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EDITORIAL

Hard to believe that we are now in Autumn, that lovely time of year where we see the leaves change from green to red to orange and gold. The children are just back at school and are already planning their Halloween outfits. We have 2 Halloween articles here for you to read. One is about ''How Halloween used to be a fairly low budget affair''.

Finally, we have a very entertaining piece for you ''The Mystery Drawer' 'Every home has one of these drawers. We don't set out intentionally to have one, but somehow we all end up with one. Whenever we pick up a nut, screw, piece of plastic, instruction manual, and don't know where to put them, we usually end up not throwing them away but putting them into the ''Mystery Drawer'' just in case!!!!!!!!!!

So until next time……and a little gentle reminder that on Sunday 25th October our clocks go back an hour and we return to winter time.

The Little Village Team





Ronan Bright
Director / Head of Sales
brightronan83@gmail.com
085 199 8321

Patrick Browne
Graphic Design
hello@patrickbrownedesign.com
086 831 9322

LITTLE VILLAGE MAGAZINE

All correspondence should be addressed to:
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Kildare County Council Officially Opens New Sensory Garden at St. Catherine's Park, Leixlip

County Council has officially opened a new Sensory Garden at St. Catherine's Park, Leixlip, providing an inclusive and accessible outdoor space for people of all ages and abilities.

The garden was officially opened at a ribbon-cutting ceremony attended by elected members, community representatives, project stakeholders, residents and invited guests.

Designed to support relaxation, wellbeing, recreation and connection with nature, the new facility enhances the existing amenities at St. Catherine's Park and creates a unique environment where visitors can engage with a rich variety of sensory experiences. Its carefully selected planting, accessible pathways, seating areas and landscape features combine to create a space that can be enjoyed by everyone, including people with disabilities, older people, families, schools and community groups.

The project represents a significant investment by Kildare County Council in the continued development of inclusive and accessible public infrastructure across the county. Delivered at a construction contract value of €363,200 including VAT, the Sensory Garden reflects the Council's commitment to improving quality of life, promoting wellbeing and ensuring that public spaces are welcoming and accessible to all.

Commenting on the opening, Cllr Tim Durkan, Cathaoirleach of the County of Kildare, said:

"The Sensory Garden at St. Catherine's Park is a wonderful addition to one of Kildare's most valued public amenities. It has been designed to create opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy nature, experience the outdoors and benefit from a peaceful and inclusive environment. This project demonstrates Kildare County Council's commitment to delivering high-quality, accessible public spaces that support health, wellbeing and community connection."

Sonya Kavanagh, Chief Executive, Kildare County Council said:

"This Sensory Garden reflects our commitment to investing in accessible, inclusive public spaces that enhance wellbeing and quality of life. By creating welcoming environments where people of all ages and abilities can connect with nature, we are ensuring that public investment delivers meaningful and lasting benefits for our communities."

The opening ceremony also included the unveiling of a new Acorn Sculpture by stone carver Aileen-Anne Brannigan. The sculpture was made possible through the support of Intel Ireland, fundraising by the Save St. Catherine's Park Group, and contributions from local residents' associations.

Inspired by the acorn as a symbol of growth, potential and renewal, the artwork forms a distinctive focal point within the garden and reflects its themes of wellbeing, inclusion and connection with nature that underpin the overall design of the space.

Accessibility and inclusivity were central to the project's development. The completed garden offers residents and visitors a calm and engaging outdoor experience within St. Catherine's Park.

Kildare County Council acknowledged the contribution of all those involved in the successful delivery of the project, including the design team, contractors, community stakeholders, accessibility advocates and Council staff who helped bring the vision for the garden to fruition.

The Sensory Garden is expected to become a valued destination for individuals, families, schools, community organisations and visitors from across the region.

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A Place to Talk: Celebrating 25 Years of Compassion at Aspen Counselling in Lucan

From one woman's vision of affordable therapy to a thriving community charity, Aspen Counselling has spent 25 years helping Lucan residents navigate life's challenges with dignity, compassion and care.

On any given morning in Lucan Village, there's a familiar rhythm to life. Parents weave through the school run, neighbours stop for a quick chat outside local cafés, and shopkeepers greet the day's first customers. Tucked away in the heart of the village is a place that has quietly become an essential part of community life, offering something many people need but often struggle to find: a safe space to be heard.

This year, Aspen Counselling celebrates 25 years of service in Lucan, marking a remarkable milestone for a local charity that has touched countless lives across South Dublin and beyond.

The story of Aspen begins with its founder, Linda Balfe, whose vision was shaped by both her professional training and her own life experiences. Originally from Dublin's Liberties, Linda saw first-hand how inaccessible counselling could be for ordinary people and became determined to create something different.

"I always wanted to make a difference," she says. "My goal was simple: to create a warm, accessible place where people could access the therapeutic support they needed without the financial stress."

What started as that simple idea has grown into one of the area's most respected community-based counselling services. Operating as a not-for-profit organisation, Aspen now has more than 60 therapists working across two units in Lucan, with nine therapy rooms offering flexible appointments from 9am to 9pm Monday to Thursday and 9am to 5pm on Fridays and Saturdays.

Despite its growth, Aspen has remained true to the values that inspired it from the beginning.

"Keeping therapy affordable was always what mattered to me," Linda explains.

The centre provides therapy for individuals, couples, families, children and adolescents, supporting everyone from young children aged four to adults aged 80 and beyond.

In a time when conversations around mental health have never been more important, Aspen's commitment to accessibility feels especially relevant. Whether someone is dealing with anxiety, grief, relationship difficulties, family challenges or life's everyday pressures, the service aims to provide support without judgement and without prohibitive costs. But Aspen's contribution to Lucan extends beyond its counselling rooms.

Many local residents will have encountered the team during this year's Lucan Festival, where Aspen delivered a series of free community workshops focused on wellbeing and mental health. The initiative reflected the organisation's long-standing belief that support should not only be available when people reach crisis point, but should also be visible and accessible within the wider community.

It's that community-first approach that has helped Aspen become part of the social fabric of Lucan.

The charity is also inviting the community to join in its anniversary celebrations and support its work through a fundraising event on Friday, 27 November, at Carroll's of Lucan. Promising karaoke, music, raffles and plenty of local craic, the event is set to be a fun night out while raising funds for a cause that has supported the community for a quarter of a century.

Looking back on the journey, Linda is quick to acknowledge the role the community has played in Aspen's success.

"Twenty-five years on, I'm so grateful to the Lucan community and surrounding counties for trusting us," she says. ***"Aspen remains a place of compassion, dignity and genuine care, and that's something I'm incredibly proud of."***

In a fast-changing world where many organisations come and go, there is something reassuring about a service that remains firmly rooted in its founding purpose. For 25 years, Aspen Counselling has provided guidance, empathy and hope to people across Lucan and beyond, one conversation at a time.

As the charity celebrates this significant milestone, it also serves as a reminder of what makes a community truly strong. Not just busy streets, successful businesses or annual festivals, but the people and organisations that quietly look after one another.

For a quarter of a century, Aspen Counselling has been doing exactly that.

To learn more or arrange an appointment, contact Aspen Counselling on 086 853 4391, email aspenabc@gmail.com, or visit their website www.aspencounsellingservices.com. And if you're looking for a good excuse for a night out, mark Friday 27 November in the diary and head along to Carroll's of Lucan for an evening of music, karaoke and community spirit in support of a local charity that continues to make a difference every day.

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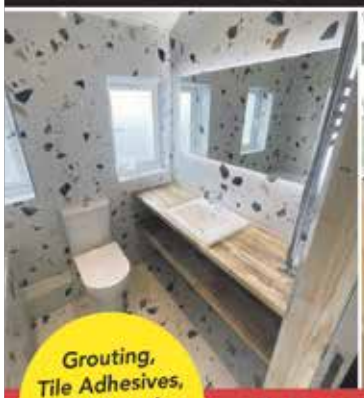
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Curtain Up for Lucan Drama: Three One-Acts, a play touring the circuit, and a Journey Towards 70 Years

For Lucan Drama, the this is also part of a much bigger story, with another milestone on the horizon, they are in planning for and will celebrate their 70th anniversary next year, 2027.

The group also recently launched a new website, www.LucanDrama.ie, with further information and updates to be added as preparations for the anniversary year develop. Lucan Drama Takes Reunion on the One Act Festival Circuit. See dates below, tickets directly from the theatre, or visit their website https://lucandrama.ie/whats-on/ for links to tickets

29 October	Moat Theatre	Naas	Kildare
30 October	Mill Theatre	Dundrum	Dublin
31 October	Studio 1A	Bangor	Down
15 November	Bog Lane Theatre	Ballymahon	Longford
21 November	Rossmore Theatre	Rossmore	Cork

Local audiences settled into their seats for an evening that offered something brilliant and compelling: live theatre created by local people, telling stories that are human, immediate and real. That scene played out across four nights from 19 to 22 October as Lucan Drama presented its annual programme of One-Act Plays upstairs in Courtneys of Lucan. The production brought together original writing and contemporary Irish drama, offering audiences a richly varied evening of live theatre, and a great night out, in the heart of Lucan.

