

SMOKEHOUSE LIFE

ISSUE 2, AUTUMN 2020



NEW NORMAL, SAME TRADITION OF GREAT QUALITY



A true love of fishing runs through the veins of the Roberts family, a long tradition of which they are very proud.

Since childhood, Smokehouse owner Graham has worked hands-on with fish, whether on the stormy Atlantic waves or filleting and smoking the finest fresh catch on the scenic shores of Connemara. Graham's father, John, has been at sea since his youth while Graham's children are all involved in helping to bring Connemara Smokehouse's fantastic flavours to your plate. The years have been packed with all the excitement, danger and bliss you could expect from life on the rugged coastal region on the periphery of the periphery of Europe. Hurricane force winds, towering swells,

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devastating coastal flooding, shark bites and even a heart pounding encounter with a giant swordfish have failed to keep the Roberts family from their love of creating some of the world's finest smoked seafood. This year's challenges have been very different, but the Roberts family continue to face down the effects of the global pandemic, to ensure you can enjoy the unique taste of the Connemara coastline on your dining table. Just like you, the Roberts family is facing into the new normal, but they do so with a strong commitment to the same tradition of great quality.

A SPECIAL TREAT AMID THE CHAOS

Life may have become very different this year, but our Atlantic smoked seafood has the same authentically ancient and unique Irish flavours.

I'm sure there have been tough adjustments for many of you. We share your frustrations and worries. We believe that in tough times it is all the more important to appreciate and celebrate the things we love. That's why our team has been working extra hard to make sure you can enjoy your favourite Smokehouse treats amid the chaos this winter season.

Our Smokehouse has endured tough times in the past. It was badly damaged by a fire in 1990 and by unprecedented coastal flooding in 2014. This pandemic, however, poses very different problems with tough consequences for many of us.

Unfortunately, due to Government guidelines, physical space restrictions and to maintain the integrity of our Smokehouse, we were unable to conduct visits to the Smokehouse this year. It has also been very challenging to source fish this year as many fishing boats were tied up for long periods of time. In addition, it has been very hard to gauge how much to



produce this season because of the impact Covid-19 has had on our industry. However, we have stayed positive. Our Smokehouse Shop in Connemara remained open for business and we have completely overhauled our online shop. Doing so has made the process of buying your Smokehouse favourites even more simple and convenient for you.

We wish to thank you wholeheartedly for continuing to enjoy the unique flavours of our smoked salmon, tuna, mackerel and more. Here's to recovery, revitalisation and a relaxing winter season with friends, good wine and fine food.

Graham Roberts,
Connemara Smokehouse

HITTING THE HEADLINES . . .

“Even from a distance, the beechwood used in the smokehouse lingers in the air. Mr Robert’s father was firstly a fisherman and knew prime fish. Today, Graham smokes and marinates salmon, herring, mackerel and tuna . . . Their export business is significant, built on a reputation of painstaking quality. Rick Stein featured their smoked tuna almost 20 years ago and Pierre Perret, the French singer and a long-time Connemara enthusiast, pronounced their fish the best in the world on national television.”

Keith Duggan, The Irish Times

“Graham Roberts owner of Connemara Smokehouse works hard, and he has always worked hard. Aged four, he was scoring a penny every time he washed a fish box for his dad. Aged sixteen, he was helping out with everything and very involved in the daily running of the Smokehouse. Today, in the Connemara Smokehouse, it is the boss himself, Graham, who hand-fillets the fish, salts it, smokes it. This is artisanship.”

Galway County & City Enterprise Board

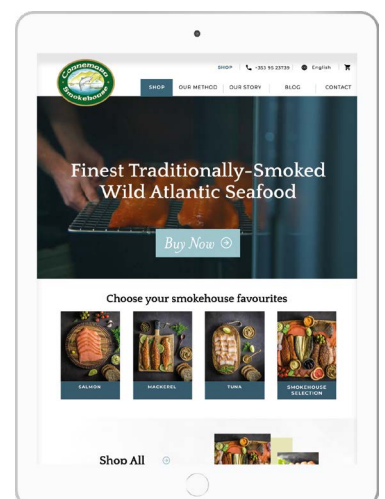
WELCOME TO OUR NEW-LOOK AND SUPER-FAST ONLINE STORE

Amid the Covid-19 lockdown, our team worked hard to bring you a completely new-look online store and website – smokehouse.ie.

