

ice house History

The Ice House (originally called Iceland Cottage or Iceland House) is located on the east bank of the River Moy on the townland of Quignalecka, in an area known as Crocketstown.

Formerly part of county Sligo, the townland – along with others – was transferred to County Mayo in 1898. The town derives its name, Béal an Átha (mouth of the ford) from its strategic location on the Moy estuary, which also contributed to its development as a sea port and market town. Its commercial growth began in 1729, when Lord Tyrwley established a cotton factory in Ballina. In the next hundred years, the town grew into the principal sea port of the county.

In the early 1800s, Messer's. Little (who subsequently founded the Moy Fishery Company) spent £1,500 rebuilding the salmon weirs at the falls of the river and placing large drifting nets further down.

The great quantities of fish caught by these methods were taken in small boats to Killala bay, where they loaded aboard bigger vessels and shipped on to Dublin or exported to Liverpool. Traffic on the river was hectic: between 1882 and 1893, the exports totalled between 120 and 130 tons of salmon.

The present Ice House, a substantial two-storey Neo-Tudor double pile over three large cellars, was constructed by Messrs. Little in 1859, but it was not the first such structure on the site. The first Edition Ordnance Survey Map (1838) shows a large salmon fishery and icehouse on the location of the present building, and a number of similar structures along the river from Ballina to the mouth of the estuary.

The Ice House in Ballina however, retained function as an ice store subsequent to its incorporation into domestic residence. Even in its residential capacity, the building served a functional purpose: while the basement was used as a cold store for salmon exports, the rest of the house itself was used to accommodate the manager of the Moy Fishery Company. The house is in a strategic location on the Quay, at the edge of the river, into which the ice vaults drained, and at right angles to the adjoining road. The road-facing elevation contains a large central archway for easy access into the vaults for the delivery and collection of ice.

The filling of the cellars was an annual event and involved every able-bodied person in town. During the winter, when the local lakes and ponds froze, farmers and quay workers would harvest the ice by breaking it into large chunks with pick axes and sledge hammers. The chunks were conveyed on carts to the ice house, where they were crushed with long handled wooden mallets and thrown into the cellars.

Owing to a gradual climate change, less and less ice was produced locally; by the 1920s and 1930s, only approximately one winter in ten was cold enough to fill the cellars. With the introduction of mechanical refrigeration, the Ice House fell into disuse as an ice store. It remained in residential use until 1989, when the state acquired the assets of the Moy Fisheries.

The Ice House in Ballina is of obvious architectural and historical merit, serving as a snapshot of the technical innovations available to merchants and traders before the invention of mechanical refrigeration. We are immensely proud to present the restored Ice House to the 21st Century to explore and enjoy.



Afternoon Tea

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*There are few hours in life
more agreeable than the hour
dedicated to the ceremony
known as afternoon tea.*

Henry James

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Welcome to The Icehouse Classic Afternoon Tea

Welcome Drink (Non-Alcoholic)

Homemade Scones - (AVAILABLE GLUTEN FREE)

Mini Plain Buttermilk Scones

Mini Raisin Buttermilk Scones

Homemade Icehouse Berry Jam, Whipped Cream

Sweet Treats

Carrot & Walnut Cake, Spiced Cardamon Buttercream

Vanilla Mini Crème Brûlée

Baked Chocolate Orange Tart, Praline Crumb

Berry Smoothie,

Lemon Tart, Meringue

Savouries/ Finger Sandwiches - (AVAILABLE GLUTEN FREE)

Connemara Smoked Salmon, Pickled Red Onion, Icehouse Guinness Bread

Cucumber & Dozio Zing Cream Cheese Bloomer

Cajun Chicken Wrap

Baked Ham, Irish Cheddar, Ballymaloe Relish, House Guinness Bread (v)

Wall & Keogh Loose Teas Selection €3.75

Irish Breakfast Superior Tea (Black Tea)

Moroccan Dusk (Green Tea with Mint)

Put The Cat Out (Chamomile & Lime)

Lemon & Ginger

Rooibos

South Of France (Fruit Tea)

Jasmin Tea

Earl Grey

Icehouse Coffee Selection €4.15

Americano

Flat White

Espresso

Cappuccino

Café Latte

Café Macchiato

Café mocha

Hot Chocolate

Classic Afternoon Tea - €29 per person

With a Glass prosecco - €37 per person

With a Glass of Champagne - €45 per person