Three Plays, Three Worlds

This year's programme opened with Reunion, an original play written and directed by Lucan Drama member Connor Hillman. The production stars Colm Dee, James Goodman and Caoimhe Cronin and centres on two old friends who reconnect after fifteen years apart.

What appears at first to be a chance meeting soon becomes something much more complex. Old wounds begin to surface, regrets that have long remained buried are revisited, and questions emerge about forgiveness, accountability and whether people can truly change.

The play asks a simple but powerful question: is it ever too late for a second chance?

The mood then shifted dramatically for Lunch Hour by John Mortimer. Set in a hotel room during the 1960s, the play follows a man and woman attempting to conduct a discreet lunchtime meeting. To avoid awkward questions, an elaborate story is invented for the hotel manageress. Predictably, things do not go according to plan. As misunderstandings mount, confusion spreads the situation becomes increasingly difficult to control. Directed by Mary Guy, the production features performances from Aine Kelly, David Doyle and Marianne Bradley, supported by lighting from Mick Cody and sound design by Trevor Murtagh.

Closing the evening was Latte by Sarah Fahy, directed by Kaylynn O'Brien. Set in an Irish coffee shop in 2015, the play follows waitress Aoife as she faces a decision that could alter the course of her life. Around her, relationships, ambitions and uncertainties collide, creating a thoughtful examination of choice and consequence.

Performed by Aoibhín Ní Ghabhann, Michael Lysaght, Sarah Jane Stewart, Ciarán Kendrick, David Hatch, Declan McFadden and Sinéad Comerford.

Together, the three plays created an evening that balanced humour with reflection, reminding audiences why live theatre remains one of the most immediate and engaging forms of storytelling.

Taking Lucan to the Festival Stage

While all three productions were warmly received during their run in Courtney's, Reunion is only beginning its journey. For Lucan Drama, Reunion represents something particularly significant. The play received its world première during the group's summer programme of one-act plays earlier this year, giving local audiences the first opportunity to experience a brand-new piece of theatre developed within the group itself. Written and Directed by Lucan Drama's own Connor Hillman it's an exciting next chapter for a play that first emerged on a local stage in Lucan.

The original drama was selected to compete on the DLI and ADCI One-Act Festival Circuit, Ireland's premier competitive amateur drama programme. The festival circuit provides amateur drama groups from across the country with an opportunity to showcase their work, receive adjudication and perform before new audiences.

Over the coming weeks, Reunion will be on the road, bringing a piece of Lucan theatre to venues across Ireland.

The tour begins at the Moat Theatre in Naas on 29 October before moving to the Mill Theatre in Dundrum on 30 October and Studio 1A in Bangor on 31 October. Further performances will take place at Bog Lane Theatre in Ballymahon on 15 November and Rossmore Theatre in Cork on 21 November.

Looking Ahead to a Landmark Anniversary

As impressive as this year's productions have been, the group are arriving at an important moment in the group's history.

Next year, Lucan Drama will celebrate its 70th anniversary.

Few community organisations sustain themselves for seven decades. Fewer still continue to attract new members, develop original productions, and maintain enthusiastic audiences across generations.

Many of those involved today are building on foundations established by previous generations of performers, directors, set builders, stage managers and volunteers. Each production bringing fresh voices and new ideas.

This year's programme illustrates that balance perfectly.

Now, with Reunion taking to the One-Act Festival Circuit and a landmark anniversary approaching, Lucan Drama enters an exciting new chapter. The group's success is not simply measured in performances staged or awards won. It lies in its ability to bring people together, spark conversation, and create memorable moments for audiences year after year.

Seventy years after its founding, that remains a remarkable achievement. If the recent run of one-act plays is any indication, Lucan Drama's story still has loads more acts to play in the future.

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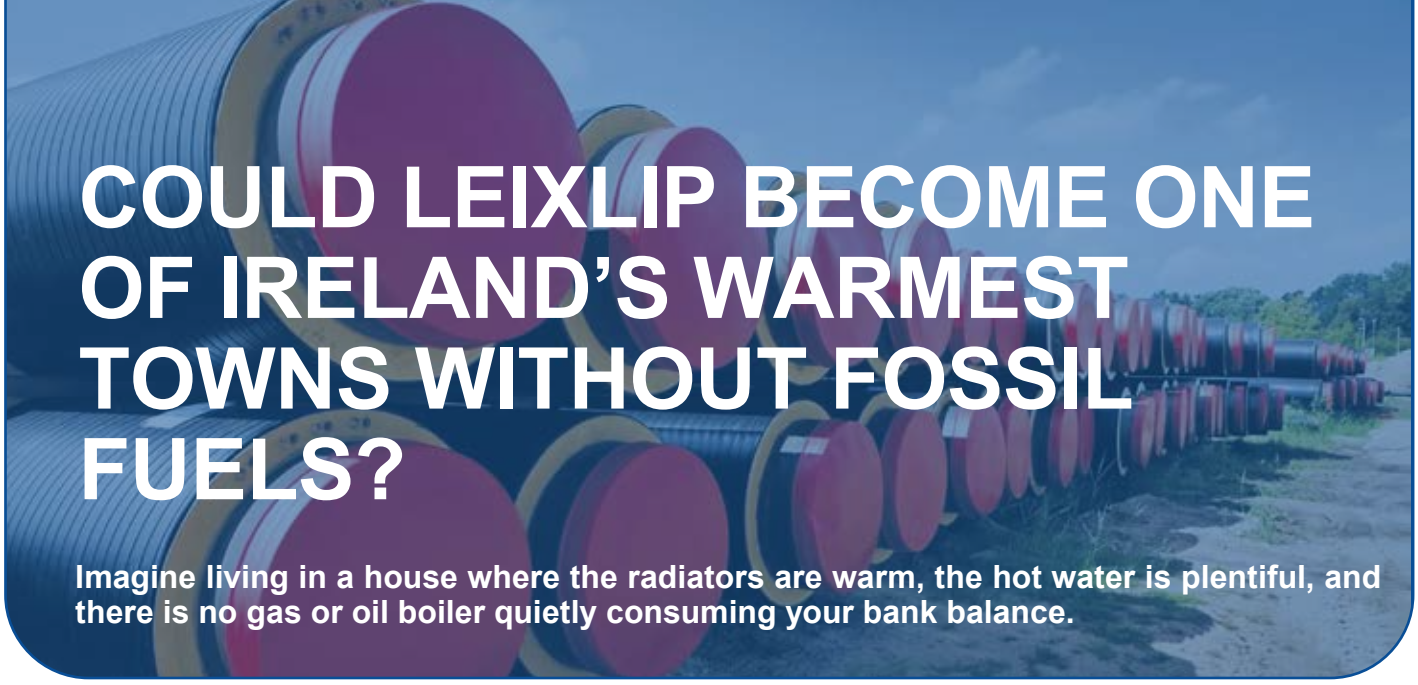
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COULD LEIXLIP BECOME ONE OF IRELAND'S WARMEST TOWNS WITHOUT FOSSIL FUELS?

Imagine living in a house where the radiators are warm, the hot water is plentiful, and there is no gas or oil boiler quietly consuming your bank balance.

Better still, imagine that some of the heat keeping you comfortable was previously being thrown away by a nearby industrial facility.

It sounds rather like getting someone else's leftovers, except these leftovers could be considerably more useful than yesterday's reheated lasagne.

That is the thinking behind an ambitious new district heating project planned for Leixlip, which has been selected as one of nine Irish locations to receive government support for developing this increasingly popular European technology.

So, What Exactly Is District Heating?

The principle is surprisingly simple.

Instead of every house having its own boiler or heating system, heat is produced or recovered at a central location and distributed through a network of insulated underground pipes.

The hot water travels to connected buildings, where it transfers its heat to the household heating and hot water systems. The network water then returns to be reheated.

Think of it as central heating for an entire neighbourhood rather than a single house.

The clever part is where that heat comes from.

Industrial facilities, data centres and other large operations frequently generate enormous amounts of heat as a by-product of their normal activities. Much of this energy is simply released into the atmosphere.

District heating offers the possibility of capturing that otherwise wasted energy and putting it to good use.

It is rather like discovering that your neighbour has been throwing perfectly good firewood over the fence for years.

Leixlip Leads the Way

In late September 2026, Minister for Climate, Energy and the Environment Darragh O'Brien announced €5 million in government support for the pre-construction development of nine district heating projects across Ireland.

