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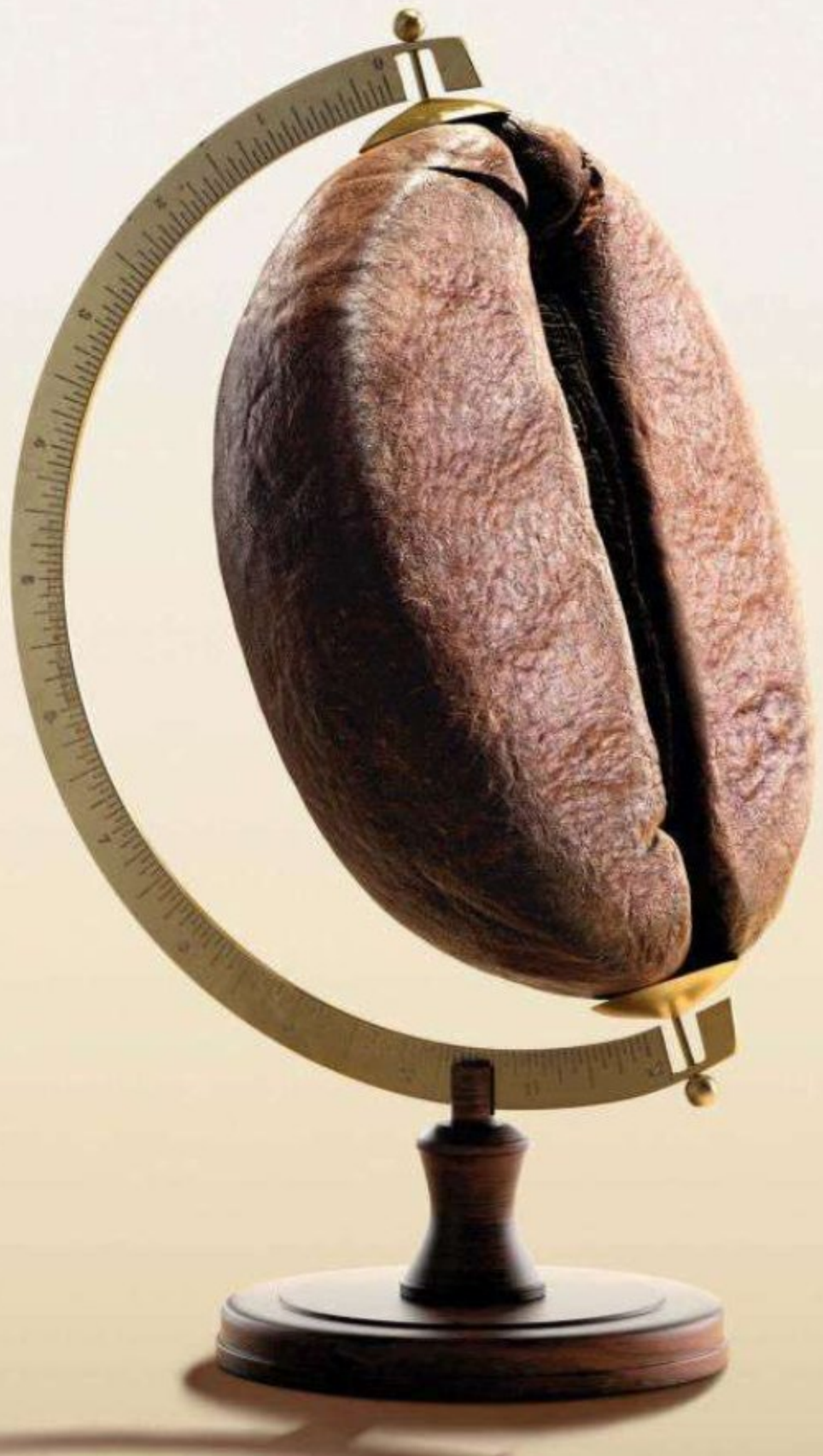
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Do Italians do it better? I guess it really depends who you're asking, but after reading this issue of *Cuisine*, we hope you'll agree that Italians do it extremely well. There is lots to discover in this gorgeous mag, packed with the traditional as well as the evolving flavours of Italy. Since we feature classic Italian movies in this issue, it's fitting to quote Martin Scorsese: "If your mother cooks Italian food, why would you go to a restaurant?"

Olivia Andrews delivers family-table favourites with sausage bucatini and pizza, Fiona Smith elevates the humble meatball to fashionable heights, Ginny Grant introduces you to two Italian brothers who are forging a future in risotto, and local food and wine gurus Ben Bayly and Michael Dearth take you on a Sicilian journey to discover the perfect pairing – that moment when food and wine combine to create an unforgettable experience.

In other news, we are excited to be bringing together five chefs for one fantastic Italian feast at Auckland's Gusto at the Grand on 7 July. Find out more on page 59.

Meanwhile, it was a hard job, but I have also been on a fabulous journey through Rome, Tuscany and Venice to bring you some tips on how to eat your way through Italy in a most luxurious manner. Read on and eat well....

Kelli

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KELLI BRETT PORTRAIT, TONY NYBERG; COVER, AARON McLEAN

Now let's talk about our cover...

Yes, it's a step away from what we usually do. That gutsy, beautiful lady on the cover is chef Stefania Ugolini from Auckland's Pasta & Cuore. We didn't want to give you a model and a fabricated image, we wanted to give you someone who lives good Italian food. Stefania says sometimes the simplest things can bring you great happiness. The taste of ricotta wrapped in fresh pasta takes her back to her childhood and cooking lessons with her grandmother. Those treasured recipes feature today on Stefania's menu at her Mt Eden eatery, where she also shares her love of pasta making by running classes. Stefania made the pasta she's holding on the cover, and on page 69 she has shared her recipe for torta ricciolina, a pasta-topped sweet tart from Bologna, her home town. Real life, real food, real stories, real dreams... The future of New Zealand food.

COVER
Concept, design & styling **Fiona Lascelles**
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Cover model & pasta **Stefania Ugolini**
Hair & make-up **Sharon Laurence-Anderson**

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LETTERS



WINNING LETTER

WITH A RECENT reshuffle of duties, i.e. my wife returning to work, I have more time as a home dad and therefore more time to serve *Cuisine* recipes on the dinner table. This was especially true after being gifted a subscription and subsequently challenged, by my wife, to prepare at least one *Cuisine* recipe per week. When the May issue arrived it wasn't long before I was drawn to "What to do with honey" (176:88). Having beehives of my own, I always have plenty of honey around, and keep an eye out for ways to use it. They all sounded amazing. I have often served up honeycomb, pear and blue cheese on oatcakes so I was keen to try the blue cheese, honeycomb and walnuts on rye. However, what really sparked my interest was the honey & vinegar chicken thighs. This was the first meal from the May issue to hit the family dinner table. The children loved it – the sweet and sour, the oranges, the kumara, and my children all love olives, so I made sure there were plenty to go around. It was beautifully matched, more by chance than design, with the Terrace Edge Classic Riesling. But the biggest hit so far from the May issue was Mum's moussaka (176:94). My wife is a sucker for lamb in any form so I knew I was onto a winner right there. I was intrigued by the cauliflower béchamel and enjoyed its texture, bringing some lightness to this hearty dish. The kids devoured it and I was denied leftovers for lunch the following day, as it all went a treat.
M Tarr, Christchurch

WOW, WHAT A fantastic last issue. I loved it and have already cooked many recipes. So many inspiring recipes in one issue. I spread the word about your latest *Cuisine* issue to my food group. There are seven of us and we get together once a month to either cook a dinner of a specific theme or to head off on some culinary adventure. The other day we were all heading south for a meal out, when I said, "Have you read the latest *Cuisine*? It's great. If not, do so." Three days later I receive this text from one of my fellow foodies: "Hey, you are right about this month's *Cuisine* being so good, I want to make everything!" So thank you for such an inspiring issue. I think we will have to have issue 176 theme next month!
L Hay, Warkworth

THANK YOU, WHAT an amazing edition. You truly took me on a journey from where we were to where we are now. You have acknowledged our bicultural heritage and celebrated our cultural diversity. From nostalgia (Sunday roast) to excitement about what I can achieve if I stretch myself and step out of my comfort zone. Thank you, can't wait to try out these recipes.
Nikki Parsons, via email

I AM A long-time subscriber and lover of your magazine, but this is the first time I have written to you. We enjoyed the lamb koftas in issue 173 (page 91). We were given "a mutton" and he proceeded to cut it up and me to bag it to freeze. I decided to make mince from all the "bits", eg neck, flaps etc (I felt quite virtuous, I might add!). So with the mincer attachment on my Kenwood mixer, I made several little bags of mince. Once I read the recipe, I thought I must try it, but had a few twists, especially as we have a lot of produce here. I used oven-roasted walnuts in place of the pistachios. I grated the red onion for both recipes, added a good glug of pomegranate molasses to the mince and next time shall add an egg to bind them better. I used our New Zealand spinach in place of the silverbeet and served with new potatoes and not the suggested pita bread. A very tasty meal indeed. Thank you for the inspiration.
Helen Pledger, Tarras, Central Otago ✱

Write to *Cuisine* by emailing editorial@cuisine.co.nz

WINNING LETTER PRIZE

Congratulations to L Hay, who receives six bottles of SOHO McQueen Central Otago 2014 Pinot Noir, a unique blend of three different sub-regions in Central Otago. It's delicious and has ripe blackberry, rich plum and black cherry flavours.

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CHEERS!
OUR WINNING LETTER RECEIVES SIX FABULOUS BOTTLES OF PINOT NOIR FROM SOHO





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NEWS + VIEWS

EDITED BY ALICE NEVILLE

FRAN-TASTICO

Italy meets South America at Franziska, a new eatery on the capital's eastern coast >



Pizza with mushrooms, potato & scamorza, Franziska, Wellington

NICOLA EMONDS



From left, Franziska owners Giulio Ricatti and Emilio Zunino and restaurant manager Marc Carbonell

The team behind Wellington's Cicio Cacio Osteria in Newtown is branching out with a new venture. Franziska, which recently opened in Seatoun, is a casual cafe-style eatery that combines the heritage of its owners, Italian Giulio Ricatti and Argentinean Emilio Zunino.

This means as well as delicious pizzas like the one on the previous page, Franziska's menu features the likes of Emilio's house-made chorizo, prawn empanadas, asado ribs with chimichurri and milanesa a la napolitana, an Argentinean schnitzel dish. There is also a selection of creative salads – think lentil, apple, radish and coriander, or quinoa, orange, fennel and cucumber. South American and Spanish labels dominate the wine list, the latter a nod to restaurant manager Marc Carbonell, who's from Barcelona.

While Cicio Cacio serves traditional Italian fare, Franziska is a chance to let loose, explains Giulio. "With this place we want to be more free and do what we feel like. So there is pasta and risotto, but I'm doing a risotto with beetroot, coconut and coriander."

The eatery's name comes from the title of a song Giulio is fond of, and he likes the linguistic ambiguity of it – Franziska is a German name but it sounds like it could be South American, and the song Franziska, funnily enough, is Italian.

Franziska, 24 Dundas St, Seatoun, Wellington, ph: 04-388 1072, facebook.com/franziska.seatoun

FRANZISKA'S PIZZA WITH MUSHROOMS, POTATO & SCAMORZA

MAKES 4 LARGE PIZZAS

This recipe uses a tiny amount of yeast – it will take 4 to 6 hours to rise but will be very light and easy to digest. This makes four large pizzas – you can halve the recipe to make two pizzas, if desired.

For the dough

3g fresh yeast
1kg flour
35g salt

Dissolve the yeast in 850ml water. Mix the flour and salt and slowly add the water-yeast mix, mixing with your hands for 10-20 minutes. It will feel very sticky initially but eventually will become a smooth dough.

Cut the dough in 4 balls and put on an oiled tray. Leave to rise for 4-6 hours, or until doubled in size.

For the topping & to assemble

200g Agria potatoes, very thinly sliced on a mandoline
olive oil for drizzling and frying
200g fresh porcini (or use wild or portobello mushrooms), sliced
1 clove garlic, unpeeled
400g scamorza (smoked mozzarella), or regular mozzarella, cut into small cubes
leaves of 1 sprig of rosemary
white truffle oil (or fresh truffle if you can get some) to serve

Preheat the oven to 190˚C. Put the potato slices on a baking tray lined with baking paper, drizzle with olive oil and season with salt. Cook in the oven for 10 minutes then remove and set aside.

Meanwhile, add a splash of oil to a frying pan and fry the mushrooms with the whole unpeeled garlic clove until the liquid released by the mushrooms has completely evaporated. Add a pinch of salt.

Preheat the oven to the highest temperature setting. Take a ball of dough and push with your fingers from the centre of the dough out to the edges, trying to open the dough with your hand. Put the pizza on a baking tray and cook in the oven for 5-10 minutes, or until just cooked.

Remove from the oven and top with a quarter of the potatoes, mushrooms, scamorza and rosemary. Return to the oven and cook until the edges brown and the cheese melts.

Repeat with the remaining dough and topping ingredients. Drizzle with white truffle oil to serve.



FRANZISKA, NICOLA EDMONDS; LESLIE HOTTIAUX, JASON CREAGHAN

Visa Wellington on a Plate is back for its eighth year, promising some very cool events – highlights include Tokyo Taphouse, a Garage Project pop-up pairing LA sushi superstar Yoya Takahashi with Martin Bosley, the capital's own seafood hero; and All Taste, No Waste, with Depot head chef Kyle Street transforming food destined for the bin into top tucker. visawoap.com

ON THE SHOPPING LIST

EXCELLENT NEW THINGS TO TRY

1



2



3



4



1 Wellington's Six Barrel Soda has launched Cola Six, thus named because it took six years to perfect the recipe, and it has six main flavours: lime, orange, cinnamon, kola nut, coriander seed and lavender. Mix with Campari for a grown-up good time. $16.50 for 500ml (makes 15 drinks). **sixbarrelsoda.co.nz**

2 Matcha Matcha is a new Kiwi company selling Japanese matcha powder, made from tea grown in the hills of Uji. Available in ceremonial grade, latte grade and culinary grade, RRP $19-$48 for 60g. **matchamatcha.co.nz**

3 I Love Pies has introduced two tasty new sausage roll varieties to its frozen range – a vegetarian spinach and feta roll and a lamb and rosemary variety. Both delicious. RRP $7. **ilovepies.com**

4 Almighty is a new organic juice company that donates three cents from every bottle to school vege-growing and healthy-eating initiatives. Tastes good, too – our fave is the carrot, orange and turmeric. **almighty.nz**

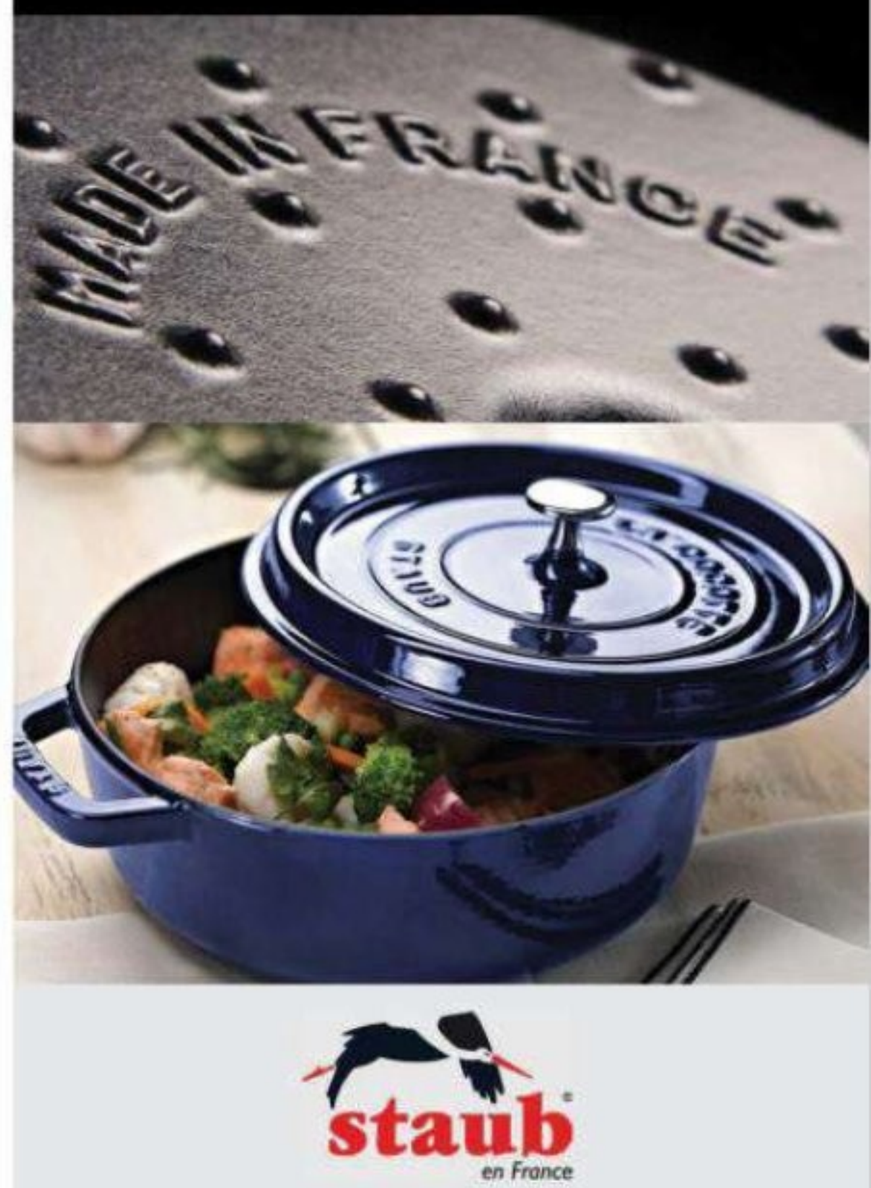
Al Brown, Dutch 'eating designer' Marije Vogelzang and New York Nigerian chef Michael Elegbede, plus workshops and pop-up dining experiences – Dunedin's International Food Design Conference & Studio, 29 June to 1 July, is shaping up to be a highlight. fooddesign.org.nz



Bright young things

Four Kiwis are among the 10 Pacific finalists in the S.Pellegrino Young Chef 2016 competition: Tom Hishon, chef-owner at Auckland's Orphans Kitchen (a finalist for the second year); Plate of Origin winner Josh Barlow, sous chef at The Grove in Auckland; Christopher Walker, sous chef at Lyttelton's Roots, 2015 *Cuisine* Restaurant of the Year; and Leslie Hottiaux, chef-owner of Apero in Auckland (left). Their dishes will be judged at an event in Melbourne in late July, and the winner will compete against 19 other young chefs from around the world in Milan on 13 October.

Who'd expect a bumpy lid to transform a casserole.



Small bumps all over the inside of the lid of the cast-iron Staub Cocotte, continuously drip to baste the entire contents. And the lid design even ensures that less moisture escapes during the cooking. Meat stays tender, your vegetables are a delight and the flavours are intensified.

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Traffic

AUCKLAND

Pop-up Korean burger joint **Tiger Burger** has found a permanent home in Grey Lynn, in the spot formerly home to Dilecta at 549 Great North Rd. There will be an expanded menu featuring some of the old favourites plus new items, craft beer, Asian-inspired cocktails and milkshakes.

Masu's Nic Watt and his wife Kelli have taken over the Tamaki Drive waterfront site previously occupied by Hammerheads to open wellness hub and yoga centre **True Food & Yoga**, featuring an 80-seat cafe with a nutrient-dense menu.

NZ chef David Schofield is setting up a Kiwi version of his Melbourne restaurant **Meat Fish Wine**. Due to open in late June in Auckland's CBD, the menu will reflect a farm-to-table ethos.

The Hip Group has opened a new bakery in Britomart called **Amano**. Think hand-crafted breads, pastries, pizza and sandwiches.

Hello Mister is serving up Vietnamese street food in Freemans Bay.

Giusto is new bar and eatery in Sale St serving breakfast, lunch, dinner and small plates.

WAIRARAPA

Le Cordon Bleu-trained Mary Biggs of preserve and cordial business Lavender's Green has opened the **Country Cooking School** at Te Puhi farm on the outskirts of Featherston.

WELLINGTON

Ellie Assaf of Five Boroughs has opened **Five and Dime** in the site formerly occupied by his parents' place, Phoenician Cuisine (don't worry, the Kent Terrace branch isn't going anywhere), serving small plates, frozen cocktails and organic wine.

