Boar, that has been fed since it was born on no other thing but fresh milk and fine meal in spring-time, curds and sweet milk in summer, the kernel of nuts and wheat in harvest, beef broth in winter… along with that, five-score wheaten cakes made with honey. That is the Champion's Portion of my house.

—"Bricriu's Feast," from Cuchulain of Muirthemne. Translated from the ancient Irish by Lady Augusta Gregory

NORTHERN IRELAND is renowned for the excellence of its food products, including seafood, milk, butter, cheese, beef, lamb, and fruit. Its baked goods—scones, wheat breads, farls (potato bread), tray bakes, and soda breads—are legendary.

The introduction of New World crops, especially the potato, had an enormous impact on Irish cuisine. The failure of potato crops during the 1840s, which resulted in widespread famine, had a monumental effect on Ireland's history.

The Ulster Fry—a hearty breakfast of eggs, "rashers" of bacon, white and black sausages, mushrooms, potato farls, and tomatoes—is widely consumed, although many people now opt for lower-calorie alternatives.

Northern Ireland is in the midst of a culinary renaissance. Today, "New Irish Cuisine" enriches traditional home cooking—the simple preparation of the finest fresh staples. Helped by a booming economy, innovative chefs are opening elegant new restaurants throughout the region.