Two of the selected locations are in County Kildare: Leixlip and Naas.

The Leixlip project is being developed by Yuno Energy Heat, which intends to use recovered industrial heat to supply heating and hot water to a residential development.

The company's initial proposal would serve approximately 1,765 homes, with the potential to expand to as many as 3,400.

That is a substantial number of households that could eventually benefit from a different approach to keeping warm.

The scheme is still in development, however. The funding will help advance design, planning and commercial arrangements, with the objective of having the project ready for construction in 2027.

It does not mean that every home in Leixlip will suddenly be connected to a communal heating system.

Will It Save Householders Money?

Now we come to the question that will interest most residents considerably more than the environmental benefits.

Will it actually reduce the heating bills?

Potentially, yes.

Centralised heating networks can operate efficiently, particularly when they use heat that would otherwise be wasted. They can also reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels, whose prices have proved remarkably unpredictable.

In a connected home, there may be no need for an individual gas or oil boiler, with its associated servicing, repairs and eventual replacement.

However, the precise savings will depend on the cost of building and operating the network, how customers are charged and the price of alternative heating options.

No household tariff or guaranteed saving has yet been announced for the Leixlip scheme.

Residents will understandably want assurances about pricing, reliability, maintenance and consumer protection before celebrating the disappearance of their old boilers.

It's Already Happening Elsewhere

District heating is well established in countries such as Denmark, Sweden and Finland, where shared heating networks have been operating successfully for decades.

Ireland has been rather slower to embrace the idea.

One notable exception is Tallaght, where an innovative scheme uses waste heat from an Amazon data centre to provide heating to nearby public buildings and university facilities.

It demonstrates that technology generating heat for one purpose can help meet the heating needs of an entirely different community.

With Ireland seeking to reduce carbon emissions and dependence on imported fuels, the Government hopes projects such as Leixlip will help establish a much larger district heating industry.

A Warmer Future?

For Leixlip, the announcement represents a promising opportunity rather than a finished solution.

There are still technical studies, planning decisions, funding arrangements and construction challenges ahead. And it will be important to establish exactly which neighbourhoods could benefit and when.

Nevertheless, the prospect is an intriguing one.

Future generations may find it extraordinary that we once installed thousands of individual boilers, burned imported fuels in each of them and allowed useful industrial heat to disappear into the sky.

Perhaps one day, when someone in Leixlip complains about the cold, the answer will be that the local industrial facility isn't working hard enough.

In the meantime, residents will continue doing what generations of Irish householders have always done when winter arrives.

They'll turn up the heating, worry about the bill and remind everyone to close the door.

Some traditions, it seems, will survive even the green energy revolution.





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These new additions two Irish branches double the company's footprint in the Island of Ireland – with existing branches on Dublin's exclusive Burlington Road and Belfast. This brings the number of branches for the group to 15 across Ireland, the UK and Spain.

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The Christmas Lights Arms Race



Can Your House Be Seen from Space?

Remember when decorating the outside of your house for Christmas involved hanging a wreath on the front door and perhaps placing a string of coloured lights around the sitting room window. If you were particularly adventurous, you might put an illuminated Santa in the porch. That was considered quite sufficient to demonstrate your enthusiasm for the festive season.

Nowadays, certain Irish housing estates appear to be competing for the attention of the International Space Station. Entire houses disappear beneath thousands of flashing lights. Inflatable Santas wave from rooftops, illuminated reindeer graze on front lawns, and enormous snowmen stand guard beside the driveway. Some houses have so many decorations that you half expect the ESB to send an engineer around to investigate an unexplained surge in national electricity consumption. And it all begins with one neighbour.

Keeping Up with the O'Connors

Every estate has somebody who takes Christmas decorating seriously. Very seriously. We'll call him Michael.

Michael begins planning his Christmas display in September. By Halloween, he has inspected last year's decorations, replaced defective bulbs, and purchased several additional items that he insists were reduced in the sales. His wife, meanwhile, has begun questioning why the garage contains more Christmas decorations than gardening equipment.

On the first weekend in November, Michael emerges with a ladder, several extension cables, and the determined expression of a man preparing to restore electricity to a small town. By lunchtime, his house is glowing. There are lights along the gutters, lights around the windows, lights in the trees, and a luminous reindeer on the lawn.

Naturally, this creates a problem for his neighbour, Gerry. Gerry has always considered himself a respectable Christmas decorator. A tasteful string of warm white lights and a modest illuminated star have served him perfectly well for years. But now Michael has introduced a twelve-foot inflatable Santa. Gerry cannot allow this to go unanswered. Within a week, Gerry has installed six illuminated reindeer, a flashing sleigh, and a projector that covers the entire front of his house in moving snowflakes. The Christmas lights arms race has begun.

The Annual Untangling Ceremony

Of course, before any decorations can be installed, there is the traditional ceremony of untangling the Christmas lights. Every January, we carefully wind them up, place them neatly in a box, and store them in the attic. By November, they have somehow transformed themselves into a complicated knot that would challenge an experienced naval officer. There is no scientific explanation for this phenomenon. Lights simply become entangled during storage, apparently without human intervention.

The next hour is spent sitting on the floor, patiently separating cables while muttering increasingly inappropriate things about Christmas goodwill. Eventually, the lights are untangled and plugged in. Half of them don't work. This is particularly frustrating when the defective bulbs are somewhere in the middle of a twenty-metre string. We are informed that modern LED lights last for thousands of hours. This may be true, but apparently nobody has told the lights in our attic.

The Inflatable Invasion

Perhaps the most remarkable development in Christmas decorating has been the rise of the inflatable ornament. Once upon a time, a Christmas decoration was something you could hang on a tree. Now it is a twelve-foot illuminated Father Christmas requiring an electric pump to keep him upright.

The range is extraordinary. There are inflatable snowmen, penguins, polar bears, reindeer, gingerbread houses, and entire scenes from the North Pole. Some are larger than the houses they decorate. And they have one unfortunate characteristic: switch off the electricity and they collapse. A cheerful Santa standing proudly beside the driveway at midnight becomes a sad heap of red and white fabric by morning. It looks as though Christmas has suffered a catastrophic defeat.

Strong winds create another problem. Across Ireland, householders can occasionally be seen pursuing escaped inflatable reindeer through neighbouring gardens, while children watch the spectacle with considerably more excitement than they displayed during the original

CONTINUES PAGE 19

Unit 7, Captain's Hill, Leixlip

China Kitchen

Chinese & Thai Take Away

Freshness Promised, Top Quality Guaranteed

624 5578 624 6234

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Email: leixlipchinakitchen@gmail.com

Opening Hours
Mon - Thur: 5:00pm - 12:00am
Fri - Sun: 5:00pm - 12:30am

Delivery Service
Mon - Sun:
5:30pm - Close

FREE Prawn Crackers with order over €45 or Large Bottle Drink and Prawn Cracker with orders over €100
(does not include Munchies Box/any meal deal/online order)

Please note all dishes are standard, any extras may cost extra

Closed 25th December
Re-Open 26th December

Accept Debit & Credit Cards

THAI MENU

Authentic Thai Cuisine

Tom Yum Soups (Hot & Sour)

(Contain Soya Bean, Fish Sauce) 1,10,11
Chicken €6.90 King Prawn €7.90 2 Mushroom €4.90

Curry (Contains Shrimp Paste, Fish Sauce) 2,11

Green Curry: Cooked with Onion, Green Peppers, Peas
Red Curry: Cooked with Onion, Green Peppers, Bamboo Shoots
Massaman Curry: Cooked with Onion & Peanuts
Ren Dang Curry: The Most Flavouful Curries in the world cooked in and Authentic Malaysian Spices.