We've set up our new store to make ordering your favourite smokehouse products easier than ever before.

Our store has been built with the help of our digital partners at Grofuse.com and with your needs at the centre of the process to

conveniently bring the taste of Connemara's wild Atlantic to your plate. If you'd like to learn more about the story of Connemara Smokehouse, get creative with some mouth-watering recipes and order your fine Atlantic smoked seafood online, visit smokehouse.ie today.



SHARK BITES AND SWORDFISH PERIL IN THE ROBERTS' PERFECT STORM

At just 16 years-old, Graham Roberts experienced an exhilarating and perilous sea adventure that is the stuff of Connemara legend.

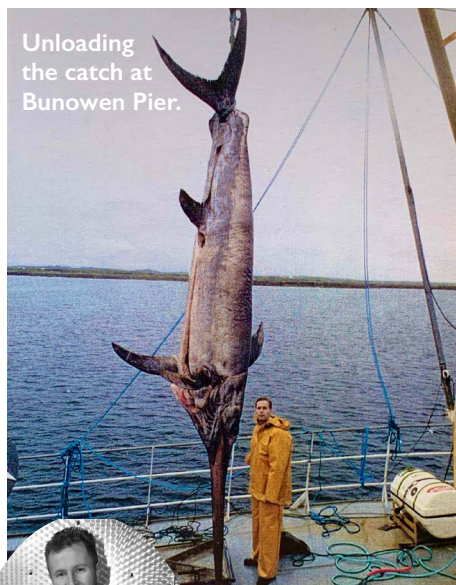
Rocked furiously in unforgiving swells 150 miles into the wild Atlantic, it was an expedition that he will "never, ever forget".

Along with his dad and godfather Paul, Graham set sail in calm conditions aboard their 55 foot sea boat the Kittiwake in the company of two researchers from the Irish fishing board, BIM (Bord Iascaigh Mhara). Midway through a five-day exploratory line-fishing expedition for Tuna in 1991, the winds kicked up to hurricane force and massive swells tossed the vulnerable 'Kittiwake'.

"It was the worst sea conditions I have ever experienced - it was almost like something from the film 'The Perfect Storm'."

But the weather conditions were far from the most terrifying aspect of the exhilarating expedition for Graham, who lived to tell the tale of two heart pounding encounters with an angry blue shark and a huge, thrashing swordfish on the wave-battered deck.

Graham recalls: "The first of four huge swordfish that we caught almost impaled me on the boat as it heeled over. The gaff kept releasing from his gill covers as he thrashed frantically around and then the hook came out his mouth as well. It was the first swordfish we had ever hooked, and I thought it could be the first, and last, we'll ever see - I couldn't bear the



Graham Roberts

thought of losing it. It was absolute madness, but I leaned out over the gunnel, hooking my feet under a rung of the ladder on the side of the boat and grabbed a hold of the metre-long sword, as his head was out of the water.

"I was thinking: 'either I'm going out or he's coming in, but I'm not letting go'. It seemed to go on forever, although it was probably only a few seconds. We eventually got a rope over him and pulled him in over the side. At this point, I had fallen backwards onto the deck and this huge fish was seesawing over the gunnel with the sword just hovering over my solar plexus while he thrashed around and the boat tossed on the water.

My biggest worry was when the boat heeled

over, the full weight of the fish would be weighing down on me.

Thankfully, everyone pulled together and managed to hoist him up over the gunnel and into the boat. At 16, what an experience! I'll never ever forget it," says Graham.

