

Wendy Kavanagh

Irish Food Tours

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One of Wendy Kavanagh's earliest memories is of baking 'apple tarts' on jam jar lids under the watchful eye of her grandmother, who was the cook for the Leigh family on Rosegarland Estate in Wexford.

Indeed, Wendy comes from a long line of foodies and her mother was also a cook for Brigadier-General John Hardress-Lloyd of Gloster House in Offaly.

It's no wonder then that Wendy Kavanagh became a chef herself and was one of Ireland's first food bloggers. She was even Eric Clapton's private chef for a period when he owned Barberstown Castle.

Wendy, who is based in Nurney, Co Kildare, worked in both the tourism and food industries and has been promoting Irish food producers online since 2008.

So, when it comes to food, she certainly knows what she's talking about and set up Irish Food Tours in March 2015 with fellow food blogger and chef Zack Gallagher.

Irish Food Tours offers culinary tours of Ireland. It plans, co-ordinates and schedules bespoke group tours for tour operators, schools, corporate and social groups. It allows tourists access to smaller artisan food producers and also opens up the food producers to new audiences.

While at business plan stage in 2013, Irish Food Tours reached the Leinster region finals in Ulster Bank's Business Achievers Awards.

Wendy believes that ACORNS gave her an extra incentive to move the business forward as she didn't want to let her fellow participants down.

As well as offering their own culinary tours of Ireland, Irish Food Tours now also uses its website as the main hub for food tours in Ireland to promote all the increasing number of individual food tours around the country.

In 2017, Wendy was asked by the Restaurant Association of Ireland to become a judge in their Foodie Destinations awards, which select the best region or town in Ireland for food tourism, and she is now in her second year in the role.

Providing early stage female entrepreneurs, living in rural Ireland, with the knowledge, support and networking opportunities to meet and even exceed their current aspirations.