

# LIVING BESIDE A MINE - AGRI-FOOD

*“The Boyne Valley is home to a bountiful supply of passionate farmers, food and drinks producers, chefs and eateries whose passion is to bring the flavours of our landscape to your table.”*

## Discover Boyne Valley

**Although mining is a new industry for Co. Tyrone, modern mines can be found throughout Europe – including close to home in both Ireland and Britain.**

Boliden Tara Mines on the edge of Navan in Co. Meath’s Boyne Valley, for instance, is Europe’s largest zinc and lead mine. The mine has been operating successfully for 40 years, employs 1,000 people and is a major driver of the local economy.

In addition to mining, the Boyne Valley also supports an amazing mix of artisan food and drink producers who thrive in the area’s clean and fertile environment. In recent years this has supported the emergence of a mouth-

watering food scene which has been described by National Geographic as one of the world’s top food destinations for 2019.

### The Irish Gastro Valley

A recent tourism strategy for the Boyne Valley proposed that the quality of the local agri-food sector was so good that the area could become the ‘Irish Gastro Valley’. As National Geographic put it, the area has much going for it: “From craft beer and cider to fresh seafood and unexpected treats such as Irish smoked garlic and blue cheese, there’s a growing sense of place on the plate.”

For the past two years the Boyne Valley has come second in the Irish Foodie Destinations

competition and at the most recent annual Blas Na hEireann Irish Food Awards, producers from the region won an impressive seven gold, silver and bronze medals.

Last year, as part of the food tourism initiative, Navan hosted ‘Boyne Valley Bites’ – an 18-day long food trail with 10 eateries offering a tapas-style dish with a local Boyne Valley twist and local craft beverages. Other events ranged from guided food tours and weekend farm retreats to themed events and street feasts.

Navan itself is home to a surprisingly wide range of award-winning restaurants and pubs which take pride in using local produce.

One of the new food and drink producers in the area is the Slane Distillery which produces triple-casked whiskey using local barley and water from the river Boyne. As they put it: “There could be no better setting in which to discover the nature of whiskey than the Boyne Valley. Our rural setting is a sprawling tapestry of fertile land, wild countryside, and native woodlands surrounding the mythical river Boyne.”

Dalradian is proposing a safe, environmentally responsible project that will bring 1,000 direct and indirect jobs to Tyrone. As demonstrated by the Boyne Valley’s experience, modern mining can co-exist with the Sperrins’ ability to grow and develop its own tourism and agri-food potential.



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