Choice of:
Mixed Meat €14.95 King Prawn €15.95 Roast Duck €16.95
Chicken / Pork €13.90
Vegetables €12.95

Noodles Box

Phad Thai (Contains Fish Sauce, Rice Flour, Peanut, Egg) 3,4,5,11
(Traditionally Thai Stir fried Flat Rice Noodles in Tamarind Sauce, Served with Fresh Lime & Crushed Peanuts)
Choice of: Mixed Seafood €15.95 Chicken €13.95
King Prawn €15.95 ToFu €12.95

Spicy Rice Noodle 5,14 Chicken €13.95 Beef €14.95
(Stir Fried Rice Noodles with Onion, Green Peppers, Chilli, Garlic, Mushroom, Beansprouts, Asian Green, Light Soya, Oyster Sauce & Sweet Basil)

Munchies Box 12" 3,5,9
Chicken Balls (4)
Salt & Chilli Chips
Salt & Chilli Chicken Pieces Salt & Chilli Chicken Wings Salt & Chilli Ribs
Curry Sauce 8oz
with 2 FREE Cans of Coke
€33.95

Munchies Box 9" 3,5,9
Chicken Balls (2)
Salt & Chilli Chips
Salt & Chilli Chicken Pieces
Salt & Chilli Chicken Wings
Salt & Chilli Ribs
Curry Sauce 8oz
with 1 FREE Can of Coke
€19.95

China Mega Box 14" 3,5,9 **€41.95**
Chicken Balls (8), Crispy Shredded Chicken, Crispy Chicken Pieces, Salt & Chilli Chips, Curry Sauce 8oz (2), Egg Fried Rice, Stir Fried Noodles, Large Bottle of Coke

Munchies Box Junior 3,5,9 **€14.95**
A personal size box (16cmx25cm), packed with crispy chicken pieces, shredded chicken, 2 chicken balls, chicken wings, ribs, chips & small tub of curry sauce



PLEASE NOTE: ALTHOUGH WE MAY NOT HAVE ADDED ALLERGENS TO SOME DISHES, ALL ALLERGENS ARE PRESENT IN OUR KITCHENS AND CROSS CONTAMINATION IS POSSIBLE

1. Soya Bean	2. Crustaceans	3. Eggs	4. Peanuts
5. Wheat	6. Nuts	7. Sesame	8. Celery
9. Milk	10. Sulphur Dioxide	11. Fish	
12. Mustard	13. Lupin	14. Molluscs	

Pattaya 5,14 €16.95
(Duck Egg Noodle Stir Ried with Hoi sin Sauce, Chilli, Asian Green, Peppers, Onion, Beansprouts)

Spicy Seafood Egg Noodles 1,2,14 €15.95
(King Prawn, Squid, Mussels with Onion, Green Peppers, Chilli, Garlic, Mushroom, Beansprouts, Asian Green, Light Soya & Sweet Basil)

Stir Fried

Bangkok Stir Fried (Contain Fish Sauce, Soya Sauce) 1,11,14
Chilli Lemon Leaf & Sweet Soya with onion, Asian Green, Green Peppers, Mushrooms
Choice of:
Mixed Meat €14.95 King Prawn €15.95 Roast Duck €16.95
Chicken / Pork €13.95
Vegetables €12.95

Chilli Sweet Basil 1,14
with Onion, Asian Green, Peppers, Oyster Sauce, Light Soya & Mushroom
Choice of:
Mixed Meat €14.95 King Prawn €15.95 Roast Duck €16.95
Chicken / Pork €13.95
Vegetables €12.95

Seafood Combination 1,2,14 €15.95
King Prawn, Squid, Mussels with Garlic, Chilli, Onions, Peppers, Light Soya & Sweet Basil

Mekong Duck (half a duck) 1,14 €16.95
with Onion, Garlic, Chilli, Chinese Leaf, Beasprout & Sweet Basil

Bang Bang Chicken 14 Large €14.95
Crispy Shredded Chicken & Black Pepper with Onion, Garlic, Broccoli & Carrot

Fire Cracker
Stir fried with onion, carrot green pepper, dry chilli, scallion in hot spicy
Choice of:

Chicken / Tofu	€13.95	Beef	€14.95
Prawn	€15.95	Duck	€16.95

All main dishes (except fried rice & noodle dishes) served with boiled rice 50c extra, chips or fried rice 90c extra. Fried noodles or young chow fried rice €2.60 extra.

Appetisers

A1. House Combination for 2 *2,7,11,4,5,9* €15.55
(Honey Spare Ribs, Spring Roll, Sesame Prawn Toast & Chicken Skews Satay)

A2. Aromatic Duck *5* (1/4) €14.10 (1/2) €22.90
(Served with Pancake, Hoisin Sauce & Fresh Vegetables)

A3. Skewered Chicken Satay (3) (sauce on side) *1,2,4,5,6,9,11* €8.60

A4. Skewered King Prawn Satay (4) (sauce on side) *1,2,4,5,6,9,11* €8.90

A5. Sesame Prawn Toast (2) with Sweet & Sour Dip *1,2,7,11* €8.90

A6. Pork Spare Ribs (3) €7.85 (4) €9.95
(Choice of: BBQ, Sweet & Sour, Salt & Chilli or Honey Sauce)

A7. Chicken Wings Small *1,3,5,7* €7.50 Large €9.95
(Choice of: BBQ, Sweet & Sour, Salt & Chilli or Honey Sauce)

A8. Smoked Shredded Chilli Chicken (Dry) *3,5* Small €6.95 Lrg €11.95

A9. Crispy Spring Roll (3) (with Plum Sauce Dip) *5,9* €7.90

A10. Crispy Spring Roll (2) (with Plum Sauce Dip) *5,9* €4.85

A11. Vegetarian Spring Roll (3) V *5,9* €6.40
with Sweet & Chilli Sauce Dip

A12. Chicken Cheese Roll (3) with Sweet & Sour Sauce Dip *5,9* €7.60

A13. Salt & Chilli King Prawn *2,3* €9.70

A14. Yuk Sung (Chicken/Pork) (Contains Peanuts) for 1 €9.70
(Served with iceberg lettuce) *1,4,6,7,5,10* for 2 €14.10

A15. Crispy Won Tons (5) with Sweet & Sour Dip *2,5,11* €8.60

A16. Crispy Chicken Curry Puff *1,5,8,9,12* €8.15

A17. Lollipop Chicken *3* €8.40
(Skewered Crispy Chicken Pieces Glazed in Honey Sauce)

A18. Gyoza (Crispy Dumpling in chicken or veg with soya sauce) *1,5,7* €8.60

A18a. Salt & Chilli Crab Claws *2* €8.60

A18b. Tempura King Prawn (6) *2,3,5,7* €9.95

Spice Bag Selection

A19. Spicy Bag *3* Small €7.90 Large €10.90
Large with Free Bottle Water (Except online orders)

A20. Primary Spicy Bag *3* €11.90
(No Chilli Spicy Bag Suitable for any age)

A21. House Special Spicy Bag *3* €13.90
(2 Chicken Balls, Crispy Shredded Chicken & Chips)

A22. Tofu Spicy Bag V *1* €11.35
(Mixed of deep Fried Tofu & Chips in Salt & Chilli)

A23. Boneless Spicy Box *3* €15.95
(2 Chicken Balls, Crispy Shredded & Piece of Chicken, Chips and Small Curry Sauce, all Salt and Chilli)

A24. The Grand Vegan Spicy Box V *1,5,7,9* €15.85
(with Tofu, Chips, Mushroom, Broccoli, Onion, Carrot, Green Pepper 2 Pieces of Vegetable Gyoza & Small Curry Sauce Dip)

A25. Munchies Box Junior *3,5,9* €14.95
A personal size box (16cmx25cm), packed with crispy chicken pieces, shredded chicken, 2 chicken balls, chicken wings, ribs, chips & small tub of curry sauce

A26. Spicy Bag Chicken Nuggets *3,5,9* Small €7.95 Large €10.95
Chicken nuggets, chips, onion, carrots with salt & chilli seasoning

A27. The Grand Spice Bag *3* €13.95
The usual Spice bag in a box with small tub of curry sauce

A28. Crispy Chicken Honey Spice Bag *3* €13.95

A29. House Special Honey Spice Bag *3,5* €15.95

A30. Fried Chicken Wings Spice Bag *3* €11.95

A31. Spice Bag in King Prawn *2,3* Small (6) €12.99 Large (10) €15.95
Mix of king prawn, chips in salt & chilli, onion & carrots

A32. Spice Bag Sausage *5,10,12* €10.95
Mix of sausage, chips in salt & chilli, onion & carrots

A33. Chicken Ball Spicy Bag *1,3,5,8,9* €13.90

A34. Jumbo Bag *3,5,9* €14.95
Chicken ball, chicken wings, shredded chicken, chips, choice of sauce from: curry, satay, king do,BBQ, sweet sour sauce

Soup

S1. Chicken & Sweetcorn Soup *3* 12oz €6.35 32oz €14.40

S2. Crab Meat & Sweetcorn Soup *2,3* 12oz €6.90 32oz €15.60

S3. Chicken Mushroom Soup 12oz €6.35 32oz €14.40

S4. Chicken Noodle Soup 12oz €5.90 32oz €11.80

S5. Hot & Sour Soup *3* 12oz €6.35 32oz €14.40

S6. Won Ton Soup *2,11* 12oz €7.50 32oz €16.95

S7. Mixed Vegetables Soup V 12oz €5.95 32oz €13.45

S8. Gyoza Soup (Chicken/Vegetable) *1,5,7* 12oz €6.35 32oz €14.40

S9. Seafood Ramen Soup 32oz *2, 11, 14, 5, 1.7* €14.95

Noodle Box

PULL OU

Choice of Noodle

Thin Noodle
Thick Noodle
Udon Noodle *(extra €1.50)*
Flat Rice Noodle *(extra €1.50)*
Ramein *(extra €1.50)*
Vermicelli *(extra €1.50)*

