

Our second in the series “People Behind the Business” where I interview Nicky Foley Chef/Proprietor of Solas Restaurant in Dingle.

We are so lucky to have such diversity of business’s in Dingle. Restaurants, pubs, shops and activity providers, all combine to create the most wonderful experiences and memories for our visitors. We have decided to showcase some of the businesses we work with on the Dingle Peninsula.

Tell me a little about yourself and your career.

I started my career over 20 years ago, in a restaurant in Waterford called Poppies.

I did about a year or so there, through the Fas Training in Waterford. I then moved to Spain where I spent 5 years & what I believe shaped me as a cook.

I moved to Cartagena South of Murcia on the coast. I loved everything about the life & food there.

Moving on to London I spent 6 years at Bentley’s with Richard Corrigan where I learned to finesse my cooking skills. I felt so much at home at home in Bentley’s. I also worked for Raymond Blanc & Tom Aiken on part time bases in order to gain more knowledge of food and up skill my techniques.

I took my first head chefs’ job in London for the Aubaine Group, before moving on to my 2nd head chef roll in Butlers Wharf Chop House for D&D. Butlers served a huge amount of people at lunch & dinner. It is a beautiful company and I loved it there. I then took on the roll at Rotunda in King Cross, which was part of Green & Fortune Group headed by Irishman John Nugget, who was also part of Bentley’s when it opened it up originally.



What is special about the food at Solas?

The food at Solas is very seasonal, light & full of flavour. I love clean food, with a lot of Asian inspired ingredients & spices.

What is your favourite Dish at Solas?

My favourite or signature dish - I do not think I could ever remove the Croquettes or Chickpeas from my menu.

Do you have a favourite Wine?

I'm not too sure. I was never a big drinker, but I do like a Spanish Albariño. The most I would do is a glass at dinner!

What influences your food creations?

I'm a lover of Cantonese (Chinese) food. I highly recommend that if you can find any old books on Cantonese food buy them! The Cantonese were miles ahead of their time, with dishes and ideas that now we see chefs using today.

What inspires you about your work?

When I see how happy people are when they eat my food, it makes me want to drive the restaurant on more. To be able to create special moments in people's lives, that they remember forever, is something very special.

Where is your favourite place in Dingle?

There are so many beautiful places here in Dingle to enjoy, I honestly could not single one out.

In conversation with Nicky Foley of Solas Restaurant Dingle – May 2020.

We would be happy to book a table in Nicky's restaurant for you on your next visit to **Castlewood House**.