Muse, formerly known as Muse on Allen, has moved to a new, bigger site on Victoria St.

Much-loved Cuba St cafe **Floriditas** is closing for six weeks for earthquake strengthening – it's due to reopen in early August.

NELSON

The Kitchen is a new wholefoods cafe serving Kokako coffee, cold-press juices, smoothies and a selection of raw, vegan and paleo food.

CHRISTCHURCH

Maddison's restaurant has opened in the Heritage Hotel's Old Goverment Building, also home to new speakeasy-style **OGB Bar and Cafe**.

The Monday Room has reopened as an all-day eatery with new owners, a new fit-out and a new menu with a local, seasonal focus.

CRAFT BEER CORNER

TIME TO RIP THE TOP OFF THIS BEER

The mission of Auckland's Behemoth Brewing Company is to "brew bigger-tasting beers". That's appropriate as the brewer, Andrew Childs, is a larger-than-life fellow, standing six foot and five inches (1.95m) and built like a robust beer fridge. He left a fledgling career in government policy to develop his home-brewing hobby into a successful business. There are now plenty of medals to prove the wisdom of that career change.

Childs's breakthrough beer was created for the Wellington in a Pint contest. Home brewers were challenged to make a beer that reflected the capital city. One of the winners was his coffee brown ale called Celia Wade-Brown Ale, after the local mayor. That was the prompt to begin commercial brewing, but not the end of the political theme, as Behemoth launched Dump the Trump American IPA in March. One of his best-selling beers is Behemoth Hopped Up on Pils, which is now available in a ground-breaking rip-top can. It is a floral New Zealand-hopped pilsner bursting with notes of passionfruit and lemon zest, before a clean finish. The rip-top can, first used in America, sees the entire lid come off so the can functions as a beer glass. It is a New Zealand first and a real crowd-pleaser.

The recommended food match is the venison & mushroom ragu with spinach polenta (page 88). It is a rich, hearty dish and the bitter beer cuts through the richness, brings out the earthy mushrooms, and kicks up the background ginger notes. Hopped Up on Pils also goes brilliantly with roast chicken. → **behemothbrewing.co.nz** ✱ **NEIL MILLER**



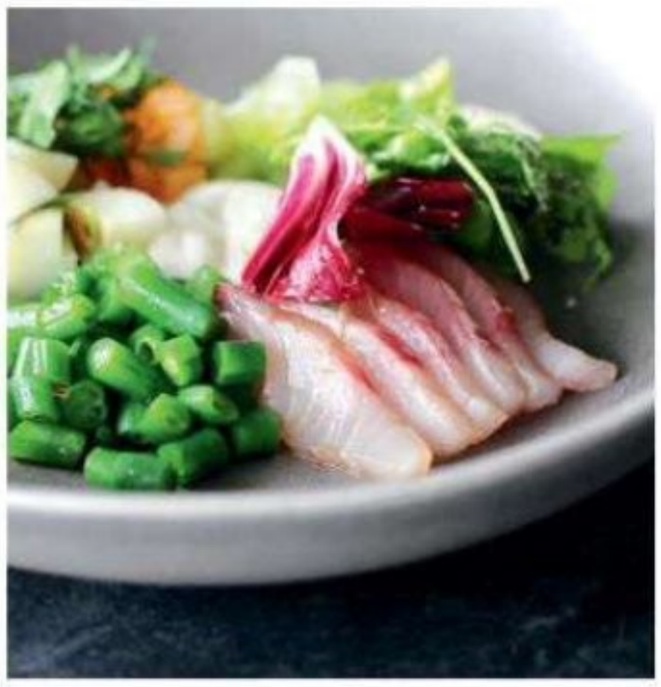
JASON CREAGHAN

DESIGN FILES

ROMAN GRAFITTI PLATES, HMS STUDIO



Whipping up an Italian feast from the recipes in this issue? If you fancy giving your dinner party an Ancient Roman slant, HMS Studio's Roman Graffiti plates are a far classier option than togas and debauchery – and they look jolly good hanging on a wall too. "I've always been pretty keen on all things classical, as well as kooky characters," explains Helen Strevens, the Auckland-based designer behind HMS Studio. She's also an architecture graduate who worked as a set designer on the *Lord of the Rings* trilogy, *The Hobbit* and *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*. Helen's band of misfits – in addition to Merman above, there's Fish Horse Man, Prancing Pan, Daedalus and four more – were inspired by Greek and Roman legends and a book of Samian ware pottery she stumbled across in the library as a young architecture student. The "swift of line and inclined to caper" characters are painted in Indian ink ("persuading them to sit for a series of drawings was quite a coup"), then scanned and screen-printed onto fine-bone china plates and cushions. The classical world also inspired Helen's Fornasetti-esque Iris collection of plates and prints, which feature historical kings and queens and creatures from myths and legends – think Caesar, Neptune, Medusa – emerging from a labyrinth of patterns. →**hmsstudio.com**



French polish

Top Auckland chef Nick Honeyman has opened his first restaurant, Paris Butter, in the site formerly home to fine-dining restaurant Vinnies on Jervois Rd in Herne Bay. The focus is classic French bistro fare with the odd New Zealand twist – think Cloudy Bay Clams à l'escargot, salade niçoise with sashimi kingfish, melon, celery, green beans and potato (left), and butcher's cut steak with Paris butter and pomme puree. →**parisbutter.co.nz**



Artisan watch

HOGARTH CRAFT CHOCOLATE

In a little factory in Nelson, some seriously good chocolate is being made. Karl and Marina Hogarth source the highest-quality, organic, fairly traded cocoa beans from Peru, Venezuela, the Dominican Republic and Madagascar, and turn them into chocolate bars, each with a flavour profile unique to its country of origin. Karl's passion for cacao began during his travels in Latin America, where he met Marina, an Argentinian. They lived in Buenos Aires for a year before moving to Nelson and starting a family.

Karl, a former fisherman, was working in the oil industry when he read about bean-to-bar chocolate companies in America, and his interest was piqued. He began sourcing beans and teaching himself how to make chocolate in the family's sleep-out.

"He would use my hair dryer to dry the beans," laughs Marina. "So every time I dried my hair I'd end up smelling like chocolate."

That was three-and-a-half years ago. Word got out about the amazing chocolate the Hogarths were producing, and they set up a stall at the Nelson Market early last year – just a week after their second child was born. It was a hit, and they began receiving emails from people who had tried their chocolate while on holiday in Nelson, wanting to get hold of it elsewhere.

So they worked on developing their range, which was officially launched in December last year. A special chocolate mould with wave detail was made in Belgium, and they developed beautiful packaging featuring a nautical illustration by Nelson-based Spanish artist Ana Aceves, to illustrate Karl's journey from fisherman to chocolate maker, and the cocoa beans' journey to New Zealand.

Hogarth chocolate now has stockists nationwide – plus one in the UK – and a Gianduia bar, made from local Nelson hazelnuts that are roasted and ground with the cocoa, has just been added to the range. New products in the works include a drinking chocolate and single-origin bars made with cocoa from Bolivia, Guatemala and Haiti. → **hogarthchocolate.co.nz**

PARIS BUTTER, LAUREN MATTHEWS

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UNDER THE GRILL

Mitch Monaghan is NZ's coffee ambassador for Nespresso. He regularly travels the world, visiting coffee farms to learn about Nespresso's work to create sustainable coffee industries.

What's the weirdest thing you've ever eaten and where? Salt and pepper scorpions in Las Vegas.

Are there any foods you hate or anything you just can't bring yourself to eat? I will give anything a go once, but I feel no desire to be rushing back to scorpions any time soon.

If you had to eat only one culture's cuisine for the rest of your life, what would it be? Mexican, without a doubt. There is not a single dish that I have tried and not enjoyed.

What would you cook to impress a date? Baked chicken breast with a chilli napoletana sauce, with a creamy chocolate affogato to finish.

What's been your most embarrassing cooking moment? Trying to prepare breakfast for my parents as a teenager has turned into years of ridicule.

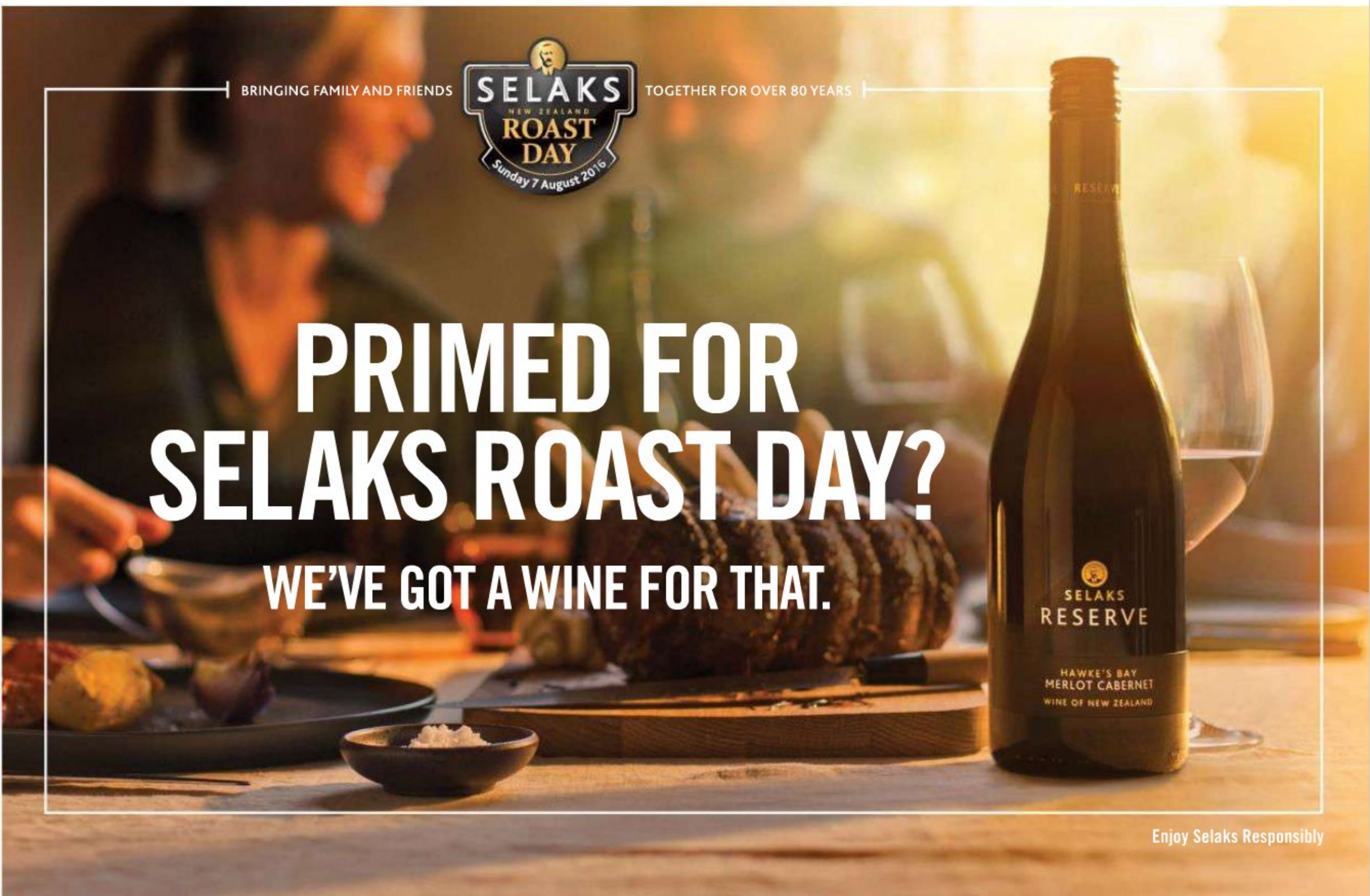
What's your favourite kitchen gadget? My Nespresso machine is one of my favourites. It's surprising how many people don't realise how much you can cook with coffee.

If you were a vegetable, what would you be and why? Corn – it is bright and has many uses. I'd like to think of myself as handy and colourful!



#COOKCUISINE

Congrats to Jenny and Finn Trass, who win a copy of *Cuisine* editor Kelli Brett's book *Australia Cooks* (see our review on page 30) for Jenny's post of the Vietnamese kahawai sliders 12-year-old Finn made from our May issue. To be in to win, add the hashtag #cookcuisine to any pics you post on social media of your renditions of *Cuisine* recipes.



EAT & GREET

MARIA GIULIA POZZI



Back home in Rome, Maria Giulia Pozzi was a journalist who specialised in writing about food and wine. "I developed a good understanding of the artisan food industry in my country," she says.

After moving to New Zealand with her Kiwi husband in 2013, Maria Giulia put that knowledge to good use by setting up Italian Foodies, which imports artisan food products from Italy for wholesale and retail customers. "When I came here for the first time in 2011 for a holiday, I understood straight away that Kiwis love food and wine as much as Italian people," she says. This planted the seed.

Maria Giulia, or MG, as her Kiwi friends call her, didn't want to import food that was already available here, so she began seeking out extra-special Italian tastes. That's where her "secret villages" come in – four regional villages from where she sources one-of-a-kind products that artisans have been making in the same way for hundreds of years. There are truffle sauces from Acqualagna in the Marche region; crispy, crunchy chocolate from Modica in Sicily; pasta from Gragnano, near Naples; and seafood products from Marzamemi, a tiny fishermen's village in Sicily.

MG returns to Italy for at least a month each year to visit producers and seek out new products. While she loves going back to see her family, New Zealand is now home, she says. "I feel like it's so stressful and chaotic there!"

She also loves that while Italians tend to stick to their own cuisine, Kiwis love experimenting with tastes from around the world. "Here it's like, 'What can we have for dinner tonight? Oh, I feel like Thai... oh, I feel like Indian."

There's a small but close-knit Italian community in Auckland, she says. "Almost everyone knows each other and we really support each other. We have strong roots, so it's nice to have that here in New Zealand as well. Sometimes you just feel like speaking Italian and moving your hands a lot when you talk!" →**italianfoodies.co.nz**



Masterclass series kicks off in style

The Mercedes-Benz Masterclass series, which sees leaders in their field discuss their road to success while The French Café's Simon Wright presents and speaks about the inspiration behind a specially created menu, was launched in April, with fashion designer Kate Sylvester the focus. See What To Do With (page 110) for one of Simon Wright's recipes from the night.

Celebrate the mighty truffle at the Canterbury Truffle Festival 2016 from 23 July to 14 August. Special truffle dinners, truffle hunting in the Waipara Valley, meet the truffle dogs and a Flip Grater finale concert are just a few of the highlights. canterburytrufflefestival.co.nz

Diary Dates

JUNE

3-26 / WINTER FAWC The Hawke's Bay festival promises special events, masterclasses and good times galore. → fawc.co.nz

24-25 / WINEMAKERS' WEEKEND AT HUKA LODGE The teams from Kumeu River and Neudorf Vineyards share their stories over the course of two five-course dinners. → hukalodge.co.nz

JULY

1-10 / GIZZY FOOD WEEK A street food festival and appearances by Ben Bayly, Nici Wickes and Fleur Sullivan are among the highlights of this Wild Out East-themed week in Gisborne.

2-3 / THE SERIOUSLY GOOD FOOD SHOW Cooking demos, tastings and much more in Tauranga. → seriouslygoodfoodshow.co.nz

28-31 / THE FOOD SHOW AUCKLAND Celeb chefs, tastings and *Cuisine* Artisan Award winners galore as the national food event comes to Auckland's ASB Showgrounds. → foodshow.co.nz

AUGUST

4-7 / CLICQUOT IN THE SNOW Veuve Clicquot's Clicquot in the Snow returns to Queenstown for the sixth year, with lots of new events.

7 / SELAKS NZ ROAST DAY Get the red wine and red meat ready – this is the day to celebrate the Kiwi roast. → selaksnzroastday.co.nz

12-28 / VISA WELLINGTON ON A PLATE A fortnight of exciting events, culinary contests, special menus and pop-up eateries in the capital (see page 14 for more). → visawoap.co.nz

13-14 / NEW ZEALAND CHOCOLATE FESTIVAL New Zealand's top chocolate makers converge on Te Papa to showcase their wares. → chocolatefestival.co.nz

12-13 / BEERVANA There are plenty of new breweries on board this year for the big beer event at Westpac Stadium. → beervana.co.nz

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THE WORK OF THE

artisan

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HANDS & HEARTS

Chicken pot pie and chilli crumb made with *Cuisine* Artisan Award-winning Kapiti Artisan Bakehouse Ghost Chilli Ciabatta.

VISIT THE KINGSSERIES.CO.NZ FOR THE RECIPE

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cheers.org.nz

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QUICK SMART

Recipes and food styling **Ginny Grant**
Photography **Aaron McLean**
Styling **Fiona Lascelles**



The craft of cooking is about taking care – from respecting the ingredients to the careful curating of the leftovers into something delicious. Great cooks know when to nudge a dish to something even better, adding more herbs or seasoning, a dash of lemon juice to enliven or a drop of cream to enrich.

Sometimes we pick up processes without thinking about it. Like my mother, I've always swirled a just-emptied can of tomatoes with water that then goes into whatever I'm cooking – not only is it based in the frugality of not wasting a drop, but knowing that the few extra minutes taken to reduce down the extra liquid in the dish will make it more complex. One of the things I love about writing this column is knowing the ideas here aren't just a set of instructions. They rely on you, the reader, to have some understanding of process, and the ability to make adjustments for your own tastes, for the ingredients you have to hand and the time you have available.

I adore risotto – it's supreme comfort eating. For the Five Ways feature I've made a base risotto to which you can add almost anything you desire. I admit I don't stand slavishly at the stove and stir constantly, instead giving it a quick stir every few minutes in between doing something else. Should you have leftovers, risotto cakes are almost always the answer. Here I've left them plain, with only an egg for binding, but you could add a cube of mozzarella into the middle of each, and dip in flour, egg and breadcrumbs for a crunchier finish.

Full-flavoured curries make a regular appearance over winter. Often they'll be slow cooked, but the fish curry here is fast and adaptable, especially if you keep a stash of curry leaves in the freezer. I like the tangy sourness tamarind imparts, but if the tomatoes are acidic I will add a little sugar for balance. If I want a richer dish, I add a little coconut milk halfway through cooking the fish, or if I'm serving vegetarians I omit the fish and cook lentils or split peas (adding extra water as needed).

Ginny

RISOTTO CAKES WITH RADICCHIO & PANCETTA
recipe page 24

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QUICK SMART WAYS WITH... RISOTTO

Almost anything can be added to this base recipe; experiment with vegetables, nuts and cheeses.

BASIC WHITE RISOTTO

SERVES 4

50g butter
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1 cup risotto rice (I used carnaroli)
½ cup dry white wine
1 litre hot chicken stock
50g freshly grated parmesan

Heat half the butter and all the oil in a wide saucepan, add the onion and fry gently until soft but not coloured (around 5-10 minutes).

Add the rice, stir to coat with the oil and fry for a few minutes until toasted and hot to touch, then add the wine and stir until all the liquid has evaporated.

Add the hot chicken stock a ladleful at a time, stirring constantly until all the liquid is absorbed before adding the next ladleful. Keep at a rapid simmer. Continue until the rice is al dente.

Stir through the remaining butter and parmesan and season to taste. The base recipe is delicious as is but also excellent with fish or grilled chicken.

1.

Risotto cakes with radicchio & pancetta Use 1 batch of the cold base recipe (or use leftovers), add a beaten **egg** and mix well. Shape into rounds, dust with **flour** (plain or rice flour) and panfry for 3-4 minutes on each side until crisp. Fry batons of **pancetta** in **olive oil** until crisp, add slivers of **garlic**, finely chopped **rosemary** and shredded **radicchio**, cook until softened, season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and add a drizzle of **balsamic vinegar**. Serve the radicchio with the risotto cakes and scatter with **rocket leaves**.

2.

Risi e bisi with prawns Make the base recipe but add 2 cups of **frozen peas** in the last few minutes and add more **stock** to make the rice loose and soupy (but it should still be able to be eaten with a fork). Quickly panfry **prawns** with chopped **garlic** and add to the risotto, then stir through shredded **mint** and a good squeeze of **lemon juice**.

3.

