



## The Mourne Seafood Bar: Seafood restaurant, fishmonger and cookery school

Bob McCoubrey is a marine biologist by trade and first became involved in the seafood industry when he started an oyster farm in Carlingford Lough in 1987. In the early days the oysters produced were exported to France, but in 2005 Bob and his wife Joanne decided to market their product closer to home and opened the first Mourne Seafood Bar in Dundrum, Co. Down in their home.



The success of the Dundrum restaurant encouraged Bob and Joanne (pictured right) to expand. They had met dynamic local chef, Andy Rea who having worked in some of the best restaurants in the world, loved the concept of the Dundrum Mourne Seafood Bar and shared their passion for seafood. A partnership was borne and together they got to work in developing the idea of a seafood restaurant in Belfast where peace had encouraged the development of a vibrant restaurant scene and an appetite for local products and seafood.



Working with Andy (pictured below), they found premises in Bank Street and got to work on creating the restaurant. The chance discovery of an oyster midden under the old floor and local stories of the Fadgies, Irish speakers from Omeath who sold oysters and herring in nearby Smithfield in the 19th Century were perhaps good omens for what was to come.



The Belfast restaurant has been hugely successful and is popular with locals and tourists alike. It has been expanded and now includes a fishmonger's counter and incorporates the Belfast Cookery School where regular seafood cookery classes introduce seafood cookery skills to a wide range of participants. Funding from Seafish enabled 900 mums and young people from across Northern Ireland to attend classes in the School and learn about seafood preparation and cookery, sustainability and the importance of seafood in a healthy, balanced diet.



From there the business has expanded to now include five restaurants (four in Northern Ireland and one in Dublin) and the team have recently published the Mourne Seafood Bar Cookbook with accompanying seafood preparation videos, filmed in partnership with Seafish and the Fish is the Dish campaign which are available on YouTube.

Joanne, Bob and Andy are great supporters of the local industry sourcing around £10,000 worth of fish a week from the local fishing ports of Co. Down. The ethos of Mourne Seafood is to use sustainably-sourced, local wild caught and farmed seafood at reasonable prices to allow everyone to experience and enjoy the fantastic seafood which is available in Northern Ireland.



*For more information about the Mourne Seafood Bar and for table reservations see:*

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*For more information on the Northern Irish seafood industry:*

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and socially responsible future for  
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