Chicken / Pork	€12.95
Mixed Meat *2*	€13.95
King Prawn *7*	€14.95
Mixed Seafood *2,11*	€14.95
Mixed Vegetable	€11.95

Choice of Sauce

Oyster Sauce *5,14*
Sweet Chilli Sauce
Black Bean Sauce
Black Pepper Sauc
Satay Sauce *4,5,9*
Curry Sauce *5,9*
Szechuan Sauce *1,*
Sweet & Sour Sauc

SINGAPORE BOX *1,3,4,5,6,11,12* €14.95
Thin Rice Noodle Roast Pork, Chicken & Vegetable
(Contain egg, peanut sauce, soy sauce wheat flour shrimp paste)

HOT BOX *2,3,5,14* €15.95
Thick Egg Noodles, Chicken, Beef, Roast Pork, King Prawn and Green Vegetables, Wok Tossed in our Secret Chilli Sauce

TERIYAKI CHICKEN BOX *1,3,5,14* €15.95
Thick Egg Noodles, Chicken and Asian Green Vegetables, Wok Tossed in our Teriyaki Sauce

Chef's Recommended

C1. Shredded Crispy Chicken in King Do Sauce *1,5* €13.95

C2. Shredded Crispy Chicken with Sweet Chilli Sauce *1,3* €13.95

C3. Shredded Crispy Chicken in Szechuan Sauce *1,3* €13.95

C4. Crispy Shredded Chicken with Sweet & Sour Sauce €13.95

C5. Sesame Shredded Chicken with Honey Chilli Sauce *9* €13.95

C6. Crispy Shredded Chicken with Honey Chilli Sauce *3* €13.95

C7. Crispy Shredded Beef with Chilli Sauce *1,3* €14.95

C8. Salt & Chilli Chicken (Piece or Shredded) €13.95

C9. Spicy Samba
Chicken / Pork *1,5,11* €13.95
Beef / Spicy Sambal King Prawn / House Special *1,2,5,11* €15.95
(Samba) sauce contains soybean fish sauce shrimp paste)

Sweet & Sour Dishes *5*

1. Sweet & Sour Chicken (Hong Kong Style) *3* €13.95
2. Sweet & Sour Chicken Balls (8) (sauce on side) €14.95
3. Sweet & Sour Pork (Hong Kong Style) *3* €13.95
4. Sweet & Sour King Prawn (Hong Kong Style) *2,3* €15.95
5. Sweet & Sour King Prawn Balls (sauce on side) *2,3* €16.95
6. Sweet & Sour Duck (half of duck) €15.95
7. Sweet & Sour Mixed Vegetables V €11.95

Curry Dishes (Contains Flour) *5,9*

8. Chicken with Curry Sauce €12.95
9. Beef with Curry Sauce €13.95
10. Pork with Curry Sauce €12.95
11. King Prawn with Curry Sauce *2* €14.95
12. House Special with Curry Sauce *2* €13.95
13. Duck with Curry Sauce (half a duck) €15.95
14. Fillet Beef with Curry Sauce (steak) €19.85
15. Breast of Chicken with Curry Sauce (Diced) €13.95 (Whole) €14.95
16. Mixed Vegetables with Curry Sauce V €11.95

**Sauce Allergy Advice: (Curry 1, 5,9,8,12) (Hoi Sin 1,5,7) (Bbq 1,5,7) (Black (Oyster Sauce 14,5,9,1,7) (Sweet and Sour 5) (Black Pepper 1,5,7,9,14) (Swe (Samba 1,2,11,5,7,9,14,10) (Red Curry/Green Curry/Masama*

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MALAYSIA BOX 1,3,4,5,6,11 **€14.95**

Egg Noodle & Vegetable, Chicken stir fried in a fragrant hot Malaysia satay paste
(Contains egg, peanut sauce, soy sauce wheat flour shrimp paste)

YAKI SOBA 3,5,11,14

Choice of: Chicken €13.95 King Prawn 2 €15.95
Tofu & Vegetable 1 €12.95
(Soba Noodles with Beansprouts, Pepper, Onion, Spring Onion, Carrot and Soba Sauce, Garnished with Shallots, Ginger & Sesame Seeds)

House Special Dishes 2

(Chicken, Beef, Pork, King Prawn, Mixed Meat)

17.	House Special with Honey & Black Pepper Sauce 14	€13.95
18.	House Special with King Do Sauce 5	€13.95
19.	House Special with Black Bean Sauce	€13.95
20.	House Special with Satay Sauce 1,5,6	€13.9
21.	House Special with Ginger & Scallions	€13.95
22.	House Special with Szechuan Sauce	€13.95
23.	House Special Kung Po with Cashew Nuts 6	€14.45
24.	House Special with Hot Garlic Sauce	€13.95
25.	House Special Chop Suey in Oyster Sauce 5,6	€13.95
26.	House Special Cashew nuts in Oyster Sauce 5,6	€14.95
27.	House Special with Black Pepper Sauce	€13.95
28.	House Special with Macau Curry Sauce 5,9	€13.95

Chicken Dishes

100% Fresh Chicken Fillet

29.	Chicken with Satay Sauce 1,5,6	€12.95
30.	Chicken with Mushroom in Oyster Sauce 5,14	€12.95
31.	Chicken with Chop Suey in Oyster Sauce 5,14 Lrg	€13.95
32.	Chicken with Cashew Nuts in Oyster Sauce 5,14	€13.95
33.	Chicken with Lemon Sauce 10	€12.95
34.	Chicken with Orange Sauce 10	€12.95
35.	Chicken with King Do Sauce 5	€12.95
36.	Chicken with Szechuan Sauce 1	€12.95
37.	Chicken Kung Po Sauce with Cashew Nuts 6	€13.45
38.	Chicken with Ginger & Scallions 14	€12.95
39.	Chicken with Hot Garlic Sauce	€12.95
40.	Chicken with Black Pepper Sauce 14	€12.95
41.	Chicken with Broccoli in Oyster Sauce 5	€12.95
42.	Chicken with Honey & Black Pepper Sauce	€12.95
43.	Chicken Green Pepper Black Bean Sauce	€12.95
44.	Chicken Mushroom Black Bean Sauce	€12.95
45.	Chicken with Macau Curry Sauce 5	€12.95
46.	Mexico Chicken Contains Flour Soybean 1,5	€12.95
47.	Chicken Pineapple	€12.95

Bean 1,9,5,14,7) (Satay 4,5,9,1,2,11) (King Do 5,1,8,11) (Szechuan 1,5,7,9,)
eet Chili 1,5,8,11) (Kung Po 1,5,8,11,4) (Hot Garlic 1,5,7,9) (Plum Sauce 5)
n 2,11) (Ren Dang 1,9) (Garlic Mayo 3,12) (Chilli Oil 1,5,7)

Beef Dishes

(Fillet Beef with €5.90 Supplement)

48.	Beef with King Do Sauce 5	€13.95
49.	Beef with Mushroom in Oyster Sauce 5	€13.95
50.	Beef with Satay Sauce	€13.95
51.	Beef with Chop Suey in Oyster Sauce 5 Lrg	€13.95
52.	Beef with Cashew nuts in Oyster Sauce 5	€14.95
53.	Beef with Ginger & Scallions 5	€13.95
54.	Beef with Szechuan Sauce	€13.95
55.	Beef with Kung Po Sauce with Cashew Nuts 6	€14.95
56.	Beef with Hot Garlic Sauce 1,5	€13.95
57.	Beef with Black Pepper Sauce	€13.95
58.	Beef with Broccoli in Oyster Sauce 5	€13.95
59.	Beef with Honey & Black Pepper Sauce	€13.95
60.	Beef with Green Pepper Black Bean Sauce	€13.95
61.	Beef with Mushroom Black Bean Sauce	€13.95
62.	Beef Pineapple	€13.95

Roast Pork Dishes (100% Irish Pork)

63.	Roast Pork with Mushroom in Oyster Sauce 5	€12.95
64.	Roast Pork with Satay Sauce 6	€12.95
65.	Roast Pork with Chop Suey in Oyster Sauce 5	€12.95
66.	Roast Pork with Cashew Nuts in Oyster Sauce 5	€13.50
67.	Roast Pork with Ginger & Scallions 5	€12.95
68.	Roast Pork with Szechuan Sauce 1,5	€12.95
69.	Roast Pork Kung Po Sauce with Cashew Nuts 6	€13.95
70.	Roast Pork with Hot Garlic Sauce 1,5	€12.95
71.	Roast Pork with Black Pepper Sauce 5	€12.95
72.	Roast Pork with Broccoli in Oyster Sauce 5	€12.95
73.	Roast Pork Green Pepper Black Bean Sauce 5	€12.95
74.	Roast Pork Mushroom Black Bean Sauce 5	€12.95

