

Kris Baldwin

Meehan's Irish Pub

With total freedom to be innovative, develop new menu items and run kitchen operations at Meehan's Irish Pub, Executive Chef Kris Baldwin is honored to inspire and direct his team of 30 since 2015. Far from a run-of-the-mill Irish pub (although Meehan's is proud of the 150+ Irish whiskeys that are served), Kris leads the day-to-day strategies of their culinary program that is served in three distinctly unique settings: Johnny's upstairs Oyster Bar reminiscent of New Orleans, an open-air casual Island Backyard and THE classic Irish Pub on Meehan's first floor.

Kris' professional experience spans more than 20 years, beginning in Palm Coast at 14 as the dishwasher in a popular mom and pop Italian restaurant. After a year, this hard working teenager admits he was having fun while following in his father's footsteps of positive work ethic and falling in love with food. Studying at Le Cordon Bleu in Orlando, he received so much more than a gastronomic education. "Cooking and food just drew me in. I have a brain for puzzles, combining flavors, being disciplined and dedicated, handling pressure and knowing how to treat people. I was working 50+ hours a week even while I was in school!"

Gathering a well-rounded repertoire of cooking as sous chef at numerous local restaurants, Chef Kris was handed the enormous responsibility at Meehan's to build new menus, recipes, equipment and an entire kitchen to accommodate the high-volume 200 seat restaurant. Every chef has a secret weapon and his ability to diffuse issues that arise daily by staying calm is how Kris handles his successful career.

Standouts that guide the menu of Irish Clam Chowder (a take on potato leek soup), Mussels in Irish Cider, Beer Battered Fish and hand-cut Irish chips, the Flatley Burger served with Whiskey BBQ and traditional Corned Beef and Cabbage remind you that the popularity of Meehan's is just about everything on the menu with a manageable choice of 50 items. In Kris' kitchen, Irish cuisine is NOT at the crossroads of disappearing in America.

Authentic dishes on the bill o'fare are big hits, especially with a bounty of readily available fish and produce. There are surprises in his kitchen, too, since he's a huge fan of pickling. With flavorful fruit and vegetable garnishes, corn relish and smoked pickled peaches are personal favorites that pair so well with lamb and seafood. What is Kris Baldwin known for as a chef? With a current generation of guests who love food as much as he does, he never stops searching, leading and teaching. When his staff's eyes light up after learning a new technique or flavor, his day is made.

"If I could, I would do it all again. I'd travel the world and research all the food I love in person. My inspiration comes from ingredients and maybe a wee bit of taking time to enjoy, be happy and who knows? I might discover a comforting new potato dish or fish pie, even create my own Irish soda bread and an award-winning Nutty Irishman for the next generation".

Leigh Cort

Chef Kris' marinated chargrilled teres majors with roasted Brussels sprouts, Parmesan fingerling potatoes and pickled red onions.