Mussel & seaweed risotto If using dried **seaweed** (you can use any kind of dry or fresh), soak ½ cup of it in water for 30 minutes to rehydrate (or follow the packet directions, depending on the type of seaweed used). Fry 2 cloves sliced **garlic** in **olive oil** with 1 tablespoon chopped **oregano leaves**. Add 1.5kg cleaned **mussels** and ½ cup **white wine**, cover and cook until the mussels have just opened. Reserve and strain the cooking liquid. Remove the mussels from the shell and chop roughly. Add the reserved liquid to the base risotto recipe as cooking and stir through the mussels and the drained seaweed in the final minutes of cooking. Add the **zest and juice of 1 lemon** just before serving. The parmesan can be omitted from this recipe.

4.

Green risotto Fry **spinach, kale, cavolo nero or silverbeet** in **olive oil** with **dried chilli** and **garlic** (adding a little water if necessary for the harder leaves of kale and silverbeet). Finely shred half the greens and puree the rest with a little water. Add both the puree and shredded greens to the base recipe in the last few minutes, along with **lemon zest and juice**. Top with optional crisp slices of **pancetta**.

5.

Risotto with sausages, borlotti & rosemary Squeeze the meat of a few good-quality **sausages** out of their casings and into small meatballs. Fry in **olive oil** until golden and almost cooked through, add a couple of cloves of chopped **garlic**, finely chopped **rosemary** and a can or two of drained and rinsed **borlotti beans**. Add a little **white or red wine** and cook until hot. Toss through a basic risotto in the last few minutes.

Wet polenta with blue cheese & braised broccoli Make a batch of wet **polenta** and enrich at the end with **mascarpone** and a **creamy blue cheese**, then stir in plenty of herbs such as **parsley or chives**. Blanch **broccoli** for 1-2 minutes and drain. Fry chopped **red onion** in **olive oil** with chopped **garlic** and **oregano** until soft, add the broccoli and cook gently, stirring occasionally, until soft. Add chopped **black olives**, **lemon zest** and **chilli flakes**. Serve on top of the polenta.

One-pot chicken drums, bacon & Jerusalem artichokes In a wide casserole dish, heat **olive oil** and brown **chicken drums**. Set aside. Add diced **onion** and **bacon** to the pan and cook until browned. Add peeled **Jerusalem artichokes**, some **thyme** and a little **chicken stock**. Return the chicken to the pan, cover and cook for 30-40 minutes or until cooked through. Remove the chicken and vegetables to a serving dish and simmer to reduce the liquid, if necessary. For a richer dish, add a tablespoonful or two of **cream** to the liquid. Serve the chicken and vegetables with the reduced liquid and greens.

Baked potatoes with chorizo, mushrooms & spinach Bake whole **Agria potatoes** in a hot oven until tender. When cool enough to handle, halve lengthwise, scoop the flesh into a bowl and mash. Cube a couple of **chorizo** and fry with sliced **mushrooms**, adding chopped **garlic**, **baby spinach leaves** and sliced **spring onions** at the end. Cook until the spinach has wilted and no liquid remains. Add to the potato with some **creme fraiche**, put back into the potato skins, add a grating of **parmesan, gruyere or pecorino** and bake until golden.

Tomato & bulghur wheat pilaf with lamb Fry chopped **onion** in **olive oil** until soft, add a few tablespoons of **tomato paste** and cook for a few minutes. Add **bulghur wheat**, a knob of **butter** and **salt** and fry for a few minutes. Add **water or stock** (1 part bulghur to 2 parts water), cover and cook over low heat for 15 minutes. Fluff up with a fork and stir in chopped **parsley**. Fry **anchovy fillets**, finely chopped **rosemary** and **capers** in olive oil, add seasoned **lamb leg steaks** to the pan and cook for a couple of minutes on each side. Remove the lamb from the pan, add **lemon juice or a splash of white wine** and reduce to a sauce. Serve the pilaf and lamb with **steamed greens**.

Tamarind fish curry Fry **mustard seeds** and **fennel seeds** in vegetable oil until they pop. Add chopped **onion** and cook until soft. Add chopped **garlic**, grated **ginger**, a handful of **curry leaves** and **chilli flakes** and cook until fragrant. Add **ground turmeric**, chopped **canned tomatoes** and **tamarind puree**. Simmer for 10-15 minutes, adjusting the seasonings, adding a little water and **sugar** if needed. Add pieces of **firm-fleshed fish** (kahawai is delicious) and simmer for 3-4 minutes or until cooked through.

Mustard-marinated pork chops with swede gratin Make a marinade of **Dijon mustard**, finely chopped **rosemary**, crushed **garlic** and **olive oil** and smear over **pork chops**. Make a gratin of sliced **swede** and **potato** layered with **thyme**, **garlic** and **butter**, pour over **chicken stock**, cover with foil and bake at 200˚C for 30-40 minutes, then uncover, top with **breadcrumbs** and **parmesan** and bake until golden. Panfry the chops until cooked through, serve with the gratin and **watercress** salad on the side.

Meatballs poached in beef broth Make your favourite **meatballs** and set aside. Fry chopped **onion** and **garlic** with **thyme**, add a **good-quality beef stock** and bring to a simmer. Cook for 10 minutes, then add the meatballs and poach gently until tender. For a more substantial dish add **small pasta**, such as ditalini, or **rice**. Finish with freshly grated **parmesan** and chopped **parsley**.

Stir-fried yams with fish Slice **yams** and **spring onions**. Finely chop **garlic**, **ginger** and **red chilli**. Quickly stir-fry everything in **sunflower oil** and when crisp-tender, add **baby spinach leaves**, the **juice of ½ an orange**, **soy sauce** and **sesame oil**. Serve with **panfried fish fillets**.

DUCK WITH BUTTERNUT SQUASH & GINGER

SERVES 2

2 duck breasts
½ teaspoon five-spice powder
½ teaspoon ground white pepper
½ teaspoon sea salt
2 tablespoons sunflower oil
1 small butternut squash (400g-500g), peeled, cubed
5cm piece ginger, peeled, grated
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 teaspoon ground coriander
1 cup chicken stock
2 spring onions, thinly sliced
½ cup coriander leaves, chopped
1 teaspoon sesame oil

Score the skin of the duck and rub all over with the five-spice powder, white pepper and sea salt. Set aside.

Heat the oil in a wide frying pan or saucepan, add the butternut and fry to get a little bit of colour then add the ginger, garlic and ground coriander and cook until fragrant. Add the chicken stock and cook for 10 minutes or until the butternut is cooked through (adding more liquid if necessary). Stir in the spring onions, coriander leaves and sesame oil.

While the butternut is cooking, fry the duck, skin side down, for 8 minutes, then turn over and cook for 6 minutes. Remove from the heat and rest for 7 minutes. Slice thinly. Serve with the butternut and garlicky braised greens such as bok choy, gai lan or choy sum.

DF GF (check your stock is gluten free)





Key to Symbols

V Vegetarian

DF Diabetic-friendly

GF Gluten-free

HF Healthy fats

CHICKEN NOODLE SOUP

Fry 500g sliced **chicken** (I used thighs) in **peanut oil**, add a grated 5cm piece of **ginger**, 2-3 cloves **garlic**, and 3-4 cups of vegetables such as **broccoli and cauliflower florets** (or other seasonal vegetables). Fry for a few minutes, add 1 litre good **chicken stock** and 1-2 tablespoons **gochujang paste** (optional) and simmer. Cook fresh or dried **egg noodles** in boiling salted water, drain and divide among serving bowls. Finish the broth with chopped **spring onions**, **soy sauce** and **sesame oil**. Spoon over the noodles and serve immediately.

DF

Lamb koftas & slaw with minted yoghurt dressing & flatbreads Mix **lamb mince** with a grated **onion**, **ground cumin** and **ground coriander**, **fresh coriander**, minced **garlic**, **fresh breadcrumbs** and optional **chilli flakes**. Shape into cigar shapes, put onto skewers and grill until cooked through. Make a slaw of a mix of any of the following: finely sliced **cabbage** (green, red, brussels sprouts etc), shredded **kohlrabi**, **daikon or radishes**, **carrots**, **celeriac**, matchsticks of **Granny Smith apples**. Dress with a dressing of **thick Greek-style yoghurt**, finely chopped **mint**, **tahini**, **sumac** and **lemon juice** to taste (you may need to thin it down with a little water). Serve with warmed **flatbreads**.

Moroccan butternut squash & chickpeas with fish Roast cubes of **butternut squash** until tender. While it is cooking, fry chopped **onions**, **garlic**, **ground cumin** and **ground coriander** with **chilli**. Add a can of **chickpeas** and fry in the spices for a minute or two then add some **tomato passata**, **preserved lemon** and **olives**. Simmer gently and just before serving, fold through the warm butternut and freshly chopped **coriander**. Dust **firm-fleshed fish fillets** with **ras el hanout** and panfry. Serve with a dollop of **yoghurt**.

Fast beef, barley & leek soup Fry chopped **onion**, **carrot** and **celery** until soft. Add sliced **leeks**, cook until softened but uncoloured, add **pearl barley** and **beef stock** and bring up to a simmer. Cook until the barley is tender. Dust **rump steak** with **ground cumin** and season well. Panfry to medium-rare. While the meat is resting, deglaze the pan with water or extra beef stock and add to the soup. Slice the steak and add it to the soup along with chopped **parsley** and extra ground cumin to serve.

CREDITS MARBLE BACKGROUND FROM ARTEDOMUS. FOR FULL DETAILS, SEE CREDITS INDEX.

POTATO & SPRING ONION LATKES WITH CHUNKY SPICED APPLE SAUCE

SERVES 4

3 apples (I used Braeburn), peeled, cored, cubed
pinch of ground fennel
1 tablespoon sugar
grated zest of 1 lemon, plus 2 tablespoons juice
1kg Agria potatoes, peeled
3 spring onions, finely chopped
2 eggs, beaten
olive oil for frying
2 fennel bulbs
½ cup parsley leaves, coarsely chopped
juice of ½ lemon
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

In a small saucepan, combine the apples, ground fennel, sugar, lemon zest and juice and 2 tablespoons water. Cover and cook for 5-10 minutes or until just tender. Set aside to cool slightly.

Grate the potatoes and squeeze out excess liquid. Put into a bowl with the spring onions and eggs. Mix well and season generously with salt and pepper.

Heat a frying pan and add some olive oil. Roughly form the grated potato mix into fritter shapes and cook in batches for 4-5 minutes on each side. Keep the latkes warm while you cook the rest.

Slice the fennel on a mandoline and put into a bowl with the parsley, lemon juice and oil. Season to taste. Put a few latkes on each plate with a spoonful of the apple sauce and some fennel salad.

GF V

To watch videos of Ginny Grant dishing up more Quick Smart ideas, visit
cuisine.co.nz

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IN SEASON

Mandarins and parsnips

Spiced parsnip with lamb chops Marinate lamb chops in grated garlic, ginger and garam masala. Peel parsnips and roughly chop. Fry in oil with chopped garlic and a couple of teaspoons of curry powder and add just enough water to cook. When tender, puree in a food processor, adding a little coconut milk to make a smooth puree. Season the lamb chops and panfry for a few minutes on each side. Serve with the parsnip puree and steamed broccoli.

Roasted parsnips with maple syrup & red chilli Cut parsnips into wedges, toss with olive oil, sea salt and finely chopped rosemary leaves and put on a baking paper-lined oven tray. Drizzle with maple syrup and chilli flakes and roast in a hot oven until golden. Scatter over fresh chilli and serve as a side for chicken, or turn into a warm salad by tossing with hot cooked lentils, freekeh or brown rice, adding a little lemon juice and plenty of fresh green herbs such as parsley or coriander.

Parsnip crostata Cook onion slices in olive oil with salt and a good pinch of sugar until soft and golden. Allow to cool. Use a mandoline to very thinly slice parsnips. Toss with olive oil, add thyme leaves and season well. Make shortcrust pastry (or use a bought one), roll into a round and top with the onion, leaving a 3cm edge. Add the parsnips and crumble over goat's feta. Fold over the edges, brush with egg wash and bake in a hot oven for 40 minutes or until cooked.

Raw salmon & mandarin salad Make a dressing of soy sauce, the juice of a mandarin and a little mirin (balance with a little lemon juice if needed). Thinly slice salmon and dress with a little of the dressing. Thinly slice radishes, fennel bulb and spring onions and peel and slice or segment mandarins. Dress the vegetables and mix with the salmon and mandarin. Serve as is for a light salad or with steamed rice.

Mandarin & date fruit salad Squeeze the juice of a mandarin and mix with mascarpone and a little orange flower water to give a drizzling consistency. Slice mandarins and arrange on a platter. Remove the stones from Medjool dates, slice thinly and scatter over the mandarins. Drizzle with the mascarpone and top with chopped toasted pistachios.

Aromatic mandarins Squeeze a couple of mandarins into a measuring jug then add the juice and an equal amount of sugar to a saucepan. Bring to the boil and add a star anise and a few cardamon pods. Cook for 5 minutes to reduce slightly. Remove the spices and add a dash of orange liqueur. Cool, then drizzle over peeled, sliced mandarins. Serve alongside a plain cheesecake or use to top meringues or pavlova.

*** GINNY GRANT**

ALSO IN SEASON

Brussels sprouts, butternut squash, cauliflower, celeriac, daikon, fennel, kohlrabi, leeks, lemons, limes, navel oranges, pears, rhubarb, swedes, tamarillos, turnips, watercress, witloof, yams

Easy as paella

This is a richly rewarding dish made even more tasty and quick to prepare with Waitoa chicken drumsticks.

Waitoa free range chicken

100% grown in NZ

Waitoa chicken, chorizo & barley paella

Serves 4



2 tablespoons olive oil
8 Waitoa chicken drumsticks
200g chorizo, sliced
1 red onion, finely chopped
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 teaspoon smoked paprika
400g can chopped tomatoes in juice
50ml dry white wine
200g pearl barley, soaked for 1 hour, drained
400ml quality chicken stock
150g green beans or peas
lemon wedges to serve (optional)

Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a 26cm paella dish or other wide, thin-based pan and brown the chicken drumsticks for 5 minutes. Set aside.

Add the remaining oil, the chorizo, onion and garlic and cook over medium heat for 5 minutes, then stir in the paprika and cook for 1 minute. Add the tomatoes and wine, turn up the heat and simmer for 2 minutes.

Stir in the barley and coat well with the tomato mix. Spread evenly over the pan.

Return the chicken to the pan, pushing it into the barley. Carefully pour the stock over. Simmer vigorously for 30 minutes, turning the chicken once. Add more stock or water if the pan is very dry, but you don't want it to be soupy.

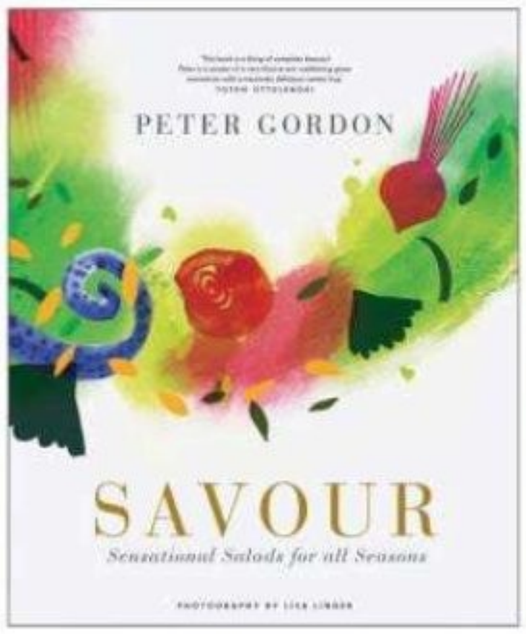
Scatter over the beans or peas, pushing them into the barley but not disturbing it. Cook for about 5 minutes.

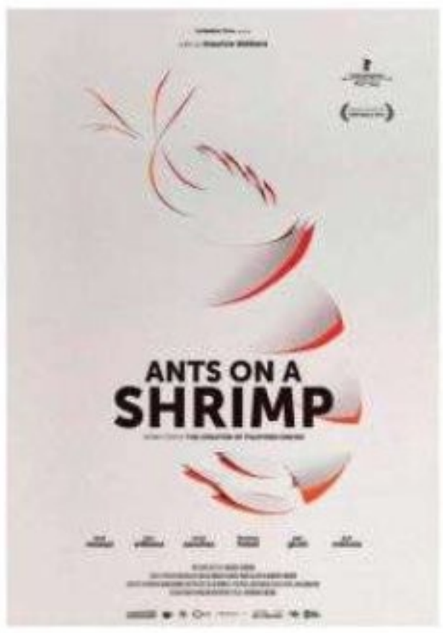
Remove from the heat, cover and rest for 10 minutes then serve, with lemon wedges if desired.

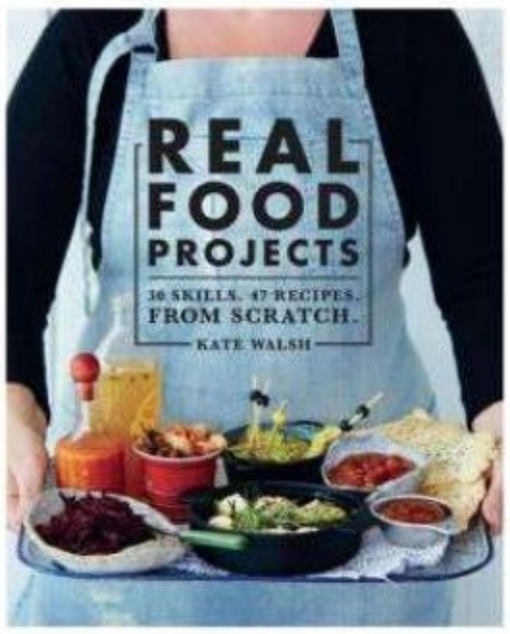
HIGH ANIMAL WELFARE SPCA AUDITED & APPROVED

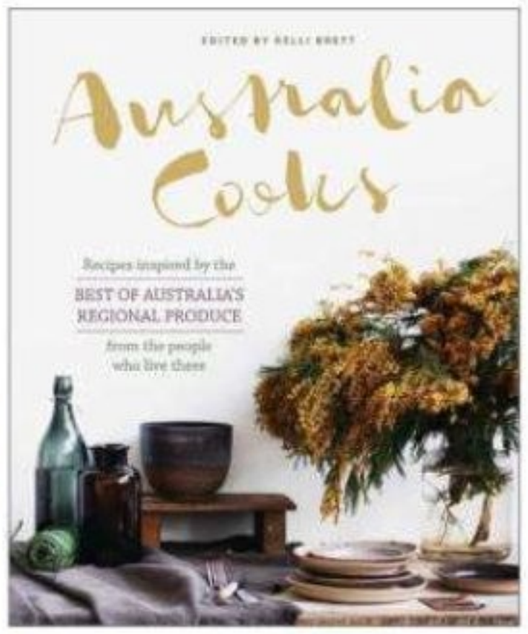
Cook Waitoa, Serve Love

ADV2016









Savour

Peter Gordon, Allen & Unwin, h/b, $55

MY QUEST for a decent weekday work lunch often has me in search of the perfect salad. If you think that means I'm the type who picks at a few limp leaves at my desk come midday, good lord no. I like my meal-time salads to have starch, protein, complementary textures and flavours. If I could eat from this book everyday, my afternoon productivity would probably double. Savour (subtitled Salads for All Seasons) is divided into Simple Salads, Veggie Straight Up (think spiced roast cauliflower and garlic with tahini yoghurt dressing), Veggie Grains (freekeh, cumin-roast artichoke, grilled corn and pomegranate, anyone?) and Veggie Cheesy (miso-baked aubergine, dates, feta, crispy buckwheat and tahini yoghurt, perchance?). Really, who needs meat when veg can be that delicious... but the fish and shellfish, poultry and meat chapters are winners too, of course – how do cardamom lamb ribs, mango-cashew rice and red onions take your fancy? More evidence of the brilliance of the boy from Whanganui. Now if only he'd move home and open a salad bar next to the *Cuisine* office. **ALICE NEVILLE**

Ants on a Shrimp

Directed by Maurice Dekkers

IF A MEAL at Copenhagen's Noma, widely regarded as the world's best restaurant, seems beyond your reach, *Ants on a Shrimp* might give you at least a glimpse inside the mind of chef René Redzepi. In January 2015, Redzepi transported his restaurant and entire team to the Mandarin Oriental Tokyo for five sold-out weeks, as he created a 14-course menu using local food sources. Scallop fudge, fresh water clam tart, black garlic leather and sweet potato with wild kiwi are a few of the tastes that unfold. The passion of Redzepi and his team are clear, but the film left me wondering about the quality of life for young chefs working under such endless pressure. Keep an eye on *Cuisine*'s social media for your chance to win a double pass to the New Zealand International Film Festival 2016 screenings of *Ants on a Shrimp* in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin in July and August. **KELLI BRETT**

Real Food Projects

Kate Walsh, Murdoch Books, p/b, $45

I MUST ADMIT, the word "projects" in the title of this book filled me with something approaching trepidation. I'm not usually the "projects" type – that words has connotations of forward-planning and discipline, qualities that don't come naturally to me, at least not in the kitchen. But I shouldn't have worried, as Australian sustainable food advocate Kate Walsh has provided projects that even folk like me can achieve without too much effort. The projects in question cover pickles and preserves, dairy, bread and crackers and fermented foods, plus a few "getting started" recipes, perfect for project novices like me (think granola, cordial, preserved garlic). All the recipes are clear and easy to follow, with step-by-step pictures and fool-proof tips. I nailed the farmers' market pickles, and now feel confident I can progress to the fermented chapter – sauerkraut and kimchi, here I come – and maybe even give dairy a go. Even the Weekend Projects chapter doesn't faze me – I'll be whipping up my own gravlax before you know it. **AN**

Australia Cooks

Kelli Brett, HarperCollins, h/b, $55

AUSTRALIA COOKS is a collection of recipes that listeners of ABC radio show *The Main Ingredient with Kelli Brett* (yes, now the editor of this very magazine) submitted when asked to define their region on a plate. Supplemented with recipes from professional chefs from around the regions, they're divided into chapters From the Earth, From the Sea, From the Land and Something Sweet, each with either a brief introduction or a larger chef profile preceding them. So we have special Far North Queensland kangaroo dumplings, reflecting the long-standing Asian heritages of this region; barbecued oysters with grilled potatoes and samphire from Moruya on the New South Wales south coast; and beetroot, buckwheat and boursan tarte Tatin from Pemberto in WA – buckwheat was brought to the region by northern Italian immigrants. Sure, there is the odd recipe those of us in Aotearoa will struggle to make (what the heck's a quandong?*), but I found learning about these indigenous ingredients fascinating. And a large chunk of the recipes can be made here with our local ingredients no worries – one even uses pāua! (OK, black-lipped abalone from Victoria, but same kettle of fish, right?). **turns out it's a fruit, also known as the native peach* **AN** ✱

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HEY, MILTONS

This revamped cafe is bringing the love back to Hamilton.