Roast Duck Dishes (Half of Duck)

75.	Roast Duck Cantonese Style Soya Sauce on side	€15.95
76.	Roast Duck with Satay Sauce 1,5,6	€15.95
77.	Roast Duck with Chop Suey in Oyster Sauce 5	€15.95
78.	Roast Duck with Cashew Nuts in Oyster Sauce 5	€16.95
79.	Roast Duck with Ginger & Scallions 5	€15.95
80.	Roast Duck with Szechuan Sauce 1,5	€15.95
81.	Roast Duck Kung Po Sauce with Cashew Nuts 6	€16.45
82.	Roast Duck with Plum Sauce	€15.95
83.	Roast Duck with Lemon Sauce	€15.95
84.	Roast Duck with Orange Sauce	€15.95
85.	Roast Duck Green Pepper Black Bean Sauce 5	€15.95
86.	Roast Duck Mushroom Black Bean Sauce 5	€15.95
87.	Glazed Duck Roast Duck with Green Veg and Honey Cashewnuts	€16.45

Seafood Dishes 2,5

88.	Mixed Seafood with Ginger & Spring Onions (King Prawn, Squid, Mussels) 2,5,	€14.95
89.	King Prawn with Satay Sauce 1,5,6	€14.95
90.	King Prawn Chop Suey in Oyster Sauce 5	€14.95
91.	King Prawn Cashew Nuts in Oyster Sauce 5,6	€15.45
92.	King Prawn with Ginger & Scallions 5	€14.95
93.	King Prawn with Szechuan Sauce 1,5	€14.95
94.	King Prawn Kung Po Sauce with Cashew Nuts 6	€15.45
95.	King Prawn with Hot Garlic Sauce 1,5	€14.95
96.	King Prawn with Black Pepper Sauce 5	€14.95
97.	King Prawn Green Pepper Black Bean Sauce 5	€14.95
98.	King Prawn Mushroom Black Bean Sauce 5	€14.95
99.	Squid with Salt & Chilli	€14.95
100.	Squid with Ginger & Scallions 5	€14.95
101.	King Prawn with Salt & Chilli	€14.95
101a.	Salt & Chilli Crab Claws	€14.95

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Vegetarian Dishes

102.	Hot & Spicy ToFu V 1,5 🌶🌶	€11.95
103.	Szechuan Style ToFu V 1,5 🌶🌶	€11.95
104.	Salt & Chilli ToFu (Long Tray) V 🌶🌶	€11.95
105.	Mixed Vegetables with Choice of Sauce V (Curry, Black Bean, Black Pepper, Cashew Nuts, Satay, King Do, Szechuan etc)	€11.95

Fried Rice Dishes 3

106.	House Special Fried Rice 2	€13.95
107.	King Prawn Fried Rice 2	€14.95
108.	Chicken Fried Rice	€12.95
109.	Pork Fried Rice	€12.95
110.	Beef Fried Rice	€13.95
111.	Vegetables Fried Rice V	€11.95
112.	Yung Chow Fried Rice	€13.95
113.	Singapore Fried Rice 1,3,4,5 🌶	€14.95
114.	Nasi Goring Chicken Fried Rice 1,3,4,5 🌶🌶	€14.95
115.	Samba! Chicken Fried Rice 1,3,4,5 🌶🌶	€14.95
115A.	Roast Duck Fried Rice 1,3,4,5	€15.95

(113-115 Contains peanut sauce, soy sauce wheat flour shrimp paste)

European Dishes

116.	Roast Breast of Chicken with Onion & Mushroom	€14.95
117.	Special Omelette or Foo Young 2,3	€14.95
118.	King Prawn Omelette or Foo Young 2,3	€15.95
119.	Chicken Omelette or Foo Young 3	€13.95
120.	Mushroom Omelette or Foo Young V 3	€12.95
121.	Fish & Chips Box 2	€12.95

Extra Dishes (Change sauce €1.50 extra)

Salt & Chilli Chicken Balls 1,3,5,8,9	(6) €9.95	(8) €12.95	
Salt & Chilli Chips in Long Tray			€6.85
Chicken Balls (3)+Chips & Curry Sauce (in Long Tray) 1,3,5,8,9			€9.85
Sausages (3), Chips & Curry Sauce (in Long Tray) 5,10,12			€8.85
Shredded Crispy Chicken+Chips & Curry Sauce 1,3,5,7,9			€8.85
5 in 1 (Shredded Chicken, Chicken Ball (2), Curry Sauce, Fried Rice & Chips) 1,3,5,7,8,9			€10.85
4 in 1 (Chicken Balls (2)+Chips+Fried Rice & Curry Sauce) 1,3,5,7,8,9			€8.85
3 in 1 (Fried Rice+Chips+Curry Sauce) 3,5,9	Small €5.85	Large €6.85	
Chicken/Beef Curry with Fried Rice 1,3,5,7,9	Small €7.85	Large €9.95	
2 in 1 (Chips with Curry Sauce) 5,9	Small €4.85	Large €6.85	
French Fried Onion Rings 1,3,5,7	Small (4) €4.85	Large (8) €7.95	
Fried Plain Onion 1,5,7,14			€7.95
Fried Soft Noodles 1,5,7	Small €6.90	Large €8.95	
Egg Fried Rice 1,3,7	Small €4.95	Large €6.25	
Boiled Rice	Small €3.80	Large €4.95	
Chips	Small €4.85	Large €6.35	
Sauce Options	8oz €3.65	12oz €5.25	

Curry/Sweet And Sour/Bbq/Satay/Szechuan/Black Bean/ Black Pepper/King Do/Sweet Chilli/Kung Po/ Hot Garlic/ Plum Sauce/Macau Curry/Oyster Sauce/Samba Sauce/ Red Curry/ Green Curry/Masaman/Ren Dang

Sauce Options	4oz €3.00	8oz €5.70

Garlic Mayo/Honey Sauce/Chilli Oil/Soy Sauce/Hai Sin Sauce

Chicken Balls (8) 1,3,5,8,9			€11.55
Chicken Balls (6) 1,3,5,8,9			€8.65
Chicken Balls (4) 1,3,5,8,9			€6.90
Chicken Balls (3) 1,3,5,8,9			€5.40
Chicken Nuggets (12) with Curry Sauce 5,9			€7.95
Chicken Tenders (6) with Curry Sauce 5,9			€8.95
Sausage (each) 5,10,12	Plain €1.65	in Batter	€2.95
Beansprouts			€7.95
Mixed Vegetables			€9.95
Mushrooms			€8.95
Cashew Nuts (8oz)			€5.50
Prawn Crackers			€3.50
Sushi Ginger (4oz)			€2.50
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installation.

The Domestic Negotiations

Naturally, decorating the outside of the house requires agreement between the occupants. One person generally favours restraint and good taste. The other wants the property to resemble the entrance to Disneyland.

Discussions begin politely.

"Do we really need another reindeer?"

"It's not another reindeer. It's a replacement."

"What happened to the original?"

"It's in the garage."

"So it's another reindeer."

At this point, negotiations generally deteriorate. Eventually, a compromise is reached in which all the decorations are installed, but one particularly offensive flashing Santa is moved behind a shrub. This is regarded as a major victory for moderation.

When Christmas Comes Early

Another interesting development is the date on which the decorations appear. Years ago, Christmas decorations traditionally went up sometime in December. For many families, 8 December was the established date, marking the Feast of the Immaculate Conception and coinciding with the great annual shopping expedition to Dublin. Nowadays, some houses are decorated before the Halloween pumpkins have been collected. By mid-November, entire estates are illuminated. The poor pumpkins have barely finished frightening the children before an inflatable snowman arrives to occupy the same patch of lawn. At this rate, Christmas decorations will soon be appearing during the August bank holiday weekend. Retailers, naturally, would be delighted.

The Neighbours Fight Back

Not everyone appreciates the festive extravaganza. There are residents who prefer a quiet Christmas, without flashing lights illuminating their bedrooms or electronic Santas playing Jingle Bells at eleven o'clock at night. And while most people enjoy a cheerful display, there is a point at which enthusiasm becomes an assault on the senses.

Some houses have lights that flash, chase, sparkle, pulse, and change colour every three seconds. One particularly ambitious display may even be synchronised to music. It is impressive for approximately four minutes. Living opposite it for six weeks is another matter entirely. There is a fine line between festive cheer and turning your neighbour's bedroom into a nightclub.

The Big Switch-Off

Eventually, Christmas comes and goes. The presents are opened, the turkey is finished, and the last of the Quality Street disappears. January arrives. For most households, this means taking down the decorations, packing them away, and returning to normality. But removing an elaborate outdoor display is a major operation.

