

FOOD & wine



Breakfast at Pearla na Mara, Oranmore

With Willie Shaw
BIADEVIL

The fact that eating a regular breakfast is good for you is well known. However it seems that many of us do not bother with it and become breakfast skippers. Your body needs to be refuelled at certain times of the day. Morning is one of those times, and if you skip breakfast you may feel so hungry at lunchtime that you overeat. You may be inclined to choose food for lunch that is not the healthiest if you are really hungry, or you might be inclined to use words like "I'm starving".

There are many reasons for eating a good breakfast; several studies have shown that children perform much better in class if they have a regular, healthy, breakfast. Academic performance, problem solving, immediate recall, and reduced fatigue are some of the benefits. People who eat breakfast have a lower body mass index, and people who eat a good breakfast are more likely to maintain a healthy weight.

So what to eat for breakfast? Well, starting

off with what to avoid, sugary cereals, high calorie Danish pastries, and meats that are high in sodium and saturated fat are best only eaten very occasionally. A healthy breakfast does not have to be complicated, a simple boiled egg and wholegrain toast soldiers is a great place to start, and baked beans are really easy to prepare, just try to get a low sugar/low salt variety. Fruits and nuts are of course really good, so perhaps take the time to buy the ingredients to make a muesli you will like. By getting the individual ingredients yourself you will be 100 per cent certain that there are no hidden sugars, etc, top it off with a good yoghurt and maybe some maple or agave syrup and you are set for the day. You can always split breakfast into two sections, a boiled egg at home and then an apple and nuts or yoghurt two hours later at work.

So what about the people who start the day floating on a sea of coffee? Well like most things, in moderation it is OK. The number to remember is



Chef's breakfast at Pearla na Mara — smoked salmon, poached eggs, and spinach with hollandaise sauce.

generally regarded as 300mg of caffeine a day, and there are 100 to 150mg per serving so unless you were really bad at maths that is two to three cups per day. More than that and you probably need to cut back. There are good things in coffee too, riboflavin (vitamin B2), potassium (vitamin B5), and magnesium, but if you have a history of hypertension it might be a good idea to stay off it.

Now to where this article started off and that is a newish restaurant in Oranmore that is serving a full selection of breakfasts, but as you can see in the picture it is serving some really healthy options. The one in the picture is the chef's breakfast and costs €7.95 including unlimited coffee and toast (remember two to three cups max) a free read of the daily papers and Pearla na Mara's own spring water. Each item on the plate was excellent and the eggs were done precisely as ordered. The

hollandaise sauce was homemade and worked perfectly with a delicious mouthful of spinach and egg. The coffee is freshly ground for each cup and excellent. One thing I noticed was that after eating this breakfast I did not feel like eating anything else until evening. My companion had the smoked salmon omelette with chives, and while good he agreed mine was the star of the menu. You can also order a small Irish breakfast of two sausages, two rashers, and two eggs for €4.95, and when you add in the complimentary coffee and papers that is one hell of a bargain. There is a veggie breakfast of potato cake, two free range eggs, grilled tomato, mushrooms, and spinach for €6.50 and that will be my next order. If you are in a hurry a freshly made scone or croissant with coffee is a very fair €3.50.

Pearla na Mara is located across the road from Byrne's Tyres.

St Patrick's Day in Oranmore

I met Charlie Chan from Royal Villa last night and he told me that he will be open from 1pm on St Patrick's Day. He also mentioned that he is ready to deliver Chinese food to your door if you are catering for a number of friends and relatives after the confirmation at the end of the month.



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