Hamilton, long the butt of meanie Aucklanders' jokes, has really come into its own of late, especially in terms of food and drink – think Good George beer and Duck Island ice cream.

Miltons Canteen, with its mid-century vibe, friendly service, great coffee and classy cafe food, is another one helping to make the city of the future cool. It opened in 2012 as Mr Miltons Canteen, and husband-and-wife team Michael and Alice Beere have been managing it since the beginning, taking ownership in 2013. Last year they carried out a major revamp and rebrand.

Mr Milton never actually existed, so they dropped the Mr but kept the rest of the name, enjoying the similarity of "Milton" to "Hamilton", and set about creating a back story. "It's about taking ownership of Hamilton," Michael explains.

A big red neon COFFEE sign is the centrepiece, and provided inspiration for the red, black and white fit-out, as did the aesthetic of their roaster of choice, Coffee Supreme. Whites Aviation photos adorn the walls and long pendant lights hang above the counter.

Michael, a chef who spent his formative cooking years at Chim Choo Ree, met Alice, a barista from Wellington, when they were both working at Go Vino at Cooks Beach in the Coromandel. He lured her back to the Tron and the rest, as they say, is history.

They're both passionate about hospitality. "We want to set up a platform for people who want a career in this industry," Michael explains. "Alice has always been annoyed when people come up to the coffee machine and ask, 'So what are you studying?' Why can't we be proud of what we do?"

The menu is small and enticing – think crumpets with peanut butter mousse, a brunch salad of crispy potatoes, greens, poached egg and bacon, and the spicy fried beans opposite – and there's an array of fresh and tasty counter food, with top-notch sweet treats by baker Katie McWha. ✱ **ALICE NEVILLE**

Miltons Canteen, 127 Alexandra St, Hamilton, 07-838 2942, miltonscanteen.co.nz

TRACIE HEASMAN



SPICY FRIED BEANS

SERVES 4

Preparation 10 minutes /
Cooking 10 minutes

400g can cannellini beans, drained, rinsed
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus extra to serve
zest of 1 lemon, plus juice to serve, if desired
30g (2 handfuls) microgreens or rocket
15g (1 handful) fresh mint leaves
oil for cooking
braised lamb, smoked salmon or haloumi to serve
2 tablespoons harissa (I like Sabato's Julie Le Clerc spicy harissa)
small handful of toasted sliced almonds
2-4 tablespoons yoghurt
poached eggs (1 per person) to serve
edible flowers to garnish (optional)

Put the beans in a small bowl with the oil and lemon zest and season with a pinch of salt and some freshly ground black pepper. Stir to coat the beans and leave to marinate (this can be done up to 3 days ahead).

Mix the microgreens or rocket and mint in a bowl and set aside.

Set a medium-sized pan over medium-high heat and add a little oil. Sear or heat the braised lamb, haloumi or salmon. Remove from the pan and set aside somewhere warm. Put the pan back over the heat and add the beans, moving the pan back and forth over the heat.

Once the beans begin to colour, add the harissa and almonds. Stir or toss until the beans are fully coated and the paste has fried and become fragrant.

Put a small pile of mint and microgreens on each plate, then top with the fried beans and dollops of yoghurt.

Add the lamb, haloumi or salmon, then top with a poached egg and the remaining salad. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil or oil from the harissa jar, lemon juice and more yoghurt, if desired. Top with edible flowers, if desired.

Spicy fried beans with poached egg & braised lamb
OPPOSITE: Miltons Canteen owners Alice and Michael Beere; the cabinets are brimming; fresh bread



Manuel, left, and Christian Costardi
OPPOSITE: A pair of the brothers' traditional-with-a-twist risotti

RICE ONE, BRO

GINNY GRANT meets the Italian brothers putting a modern twist on risotto.

Hailing as they do from the heart of Piedmont's rice-growing region, it's hardly surprising that brothers Christian and Manuel Costardi have a risotteria (a restaurant that specialises in risotto) in their family-run hotel. Their grandfather opened Hotel Cinzia in Vercelli, west of Milan, in 1967, and named it after his daughter – their mother.

The two brothers took over the hotel's restaurant, renaming it Christian e Manuel Restaurant, in 2005. They gradually brought in changes, and while they cook the traditional cuisine of the area, it's their use of modern techniques and playful presentations that helped them attain a prized Michelin star in 2009. I spoke to them recently at the Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, where they held a masterclass on risotto.

As a child, Christian (the elder brother) was given a *dolce forno* – a toy oven – which sparked his enthusiasm for cooking. He went to catering college at 14 despite his mother Cinzia discouraging him, as she thought the work was too hard. Manuel, who is nine years younger, used to come into the hotel kitchen and play with the butter and flour to make biscuits. Both brothers say they knew they wanted to continue what their grandparents had started.

"They built a hotel, a restaurant, spent money and time and we are very happy to continue and to upgrade," says Christian, whose 'victimofmypassion' tattoo on his inner forearm matches his brother's.

Their grandmother thought they were crazy to modernise the restaurant in a city of 45,000, although she was happy with what they had achieved when they received their star. But for the brothers, who were, as Christian says, "born into the hotel", putting their own stamp on it was always the way to go. Their mother comes into the kitchen each day and is still the first critic of the food.

While they place great importance on using the best foods of the region, they also find inspiration from all over the world. "Whether it's something you smell, you touch or eat, it's very important today for a chef to have an open mind and study a lot, not only

food, but music, art and culture," Christian explains.

"Everyday we work for more quality, more business and to achieve something in the gastronomic world... It's not important to work for the second star, but it is important to work well and if the star arrives after that, then all is well, but it's important to work for the customer and for the family."

Italy is the rice-growing capital of Europe; most of it grown in Piedmont and Lombardy. Having grown up surrounded by rice, the brothers choose it with care. The local rice is carnaroli – favoured in risotto for its high starch content, firm bite and the ability to hold its shape – and it has proven pivotal to their focus.

There are more than 20 risotti on the menu, but it's a nostalgic look at tomato risotto – a dish of their childhood – that has made the brothers famous. It was standard fare at Italian kindergarten, but not often done well – in fact, rumour has it five-year-old Christian pronounced what was served to him inedible.

The brothers' version is a serious improvement – a slow-cooked ragu of the best local tomatoes and vegetables is pureed and added to the rice near the end of cooking, with lemon zest and basil pesto. And, in a tribute to Andy Warhol, it's served in a quirkily branded Costardi tomato can.

Risotto is considered a tricky dish to execute properly because of its need



for constant attention, and I'm always interested to find out what tricks other chefs use. The Costardis use only a simple vegetable stock as the base to their risotto. Onion, carrot, celery and cold water are put into a pot and simmered for a mere 30 minutes before straining; and they make it fresh everyday. They don't add salt to the stock, so they can control the saltiness of the dish later on. If a dish requires a more intense or darker stock, they'll brown the onions first.

The rice can change daily depending on humidity and its freshness. They use a wide, shallow pan to toast the rice first, without butter or oil, until it is hot to touch. Toasting helps to start the process of opening the grain. After the rice has been toasted, they add seasonings such as salt, and a spoonful of pureed onion and garlic cooked in olive oil.

They seldom use wine in the base of the dish (unless it is central to the taste – such as in their prosecco, taleggio, lemon and rosemary risotto), the stock is always added hot, and when the rice is almost ready and the heat turned off, cold butter is added and the pot is shaken back and forth quickly for a few minutes to make the risotto creamy. If the risotto is liquid enough, it should "wave". At this point you can also add a little extra stock to loosen the risotto and help bind the butter and rice.

And, if all that sounds a bit too much effort, booking a flight to Italy and a table at Christian e Manuel Restaurant is always an option. ✱

For more risotto tips, see Quick Smart, page 24. Ginny Grant travelled to Melbourne courtesy of Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, Langham Hotel and Tourism Victoria.

WITHER HILLS PROMOTION

Wither Hills makes a winning match

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Anchovy & mozzarella mini rolls (page 58)

Wine Match: Wither Hills 2015 Sauvignon Blanc

With vibrant ripe citrus notes and a hint of tropical guava on the nose, Wither Hills Wairau Valley Sauvignon Blanc is perfect to serve with these Sicilian mini bread rolls with a cheesy anchovy filling, which make an ideal canape. RRP $17.99

Potato & spring onion latke with chunky spiced apple (page 27)

Wine Match: Wither Hills 2015 Pinot Noir Rosé

The Wither Hills Rosé, made with 100 per cent pinot noir, is refreshing in style, with perfumed aromas of wild strawberries and fresh raspberries. A delightful pairing with the potato & spring onion latke with chunky spiced apple. RRP $17.99

Duck with butternut squash & ginger (page 27)

Wine Match: Wither Hills 2012 Pinot Noir

An aromatic blend, full of dark, wild berry fruits, toasty spice and earthy undertones, the Wither Hills Wairau Valley Pinot Noir is classically Marlborough, and would complement this spiced duck dish. RRP $21.99



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FOOD + WINE

CARLOTTA WEARS ZORA BELL BOYD EARRINGS, ODETTE ANSCOMBE-SMITH RING, CHARMAINE REVELEY DRE$$, MERCY WEARS TRELISE COOPER DRESS, MIMCO EARRINGS

polpette & passione

FIONA SMITH celebrates the classic Italian meatball in style.

Recipes and food styling **Fiona Smith** / Photography **Aaron McLean** / Styling **Fiona Lascelles**
Fashion stylist **Karlya Smith** / Photographer's assistant **Fraser Chatham** / Hair stylist **Emma Bryce, Stephen Marr**
Make-up & nails **Tanya Barlow** / **Models** Carlotta & Laurent, Clyne Model Management;
Mercy, Unique Model Management; Danika, Red 11 Management



FISH MEATBALLS WITH
CLAM, PERNOD
& TOMATO SAUCE

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FIONA SMITH

Meatballs are a fixture in cuisines from all corners of the world. In Italy, they've been around since at least the Roman era. Called polpette (or polpettine if they're small), they are usually eaten by themselves or in a soup. For this feature I've created meatballs from a range of proteins and paired them with classic Italian flavours. That pop culture favourite, spaghetti and meatballs smothered in tomato sauce, isn't really a thing in Italy – it was created by Italian immigrants in America, where it's become a staple (and can be totally delicious, of course – see the version on page 46).

FISH MEATBALLS WITH CLAM, PERNOD & TOMATO SAUCE

SERVES 5-6

Preparation 20 minutes plus chilling time
Cooking 30 minutes

This is a more adult version of meatballs in tomato sauce. The salmon is important as it adds fat, otherwise plain white fish can be dry. You can serve this with pasta, rice or similar or simply in bowls with warm crusty bread.

500g skinless, boneless white fish (I used trevally)
300g salmon, skin removed
3 tablespoons dill
zest and juice of 1 lemon
4 tablespoons olive oil
4 garlic cloves, crushed
¼ cup flat-leafed parsley, chopped
2 x 400g cans chopped tomatoes
½ cup Pernod
1kg clams, cleaned
crusty bread to serve

Roughly chop the fish and salmon and put in a food processor with the dill, lemon zest and juice and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. In bursts so as not to overwork it, process to a rough mince. Roll into golf ball-sized balls (you should get about 25). Chill in the fridge for at least 30 minutes.

Heat the olive oil in a very large saucepan or frying pan over medium heat. Add the garlic and parsley and cook, stirring, for a minute, making sure it doesn't brown. Add the tomatoes and bring to the boil then reduce to a simmer and simmer for 15 minutes.

Add the Pernod and bring back to a steady simmer. Stir in the fish balls. Cover and cook for 2 minutes then stir in the clams and cook for 2-3 minutes. Discard any unopened clams.

Taste the sauce and season (tasting first is important, as some shellfish can be very salty)Divide the balls, clams and sauce among bowls and serve with crusty bread.

› **WINE** A light, fresh red. Go for the Prunotto Dolcetto d'Alba 2014.

PREVIOUS PAGE: DANICA WEARS CAMILLA AND MARC DRESS, ZORA BELL BOYD NECKLACE; MERCY WEARS DEADLY PONIES SHEEPSKIN STOLE; LAURENT WEARS BARKERS SHIRT, JACKET AND POCKET SQUARE; CARLOTTA WEARS TRELISE COOPER DRESS, ZORA BELL BOYD EARRINGS, ODETTE ANSCOMBE-SMITH RING; THIS PAGE: KATE SYLVESTER TOP (OPPOSITE); LAURENT WEARS ZAMBESI JACKET, BARKERS SHIRT AND POCKET SQUARE; DANICA WEARS COOPER DRESS, ZORA BELL BOYD BANGLE

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FIONA SMITH

Served with a grain and apple salad, these pork, parmesan and ricotta balls are evidence meatballs can be an elegant dinner-party dish

CARLOTTA WEARS ZORA BELL BOYD EARRINGS, CHARMAINE REVELEY DRESS, KAREN WALKER JEWELLERY BANGLE; MERCY WEARS TRELISE COOPER DRESS, MIMCO EARRINGS

PORK, PARMESAN
& RICOTTA BALLS WITH
GRAIN & APPLE SALAD

PORK, PARMESAN & RICOTTA BALLS WITH GRAIN & APPLE SALAD

SERVES 4-5

Preparation 15 minutes plus soaking / Cooking 20 minutes

I like the texture of whole pine nuts in these balls, but some tend to pop out while the balls are frying. I pick them out of the pan if they're browning too much, but you can chop them before adding to the mix if you'd rather. Replace the bulghur with quinoa for a gluten-free salad.

Grain & apple salad

½ cup bulghur wheat
½ cup buckwheat
1 tablespoon wholegrain mustard
2 tablespoons cider vinegar
4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
2 spring onions, finely chopped
1 stalk of celery, finely chopped
2 green apples, cored, finely chopped
75g rocket
½ cup flat-leafed parsley, finely chopped

Put the bulghur wheat in a bowl and cover with cold water. Leave to soak for 30 minutes until tender but not too soft. Drain well in a sieve and press down hard on the wheat with the back of a spoon to squeeze out excess water.

Bring a saucepan of water to the boil and add the buckwheat. Simmer for 15 minutes until cooked then drain well and set aside to cool.

In a large bowl, whisk together the mustard, vinegar and oil and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Add the bulghur and cooled buckwheat then the spring onion, celery, apple, rocket and parsley and toss. Divide the salad among plates and top with the meatballs.

For the meatballs

500g pork mince
200g ricotta
50g parmesan, grated
70g pine nuts (chopped if desired)
¼ cup fresh basil leaves, finely chopped
2 tablespoons fresh sage leaves, finely chopped
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
2 tablespoons olive oil

Put the mince in a bowl with the ricotta, parmesan, pine nuts, basil, sage, salt and pepper and mix well with your hands. Shape into 2cm balls and refrigerate until needed.

Heat the oil in a frying pan and cook the balls, shaking them around the pan, for about 5 minutes or until golden and cooked through. Serve with the grain & apple salad.

› **WINE** An almondy, dry prosecco – try the Luna Argenta Prosecco NV.

CLASSIC MEATBALLS IN TOMATO SAUCE (WITH HIDDEN VEGES)

SERVES 4-5 (MAKES ABOUT 22 BALLS)

Preparation 15 minutes / Cooking 40 minutes

This recipe is great for parents aiming to get more veges into their children's diets (seems to be an issue for most parents I know!). I've based this recipe on Ginny Grant's meatballs, which are a hit with the kids. Of course, they're totally tasty for adults too! You can substitute the veges with any others – grated pumpkin works well. Use a regular beef mince (you want some fat) or a mix of beef and pork. Poaching the meatballs in the sauce saves time, but searing them in a pan first gives more flavour. Serve with your choice of carbs (you can add more veges to these too).

For the meatballs

500g mince
1 cup fresh breadcrumbs
⅓ cup milk
1 egg, beaten
3 tablespoons finely chopped parsley
25g parmesan, grated
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

In a bowl, mix the mince, breadcrumbs, milk, egg, parsley, parmesan, salt and pepper with your hands. Shape into rough balls. To cook you can fry them in a pan with olive oil for about 5 minutes or until cooked through, or drop into the simmering sauce for the last 5 minutes of cooking.

For the tomato sauce

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
1-2 garlic cloves, crushed (optional)
1 zucchini, grated
1 medium carrot, grated
1 parsnip, grated
2 tablespoons tomato paste
2 x 400g cans whole tomatoes

Heat the oil in a frying pan and fry the onion, garlic, zucchini, carrot and parsnip, with a good sprinkle of salt, over medium-low heat for at least 15 minutes or until very soft. The longer you cook the veges down, the sweeter and more incorporated with the sauce they become – I cook them until they are just starting to stick to the frying pan.

Stir in the tomato paste and cook for 2 minutes then stir in the tomatoes, half filling one of the empty cans with water and adding this too. Bring to a simmer and cook for 20 minutes. Season to taste. Serve the meatballs with a starchy side of your choice, such as pasta, rice or mash.

› **WINE** A tarry southern red such as the Tormaresca Neprica IGT Puglia 2013.

LAURENT WEARS BARKERS SHIRT AND BRACES

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CLASSIC MEATBALLS IN TOMATO SAUCE (WITH HIDDEN VEGES)

WHITE BEAN, BUCKWHEAT
& BEETROOT BALLS
WITH MUSHROOM,
TALEGGIO & PASTA BAKE

FIONA SMITH

WHITE BEAN, BUCKWHEAT & BEETROOT BALLS WITH MUSHROOM, TALEGGIO & POTATO BAKE

SERVES 4-5

Preparation 20 minutes plus chilling time / Cooking 2 hours

I serve these vegetarian balls with a rich, cheesy potato bake, but you could substitute your favourite sauce and serve over pasta. In the summer, they are great with a chopped tomato salad. I cook the gratin first, taking it out of the oven and leaving it to rest (it's better cooler) while I cook the balls. To make the balls vegan friendly, just omit the parmesan and add a little more salt.

Mushroom, taleggio & potato bake

1 tablespoon olive oil
250g mushrooms, sliced
300ml whole milk
200ml cream
1kg all-purpose potatoes, peeled, very thinly sliced
30g (2 tablespoons) butter
200g taleggio or other washed rind cheese, chopped

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Heat the oil in a frying pan and fry the mushrooms with a little salt for 5 minutes. Set aside.

Put the milk and cream in a large saucepan and bring just to the boil. Add the potato, season with salt and freshly ground black pepper and bring back to a simmer, stirring gently. Stir in the mushrooms and remove from the heat.