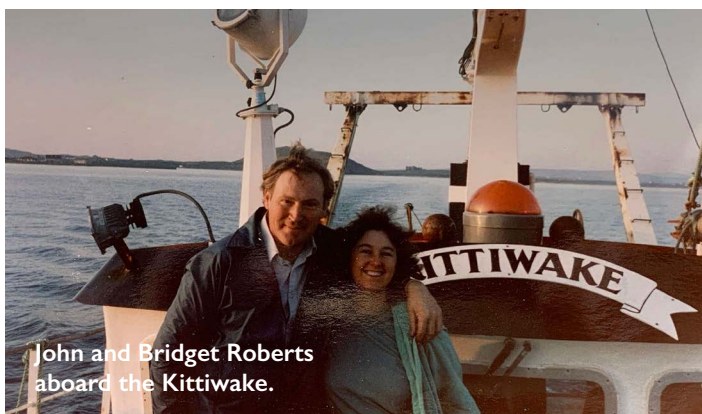
But the adventure was to take an even more terrifying turn.

"A little later, I had an even closer call with a very large blue shark. I was standing with my legs straddled to keep my balance in the stormy weather and a large blue shark that had just come over the side, curled up and bit me between the legs. It went straight through my oilers and trousers, and just cut the skin on the inside top of my leg - thankfully nothing more," he recalls.

Graham was not the only crew member who had a brush with fate on that action-packed trip.

"At the height of the storm, one of the BIM guys got a hook in his hand - between his thumb and index finger - and he was faced with having his hand ripped open or being pulled overboard. Thankfully, he acted fast - with quick thinking he grabbed a gaff and wrenched the hook out in matter of seconds. We could have been facing a horrific scenario if he hadn't done so, as none of us could reach him in time."

Needless to say, when the Kittiwake chugged into port after five days of wild Atlantic battering and a fair bit heavier due to a great catch, Graham and the crew enjoyed a well-deserved rest and celebration before jumping straight back into bringing the unique flavours of the sea to you.



John and Bridget Roberts aboard the Kittiwake.

PRICES

EXCLUSIVE SPECIALITY IRISH SMOKED TUNA

200grm Cold Smoked Tuna	€25.00
200grm Honey Roast Smoked Tuna	€25.00

SMOKED SALMON

	ORGANIC
800grm sliced side	€49.00
500grm sliced side	€35.00
200grm sliced pack	€17.00

GRAVADLAX (MARINATED SALMON)

	ORGANIC
500grm sliced side	€35.00
200grm sliced pack	€17.00

HONEY ROAST SMOKED SALMON

	ORGANIC
200grm sliced pack	€17.00

ROAST SMOKED SALMON

	ORGANIC
200grm sliced pack	€17.00

OTHER SPECIALITIES

Plain Smoked Mackerel (3 Fillets)	€8.50
Peppered Smoked Mackerel (3 Fillets)	€8.50

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 www.facebook.com/OldSmoky/

 <https://twitter.com/OldSmoky>

 <https://www.instagram.com/connemarasmokehouse/>

 <https://www.youtube.com/user/ConnemaraSmokehouse>

ORDER NOW FOR CHRISTMAS

In these uncertain times, we are encouraging you to order early in order to receive your Smokehouse favourites in good time for Christmas.

Local lockdowns or other Covid-19 restrictions have the potential to cause delays with courier deliveries, so the best way to be sure of having your Smokehouse products is to place your order as early as possible.

We would recommend having your orders dispatched and delivered sooner rather than later as couriers and transport links may be busier than ever before with more people ordering online. All of our products keep perfectly in the freezer, making it easy for you to store your smoked and marinated goodies from Connemara Smokehouse.

**CHRISTMAS 2020
LAST ORDER DATE:**
1st December

LAST DISPATCH DATES:
UK: Monday 7th December
Ireland: Tuesday 8th December
Europe by AIR: Monday 7th December

SHIPPING RATES

PRICES FOR SHIPPING ARE
FOR THE WEIGHT OF THE FISH

BY ROAD:

IRELAND: €16 per box up to 15kg
UK MAINLAND: €20 per box up to 15kg

UPS BY AIR

EUROPE: Belgium, France, Germany, Italy,
Luxembourg, Netherlands - 1st kg €30,
€4.00/kg thereafter
Corsica - 1st kg €54, €4.00/kg thereafter
Austria, Denmark, Finland, Greece, Portugal, Spain,
Sweden - 1st kg €35, €5/kg thereafter
Andorra, Guernsey, Jersey, Liechtenstein,
Norway, Switzerland - 1st kg €45, €6.50/kg
thereafter
Isle of Man by UPS - 1st kg €52,
€3.00/kg thereafter