food and Wine** is just around the corner. This year it's on the weekend of **May 16th-17th-18th**. We'd love to see you there... **WE'RE OFFERING PAIRS OF TICKETS TO TWO EVENTS**, so be sure to read **on for more**.

Once again we will be welcoming some of the world's biggest names in food and wine to **Ballymaloe House** and **Ballymaloe Cookery School**, to share their knowledge and passion with you. This year's line up is even more incredible than last year's... though it hardly seems possible! (See below for our speakers!)

Simon Hopkinson, Alys Fowler, Sally and John McKenna, Donal Skeehan, Catherine Fulvio, Rachel Allen, Tom Dorley, John Wilson, Thomasina Miers, Paul Flynn, Maggie Beer, Mary Dowey, Jill Norman... some of the giants of food and wine literature.

We have discussions, readings, writing workshops, a food trail and walking tour as well as cookery demonstrations galore.

Tickets to Yotam Ottolenghi and Sami Tamimi's demonstration and pop-up dinner sold within minutes of going on sale. As did the foraging walks with Rene Redzepi of Noma.... but you can still (at time of writing) catch him in conversation with John McKenna on Saturday morning in the Grainstore... but tickets are selling fast.

If you were longing to learn about Middle Eastern flavours then [Ariana Bundy's](#) cookery demonstration with Rory O'Connell is not to be missed. She will be sharing recipes from her delectable book, *Pomegranates and Roses*.

Another couple of cookery demonstrations which are selling fast are grande dame of Mexican cuisine [Diana Kennedy](#) who "*did for Mexican cooking what Julie Child did for French cuisine and Marcella Hazan did for Italian.*" And don't miss our home grown heroes, [Ross Lewis and Rachel Allen](#), who will be doing a demo together.

If you're a writer or aspiring writer then our [Food and Wine Blogging](#) discussion will be right up your street. Or perhaps the [all day Food Writing workshop](#) run by the staff of UCC's MA in Creative Writing... which just has a couple of places remaining... and is a steal at just €10!

And whilst we love to talk books, we also relish debate on the hot topics of our time: [Forgotten Skills Making a Comeback](#) and [Good Fats vs Bad Fats- The Big Debate](#) are just two of the many discussions for the discerning foodie.

And that's just the beginning. With over fifty speakers from home and abroad touching on all aspects of food and wine, as well as our Big Shed Fringe event, it promises to be a weekend to savour.

For a full listing of [events](#), and to book, check out the [Litfest.ie](#) website.

We can't wait to welcome you!

TICKET GIVEAWAY!

To be in with a chance to win a pair of tickets to EITHER the *Food and Wine Blogging* OR *Good Fats Vs Bad Fats* event, just tell us in the comments section below which event you'd like to attend... and which food hero you'd most like to meet in real life!

Please ensure that 1) You are free to attend the LitFest event and 2) That you check back here on 30th April to see if you've won. Winners will be announced that day and must make contact with us within 48 hours to secure their tickets.



ALBERTO ZENATO



ALINE BALY



ALYS FOWLER



ANTHONY CRESWELL



ARIANA BUNDY



BEN READE



BRIAN NATION



BUTTER VIKINGS



CAROLINE HENNESSY



CATHERINE FULVIO



CHRIS FORBES



CHRISTOPHER HIRSHEIMER



CLODAGH MCKENNA



COLM MCCAN



DANIEL KLEIN



DARINA ALLEN



DAVE BROOM



DAVID PRIOR



DERMOT SUGRUE



DIANA KENNEDY



DONAL SKEHAN



ELLA MCSWEENEY



GER BUCKLEY



GIANA FERGUSON



JILL NORMAN



JOANNA BLYTHMAN



JOE MCNAMEE



JOHN BOWMAN



JOHN MCKENNA



JOHN WILSON



JORDAN BOURKE



KEVIN O'GORMAN



LESLIE WILLIAMS



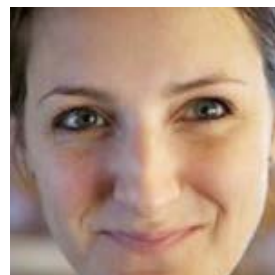
LILIAN BARTON



LILY HIGGINS



MAGGIE BEER



MARTIN SHANAHAN



MARY DOWEY



MELISSA HAMILTON



MIRRA FINE



NESSA ROBINS



NICK STRANGEWAY



PASCAL ROSSIGNOL



PAUL FLYNN



RACHEL ALLEN



RAYMOND BLAKE



REGINA SEXTON



RENÉ REDZEPI



RORY O'CONNELL



ROSS LEWIS



ROWLEY LEIGH



SALLY MCKENNA



SAMI TAMIMI



SANDOR KATZ



SIMON HOPKINSON



SUSAN BOYLE



TELMO RODRIGUEZ



THOMASINA MIERS



TOM DOORLEY



TOM PARKER BOWLES





TOMAS CLANCY



YOTAM OTTOLENGHI

Posted by Darina at 15:53 15 comments:



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