Rub a 1.2-litre gratin or shallow oven-proof dish with the butter. Put half the potato and mushroom mix in the dish and spread out evenly, top with half the taleggio then repeat with the remaining potato, finishing with the remaining taleggio. Bake for 1 hour, then remove from the oven and leave to rest while you cook the balls.

For the balls

⅓ cup buckwheat
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 small onion, finely chopped
1-2 cloves garlic, crushed
400g can white cannellini beans
¼ teaspoon dried oregano
150g beetroot, peeled
30g panko breadcrumbs
50g parmesan, grated
2 tablespoons fresh parsley, finely chopped
1 teaspoon lemon zest
¼ teaspoon salt

Bring a saucepan of water to the boil, add the buckwheat. simmer for 18 minutes or until well cooked then drain well, pressing down with the back of a fork to get moisture out and set aside. Heat the oil in a large frying pan over medium heat and fry the onion and garlic with a sprinkle of salt for 10 minutes. Drain the beans, reserving 1 tablespoon of the liquid (this is called aquafaba). Stir the oregano into the onion mix, then the buckwheat and beans. Transfer to a food processor with the aquafaba and pulse for 10-15 seconds, or until coarse and combined.

Grate the beetroot and put in a sieve. Press with a fork to press out excess juice. Combine the bean mix with the beetroot, crumbs, parmesan, parsley, lemon zest and the ¼ teaspoon salt and mix until well combined. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before rolling into golf ball-sized balls.

Preheat the oven to 190˚C. Spray or brush the balls with oil and bake for 20 minutes or until browned on top, turning once. Remove from the oven and serve with the potato bake.

› **WINE** A sweetish, juicy montepulciano, such as the Contesa Vigna Corvino Montepulciano d'Abruzzo 2013.

DANICA WEARS COOPER DRESS, ZORA BELL BOYD BANGLE



CHICKEN, THYME & LEMON MEATBALLS WITH CELERIAC 'RISOTTO'

SERVES 4

Preparation 20 minutes / Cooking 30 minutes

If you can, ask your butcher to make chicken mince with the skin included, as it adds fat and flavour. I make these into large balls, about three per person, but make them smaller if you like and cook for a shorter time. The risotto isn't actually made with rice, but is cooked in risotto style. If you can't find celeriac, use parsnip.

Celeriac 'risotto'

500g celeriac, peeled, cut into very small cubes or whizzed in a food processor until finely chopped
2 tablespoons olive oil
40g butter
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1 leek, thinly sliced
1-2 red chillies, finely chopped
250g waxy potato, peeled, cut into very small cubes or whizzed in a food processor until finely chopped
125ml dry white wine such as pinot grigio
500ml well-flavoured chicken stock, hot
100g mascarpone
50g parmesan, grated

Bring a saucepan of water to the boil, add the celeriac and blanch for 2 minutes then drain well and set aside.

Heat the oil and butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat and gently fry the onion, leek and chillies for 10 minutes without browning. Add the celeriac and potato and cook, stirring, for 2 minutes. Add the wine, increase the heat and bring to the boil. Continue boiling until absorbed. Turn down the heat, add the hot stock and cook for 15 minutes – the risotto should be a little soupy when done. Stir through the mascarpone and parmesan and season with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

For the meatballs

600g chicken mince, preferably skin on
½ cup fresh breadcrumbs
2 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves
zest and juice of 1 lemon
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground white pepper
2 tablespoons olive oil
250ml chicken jus or 500ml chicken stock
handful of flat-leafed parsley, chopped

Put the mince in a bowl with the breadcrumbs, thyme, lemon zest, salt and pepper and mix well with your hands. Shape into 5cm balls and refrigerate until needed. Heat the oil in a frying pan and add the balls. Cook for about 8 minutes, shaking them around the pan, until golden and cooked through. Remove to a warm plate. Add the jus or stock to the pan and bring to a rapid boil, scraping the bottom of the pan. Boil for 3-10 minutes until thickened (stock will require longer boiling). Stir in the lemon juice and parsley then return the meatballs to the pan to warm through. Serve over the celeriac risotto.

› **WINE** A feisty pinot grigio. We recommend the Alpha Zeta Single Vineyard Terrapieno Pinot Grigio 2014. *

CREDITS: UPPER HALF CANDLESTICK IN NICKEL AND BRASS, BRASS NAPKIN RING, MARBLE BOWL, MARBLE ROUND BOARD, MARBLE TRAY, GEORGIA DINNER PLATES, GOLD CUTLERY, LONG BEACH BREAD AND BUTTER PLATES, TUMBLER IN SMOKE, WHITE WINE GLASS IN SMOKE, GRACIE ECO LINEN NAPKINS IN GREY ALL FROM MAY TIME; JASPER CONRAN TISBURY PLATE IN WHITE AND BLACK, WEDGWOOD ARRIS ESPRESSO CUP AND SAUCERS ALL FROM SMITH & CAUGHEY'S. FOR FULL DETAILS, SEE CREDITS INDEX.

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CHICKEN, THYME
& LEMON MEATBALLS
WITH CELERIAC ‘RISOTTO’

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primo amore

Begin an evening to remember with these antipasti recipes from **URSULA FERRIGNO**'s *Flavours of Sicily*.

FRIED CHICKPEAS WITH HERBS
& VERY TASTY OLIVE RELISH
recipes page 54

ANCHOVY & MOZZARELLA
MINI ROLLS
recipe page 58

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These potato & ricotta balls are extremely child-friendly, as kids love to discover the ricotta in the middle. I urge you to try other ingredients – ham, olives and onions are all good

FRIED CHICKPEAS WITH HERBS
CECI FRITTI CON SALVIA E ORIGANO
SERVES 8

This very simple treatment of chickpeas – which are abundant in Sicily – has its roots firmly anchored in North Africa. It's a popular street food, often eaten as a 'merenda' or afternoon snack, and also commonly served at 'Sagre' – festivals to celebrate the season of a particular ingredient. It's a welcome change from peanuts and crisps as an aperitivo, but also works in a salad.

200g dried chickpeas, soaked in water overnight with 2 bay leaves, 2 garlic cloves and a handful of parsley
olive oil or groundnut oil, for frying
a handful of rosemary needles
a handful of sage leaves, finely chopped
a handful of oregano leaves, finely chopped
1½ teaspoons fennel seeds
crushed sea salt, for sprinkling
finely grated zest of 1 unwaxed lemon

Drain the chickpeas and discard the soaking water, but keep the garlic and bay leaves.

Add the chickpeas, garlic and bay leaves to a saucepan filled with cold water. Bring to the boil and boil rapidly for 10 minutes. Reduce the heat and continue cooking for 20 minutes until the chickpeas are tender. Strain and place on a dry, clean dish towel and pat to remove excess moisture.

Heat the oil in a large frying pan set over medium heat and add a quarter of the chickpeas. Shallow-fry for 5 minutes. Add a quarter of the herbs and a quarter of the fennel seeds and cook for 3 minutes until fragrant. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels. Repeat with the remaining ingredients in batches.

Transfer to a bowl and add sea salt to taste. Mix well and serve with the zest of the lemon.

VERY TASTY OLIVE RELISH
GUSTOSO OLIVE NERO
MAKES ABOUT 250G

I have been experimenting with this relish after my recent trip to Sicily and I think this recipe is as close to the version I enjoyed at Mandello beach. Serve on sourdough, or other good bread. Good bread is vital. Like great oil that breathes life into a dish, great bread elevates a dish to another level.

300g very tasty black olives (e.g. Gaeta), stoned
a generous handful of flat-leafed parsley leaves
2 garlic cloves, peeled
leaves stripped from 7-8 lemon thyme sprigs
6 fennel seeds (optional)
finely grated zest of 1 unwaxed lemon
about 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

Combine all the ingredients together in a food processor and blend to a coarse texture. Use immediately on toasted bread.

POTATO & RICOTTA BALLS
POLPETTE DI PATATA E RICOTTA
SERVES 8

The Sicilian love of potatoes is well documented. The fertile soil from Etna gives the potatoes grown there golden flesh and a very particular flavour.

500g old potatoes, scrubbed
2 large eggs, plus 2 extra egg yolks
125g freshly grated parmesan cheese
1 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
a generous handful of flat-leafed parsley, freshly chopped
225g ricotta cheese
100g dried breadcrumbs
olive oil, for frying (optional)

Boil the potatoes in their skins, then peel and mash in a ricer. Add the 2 egg yolks and the parmesan, nutmeg and parsley, season with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper and mix well.

In a separate bowl, mash the ricotta and season well.

Beat the whole eggs in a bowl. Place the breadcrumbs in a separate bowl.

Make little nests of the potato mixture in your palms and fill up the hollows with a spoonful of ricotta.

Seal the mixture to form a ball (the balls should be golf-ball sized). Continue to make more balls until all the mixture is completely used.

Dip each ball first into the beaten egg and then the breadcrumbs.

You can either fry the polpette until golden in olive oil or bake them in an oven preheated to 200°C for 15 minutes until golden brown.

Serve warm or cold. They are excellent for picnics and family gatherings.

POTATO & RICOTTA BALLS &
PANFRIED PROVOLONE
WITH OLIVE OIL
recipe page 56

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Thanks to the complex influences and fusion of flavours left behind by the Greeks, Romans, Arabs, Normans and Spanish, who have each occupied this fertile land, Sicily has one of the world's best cuisines

PANFRIED PROVOLONE WITH OLIVE OIL
PROVOLONE CON OLIO D'OLIVA

SERVES 4

Provolone is a delicious southern Italian cheese made by first boiling cow's milk curds and then soaking the curds in brine. Sicilians are blessed with many varieties of provolone: dolce – a mild version aged for two to three months; piccante – sharp and spicy and aged for up to one year; and affumicato – lightly smoked for one week and then aged for three to four months. Please use good-quality ingredients for this recipe – it is such a simple recipe and benefits from a wonderful provolone. This dish can be made really quickly for an impromptu gathering.

4 tablespoons olive oil, for frying
2 garlic cloves, crushed
700g provolone cheese, cut into 2.5 x 1-cm strips
4 tablespoons white wine vinegar or a little balsamic vinegar
4 teaspoons freshly chopped oregano
good-quality extra virgin olive oil to serve
wonderful bread to mop up the juices

Heat the olive oil in a large frying pan set over low heat. Sauté the garlic until coloured and then discard.

Add the cheese, arranging it in a single layer. Cook for 3-4 minutes on each side, without allowing the cheese to burn. Transfer to a serving plate.

Pour over the vinegar and sprinkle with oregano. Serve immediately with a little good oil on top and some great bread.

FRIED GNOCCHI WITH SALAMI
GNOCCO FRITTO CON SALUMI

SERVES 4-6

I feel so very lucky to have spent 18 wonderful years teaching at La Cucina Caldesi in Marylebone, London and hope to enjoy another 18 years. I adore working with Italians – we are all so opinionated about food, but we are a very jolly, happy team. This recipe is my adaptation of Gregorio Piazza's; he's the head chef at the Caldesi in Campagna restaurant that Giancarlo and Katie Caldesi own in Bray, Berkshire. Like so many Sicilian antipasti, it is fried. You can vary the toppings, but keep them light and tasty.

160ml whole milk
7g fresh yeast
350g Italian '00' flour
35g unsalted butter, grated
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons finely chopped fresh rosemary
semolina, for dusting
groundnut oil, for frying
selection of antipasti, such as salami, prosciutto, shaved parmesan cheese and artichokes in oil, to serve

Heat the milk gently until it reaches 37°C. Dissolve the yeast in the milk. In a bowl, combine the flour, butter, salt, rosemary and milk mixture and mix well. Turn out onto a floured board and knead until smooth, approximately 10 minutes. Transfer to an oiled bowl and leave to rise until it has doubled in size, approximately 1 hour.

Turn the dough onto a floured work surface and re-knead. Divide the dough into 4 equal pieces and feed through a pasta machine, starting with the #1 setting (the thickest setting) and working your way through to the thinnest setting, usually #6.

You should have 4 long strips of dough. Cut the dough with a pastry wheel (one with fluted edges) into 6cm squares. Place the squares onto trays dusted with semolina, cover and leave for 1 hour.

Heat a generous quantity of oil in a large frying pan and fry the gnocchi in batches, turning once. This should take approximately 3 minutes. Drain on paper towels.

Serve with a selection of antipasti, such as cured meats, cheese and artichokes and season with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.

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FRIED GNOCCHI WITH SALAMI

ANCHOVY & MOZZARELLA MINI ROLLS
CRISPEDDI SICILIANI

MAKES 12

Since Sicily is known as the bread basket of the Mediterranean, I am always delighted by such interesting and varied styles of bread wherever I travel around this magical island. These wonderfully crisp rolls are really fun to make and eat and feature in Agrigento wheat festival celebrations every spring. Be adventurous with the filling as different herb and cheese combinations work well. I think they are great to take to picnics or as canapes. My daughter loves it when I serve them at her birthday parties.

250g white strong flour
2 teaspoons fine sea salt
10g fresh yeast, crumbled or 1 teaspoon dried yeast
2 tablespoons olive oil
150ml water at body temperature
12 anchovies, chopped
125g buffalo mozzarella, chopped
a handful of flat-leafed parsley, freshly chopped

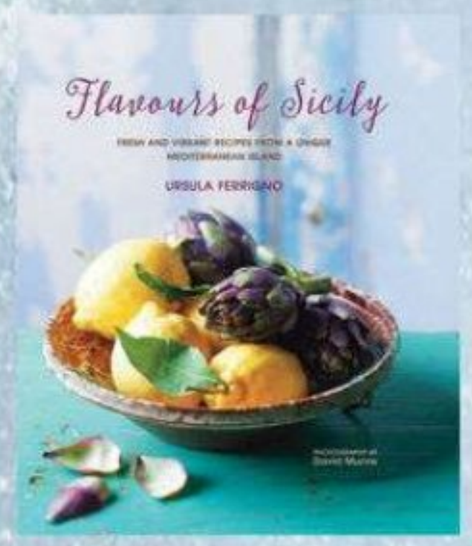
In a large bowl mix the flour and salt together. If using dried yeast, mix it with the flour. Make a well in the centre and add the oil. Dissolve the yeast in one-third of the water and add to the well in the flour. Using a wooden spoon, add enough of the remaining water to form a firm but damp dough.

Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured surface and knead for 10 minutes. Place in a lightly oiled bowl, cover with a damp dish towel and leave to rise for 1 hour. After 1 hour, knock back the dough (i.e. release the gas in the dough by punching it gently) and knead again for 5 minutes to relax it. Cover the dough and leave to rest for another 5 minutes.

Divide the rested dough into 12 little balls. Flatten each in the palm of your hand and fill it with the chopped anchovy, mozzarella and parsley and pinch it closed into a ball, enclosing the filling. Put the little balls on a greased baking sheet, seam-side down, cover and leave to prove for 20 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 200°C. Bake the rolls for 12-15 minutes in the preheated oven until they are golden. Cool slightly on a wire rack, and eat while still war
TIP: You may like to roll the balls in a little semolina to create a crisp texture on the outside. ✱

Flavours of Sicily by Ursula Ferrigno, photography by David Munns, published by Ryland Peters & Small, distributed by Bookreps NZ. RRP $50





Cuisine PRESENTS FIVE CHEFS, ONE ITALIAN FEAST



SERGIO MAGLIONE
FARINA

GAETANO SPINOSA
SPACCA

STEFANIA UGOLINI
PASTA E CUORE

GIAPO GRAZIOLI
GIAPO HAUTE ICE CREAM

SEAN CONNOLLY
GUSTO AT THE GRAND

Mangiamo at Gusto

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"I present a combination of autumn and winter tastes, an expression of the beautiful ingredients I work with. My cucina is art and emotion." *Sergio Maglione, Farina*

"My food is a revolution of the simplicity of Napoletano food... This is me, Gaetano Spinosa – what you see is what you get" *Gaetano Spinosa, Spacca*

"The taste of ricotta wrapped in fresh pasta carries me back to my childhood. Sometimes the simplest of things bring you the greatest happiness." *Stefania Ugolini, Pasta e Cuore*

"My dishes are an impulse of memories, traditions, dreams and a splash of cream... leave room for the unexpected!" *Giapo Grazioli, Giapo Haute Ice Cream*

"My food represents a small glimpse of my travels to Italy. A time of inspiration, reflecting my experiences with special friends." *Sean Connolly, Gusto at the Grand*

BECAUSE ITALIANS DO IT BETTER

PERONI ITALY · CAMPARI · SKYCITY AUCKLAND · FARINA · SPACCA PIZZA E CUCINA · PASTA & CUORE · CUCINA & BAR Gusto AT THE GRAND · GIAPO HAUTE ICE CREAM

As I arrived in New Zealand and started to get to know the *Cuisine* team, the Italian issue was high on our agenda. What would the content be? What would it look like? What is Italian food in New Zealand? I asked to meet an Italian living in Auckland. Someone passionate about New Zealand and its emerging food culture, but who also had close ties to their Italian roots. Someone who was taking risks, pushing boundaries, creating ideas and who was perhaps a little bit crazy.... And someone we could get to in a taxi. My team took me to meet Gianpaolo Grazioli and his beautiful wife Annarosa. Together they make "haute" ice cream at Giapo, their tiny store on Queen St. The flavour combinations and unusual textures surprised me and the conversation that followed the tasting excited me. It has led us to something very special. A collaboration between five incredible chefs to bring you Mangiamo – a one-off Italian feast in Auckland. We've started with one of our most renowned chefs of Italian cuisine, Sean Connolly, and his philosophy that great dining is all about bringing people together. Into our menu we've added Gaetano Spinosa from Spacca, Sergio Maglione from Farina and Stefania Ugolini from Pasta & Cuore. Of course, Giapo Grazioli will bring the dessert. This unique Italian feast will happen for lunch and dinner for one day only, on 7 July at Gusto at the Grand on Federal St in Auckland (see page 59 for how you can attend). As a Mangiamo preview, we've asked our five chefs to create their ultimate Italian dessert and match it to an Italian movie (Giapo has provided two for the price of one). We hope to inspire you to create your own Italian feast at home using recipes from this issue, and perhaps finish off the evening with something sweet as you lose yourself in that special experience that only the great Italian film-makers and performers can give. ✱ **KELLI BRETT**

SCREEN SIRENS

Decadent Italian desserts matched with classic Italian movies.

Food Photography
Jason Creaghan



SOPHIA LOREN IN YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW, 1963,
KEYSTONE-FRANCE/GAMMA-KEYSTONE VIA GETTY IMAGES

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The Italian Job

Directed by Peter Collinson
Starring: Michael Caine, Noël Coward, Benny Hill
Released: 1969

OK, it's not so much an Italian movie as a British comic caper set in Italy, but *The Italian Job* is an absolute classic. Michael Caine plays Cockney criminal Charlie Croker, who recruits a gang of cronies for a "big job" in Turin. Cue one of the best movie car chases of all time, one of the most memorable movie lines of all time – "You were only supposed to blow the bloody doors off!" – and general hilarity.

GIAPO SAYS...

The zuppa inglese makes me think of *The Italian Job*: it's shot in Italy but it has a British heart.

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SWEET SPOT



Giapo & Annarosa Grazioli, Giapo Haute Ice Cream

Gianpaolo (Giapo) and Annarosa Grazioli, high school sweethearts originally from Torre del Greco, a small town between Naples and Sorrento, launched Giapo Haute Ice Cream in 2008. In the years since, the little shop on Auckland's main drag has built up a cult following for its amazing ice cream creations. Zuppa inglese is an Italian dessert invented in the 19th century, thought to be inspired by the English trifle. You'd be forgiven for balking a little at the extravagance of this recipe, and if such a commitment in time and expense doesn't appeal, why not come along to Mangiamo, where it will be the grand finale, instead? If you do want to attempt it, a thermometer is essential. Alchermes, the bright red herb liqueur zuppa inglese is traditionally made with, is tricky to find in New Zealand, so Giapo has created a spiced syrup with gin to replicate it.

ZUPPA INGLESE

SERVES 8

Preparation 2 hours / Cooking 1 hour

Savoiardi cake

10 eggs, separated
405g sugar
360g flour, sifted

Preheat the oven to 160˚C. Using an electric beater, beat the egg yolks and 240g of the sugar until the mixture is creamy and white. Set aside.

Beat the egg whites with the remaining 165g sugar to soft peaks, then fold into the yolk mixture. Fold the sifted flour into the egg mixture until combined, then pour the mixture into a greased, lined 22cm cake tin and bake for 35 minutes or until the cake comes away at the edges of the tin and springs back when you lightly press it with a finger.

