

In this blog we chat to Sinead Ashe, the lady behind one of Dingle's most famous and long established businesses, Ashes Seafood Restaurant which is located on Main Street, right in the centre of Dingle Town.

### **Why do you do what you do ?**

*I love food and meeting people and in this business food styles and trends are constantly changing and you get to meet hundreds, if not thousands of people every year. We establish relationships with customers who will then become regulars and even friends. I have been working in the hospitality business for twenty years, I could never imagine myself doing a desk job. I am the latest incumbent in a long line of women who managed Ashes, it has always been run by women which is quite unusual in Ireland. I took over the business, along with my husband Thomas, when his mother Kate retired. She was an amazing woman who had real vision as to where the business should go. Up until she took over Ashes in the 1960's it had been a bar and drapery since 1849, but she realised that it would make much more financial sense to concentrate on one side of the business and took the decision to get rid of the drapery and to focus on expanding the bar side of the business. In 1969 David Lean decided to film his movie "Ryan's Daughter" in Dingle which brought the crew and all the ancillary people involved to Dingle and when the movie was released in 1970 that put Dingle on the tourist map, and the rest is history.*

### **Why Dingle ? How did you end up settling here ?**

*I first came here on holidays with my parents on holidays and came back again five years later to work when I spied my husband Thomas and there was no going back ! We are married 24 years this year and have a teenage daughter. I worked in a few different places in Dingle including The Half Door, Adams Bar and Murphy's Icecream. I then completed a Diploma in Business before taking over at Ashes Seafood Restaurant.*

**Who is your greatest culinary influence ?**

*I like Rick Stein as his style of food is simple and he gets a lot of his inspiration from his travels. Our business is in a similar situation as his as we are based in a seasonal tourist seafood town. Most of his dishes are seafood based as are ours. I really like that his business is family based with his son running the cookery school and his ex-wife running the accommodation side of the business. I have been to his restaurants and they are simply sublime. I love his travel shows and would share his love for food in that my first stop on any trip away would be a food market.*

**What is your favourite food ? Why ?**

*I would have to say Crab Claws or lobster, but I love any shellfish. There is nothing that compares with the flavour of fresh crab, no sauce, just some Irish butter, its divine, the flavour is so sweet. It is wonderful that we are eating more and more crab in Ireland because years ago all our crab went to China, and it is such a wonderful food.*

**What is your favourite thing to drink ?**

*I love champagne, or something bubbly.*

**What is your favourite part of the day ?**

*I am definitely a morning person. I just love getting up early and turning on the lights when no-one is around. I love the peace and quiet of the morning and just having time to stop and think.*

**What is your favourite place on the Dingle Peninsula ?**

*I just love Ventry Beach and walking on the sand with our dog is part of my daily routine. The beach is long so it is great exercise and to get out in the open air and to hear the birds. It really is wonderful for the soul. I also love Beenbawn Beach on the Tralee side of Dingle.*

*If I had a picnic I would definitely go to Clogher Beach which has the most magnificent waves on the peninsula. To sit on the sand and watch those waves crash in is a memorable experience. Another favourite place would be the Spa in the Skellig Hotel, and I adore going there to have a treatment and to just totally relaxing for a few hours.*

**And finally Sinead, what would you do if you won the Lottery ??**

*I would build a Thalasso therapy pool at my house and hire a masseuse to go with it!!!!*



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