Michael requires an entire weekend. The inflatable Santa must be deflated, the reindeer dismantled, and several kilometres of electrical cable recovered from the shrubbery. The ladder comes out again. The lights are carefully wound into neat coils and placed in storage boxes.



And somewhere, beneath the tangled mass of decorations, Michael discovers a brand-new illuminated polar bear he bought in last January's sales and completely forgot about. He studies it thoughtfully. It really would look magnificent beside the driveway. Perhaps next Christmas.

Let There Be Light

Despite the competition, the expense, and the occasional excess, there is something rather wonderful about Ireland's enthusiasm for Christmas lights. On dark December evenings, a brightly decorated street can lift the spirits, particularly when households make the effort to create something special for local children. Some families also use their displays to raise money for charity, turning their festive enthusiasm into something genuinely worthwhile.

And while the displays may occasionally resemble Las Vegas after a power surge, they are generally created with the best of intentions. Christmas is supposed to be a time of light, warmth, and celebration. So perhaps we should applaud those neighbours who spend hours putting up decorations for everyone to enjoy. Even Michael.

Although I do worry about what he has planned for next year. I overheard him discussing a second electricity meter. And Gerry has apparently ordered a life-sized illuminated sleigh complete with eight reindeer. If this continues, there is every possibility that passing aircraft will mistake the estate for Dublin Airport. On the bright side, at least Santa won't have any difficulty finding it.

Dementia in Ireland

A Growing Challenge We Can No Longer Ignore

Every year in Ireland there are 11,000 new cases of dementia



The 36th Alzheimer Europe Conference takes place in Dublin from 27–29 October 2026, with Taoiseach Micheál Martin scheduled to address the opening ceremony on 27 October. Almost 70,000 people in Ireland are living with dementia, and that number is expected to more than double over the next 25 years. As Dublin hosts a major European conference on the condition, what are we doing to prepare?

Most of us have experienced that slightly embarrassing moment when we walk into a room and forget why we're there. Or spend ten minutes searching for our glasses before discovering they're sitting on top of our head. We laugh about these little lapses, putting them down to age, distraction or simply having too much on our minds. But for thousands of Irish families, memory loss is no laughing matter.

Dementia is one of the greatest health and social challenges facing Ireland, and the scale of the problem is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore. The issue has been brought into sharp focus by the 36th Alzheimer Europe Conference, held in Dublin in October, with Taoiseach Micheál Martin announced as the opening speaker. Bringing together more than 1,300 delegates, including researchers, medical professionals, policymakers, people living with dementia and family carers, the conference places Ireland at the centre of an important European conversation. And the figures explain why that conversation is urgently needed.

According to new research published by Alzheimer Europe in January 2026, an estimated 69,949 people in Ireland are living with dementia. By 2050, that number is projected to reach 151,092. That's an increase of approximately 116%, driven largely by our growing and ageing population. Put simply, more people are living longer, and age remains the greatest risk factor for developing dementia. But dementia isn't exclusively a condition of old age. It can affect people in their fifties, forties and, occasionally, even younger. Nor is dementia a single disease. Alzheimer's disease is the most common cause, but vascular dementia, Lewy body dementia and frontotemporal dementia are among several other forms. The condition can affect memory, reasoning, communication, behaviour and eventually the ability to manage everyday activities. Importantly, dementia is not an inevitable consequence of growing older.

Behind every diagnosis there is often a husband, wife, partner, son or daughter whose life changes dramatically. The Alzheimer Society of Ireland estimates that approximately 63% of people living with dementia remain at home in their communities. For many, this is made possible by the extraordinary efforts of family carers. A spouse may gradually become responsible for medication, meals, finances and everyday personal care. An adult child may find themselves looking after a parent who once looked after them. The changes can happen slowly. First there are forgotten appointments, misplaced possessions or repeated questions. Later, familiar activities may become increasingly difficult. For the person providing care, the emotional demands can be considerable. There's the sadness of watching somebody they love change, combined with physical exhaustion, financial pressure and the constant responsibility of ensuring their safety. More than 180,000 people in Ireland are estimated to be current or former carers of a family member or partner with dementia. Their contribution is

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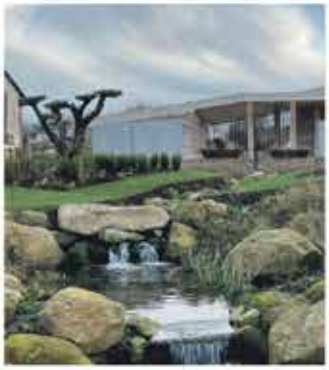
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enormous, yet much of it takes place quietly behind closed doors.

Ireland introduced its first National Dementia Strategy in 2014, recognising the need for better diagnosis, greater public awareness and improved care. Progress has been made, particularly in the development of community services and specialist assessment facilities. Budget 2027 includes an additional €1.4 million for community-based dementia services, intended to provide eight new or expanded day-care services, additional day care at home, five activity clubs for people with young-onset dementia and five more dementia advisers. The Government has also committed to increasing HSE home-support provision to 28.5 million hours in 2027, with at least 24% of the additional hours allocated to people living with dementia. Meanwhile, specialist memory assessment services are being expanded, with new clinics planned in several parts of the country. A national dementia registry is also being developed to improve information about diagnosis, care and future service requirements. These are positive developments, although the crucial question is whether the planned services will become available quickly enough to meet growing demand. For families struggling to obtain a diagnosis, secure home support or arrange respite care, promises of future improvements provide limited comfort in the present.

There have been encouraging advances in dementia research. Two newer Alzheimer's treatments, lecanemab and donanemab, have received European authorisation for certain people with early-stage Alzheimer's disease. Unlike older medicines that primarily manage symptoms, these treatments target processes associated with the disease and can slow cognitive decline in selected patients. However, they are not cures, do not restore lost memory and are unsuitable for many people. They also carry risks requiring careful monitoring. Access through Ireland's public health system is subject to further assessment and funding decisions. Nevertheless, these developments represent an important change in Alzheimer's research. For decades, treatment largely concentrated on managing symptoms and providing care. Scientists are now beginning to develop treatments that may alter the course of the disease itself.

Another encouraging area of research concerns prevention. A major international study published by The Lancet in 2024 suggested that, at population level, up to 45% of dementia cases might potentially be prevented or delayed by addressing fourteen modifiable risk factors. These include high blood pressure, smoking, physical inactivity, diabetes, high cholesterol, hearing loss, untreated vision problems and social isolation. There are no guarantees, and people can develop dementia despite living healthy lives. Nevertheless, the findings reinforce the importance of looking after our physical and mental health throughout life. Regular exercise, maintaining social connections, managing blood pressure and cholesterol, and addressing hearing or vision difficulties may all help reduce risk. Perhaps that provides another good reason to go for a walk, join a club or meet friends for coffee. Not that most of us needed another excuse for the coffee.

Medical treatment and government funding are only part of the answer. We also need communities that understand dementia and support those living with it. A person struggling to find the right words in a shop isn't necessarily being difficult. Someone becoming confused in a familiar place may need patience rather than criticism. Businesses, community organisations and neighbours can make an enormous difference through awareness, understanding and relatively simple acts of kindness. People living with dementia should also have opportunities to remain active, maintain friendships and participate in community life for as long as possible. A diagnosis does not mean that somebody immediately loses their independence, personality or ability to enjoy life. The voices of people living with dementia have an important place in deciding how services are designed and delivered.

The Dublin conference offers an important opportunity to examine what Ireland has achieved and what still needs to be done. But beyond the speeches, presentations and policy discussions, there is a much simpler measure of success. Can somebody living with dementia receive an early diagnosis, access appropriate treatment and continue enjoying a meaningful life? Can their family obtain practical assistance before reaching breaking point? And can we ensure that the growing number of people affected are treated with dignity, respect and understanding? With the number of people living with dementia expected to more than double by 2050, these questions will become increasingly important. Dementia may affect a person's memory, but it should never diminish their value as a human being. And as a society, remembering that might be the most important step of all.



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LUCAN'S GREEN LUNG

Has St Edmundsbury Been Saved?

There is something rather comforting about knowing that, however much the world changes, there are still places where you can escape the traffic, the building sites and the relentless march of housing estates. For generations, the River Liffey and its surrounding countryside have provided just such an escape for the people of Lucan. But as the population grows and the pressure for new housing intensifies, protecting these green spaces is becoming increasingly difficult.

That is why a decision by South Dublin County Council on 19 October was greeted with considerable relief by local environmental campaigners. Councillors voted to reject proposals to rezone land at St Edmundsbury, beside the Liffey, for residential development. For the moment, at least, Lucan's green lung can breathe a little easier.