Leave to cool in the tin on a cake rack. Once cool, cut the golden crust off all sides of the cake and slice the crustless cake horizontally into rounds.

For the spiced syrup

200g sugar
1 cinnamon quill
pinch of nutmeg
50ml cranberry juice
2 vanilla beans, split in half lengthwise
100ml gin

Put the sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, cranberry juice and 150ml water into a saucepan. Scrape the seeds from the vanilla beans into the saucepan, adding the beans too.

Bring to the boil and simmer for 5 minutes, then remove from the heat and leave to cool. Discard the vanilla beans and stir in the gin.

Vanilla creme patissiere

500ml full-cream milk
zest of ½ lemon
3 vanilla beans, split in half lengthwise
45g rice flour
110g sugar
10 egg yolks

Put the milk and lemon zest in a saucepan, scrape in the vanilla seeds, add the scraped-out beans and bring to the boil. At the same time, set a separate saucepan of water to simmer.

In a bowl, whisk together the rice flour, sugar and egg yolks until thick and creamy then pour into a heatproof bowl and set over the saucepan of gently simmering water.

Once the milk mixture reaches the boil, remove from the heat and pour into the yolk mixture (still set over the saucepan of simmering water).

Stir the mixture constantly until it is the texture of lightly whipped cream (this should take 5-10 minutes) then remove from the heat and pour onto a baking tray, cover with plastic wrap to prevent a skin from forming and put in the fridge.

Chocolate creme patissiere

500ml full-cream milk
zest of ½ lemon
3 vanilla beans, split in half lengthwise
45g rice flour
110g sugar
10 egg yolks
750g dark chocolate, chopped

Repeat the process above up to removing the mixture from the heat. At this point, let it cool to 50˚C then stir in the chocolate (it's essential to let it cool to 50˚C, otherwise the mixture will seize when you add the chocolate).

To assemble

Caramelised cocoa nibs, freeze-dried raspberries, fresh raspberries coated in edible gold powder (all optional)

Spoon a layer of chocolate creme patissiere into the bottom of a trifle bowl. Dip a cake round in the spiced syrup then put on top of the chocolate creme. Top with a layer of vanilla creme patissiere, another layer of chocolate creme patissiere and repeat the layers, finishing with the chocolate creme patissiere. Sprinkle caramelised cocoa nibs and freeze-dried raspberries between the layers, if desired. Top with a final sprinkle of freeze-dried raspberries and fresh raspberries coated in gold powder, if desired.

› **DIGESTIF** A glass of cognac. Hennessy VSOP will do nicely.

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La Grande Bellezza (The Great Beauty)

Directed by Paolo Sorrentino
Cast: Toni Servillo, Carlo Verdone, Sabrina Ferilli
Released: 2013

The Great Beauty, which won the Oscar for Best Foreign Film in 2014, has been compared to *Rome, Open City* and *La Dolce Vita* for the way it immortalises the city of Rome during a certain period – in this instance, the Berlusconi era. The central character is ageing playboy Jep Gambardella (played by Toni Servillo), who, since the success of his one novel, written when he was in his 20s, has been a permanent fixture on Rome's social scene. When Jep's 65th birthday coincides with a shock from the past, he finds himself unexpectedly taking stock of his life.

GIAPO SAYS...
I created an elaborate cone to echo the underlying theme of this film. The extravagant but meaningless existence of Rome's socialites is reflected by the gold cone decorated with Baroque details, filled with a simple and tasteless white ice cream. Beautiful but ultimately unfulfilling.

THE GREAT BEAUTY, INDIGO FILM/MEDUSA FILM/BABE FILM/
CANAL+ / THE KOBAL COLLECTION. ICE CREAM, TONY NYBERG

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SWEET SPOT



Sergio Maglione, Farina

Sergio Maglione, of Ponsonby's Farina, moved to New Zealand from Naples more than 20 years ago. Here he has made cannoli alla Siciliana, a classic Sicilian sweet that's also popular in Naples. To make these you will need cannoli cylinders – you can buy metallic ones at some kitchenware shops or online – or, as the Sicilians do, use bamboo. Lengths of wooden dowel is another option.

CANNOLI ALLA SICILIANA

SERVES 12 (MAKES 24 CANNOLI)

Preparation 1 hour plus resting time / Cooking 15 minutes

300g flour
50g sugar
½ teaspoon finely ground coffee beans
½ teaspoon cocoa powder
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon honey
50ml passito or other sweet dessert wine
2 litres sunflower oil
75g pistachio nuts
75g dark chocolate
75g candied peel, diced
500g ricotta (use a good-quality Italian or New Zealand brand, such as Mauri or Over the Moon)
seeds scraped from ½ vanilla bean
½ tablespoon orange blossom water
200g icing sugar, plus extra for dusting

Put the flour, sugar, coffee and cocoa into a large stainless steel bowl, add the eggs, honey and wine and mix with your hands to a nice smooth consistency. Take the dough out of the bowl, wrap in plastic wrap and rest in the fridge for at least 1 hour.

Take the dough out of the fridge, remove the plastic wrap and roll out very thin – about 1mm-1.5mm – using a rolling pin or a pasta machine. Using a 10cm round cutter, cut into circles. Roll the circles around cannoli cylinders, sealing the edges with a little water.

Put the sunflower oil in a saucepan and heat to about 160˚C. Submerge 4 cannoli in the oil and fry for 3-4 minutes or until golden. Remove carefully with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels. Repeat with the remaining dough, ensuring the cylinders have cooled down before reusing.

Preheat the oven to 140˚C, spread the pistachios on a baking tray and toast in the oven for 5 minutes. Chop the chocolate, put into a sieve and shake, retaining the chips and discarding the dust (this is so the filling stays white). Pass the ricotta through a sieve.

Mix the vanilla seeds and orange blossom water into the icing sugar, then mix this into the ricotta, along with the chocolate, pistachios and candied peel. If the mixture seems too thick, stir in a spoonful or two of extra ricotta.

Put the mix into a piping bag with a wide nozzle (about 1cm) and use to fill the cannoli. Dust with icing sugar to serve.

› **DIGESTIF** A tawny port, the older the better.



Once Upon A Time in America (C'era una volta in America)

Directed by Sergio Leone
Starring: Robert de Niro, James Woods
Released: 1984

The magnum opus of Italian director Sergio Leone, this epic saga chronicles Prohibition-era kids from New York's Jewish ghetto rising to become prominent gangsters. The original, 229-minute "European cut" was a critical favourite, while the shortened American version flopped.

SERGIO SAYS...
Sicilian cannoli are a symbol of the spread of Italian culture through the ages, and would have been eaten in America from the early stages of Italian immigration. *Once Upon A Time in America* for me represents the beginning of real Italian culture in New York City, and the rise of the Italian mobsters.

ROBERT DE NIRO IN ONCE UPON A TIME IN AMERICA (1984), A FARCHIVE/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

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Matrimonio all'Italiana (Marriage Italian Style)

Directed by Vittorio De Sica
Starring: Sophia Loren, Marcello Mastroianni
Released: 1964

Sophia Loren stars as Filumena Marturano, the long-time mistress of businessman Domenico Soriano (Marcello Mastroianni), who "saves" her from prostitution and sets her up in an apartment, putting her to work in his various businesses. When Domenico plans to marry someone else, Filumena fakes terminal illness and tricks him into marrying her instead.

SEAN SAYS...

As a young boy, I used to watch old movies on a Saturday afternoon with my grandmother, Esther, whose favourite actress was Sophia Loren. Loren wrote a cookbook with a tiramisu recipe that used orange liqueur, hence I've included orange zest in my recipe here.

SOPHIA LOREN & CHILD, MARRIAGE ITALIAN STYLE (1964). A F ARCHIVE/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



Sean Connolly, Gusto at the Grand

Sean Connolly is a Yorkshire-born, Australia-based chef who has a huge passion for and knowledge of Italian food. Gusto at the Grand is his Italian restaurant at SkyCity Grand Hotel, and here he shares the recipe for Gusto's tiramisu. You can make this in individual-serve glasses, as Sean has done here, or in one large dish.

GUSTO TIRAMISU

SERVES 6-8

Preparation 40 minutes / Cooking 10 minutes

2 cups strong espresso
½ cup Kahlua or marsala
3 eggs, separated
⅓ cup caster sugar
very finely grated zest of 1 orange
(use a microplane if you have one)
1 cup cream, lightly whipped
1½ cups mascarpone
1 large packet sponge fingers (savoiardi)
cocoa to dust

Pour the coffee and Kahlua or marsala into a shallow dish and set aside. Set a saucepan of water to a gentle simmer. Put the egg yolks, sugar and orange zest in a large heatproof bowl and set it over the simmering water, so the bottom of the bowl doesn't touch the water. Beat with electric beaters until thick and pale then remove from the heat.

Using a large metal spoon, fold the whipped cream and mascarpone into the egg yolk mix until combined. Beat the egg whites until soft peaks form then gently fold into the cream mixture.

If you're using glasses, break up the sponge fingers so they fit into the bases, then dip ⅓ of them in the coffee mix and divide among the glasses (if using a dish, leave them whole). Spoon ⅓ of the cream mix over and dust with cocoa. Repeat this process twice more with the sponge fingers, cream and cocoa, then refrigerate for 2-4 hours (a larger tiramisu may need longer). Dust with cocoa to serve.

› **DIGESTIF** A neat shot of white Sambuca.



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SWEET SPOT



Un Americano a Roma (An American in Rome)

Directed by Steno
Starring: Alberto Sordi
Released: 1954

A satire of Americanisation in which Alberto Sordi plays Ferdinand "Nando" Mericoni, a young man who tries to emulate the America he sees in the movies. He shuns spaghetti al pomodoro, instead preferring an odd mix of marmalade and mustard on bread, only to learn he can't resist the temptation of the traditional dish.

STEFANIA SAYS...
For me this movie shows how important culinary traditions are for us Italians. Even if we try to change our habits, in the end we always fall back to the dish Grandma cooked.

ALBERTO SORDI IN UN AMERICANO A ROMA, 1954.
ZUMA PRESS, INC. / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO



Stefania Ugolini, Pasta & Cuore

Stefania Ugolini opened her Mt Eden cafe, restaurant and pasta shop Pasta & Cuore (cuore means heart) late last year. The dessert she has chosen to create for us is torta ricciolina, a classic dish from Bologna, where Stefania hails from. It's a particularly fitting choice for a pasta expert such as Stefania, as it is topped with fresh pasta.

TORTA RICCIOLINA

SERVES 8-12

Preparation 1 hour / Cooking 30-45 minutes

For the pastry

250g flour
1 tablespoon baking powder
1 pinch of salt
1 egg
80g softened butter, cut into small pieces
100g sugar

Mix the flour with the baking powder and a pinch of salt on a board. Make a well in the centre and add the egg, butter and sugar. Work it quickly into a soft dough and shape into a small ball. Wrap in plastic wrap and let it rest in the fridge.

For the tagliatelline

200g flour
2 eggs

Measure the flour directly onto your work surface. Make a well in the centre of the mound of flour and work in the eggs quickly with your fingertips. Knead the mixture until smooth. Shape it into a small ball, cover it with a cloth or inverted bowl and let it rest for an hour. Roll out the dough with a rolling pin and let it dry slightly. Roll it up into a tube and cut very thin rings, forming tagliatelline, or roll through a pasta machine.

For the filling & to assemble

100g candied citrus, finely chopped (or use mixed peel)
400g blanched almonds, ground in a food processor
80g amaretti biscuits (about 22), finely chopped
180g sugar
200g butter, melted
3 tablespoons of sassalino or other anise-flavoured liqueur
50g vanilla sugar*
icing sugar to serve

Butter a 26cm tart tin. Roll out the pastry and use to line the tin, ensuring the pastry comes at least 4cm up the sides. Put into the fridge while you prepare the filling.

Preheat the oven to 170˚C. Put the candied citrus, almonds and amaretti in a bowl. Add the sugar, 150g of the melted butter and the liqueur and mix together until smooth.

Pour the filling into the tart case, level it with the back of a spoon and cover with the tagliatelline, then sprinkle with the remaining melted butter and the vanilla sugar.

Cover the cake with baking paper, put in the oven and bake for 15 minutes. Remove the baking paper and bake for another 15-30 minutes or until the pastry is cooked through and the tagliatelline are golden.

Allow to cool completely. Sprinkle with icing sugar to serve.

*Heilala and Equagold produce vanilla sugars – available from good supermarkets and specialty food stores – or make your own by pulsing a vanilla bean and some sugar to a powder in a food processor.

› **DIGESTIF** A sparkling moscato from Italy. We recommend the Pelissero Moscato d'Asti 2014.







Gaetano Spinosa, Spacca

Gaetano Spinosa is chef at Spacca, a restaurant in Remuera that specialises in the cuisine of Naples, Spinosa's home town. He chose this dessert, migliaccio napoletano, as it showcases the flavours of Napoli – ricotta, limoncello and semolina. It's one of the oldest known Neapolitan desserts and is traditionally eaten during Carnevale (the celebration before Lent). Early versions were made with just semolina and sanguinaccio (a chocolate sauce made with pig's blood!).

MIGLIACCIO NAPOLETANO

SERVES 6

Preparation 15 minutes / Cooking 45 minutes

neutral-tasting oil to grease the tin
250ml milk
finely grated zest of ½ lemon
finely grated zest of ½ orange
40g butter
1 vanilla bean, split in half lengthwise, or use 1 teaspoon orange blossom water
125g fine semolina
2 medium eggs
150g sugar
200g fresh ricotta
80ml limoncello
candied fruit to garnish

Preheat the oven to 180˚C. Brush an 18cm cake tin with oil and line with baking paper, or use small individual round tins.

Put the milk, lemon zest, orange zest, butter and 250ml water in a saucepan. Scrape the seeds from the vanilla bean into the saucepan, adding the bean too.

Bring to the boil, then remove from the heat, discard the vanilla bean and quickly whisk in the semolina.

In the bowl of an electric mixer, beat the eggs and sugar for 5 minutes or until frothy and pale in colour. Add the ricotta and continue to beat, then add the semolina mixture and limoncello and beat until well combined.

Put the mixture into the tin and bake for 35 minutes or until the cake is golden at the edges and starting to colour (if you've used individual tins, check after 25 minutes).

Cool in the tin. Dust with icing sugar and top with candied fruit to serve, if desired.

› **DIGESTIF** An ice-cold Cointreau. ✱

MARCELLO MASTROIANNI IN YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW, ARCHIVE PHOTOS/STRINGER/GETTY IMAGES

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Ieri, Oggi, Domani (Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow)

Directed by Vittorio De Sica
Starring: Sophia Loren, Marcello Mastroianni
Released: 1963

Another De Sica film with Sofia Loren starring opposite Marcello Mastroianni, this trio of stories was filmed the year before *Marriage Italian Style* (see page 66). Loren plays the poor Adelina from Naples; Anna, the wife of a mega-rich industrialist; and Mara, a high-class Roman prostitute, while Mastroianni plays Adelina's unemployed husband; Anna's lover; and one of Mara's wealthy clients.

GAETANO SAYS...

Migliaccio suits this film as it is a romantic dessert, like all Napoletano men! It's also an old dessert (yesterday), a contemporary dessert (today), and will still be a romantic and authentic dessert tomorrow.

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PASTA ALLA SCOGLIO WITH
ROSEMARY
with
BENANTI PIETRAMARINA
ETNA BIANCA

Recipes and food styling **Ben Bayly**
Food photography **Aaron McLean**

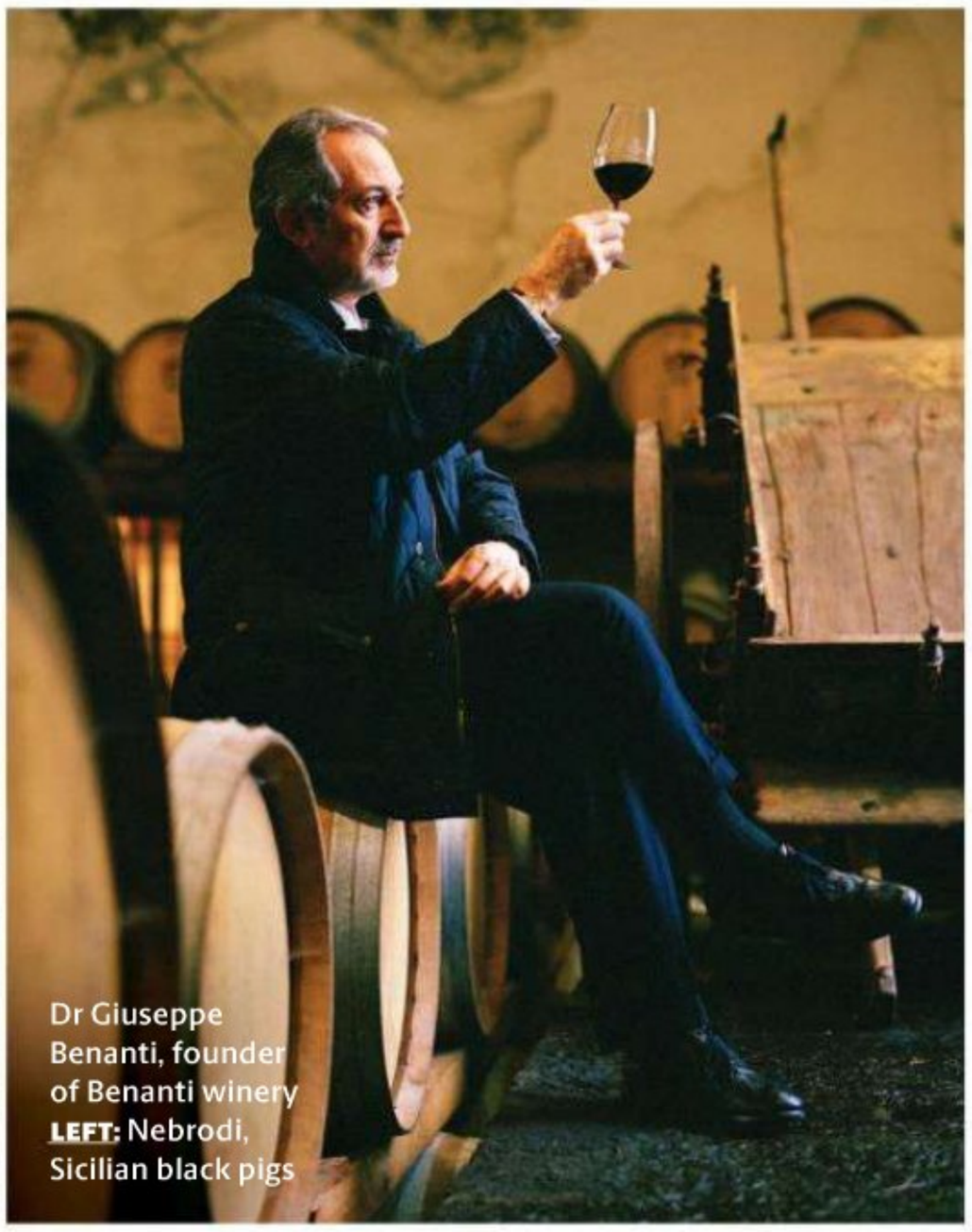
match fit

MICHAEL DEARTH and **BEN BAYLY** of Auckland's Baduzzi travelled to Sicily in search of the perfect food and wine matches – here they share their discoveries.

ABOVE: The volcanic soil around Mt Etna gives the terroir a unique character; a fishmonger at Syracuse market **BELOW:** Ben Bayly and Michael Dearth try a local drop near the Occhipinti winery; a grape picker breaks for lunch at Benanti winery; room with a view at Benanti

MAN WITH BREAD, 4CORNERS IMAGES





Dr Giuseppe Benanti, founder of Benanti winery
LEFT: Nebrodi, Sicilian black pigs

POT-ROASTED SICILIAN BLACK PIG SHOULDER WITH FIGS

SERVES 6

Preparation 15 minutes plus resting time / Cooking 3½ hours

Ben: It seems like the production of pork is a fine art – the market has identified which breed of pig gains the largest yield in the shortest amount of time for the best profits, and in turn we get lower prices at the checkout. But the downside is we are not seeing the range of flavours from different rare-breed pigs that are fed different foods that in turn affect their flavour. In Europe, rare pig breeds like the Sicilian black pig or *nebrodi* are held in very high regard and considered a top-quality ingredient.

