

Costigan's Pub

One of Cork's oldest pubs has a new owner, but it's a familiar face



Costigan's Pub Welcomes New Ownership: Colm O'Connor Takes the Helm

Costigan's Pub, a cherished cornerstone of Cork City's vibrant pub scene, proudly announces the appointment of Colm O'Connor as the new owner. This exciting change marks the

beginning of a new chapter for the beloved establishment, renowned for its warm atmosphere, rich history, and commitment to community.

Colm O'Connor, a native of Meath, left his home at the tender age of 17, embarking on his very first journey on a train with Cork as his final destination. Coming from an agricultural background, Colm made the significant pivot into the world of hospitality and never looked back - until it's time for silage and the phone starts ringing requesting his help!



Colm quickly embedded deep roots in Cork's hospitality industry, bringing a wealth of experience and a fresh vision to Costigan's Pub when he took over the lease in 2015. Now with over 30 years in the business, Colm has earned a stellar reputation for his dedication to exceptional service, quality, and community engagement - actively sponsoring and coaching his local club Blarney GAA. His passion for preserving the cultural heritage of a traditional Irish pub while introducing innovative ideas aligns perfectly with the spirit of Costigan's.



"This is a real full circle moment for me," said Colm O'Connor. "This pub has been a gathering place for friends, families, and tourists for generations, and I have been so proud to be a part of its progression over these nine years. It's always been a dream of mine to one day own my own pub and it's quite surreal to finally be able to say that I do."

"It goes without saying that this would not have been possible without the endless support and advice from my family and friends, I definitely owe a few people a couple of pints on the house!"

Colm is fully committed to ensuring Costigan's remains a beloved landmark in Cork and is very passionate about instilling a love of the pub trade in younger generations. "Over the years I've noticed a steady decline in younger people seeing the pub industry as a career option, it's more often regarded as a part-time job while studying and not seen as a very viable career. This is why I am so pleased to have Brian McCarthy on board with me as a shareholder in Costigan's Pub. Brian is 25 years old, has completed a degree in college, and has chosen to put his learnings into practice by becoming a full-time publican. It's a very proud moment for

me too as I've watched him grow as a bartender and now as a business partner, and it gives me a lot of hope for the future that Costigan's will always be in good hands."



Colm O'Conner (L) and Brian McCarthy (R)

Brian, an Inniscarra man, first began working in the pub trade when he was just 17 years old, starting out, as most people in the trade do, in his local pub, The Huntsman in Tower. Thrown in at the deep end, Brian's first night working in the bar was for the Liverpool V Real Madrid Champions League Final in 2018, he quickly learned to pull pints under pressure. Finishing

secondary school and progressing on to third level education, Brian kept on his part time work in the pub while studying Civil Engineering at UCC. His ability to balance his studies, commitment to his rugby training, whilst still continuing to progress and take on more responsibilities in the pub really showed his determined character and admirable work ethic.

Costigan's Pub, a beloved Cork institution, traces its roots back to 1827 when it was owned by John and Hanora Murphy. Initially, the premises at No. 10 Washington Street operated as a fishmongers, while No. 11 served as a pub. Over the years, the two buildings underwent various transformations, including ownership changes - 1856-1871; Stephen McKenna, 1871-1891; James Murphy, 1925-1943; John Dunlea & Healy's Bootmakers, periods doubling up as a grocer, a bootmaker, and even a stint as a flour and meal store. In 1943, the pub was purchased by Kenny Coleman, at this time it was called The Greyhound Bar. This name survived until the early 1950's when Maura Kenny took over the pub and changed it to Kenny's. It wasn't until the late 1970s that John and Pauline Costigan acquired the pub, giving it the name it proudly holds today. Pauline managed the establishment for two decades, and her legacy is immortalised with a picture of her pulling pints behind the bar. In 1999, Michael Cunningham purchased both No. 10 and No. 11, merging the two buildings into the Costigan's Pub we know today. Now under the ownership of Colm O'Connor and Brian McCarthy, the pub continues to thrive, honouring its rich heritage while welcoming the future.



Under Colm and Brian's leadership, patrons can look forward to the true Irish character of a traditional Irish pub in every sense of the word, following their recent win at the Bar of the Year Awards 2024, "We are truly delighted and really appreciative of the recognition, especially winning Traditional Bar of the Year. It's something that we've always attained over the last almost decade, we committed to creating a pub in the traditional sense of the word. In the old school days a pub was always a place for people to meet, it was the centre of the community and to be recognised for that on a national scale is absolutely fantastic for us. It's something we've always strived to maintain by having live music five nights a week, showing live sport, having a great array of drinks, we have a meeting room for clubs and all different types of groups who come in every week throughout the year to support us and we try our best to support them back through sponsorships of teams and local events.

In a time when things have been ever changing in society, Costigan's remains traditional, doing the simple things and doing them well - it's a motto we had a very long time ago and it's a motto we still have today."



Costigan's team members at the Bar of the Year Awards 2024 accepting the award for Traditional Bar of the year. Picture by Paul Sherwood.

Costigan's Pub invites all patrons, old and new, to join in the celebrations over the coming weeks and experience the enhanced offerings and warm hospitality under Colm and Brian's ownership.