The land at St Edmundsbury, close to Lucan and west of the Hermitage Golf Club, forms part of an environmentally important landscape along the River Liffey. It is an area of woodland, farmland and natural habitats that provides a valuable green corridor in an increasingly urbanised part of Dublin. The land is owned by businessmen JP McManus and John Magnier, who purchased a much larger property in 2013. Proposals to rezone approximately 15 hectares for residential development could have paved the way for around 500 homes.

But local residents were having none of it. More than 1,600 submissions were made opposing the rezoning, and campaigners organised protests, including a march through Lucan shortly before the council's final decision. Their argument was straightforward. Once a natural landscape is covered in houses and roads, there is no going back. Trees can be replanted, but ancient habitats cannot simply be recreated somewhere else. And while a developer can promise an attractive landscaped entrance and a few ornamental trees, these are hardly substitutes for an established riverside ecosystem.

Of course, the argument is not quite that simple.

Ireland desperately needs more homes. Young couples are struggling to get onto the property ladder, rents remain painfully high, and many adults are living with their parents considerably longer than either generation ever intended. There was a time when moving out of the family home was regarded as a natural part of growing up. Nowadays, a thirty-year-old announcing that he has finally found somewhere affordable to live is likely to receive the same enthusiastic congratulations once reserved for passing the Leaving Cert.

Developers argue, with some justification, that preventing residential construction on potentially suitable land makes an already difficult housing situation worse. Supporters of rezoning St Edmundsbury pointed to its accessibility and the pressing need for additional housing. The Office of the Planning Regulator and the National Transport Authority also raised concerns about excluding the site from residential development.

So the councillors faced a difficult choice: protect an important natural landscape or release more land for urgently needed homes. In the end, they decided that St Edmundsbury should retain its existing high-amenity zoning. However, they approved residential rezoning at Finnstown Castle and Coldcut Road, demonstrating that the decision was not a blanket rejection of further housing in the area.

For environmental campaigners, protecting St Edmundsbury is only part of a much bigger ambition. For decades, there have been proposals to create a continuous Liffey Valley Park, linking green spaces along the river from the western suburbs towards the city. Imagine being able to walk or cycle through an extensive riverside park, enjoying woodland, wildlife and open countryside without constantly encountering roads or housing developments. It could become one of Dublin's most attractive recreational amenities.

The concept is hardly new. A strategic plan for the Liffey Valley Park was developed twenty years ago, but progress has been slow and fragmented. Protecting St Edmundsbury from rezoning does not automatically create a public park. Questions of ownership, access, funding and management would still have to be

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resolved. Nevertheless, the October decision preserves an opportunity that might otherwise have disappeared forever.

For many years, parks and natural landscapes were considered pleasant extras when planning towns and suburbs. Today, we understand that they are essential to healthy communities. Walking among trees, spending time beside a river or simply escaping the noise of traffic can benefit both physical and mental wellbeing. Green spaces also support wildlife, help manage rainfall and moderate temperatures during hot weather. These benefits become increasingly important as urban areas expand. And there is something profoundly reassuring about having somewhere nearby where the most urgent decision of the afternoon is whether to take the longer walking route or turn back for a cup of tea.

The October vote represents an important victory for those who have campaigned to protect St Edmundsbury. It also demonstrates that local voices can influence decisions about the future of their communities. But the wider debate is far from settled. Lucan and its neighbouring communities will continue to grow, and suitable land must be found for new housing. Equally, new development needs schools, transport, healthcare, recreational facilities and green spaces. Building houses without the infrastructure to support them simply creates tomorrow's problems.

The challenge is to achieve both objectives: providing homes for future generations while preserving the natural environment that makes an area worth living in. For now, the trees at St Edmundsbury remain standing, the Liffey continues its journey towards Dublin Bay, and campaigners can enjoy a well-earned moment of satisfaction. Perhaps one day, their grandchildren will be walking through a magnificent Liffey Valley Park, wondering why anyone ever contemplated building houses on such a beautiful landscape. And perhaps, if we plan properly, those same grandchildren will also be able to afford a home somewhere nearby. Now that really would be progress.



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The Neighbours Who Make Leixlip a Better Place to Live

There are two kinds of people in every neighbourhood.

Those who notice a piece of litter on the pavement and walk past it, and those who pick it up. The second group are the ones who make a community worth living in.

They are also the people who turn up on Saturday mornings with gardening gloves, bin bags and a determination to improve their surroundings. They plant flowers, organise clean-ups, cut grass and generally do the jobs that the rest of us agree are terribly important, provided somebody else does them.

Thankfully, Leixlip has plenty of these community-minded residents, and their efforts have recently received some well-deserved recognition.

A Town to Be Proud Of

At Kildare County Council's annual Pride in Your Place Awards, held in September, Leixlip enjoyed considerable success.

Avondale took first place in the large estate category, while Loughnamona shared third place. Loughnamona also won the Community Integration Award and achieved third place in the category for community development projects with a community centre.

Meanwhile, Raymond and Patricia Troy of Avondale received the Best Pollinator Friendly Garden Award, recognising their contribution to creating a welcoming environment for bees, butterflies and other important wildlife.

These might not be the sort of awards that attract television cameras and celebrity presenters, but they celebrate achievements that have a genuine impact on everyday life.

After all, there is something rather satisfying about living in an estate where residents take pride in their surroundings.

More Than Beautiful Flower Beds

Of course, community pride is about much more than neatly trimmed lawns and colourful flower displays.

An attractive neighbourhood is pleasant to look at, but a friendly one is infinitely more valuable.

It is the neighbour who brings in your bins when you're away, the person who checks on an elderly resident during a cold spell, or the family who welcomes newcomers to the estate.

These are small gestures, but collectively they create the sense of belonging that distinguishes a community from a collection of houses.

The recognition given to Loughnamona for community integration is particularly encouraging. As towns such as Leixlip continue to develop and welcome new residents, ensuring that everyone feels included becomes increasingly important.

It is easy to move into a new estate and spend months knowing your neighbours only as the people with the blue car or the enormous dog.

A simple conversation over a garden fence can sometimes achieve more than a dozen official initiatives designed to encourage community interaction.

The Unsung Heroes

Every successful residents' association has a small group of people who seem to possess unlimited energy.

They organise meetings, apply for grants, coordinate volunteers and somehow persuade reluctant householders to help with the annual clean-up.

Their reward is usually another job.

There will always be someone who complains that the grass hasn't been cut, the flowers need watering or the Christmas lights should have gone up a week earlier.

Frequently, the person complaining has never attended a residents' association meeting in their life.

Yet the volunteers continue, often contributing years of unpaid work to making their neighbourhoods better places.

In an age when so much of our communication takes place through phones and social media, these face-to-face community activities are perhaps more valuable than ever.

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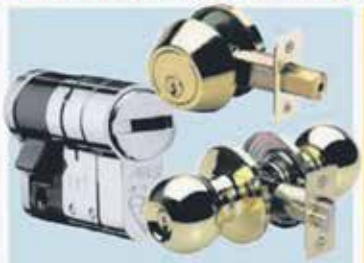
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Even the Bees Are Benefiting

The success of Raymond and Patricia Troy's pollinator-friendly garden highlights another important aspect of modern community involvement.

Gone are the days when a respectable Irish garden was judged entirely by the precision of its lawn and the absence of anything resembling a weed.

Today, gardeners are increasingly encouraged to make room for nature.

Wildflowers, native plants and less intensively maintained areas can provide essential food and shelter for pollinating insects.

This does require a slight adjustment in attitude for anyone raised to believe that a lawn should resemble the centre court at Wimbledon.

Nevertheless, creating attractive gardens that also support biodiversity is something from which entire neighbourhoods can benefit.

What Makes a Good Neighbourhood?

When choosing where to live, people naturally consider house prices, schools, transport links and local amenities.

But there is one important feature that rarely appears in an estate agent's brochure: the quality of the neighbours.

A beautifully designed development can feel lonely if nobody speaks to anybody else. Equally, an ordinary estate can become a wonderful place to live when residents look out for one another.

That is why community awards deserve more attention than they sometimes receive.

The achievements of Avondale and Loughnamona demonstrate what can happen when people decide that their surroundings and their neighbours are worth making an effort for.

They also provide encouragement to other communities throughout Leixlip and Lucan.

You don't need a large budget or an elaborate plan to make a difference. Sometimes it begins with planting a few flowers, organising a neighbourhood gathering or simply introducing yourself to the family next door.

And while winning an award is certainly something to celebrate, the real prize is living somewhere that feels like home.

So congratulations to Leixlip's community champions, particularly those who do the work without ever expecting recognition.

They remind us that a good neighbourhood isn't created by property developers, architects or local authorities alone.

It's created by the people who live there.

Especially the ones who remember to put your bins back.




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