In New Zealand we have a few people who breed interesting pigs and other animals – have a look at rarebreeds.co.nz. Or if you can get to know a hunter and make friends, try to score a leg! Wild New Zealand pigs are delicious and are a pest in our native forest, so it's a win-win. This recipe features the flavours of juniper and cinnamon that sum up a Sicilian winter. (Tip: if the meat is wild, use a lower temperature and longer cooking time.)

I have used fresh figs in this recipe as they were in season when the photo shoot took place, but dried figs, dried apricots or dates work beautifully too. If you do make this dish during fig season and want to use fresh figs, add them for the final hour of cooking, rather than at the beginning

Michael: We have matched this dish with Etna Rosso from Benanti winery, made from nerello mascalese and nerello capuccio, two red grape varieties indigenous to the Mt Etna region. It's a fitting pairing, as pigs graze on the hill where these grapes are grown, and eat the excess fruit after harvest. The wine is a light to medium-bodied red, a great alternative to pinot noir.

50g sea salt
2 tablespoons juniper berries
1 cinnamon quill
1 tablespoon black peppercorns
leaves from 1 large sprig fresh thyme or
1 tablespoon dried thyme
zest of 1 orange
1.5kg skin-on, boneless pork shoulder
2 sticks celery, diced
1 large brown onion, diced
1 head of garlic, broken up into cloves
6 dried figs, dates or dried apricots, halved
100ml good-quality red wine vinegar
100ml red wine
250ml chicken stock

Put the salt in a bowl. Put the juniper berries, cinnamon and peppercorns in a small blender or a mortar and pestle. Add the thyme and orange zest and grind or pound together to help release the flavours, then add to the salt and mix. Rub the pork all over with the flavoured salt then leave it on the bench, covered, for 3 hours.

Preheat the oven to 190°C. Put the pork in a large casserole dish and put the celery, onion, unpeeled garlic cloves and figs around it. Roast for 20 minutes or until the pork is golden brown. Take the dish out of the oven, pour the vinegar in and let it bubble for a few seconds, then add the wine and stock. Turn the oven down to 140°C, cover the casserole dish with a lid or foil and put back in the oven to cook for another 3 hours or until the meat is soft.

After 3 hours, turn the oven back up to 190°C to crisp the skin – this should take about 15 minutes. When the skin is crispy, remove the pork from the oven and rest, uncovered, for 15 minutes. Serve the pork with the vegetables and figs.

DR GIUSEPPE BENANTI, 4CORNERS IMAGES

GUEST CHEF

POT-ROASTED SICILIAN
BLACK PIG SHOULDER
WITH FIGS
with
BENANTI ETNA ROSSO



GRILLED SARDINES WITH
WINTER CAPONATA
with
ETNA SP68 BIANCO

BENANTI GRAPE HARVEST, 4CORNERS IMAGES

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GRILLED SARDINES WITH WINTER CAPONATA

SERVES 4

Preparation 15 minutes / Cooking 7 minutes

Ben: Sardines are a staple Mediterranean seafood steeped in history. For some reason, though, we are only just catching on to the flavour here. Kiwis love their white-fleshed fish, and sardines mostly get exported or used for snapper bait! It's time to embrace the humble sardine, not only because they're packed with omega 3, but also to do your bit for the sustainability of New Zealand fish stocks.

We buy our sardines whole and snap frozen from Leigh Fisheries or Yellow Brick Road. Fresh sardines have a very short shelf life. Buying them frozen allows you to fillet them when they are semi-defrosted, which makes the whole process a hell of a lot easier, because the flesh is very, very soft. Caponata is a classic Sicilian salad. Come the cooler months I like to substitute fresh tomatoes and eggplant with fennel and celery.

Michael: We have matched this dish with the Etna SP68 Bianco made by Sicilian winemaker Arianna Occhipinti, one of the hottest young winemakers in the world right now. With notes of citrus blossom, honeycomb and stonefruit, it is blended from the indigenous grapes albanello and zibibbo.

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus an extra lug
1 medium fennel bulb, diced 1cm
1 celery stick, peeled, diced 1cm
½ red onion, diced 1cm
1 clove garlic, sliced
pinch of chili flakes
4 tablespoons good-quality red wine vinegar
1 tablespoon honey
50g pine nuts, toasted
10 capers
zest of 1 orange and 1 lemon
handful of flat-leafed parsley and oregano, chopped
¼ handful celery leaves
6 green olives, stones removed
large slice of sourdough, ripped into small pieces, tossed with olive oil and toasted in the oven
8 sardines

Heat the oil in a heavy-based frying pan over medium heat and fry the fennel, celery, red onion, garlic and chilli flakes until soft and light brown in colour – about 5 minutes. Add the red wine vinegar and honey to the pan and let it bubble and reduce slightly, then remove the pan from the heat.

Add the pine nuts, capers, citrus zest, herbs, celery leaves and olives to the fennel mix in the pan, season with freshly ground black pepper and sea salt to taste, add a good lug of olive oil and mix gently. Add the bread and leave to rest for 1 hour before serving.

Rub the scales off the sardines. Use a small serrated knife to slit along the belly of each fish, remove the guts, slice down the side of the flesh by the head, twist the head to remove and ease the spine from the fillets.

Preheat a barbecue to very hot. Lightly season the sardine fillets and cook on the barbecue, skin side down, for 2 minutes, then remove. Divide the caponata among plates and top with the sardines to serve.



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PASTA ALLA SCOGLIO WITH ROSEMARY

SERVES 4

Preparation 30 minutes / Cooking 10 minutes

Ben: Pasta alla scoglio is a simple seafood Sicilian pasta that harnesses the bounty of seafood. The New Zealand coastline provides many options, so please make this dish your own, depending on what seafood is on hand.
Michael: We have matched this dish with Benanti's Pietramarina Etna Bianca Superiore. Made from the carricante grape, grown on the volcanic soil of Mt Etna, it is a fantastic dry, acidic seafood wine, with hints of almond.

For the seafood

1 live paua
2 paddle crabs
12 live mussels
16 tuatua

Prepare the seafood first. Some people find paua a daunting ingredient, because it can be as tough as old boots if not cooked correctly. This is the easiest way to handle it! Preheat the oven to 100°C. Wash the live paua in cold fresh water and give its foot a good scrub. Put the paua in the oven for 1 hour then remove – it should now pop out of the shell easily. Wash the paua again under cold running water – the stomach will wash away, leaving just the paua muscle. Shave the paua into very thin slices with a sharp knife.

Cut the paddle crabs into 4 quarters. Discard the top shell and the gills and crack the large pincers with the back of your knife so the crab cooks evenly and is easier to eat.

Mussels and tuatua – simply wash in cold fresh water and pull the beards out of the mussels.

For the pasta

500g dried spaghetti
100ml extra virgin olive oil, plus an extra couple of lugs
2 shallots, finely diced
4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
½ teaspoon dried chilli flakes
¼ cup dry white wine
juice and zest of 1 lemon
250g can whole peeled tomatoes, crushed lightly, excess juice drained off (I like the Mutti brand)
handful of rosemary leaves
handful of shaved pecorino or other hard cheese

Cook the spaghetti in salted boiling water as per the packet directions until al dente. Drain, then toss with a lug of olive oil and spread out evenly on a baking tray until needed.

In a large frying pan, heat oil to almost smoking point, then add the paddle crab, season with a pinch of sea salt and fry for about 3 minutes or until lightly browned. Add the shallots, garlic and chilli and fry for another 2 minutes or until soft. Add the white wine and bring to the boil.

Keeping the pan over high heat, add the mussels and tomatoes and cook for another minute. As the mussels start to open, add the tuatuas and the cooked spaghetti. As soon as the mussels and tuatua are open, remove the pan from the heat and stir in the lemon juice and zest. Top with the shaved paua, rosemary, pecorino and another good lug of olive oil. Serve in the pan and eat immediately.

SICILIAN CASSATA

SERVES 8

Preparation 15 minutes plus freezing time

Ben: A wonderful variety of semifreddo found all over Sicily, cassata is an unchurned ice cream that is frozen into a log or cake shape then portioned into slices or wedges and left to defrost ever so slightly before eating. It's traditionally served at Christmas and Easter, but it's great at any time – as it can be done ahead of time, you can just whip it out of the freezer during dessert emergencies.

As the southernmost part of Italy, Sicily is the only part of the country where pistachios are grown. They were introduced in the 9th century after the island was conquered by the Arabs. These days, Sicily's Bronte pistachios, grown in the volcanic soil of Mt Etna, are world famous. Sicily is also known for its sheep's milk, and this recipe uses sheep's ricotta. Calum Hodgson, the cheesemonger at Auckland's Sabato (sabato.co.nz), has a great selection of fresh New Zealand sheep's cheeses. Production starts in July. If you can't find sheep's ricotta, substitute good-quality regular cow's milk ricotta or buffalo yoghurt (Clevedon Valley's is available nationwide – see clevedonbuffalo.co.nz). Or make it with half sheep's ricotta, half buffalo yoghurt, as we do at Baduzzi.
Michael: This dessert pairs well with Tasca D'Almerita winery's Malvasia Capofaro, made from grapes from Salina, an island to the north of Sicily. Tasca has a commitment not only to wine but also olive oil, and education around sustainability. They also run a great cooking school.

400g sheep's ricotta (or use cow's milk ricotta or buffalo yoghurt)
400g sweetened condensed milk or dulce de leche
grated zest of 2 oranges
150g dark chocolate, finely chopped
75g frozen blackberries
75g toasted pistachios, finely chopped
350ml cream
75g icing sugar
scraped-out seeds from 1 vanilla bean (substitute with a pinch of saffron for something a little different)

Line a cake tin, terrine mould or loaf tin with plastic wrap or baking paper. Mix the ricotta and sweetened condensed milk or dulce de leche until smooth. Put in a bowl, add the orange zest, chocolate, blackberries and half the pistachios and lightly mix.

Whip the cream, icing sugar and vanilla to soft peak stage, then fold through the ricotta mix. Pour into the tin then freeze until solid – overnight is best. Remove from the freezer to defrost slightly. Put the remaining pistachios on a board or plate and carefully roll the slightly defrosted cassata in them, before cutting into slices to serve. ✱

SICILIAN CASSATA
with
TASCA D'ALMERITA
MALVASIA CAPOFARO



MENU

SGROPPINO

FISH TORTELLINI IN FENNEL SAFFRON BROTH

VENISON & MUSHROOM RAGU WITH SPINACH POLENTA

BROCCOFLOWER WITH PANGRATTATO

BAKED STUFFED APPLES WITH CARAMEL

master class

GINNY GRANT has the wintry Italian feast down to a fine art.

In winter, taking the time to prepare a slow braise and fresh pasta seems to me like the perfect way to spend a cold afternoon. I get a bit annoyed by the constant call for a meal to take 20 minutes – yes, it can be done, and done well (spaghetti alle vongole, I'm thinking of you), but it's also limiting in terms of dishes you can prepare without resorting to bought sauces or dressings loaded with preservatives. That said, I'm not above buying good-quality chicken stock, and am happy to fork out a bit extra for a great product, especially if it's integral to the finished dish, such as in the fennel saffron broth in the tortellini recipe that follows. Slow shouldn't necessarily mean hard – none of these dishes are technically difficult, but they do require care. To my mind, smart cooking is looking at what you already have, knowing how it can best be utilised, and turning it into something delicious. In essence, that frugality and economy is what exemplifies the many strands of Italian cookery.

Recipes and food styling **Ginny Grant**
Photography **Aaron McLean**
Concept and styling **Tamara West**

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ALLEGORY OF MAGNANIMITY BY GIORDANO,
ART RESERVE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

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GINNY GRANT

SGROPPINO

SERVES 1

Preparation 5 minutes

This frothy, lemony cocktail with a little punch is one of my favourites. I used a bought lemon sorbet, but if you want to make your own, go for it. You can also whisk in an egg white for extra frothiness if you like.

⅓ cup lemon sorbet (bring it out of the fridge to soften slightly if it's very hard)
25ml vodka
75ml prosecco or sparkling wine

Whisk the sorbet with the vodka, add the prosecco and whisk until smooth. Pour into a glass and serve immediately.

FISH TORTELLINI IN FENNEL SAFFRON BROTH

SERVES 6 AS A STARTER

Preparation 1 hour plus 30 minutes' resting time
Cooking 15 minutes

I've always enjoyed making pasta – it's a job with an almost meditative quality, and the satisfaction of a particularly silky batch makes the hard work worth while. If I'm making a large amount I use a dough hook in a mixer; otherwise I knead it by hand, as I've done for the tortellini here. Each batch is different depending on humidity, flour and eggs. I prefer a drier dough – it's harder to knead, but easier to roll. My rough rule is if I stick a finger into the dough, it shouldn't be wet or sticky. The resting period gives the flour time to absorb the liquid and the gluten relaxes, so it can seem quite moist. Add more flour by dusting the dough in the first few turns and folds in the roller until you're satisfied it's dry enough to start rolling out thinly. If you don't have time for dough making, don't despair – simply pick up a packet of wonton or dumpling wrappers instead. You'll find them at Asian supermarkets and specialty food stores.

For the filling

MAKES ENOUGH TO FILL ABOUT 36 TORTELLINI

200g potato (1 medium), peeled, cut into large chunks
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil
1 clove garlic, thinly sliced
¼ cup packed parsley leaves, chopped
200g skinless, boneless fish (I used gurnard), cut into 5mm slices
¼ cup white wine
grated zest of ½ lemon

Cook the potato in boiling salted water until tender, drain well, mash and set aside. Heat the oil in a frying pan, add the garlic and parsley and cook for a minute, then add the fish. Cook for a minute or two then add the wine. Season generously with sea salt and cook for 2-3 minutes or until the fish is cooked and the wine has almost evaporated.

Add to the potatoes along with the lemon zest and mix together. Adjust the seasoning. Set aside to cool.

To make the pasta (or use bought wonton wrappers)

2 eggs
200g Tipo '00' flour, plus extra for dusting
semolina to dust the tray

Beat the eggs and knead with the flour (or blitz together briefly in a food processor to just come together), then remove and knead on a floured bench until smooth. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

Roll out the pasta in a pasta machine starting with the thickest rung, taking the dough through each rung 3 times, dusting with flour as necessary and moving through each rung until you reach the second to last setting. Cut the pasta into 7cm squares.

If using wonton wrappers, follow the method from this point. Put a teaspoonful of filling in the middle of each square. Brush the edges with water. Fold into a triangle, squeezing out any air. Take the 2 edges of the triangle on the fold, wrap around and press together. Fold down the upright corner if you wish. Put on a semolina-dusted tray until ready to use – they can go in the fridge for an hour or so. You can also freeze them on the tray – when frozen, move to a sealable plastic bag in the freezer (allow a few minutes extra cooking time if cooking from frozen).

For the broth

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 shallots, finely chopped
1 fennel bulb, fronds reserved, finely chopped
pinch of saffron
½ cup white wine
1½ litres chicken stock (home-made or a very good-quality bought one)

Heat the oil in a wide saucepan, add the shallots and fennel, season with salt and fry until the vegetables are soft. Add the saffron, fry for a few minutes then add the wine and cook until most of the liquid has evaporated. Add the chicken stock and simmer for 10 minutes.

Cook the tortellini in boiling salted water for 5-7 minutes or until tender. Drain, divide among 6 warmed bowls, cover with ladlefuls of the broth and top with the fennel fronds.

› **WINE** An intense, lively dry white such as the Alpha Zeta G Garganega 2014.

MADONNA WITH THE FISH BY RAPHAEL, MUSEO DEL PRADO

SGROPPINO

JOSEPH AND POTIPHAR'S WIFE BY RENI.
ART RESERVE / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

GINNY GRANT

FISH TORTELLINI IN
FENNEL SAFFRON BROTH
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GINNY GRANT

HERCULES AND OMPHALE BY GARZI,
LISZT COLLECTION / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

VENISON & MUSHROOM RAGU WITH
SPINACH POLENTA & BROCCOFLOWER
WITH PANGRATTATO
recipes page 88

GINNY GRANT

Don't rush the soffritto – the base of the ragu – as slow frying draws out the sweetness of the vegetables, while the fat from the pancetta helps build flavour

VENISON & MUSHROOM RAGU WITH SPINACH POLENTA

SERVES 6

Preparation 10 minutes plus 20 minutes' soaking time / Cooking 2 hours

This rich hunter-style ragu is a classic. The pancetta keeps the lean venison moist during cooking. It works well with beef too and on occasion I have made a version with chicken, with a shorter cooking time and a little less liquid. This will be quite a liquid mix, perfect for the polenta to soak up. If you prefer something a little thicker, you can remove the meat and vegetables and reduce the sauce further, or alternatively, flour the venison before browning.

For the ragu

10g dried porcini
2 tablespoons olive oil
1kg diced venison
100g pancetta, cut into batons
1 onion, diced
1 stick celery, diced
2 carrots, peeled, diced
250g fresh mushrooms, sliced
4cm piece ginger, peeled, finely grated
2 teaspoons finely chopped rosemary
1 cinnamon quill
1 cup medium-bodied red wine
1 cup chicken stock
chopped parsley and freshly grated parmesan to serve

Soak the porcini in 1 cup boiling water for 20 minutes. Drain, reserving the liquid. Roughly chop the porcini.

Heat the oil in a wide saucepan or casserole. Pat dry the venison, season with sea salt, add to the pan and brown (in batches if necessary).

Remove the venison and set aside. Add the pancetta to the pan and cook gently for 5 minutes, then add the onion, celery, carrots and porcini and cook until soft.

Add the fresh mushrooms and cook for 5 minutes, then add the ginger, rosemary and cinnamon quill.

Cook for a few minutes then return the venison to the pan and add the wine. Allow to bubble and reduce by half then add the porcini liquid and the chicken stock. Cover and simmer gently for 1½ hours or until the meat is tender.

Spinach polenta

50g butter
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
300g spinach, washed
1 cup polenta (instant or slow cooking)

Melt half the butter in a frying pan over medium heat, add the garlic and cook, stirring, for a minute. Add the spinach and wilt, turning it over in the pan with tongs, then drain well and blitz in a food processor. Set aside.

Bring 1½ litres water to the boil and season generously with sea salt. Whisk in the polenta until thickened. If using instant polenta, cook for 3-4 minutes; if using slow-cooking polenta, cook gently, stirring occasionally, for 40 minutes, adding more liquid if necessary.

Add the remaining butter, stir in the spinach and adjust the seasoning. To serve, ladle some polenta onto each plate and top with the ragu, garnishing with parsley and freshly grated parmesan.

› **WINE** A dark, ripe red with a touch of sweetness – try the Umani Ronchi San LoRenzo 2013.

BROCCOFLOWER WITH PANGRATTATO

Preparation 10 minutes / Cooking 5 minutes

2 tablespoons olive oil
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
a good pinch of chilli flakes
1 cup breadcrumbs (ideally made by blitzing crustless day-old sourdough in a food processor)
grated zest of 1 lemon
¼ cup flat-leafed parsley, finely chopped
1 head broccoflower or cauliflower, cut into florets (or use broccoli)
extra virgin olive oil for drizzling

Heat the oil in a frying pan over medium heat, add the garlic and cook for a minute, add the chilli flakes and breadcrumbs and cook, stirring, until golden.

Remove from the pan, allow to cool, then toss through the lemon zest and parsley. Set aside.

Blanch the broccoflower in boiling, salted water for 3 minutes or until just bite tender, drain, drizzle with extra virgin olive oil, put into a serving dish and scatter with the pangrattato.

THE HOLY FAMILY BY RAPHAEL, CLASSICALPAINTINGS/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

BAKED STUFFED APPLES
WITH CARAMEL
recipe page 90

GINNY GRANT



BAKED STUFFED APPLES WITH CARAMEL

SERVES 6

Preparation 15 minutes plus 15 minutes' soaking time / Cooking 1 hour

grated zest and juice of 1 orange
¼ cup sultanas, coarsely chopped
3 dried apricots (I use tart NZ apricots), coarsely chopped
½ teaspoon mixed spice
¼ cup walnuts, coarsely chopped
2 teaspoons honey
6 apples (I used Braeburn)
50g brown sugar
¼ cup marsala (or use white wine or water)
1 cinnamon quill
mascarpone, cream or creme fraiche to serve

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Put the orange zest and juice in a bowl and add the sultanas and apricots. Leave to soak or 20 minutes then mix with the mixed spice and walnuts.

Use an apple corer (or a sharp knife, very carefully) to remove the apples' cores, leaving the apples whole. Take a slice off the apples' bottoms so they stand upright and lightly score around the middle of each apple.

