

The Watchin' of the Green

8 movies that celebrate the Irish – and the drinks that pair perfectly with them

BY BILL BURKE

Irish Coffee
recipe on page 17



The Irish have a reputation for being able to tell a story.

It stands to reason, then, that Irish cinema can be compelling, hilarious and moving. So while we're in the season where it's fitting to celebrate all things Irish, consider streaming a few cinematic offerings from the Emerald Isle. And while we all miss the theater experience, throwing an intimate St. Patrick's Day film festival at home opens up snack and sipping alternatives that go way beyond a bucket of popcorn and a gigantic soda.

Here are eight outstanding films that explore the Irish storytelling tradition, allowing you to organize a St. Patrick's Day film fest, complete with cocktails that pair (at least thematically) with whatever is on screen. Slainte!

Movie poster by Clement Hurel, Public Domain, Courtesy Wikimedia.com



“The Quiet Man”

John Ford directed this classic featuring John Wayne as boxer Sean Thornton and Maureen O'Hara as Mary Kate, the object of his love. Wayne woos the red-haired O'Hara despite the objections of her spiteful brother.

Though it was named for the owner's father and not the film, the **Quiet Man** Irish Whiskey is a no-brainer ➤



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Try it in a Spritz:

- 3 oz Prosecco
- 2 oz Aperitivo
- 1 oz Soda Water

Combine Ingredients in Large Glass with Ice and Garnish with Orange



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Please Drink Responsibly.

for this pairing. With a golden straw appearance and malted barley, oak and candied fruit on the nose, expect notes of honey, vanilla and banana on the palate. It all leads up to a nice butterscotch finish. Try sipping it neat or with ice.

“Darby O’Gill and the Little People”

A wily man attempts to outwit the king of the leprechauns — demanding three wishes from the accidental hitchhiker — and match his daughter with a lad played by a young (and pre-James Bond) Sean Connery.

Wicked Little Leprechaun

courtesy food.com

- 1 ounce vodka
- 1 ounce blue curacao
- 1 splash lemon-lime soda
- 4 ounces orange juice
- Ice

Fill a 12-ounce highball or pint glass $\frac{3}{4}$ full with ice. Add vodka and blue curacao. Add the splash of lemon-lime soda, and fill the rest of the glass with orange juice. Stir to mix.



Muddle the cucumber, mint leaves, lime juice and sweetener together in a glass. Add ice to the glass, then pour in the tequila and juice. Stir and serve. (Note: If you don't have a muddler, use a spoon to thoroughly muddle the cucumber, mint and lime juice.)

“The Commitments”

Jimmy Rabbitte is a young music fan who wants to manage an Irish soul band in Dublin. He assembles a group of diverse personalities who ultimately clash but not before experiencing a taste of success and creating some truly volcanic music, including high energy versions of songs like “Try a Little Tenderness” and “Mustang Sally.”

Mustang Sally

courtesy noblehostess.com

- 2 ounces tequila
- 4 ounces grapefruit juice
- Honey (or sugar or agave)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ lime, juiced
- 4-5 thin slices of cucumber
- 4-5 mint leaves, torn
- Ice

“Once”

This story of an Irish singer/songwriter (played by Glen Hansard — you'll recognize him from “The Commitments”) who makes beautiful music with a Czech piano player on the streets of Dublin in a feel-good affair that resulted in a Best Original Song Oscar for Hansard's “Falling Slowly.”

ON THE COVER Oscars Night

courtesy townandcountrymag.com

- 2 ounces Cognac
- 1 ounce orange liqueur
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce simple syrup

Mix all ingredients together in a cocktail shaker over ice. Shake vigorously, and strain into a coupe glass.



“Waking Ned Devine”

Best pals Jackie and Michael discover that someone in their tiny Irish village has won the lottery — and died of the shock. The townsfolk come up with a plan to claim the prize by convincing the inspector that Michael is, in fact, the lucky Ned Devine. Come for the hilarious performances, stay for the touching toast at the end, set to the moving ballad, “The Parting Glass.”

The Parting Glass

- 2 ounces Jameson 12 Year Irish Whiskey
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce Drambuie
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce sweet vermouth
- 2 dashes Peychaud bitters

Combine all ingredients in a mixing glass, and stir with ice. Strain into a chilled old-fashioned glass, and garnish with an orange peel.



“Far and Away”

Tom Cruise and Nicole Kidman take part in a land rush that would see each of them claim a plot in Oklahoma. Stops in Boston and some bare-knuckle boxing create excitement along the way. In the spirit of scrapping, pair your viewing with some of fighter Conor “The Notorious” McGregor's Proper No. 12 Irish Whiskey. Triple distilled, it's a blend of fine grain and single malt, offering hints of vanilla, honey and toasted wood.

The Notorious

courtesy fansided.com

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounces Proper No. 12 Irish Whiskey
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce Ancho Reyes liqueur
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce fresh lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce cinnamon syrup
- 2 dashes Corazon bitters
- Lemon wheel
- Ancho chile powder

Combine ingredients, stir, garnish with a lemon wheel and dust with Ancho chile powder.

“Circle of Friends”

An early film in the careers of both Minnie Driver and Chris O'Donnell, this dramedy set in 1950s Ireland finds the pair grappling with familial responsibility, religious upbringing, university life and young love. Sweet, right? Not as sweet as this delicious libation:

Lucky Charms Shots

serves 8
courtesy *delish.com*



- 1 cup cold whole milk
- 1 cup Lucky Charms cereal, divided
- 1 cup Bailey's Irish Cream, chilled
- 1 tablespoon rainbow sprinkles
- ¼ cup vanilla frosting

Pour ½ cup Lucky Charms into milk and let sit in the fridge for 10 minutes to infuse milk with the cereal's sugary flavor. Strain out the cereal, pouring milk into a pitcher. Add Bailey's to the cereal milk, stirring to combine. Remove 8 marshmallows from the remaining Lucky Charms. Set aside. Take the rest of the cereal and crush finely, pouring it out onto a plate and mixing with sprinkles. Rim the shot glasses in vanilla frosting, and then roll in the crushed cereal. Fill each shot glass with Bailey's infused milk and serve.

“My Left Foot”

Christy Brown is a boy born with cerebral palsy into a poor Irish family. He learns to paint and write with the only limb he can control: his left foot. It won Daniel Day-Lewis his first Oscar, and also garnered the award for Brenda Fricker, who plays Christy's supportive, cheerleading mother. The song “Down All the Days” was inspired by the real-life Brown, and recorded by the Pogues — who also put their name on a brand of Irish whiskey. A blend of malt and grain whiskey, expect citrus, spice, cracked pepper and dark fruit flavors. It sits perfectly in the classic, and always welcome, Irish coffee.

Irish Coffee

courtesy *cocktails.about.com*

- 4 ounces strong, rich hot coffee
- 1 ounce Pogues Irish whiskey
- 2 teaspoons brown sugar
- 1 ounce lightly whipped double cream



Pour the sugar then coffee into a warm Irish coffee glass, mug or other heat-proof glass. Stir until dissolved, and then add the Irish whiskey and stir again. Float the cream on top by pouring it over the back of a spoon. Do not stir again — drink the coffee through the cream.

Always drink in moderation.

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