

Kate Dempsey

Kinsale Mead



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Standing in the footprint of the Great Mead Hall of Tara inspired Kate Dempsey and her husband Denis to leave their multinational tech jobs and open Ireland's first meadery in 200 years.

Kate and Denis set up Kinsale Mead Co. in 2016 with a vision and passion to rediscover the art of mead making and create a world-class range of Irish meads in their family run meadery in West Cork.

And that dream is coming true; with seven types of mead on the market and more in development, Kinsale Mead is stocked in over 200 locations across Ireland and is exporting to the UK, The Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Czech Republic and Estonia. They have won a string of prestigious awards including a 2-star award at the Great Taste Awards for their Atlantic Dry Mead and Drink of the Year from the Irish Food Writers' Guild.

Based in Kinsale, Co Cork, Kate and Denis researched and applied the best techniques of 21st century wine making, coupled with a careful selection of raw honey, fruits and yeast. With a close eye on sustainability and Origin Green certified, they develop and produce meads which embody the modern, refined style of mead-making.

With four employees, they have re-opened for their entertaining and popular tours covering the history and stories of honey and mead in Ireland and the mead-making process, with honey and mead tastings. Their tours won a Tripadvisor Travellers' Choice Award.

Kate joined ACORNS after they started selling their mead in 2017 and she found it incredibly helpful for getting her thoughts in order and building a support network.

During the lockdown, Kate and Denis pivoted the business to boost their online presence in Ireland and the UK. With features in the Irish Times and on Ireland AM on Virgin TV as well as with TV chef Neven Maguire on RTE, they successfully launched their first limited edition, barrel meads and Irish Wildflower Mead. Their next step is to expand their presence in the re-opened on-trade and continue to build their exports of this wonderfully delicious range of Irish drinks.

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



An Roinn Talmhaíochta,
Bia agus Mara
Department of Agriculture,
Food and the Marine