

Chef Gavan Murphy – The Healthy Irishman Biography

Chef Gavan Murphy is the Irish Man with the Master Plan when it comes to healthy home cooking and coaxing the fearful into the kitchen. Hailing from the Emerald Isle and best known by his custom moniker “**The Healthy Irishman**,” Gavan is among the most popular and respected chefs in Los Angeles. His passion for clean eating, his advocacy of organics and his earthy personality inspire everyone to believe they can lead a healthier life without giving up great taste in the foods they eat. He has trained with and worked under some of the toughest professionals in the business in a broad spectrum of environments. He has cooked privately for the likes of Oscar-winning film director **James Cameron**, supermodels **Cindy Crawford** and **Molly Sims** as well as producer/director **Scott Stuber**. Now Gavan is on a mission to bring healthy back to the masses via his Website **gavanmurphy.com**, which includes a series of videos called “Vegucating Robin” that he co-starred in and co-produced with radio personality **Robin Quivers**. “My passion is to prove that cooking doesn’t have to be complicated,” Gavan states, “and healthy food doesn’t mean bland or *boring*.”

Gavan grew up in a small town on the southwest coast of Ireland. His fondest childhood memories revolve around his whole family sitting around the table enjoying his mum’s hearty, rustic and nourishing meals while rehashing the events of their day. “That doesn’t happen as much these days...especially with both parents working and everyone leading such hectic lives,” Gavan laments, “but I equate family meals with comfort to the core, and this remains very important to me.”

While studying Marketing at Dublin Business School, Gavan took summer jobs at restaurants and hotels. At the end of his third year of college, Gavan made his first trip to America on a summer work visa and got his first job in a kitchen at a busy Martha’s Vineyard restaurant, The Seafood Shanty. “That kitchen was like the cockpit of an airplane,” Gavan shares - “Mission control! I was instantly hooked on the vibe of the chefs and the camaraderie they shared with everybody working in there, right down to me - *the dishwasher*.” Though he dutifully went back to Dublin to finish his business studies, Gavan already knew that a suit and tie profession was not for him. He was going headfirst into cooking.

Having had this epiphany, Gavan enrolled in Ireland’s prestigious **Ballymaloe Cookery School**, overseen by **Darina Allen** - the Martha Stewart of Ireland. The school sits surrounded by lush fields and mountains with a 100 acre farm, 50% of which is strictly organically cultivated. “Every meal we made and ate consisted of food right off the farm and from local butchers,” Gavan says. “We picked it from the earth, washed off the dirt, created a dish then tucked in. It was here that I gained an understanding for farm-to-table seasonal cooking, an appreciation that has stuck with me.”

Gavan’s first gig after graduating was in the small fishing village of Dingle in his home county of Kerry. After Gavan served a hectic summer season there, working up to 95 hours a week, the no-nonsense Irish woman that ran the place remarked to his father, “There were four times when I was sure your boy was going to quit!” What she didn’t know is that it was from his father that Gavan inherited a very strong work ethic.

Gavan took a few months off until he had a hankering to get back in the kitchen. Making the move across the pond to London, he challenged himself by taking a job at the high-end restaurant Scott's of Mayfair. "The year I spent there was yet another great learning experience," he states. "Although I was green, Chef **Christophe Prudhomme** personally took me under his wing when he saw how eager I was to learn which was invaluable."

After a brief return to Ireland, a 30 year-old Gavan decided it was time for greener pastures, moving to sunny Santa Monica, California. He signed on with a number of catering agencies and proceeded to freelance, internalizing the reality that despite his extensive experience, he was starting over.

"Nobody knew me here," he explains, "so I had to prove myself. A piece of paper gets you in the door and people know that you can chop an onion without killing anybody, but you have to show that you can hold your own: manage people, get along with clients AND cook the food! So I worked as an assistant for many chefs, met people and got my name out there. For the first two years I had no car so I had to catch the bus, *but I was never late!* I catered for about 5 years before I went into business for myself."

Gavan transitioned into private cheffing when celebrity organic chef **Akasha Richmond** referred him for a job cooking for supermodel **Cindy Crawford**, who was preparing to promote a fitness product for a prominent company. "That was my big break and perfect for me," Gavan gushes. "Then I was hired by **Josh Homme** (of the rock band Queens of the Stone Age) and later worked for **Dr. Linda Li** (plastic surgeon on "Doctor 90210"), former Roc-a-Fella Records executive **Damon Dash**, and NBA star **Baron Davis**. Some highlights of his major events stretch from the 100th birthday party for beloved Hollywood actress **Gloria Stuart** to the gala opening festivities of the inaugural Irish Film Festival (IFF) in Los Angeles.

Gavan met his wife **Christy Murphy** in 2005 in Venice, the down to earth neighborhood where they now live and run their own catering and event planning company The Healthy Irishman, Inc. "She came up with the name," Gavan says smiling. "I am the face of the business and the cook, but Christy handles everything else. She's a vegetarian Texan and I'm a healthy Irishman – both unlikely in our selves – let's just say the combination results in our share of colorful moments! We enjoy living in such a wonderful neighborhood among other like-minded people who are equally passionate about sustainable healthy living, even growing their own vegetables. Venice is like a home away from home for me."

The Healthy Irishman is now flourishing as the go-to healthy chef. His website touts delicious healthy recipes (such as Vegetable Quinoa Cakes, Herb Apple Stuffed Pork, Fig & Goat's Cheese Pizza, and Pistachio Pesto Lamb), includes articles about healthy cooking, and has a series of video vignettes.

With 18 years as a chef under his fit and trim belt, **Chef Gavan Murphy** is eager to usher as many people as he can into a lifestyle of healthier eating. "I'm fired up about doing something I'm passionate about," he concludes. "This is a very exciting time for Christy and me. It's the natural progression of my lifelong passion for getting the message out about healthy, seasonal foods, using quality ingredients, and inspiring people to get into the kitchen cooking again...in a fun way."

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