Stuff the fruit mix into the apples and put them into a baking dish with the cinnamon quill. Sprinkle with the sugar and marsala, cover with foil and bake for 30 minutes. Remove the foil and bake until tender (about 15 minutes). Serve the apples warm with the sauce from the baking dish and some mascarpone, cream or creme fraiche.

› **WINE** A sparkling moscato such as the Pelissero Moscato d'Asti 2014. *

CREDITS Cutlery, small black and brass dishes, purple decanter and glass, green and black dinner plates all from Father Rabbit; grey bowls from Taylor Road Homewares. For full details, see Credits Index.

DAVID WITH THE HEAD OF GOLIATH BY CAGNACCI, LISZT COLLECTION / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

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FLASH IN THE PAN + ITALIAN SPECIAL



ITALIAN SAUSAGE BUCATINI WITH
PORCINI, HAZELNUTS & TARRAGON
recipe page 94

WHITE PIZZA WITH CAULIFLOWER & TALEGGIO
recipe page 98

OLIVIA ANDREWS has quick and clever ideas for the midweek rush.

Recipes **Olivia Andrews** / Photography **Rob Palmer**
Styling **Kristine Duran-Thiessen** / Recipe analysis **Sarah Hanrahan**



ITALIAN SAUSAGE BUCATINI WITH PORCINI, HAZELNUTS & TARRAGON

SERVES 4

Preparation 10 minutes plus soaking / Cooking 10 minutes

20g dried porcini, soaked in 300ml boiling water for 15 minutes
375g dried bucatini pasta
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
400g Italian sausages, casings removed
2 shallots, finely chopped
1 clove garlic, crushed
250g punnet Swiss Brown mushrooms, cleaned, finely chopped
½ cup toasted hazelnuts, coarsely chopped
¼ cup coarsely chopped tarragon
⅓ cup coarsely chopped parsley
pinch of dried chilli flakes
⅓ cup finely grated pecorino or parmesan

Bring a large saucepan of salted water to the boil. Meanwhile, drain the porcini, reserving 150ml of the soaking liquid, ensuring any grit is discarded, then coarsely chop the porcini.

Cook the pasta according to packet instructions until al dente. Drain.

Meanwhile, heat the oil in a frying pan over high heat. Break up the sausages into the pan and cook for 5 minutes or until golden. Remove with a slotted spoon and set aside.

Add the shallots, garlic and fresh mushrooms to the pan. Cook for 5 minutes or until any liquid has evaporated. Add the porcini, reserved soaking liquid and pasta to the pan and toss well to combine.

Divide the pasta among bowls and scatter with the hazelnuts, herbs, chilli and pecorino to serve. Drizzle with oil and season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper.

› **WINE** A bold tannic Chianti. Try the Castello di Radda Riserva Chianti Classico DOCG 2011.

LAMB WITH MASH, CARROTS & CELERY, OREGANO & PINE NUT GREMOLATA

SERVES 4

Preparation 15 minutes / Cooking 25 minutes

750g floury potatoes, peeled, cut into 4cm cubes
60g butter
125ml (½ cup) milk
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
1 bunch baby carrots, peeled, cut in 1cm pieces on an angle
3 sticks celery, cut into 1cm-thick slices
1 tablespoon finely chopped oregano
finely grated zest of 1 lemon
⅓ cup toasted pine nuts, coarsely chopped
1 clove garlic, crushed
12 Frenched lamb cutlets
1 tablespoon lemon juice

Put the potatoes in a saucepan and cover with plenty of water. Season with salt and bring to the boil over medium heat. Cook the potatoes for 12-15 minutes or until tender. Drain, then return to the pan over low heat. Mash the potatoes with the butter. Stir in the milk and season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Keep warm.

Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Add the carrots and celery and fry for 5 minutes or until slightly softened. Remove and set aside.

Meanwhile, combine the oregano, lemon zest, pine nuts and garlic in a bowl. Season to taste. This is the gremolata.

Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in the pan over medium-high heat. Season the lamb cutlets on both sides.

Cook for 2-3 minutes each side for medium-rare until done to your liking. Remove, cover loosely with foil and set aside to rest for 3 minutes. Return the vegetables to the pan with the lemon juice and 60ml (¼ cup) water. Season and cook for a further 3 minutes or until tender. Divide the mash, vegetables and lamb among plates, then top the lamb with the gremolata.

› **WINE** An earthy, soft montepulciano, such as the Riparosso Montepulciano 2013.

GF DF

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Key to Symbols

V
Vegetarian

DF
Diabetic-friendly

GF
Gluten-free

HF
Healthy fats

LAMB WITH MASH, CARROTS
& CELERY, OREGANO
& PINE NUT GREMOLATA



CHICKPEA DITALINI WITH SILVERBEET & ROSEMARY

SERVES 4

Preparation 10 minutes
Cooking 10 minutes

375g dried ditalini pasta or other short pasta
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 red onion, finely chopped
1 zucchini, cut into thin 4cm strips
½ bunch silverbeet, stalks diced 2cm, leaves shredded
1 tablespoon finely chopped rosemary
250ml (1 cup) vegetable stock
400g can chickpeas, rinsed, drained
80g parmesan, finely grated

Bring a large saucepan of salted water to the boil. Cook the pasta according to packet instructions until al dente. Drain and set aside.

Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Fry the garlic and onion for 5 minutes or until slightly softened. Increase the heat to medium-high. Add the zucchini, silverbeet stems and rosemary and cook for 3 minutes or until lightly golden. Add the stock, chickpeas, and silverbeet leaves and cook for 2 minutes or until wilted.

Stir in the pasta and half the parmesan and season well with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Divide among bowls and scatter with the remaining parmesan.

› WINE An intense orange wine. Try the Vej Bianco Antico 2006.

V DF

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BEEF WITH CAVOLO NERO,
CAPERS, ARTICHOKES,
& WHITE BEAN PUREE
recipe page 98

FLASH IN
THE PAN
+



WHITE PIZZA WITH CAULIFLOWER & TALEGGIO

SERVES 4

Preparation 10 minutes / Cooking 10 minutes

250g ricotta
1 clove garlic, crushed
2 tablespoons thinly sliced sage leaves
2 large store-bought pizza bases
1 large waxy potato, very thinly sliced into 1mm rounds
200g cauliflower (about 2 cups florets), very thinly sliced
100g pancetta slices
100g melting Italian cheese, such as taleggio or fontina, cut into 1cm cubes
1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil

Preheat the oven to 220°C. Combine the ricotta, garlic and half the sage in a bowl and season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Evenly divide the mixture and spread over the bases. Scatter the potato and cauliflower slices over the bases. Top with the pancetta, remaining sage and the cheese, drizzle with the oil and season.

Put the pizzas onto 2 separate oven trays. Bake in the oven for 10 minutes or until golden on the surface and cooked, swapping the pizzas' positions halfway through.

› **WINE** A relaxed, smooth dry white – we recommend the Castyello Soave Classico 2014.

PORK WITH FENNEL, ORANGE, SMASHED OLIVES & POLENTA

SERVES 4

Preparation 10 minutes / Cooking 20 minutes

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling
1 pork fillet, trimmed
1 fennel bulb, halved, thinly sliced
1 orange, cut into thin wedges
100g pitted Kalamata olives, bruised with a knife
1 tablespoon thyme leaves
500ml (2 cups) chicken stock or water
250ml (1 cup) milk
1 cup instant polenta
¼ cup finely grated parmesan

Preheat the oven to 190°C. Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large frying pan over high heat. Season the pork all over with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Add the pork to the frying pan and cook for 6 minutes, turning, until browned. Transfer to a baking tray and put in the oven for 10 minutes or until done to your liking. Remove, cover loosely with foil and set aside for 5 minutes to rest.

Heat the remaining oil in the frying pan over medium-high heat. Fry the fennel and orange for 2-3 minutes each side or until golden. Add the olives and thyme and cook for 1 minute, then turn off the heat and keep warm.

Meanwhile, bring the stock, milk and 500ml (2 cups) water to a simmer in a saucepan over medium heat. Gradually whisk the polenta into the pan and cook for 2 minutes or until combined and smooth. Stir in the parmesan and season.

Thinly slice the pork. Divide the polenta among plates and top with the pork and the fennel mixture. Drizzle with extra virgin olive oil to serve.

› **WINE** A bright, fresh red, such as Susumaniello 'Elfo' 2014.

DF GF (check your stock is gluten free)

BEEF WITH CAVOLO NERO, CAPERS, ARTICHOKES & WHITE BEAN PUREE

SERVES 4

Preparation 10 minutes / Cooking 12 minutes

2 x 400g cans cannellini beans, rinsed, drained
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
juice of ½ lemon
4 x 150g beef rump steaks
1 bunch cavolo nero, trimmed, cut into large pieces
250g marinated artichokes, drained
1 tablespoon capers
½ lemon, cut into wedges, to serve

Set a saucepan over medium heat, add the beans, half the garlic, 1 tablespoon oil, 1 tablespoon lemon juice and 60ml (¼ cup) water. Cook for 2 minutes or until warmed through. Use a stick blender or masher to mash the mixture until smooth. Add more water, 1 tablespoon at a time, for a thinner consistency. Season to taste with salt and freshly ground black pepper. Keep warm.

Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a large frying pan over medium-high heat. Season the beef on both sides and cook for 3 minutes each side for medium-rare or until done to your liking. Remove, cover with foil and rest for 3 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat the remaining oil in the same pan over medium-high heat. In batches, if necessary, cook the cavolo nero and remaining garlic for 3 minutes or until the cavolo nero wilts. Add the artichokes and capers, season and warm through. Divide the puree and vegetables among plates. Top with a steak and serve with lemon wedges.

› **WINE** A dark, spicy red. Try the I Muri Negroamaro 2013. *

DF GF

CREDITS Pasta bowls and salt and pepper dish both by Dots and Lines 10 to 1000; Blood Moon Rising bread plate, large salad server and mug (holding polenta) all by Sit Still Lauren; platter (beef) and dish (fennel and orange) both by Earth and Baker; blue ceramic jug by Little White Dish; rust-coloured plate by Seastone Wares. For full details, see Credits Index

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PORK WITH FENNEL,
ORANGE, SMASHED
OLIVES & POLENTA

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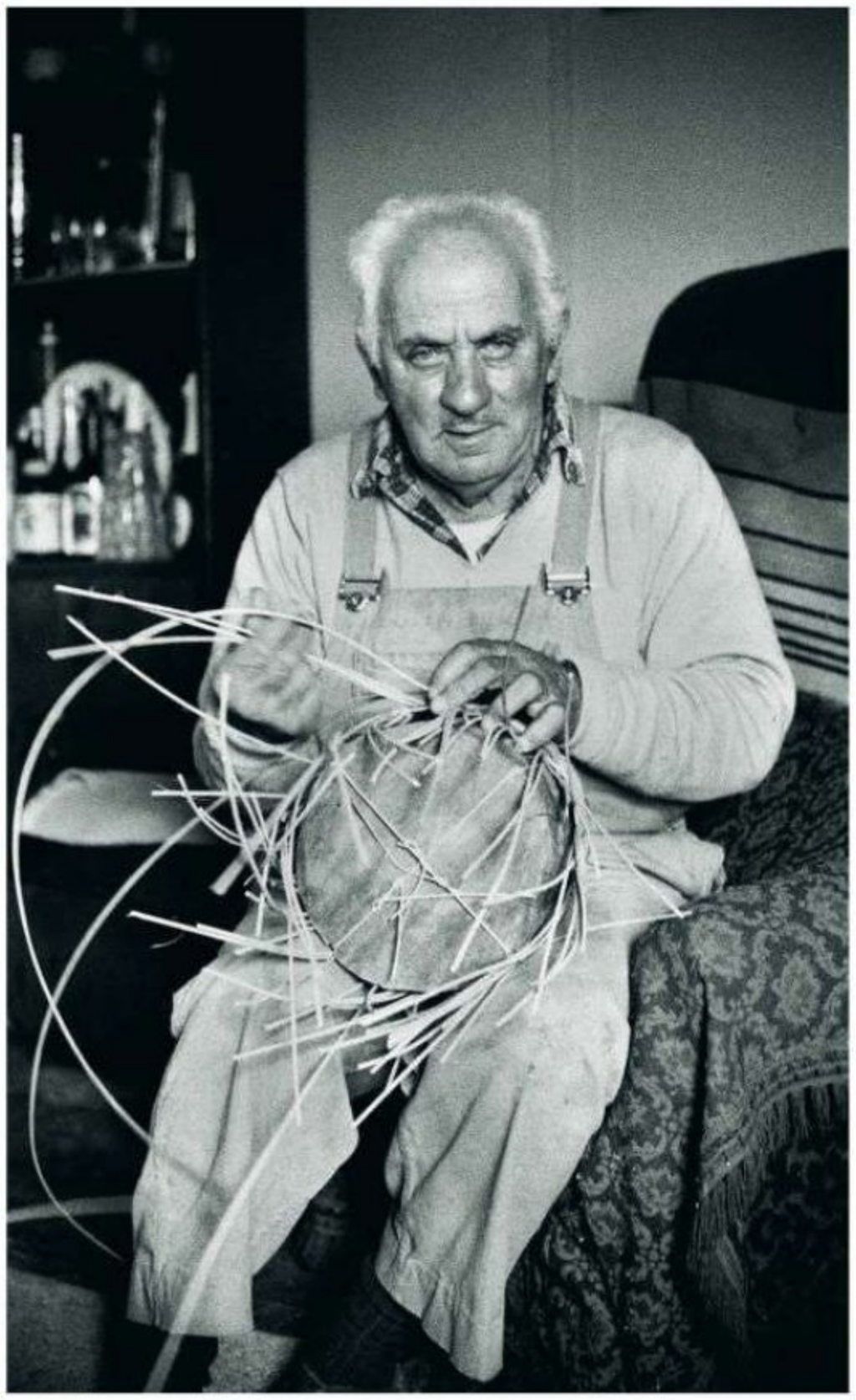
Nonna (Giovannia Sirianni) carrying sticks to stoke the fire, circa 1989 **OPPOSITE PAGE:** (clockwise from top) The original farmhouse in Kinglake West; Nonno (Erminio Sirianni) weaving a cheese-making basket from river reed; a family dinner in 2004; Zio Alberto cutting up his homemade salami

Photographer Serena Giovanna Stevenson has been documenting the day-to-day life of her Italian family for 18 years.

la famiglia è tutto

Photography **Serena Giovanna Stevenson**
Words **Alice Neville**









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THIS PAGE: Nonna carrying the stomach of a freshly butchered goat, with her dog Cecilia at her side, at the farm in Kinglake
OPPOSITE PAGE: (clockwise from top) Zia Maria serving up pasta cu sucu; Zia Maria with her handmade pasta shuta; Zio Raphaele and his grandson; Nonna stirring milk to separate the curds for cheesemaking, circa 1989

"When visiting my family in Melbourne, I experienced a sense of belonging I never really felt in New Zealand, maybe because it was OK to be an excited extrovert with my Calabrese family the Siriannis; to be myself. Or because my face was recognised as Italian and not anything else."

Auckland photographer Serena Giovanna Stevenson's Scottish-Kiwi dad met her Italian mum when he was in port in Melbourne with the merchant navy. Pasqualina was just 16 and they went on a blind date and hit it off, ended up getting married and returning to New Zealand.

Pasqualina, the youngest of 10 children, had moved with her family to Melbourne from Calabria in Italy's deep south in 1956, when she was 4, and grown up in Australia finding it hard to fit in. "They tried to be as Australian as they could, especially the younger three girls," explains Serena. "At school they used to hide their sandwiches because everyone teased them about their thick Italian bread."

As a child, Serena and her family would visit Melbourne often, and moved there for a couple of years when she was 11. "It was great, we had the chance to live and experience our Southern Italian culture. Us three kids just loved it because we didn't have anything like that here. "We didn't speak the language but it didn't make too much difference. It didn't matter that we came from New Zealand, we were just completely embraced. And it's always like that – that's why I've continued to go back there, I just feel at home. You walk in the door and it's like 'sit down' and a bowl of pasta is put in front of you."

When she was a teenager, Serena became interested in photography. After leaving school, she decided to go and stay with her grandparents in Melbourne before starting university, and she took her camera with her.

"I just photographed them, and it became a way for me to communicate with them and understand in more depth about who I was... I didn't know what the project was going to be then, but, to cut a long story short, I just kept going back."

When she was in her mid 20s and by now a professional photographer, others in the industry saw Serena's photos of her family and told her there was something there. That's when the project became more intentional.

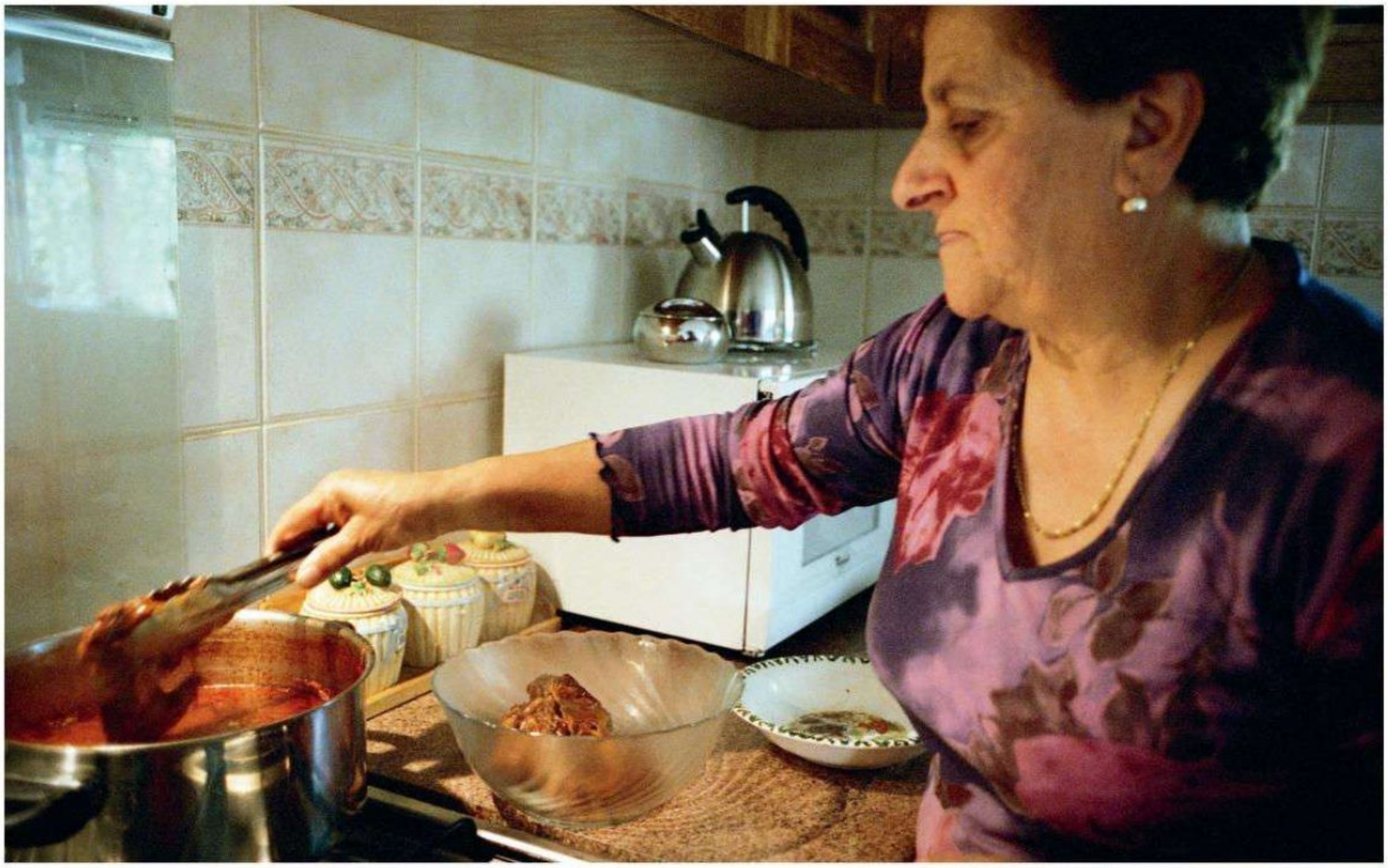
"I went back and photographed them and I noticed there was an amazing thread with mealtimes and food, and I think that's because that's at the core of the Italian culture, and especially the Calabreses – in southern Italy it's not only about sitting down and eating as a family, it's also about the growing and the making.

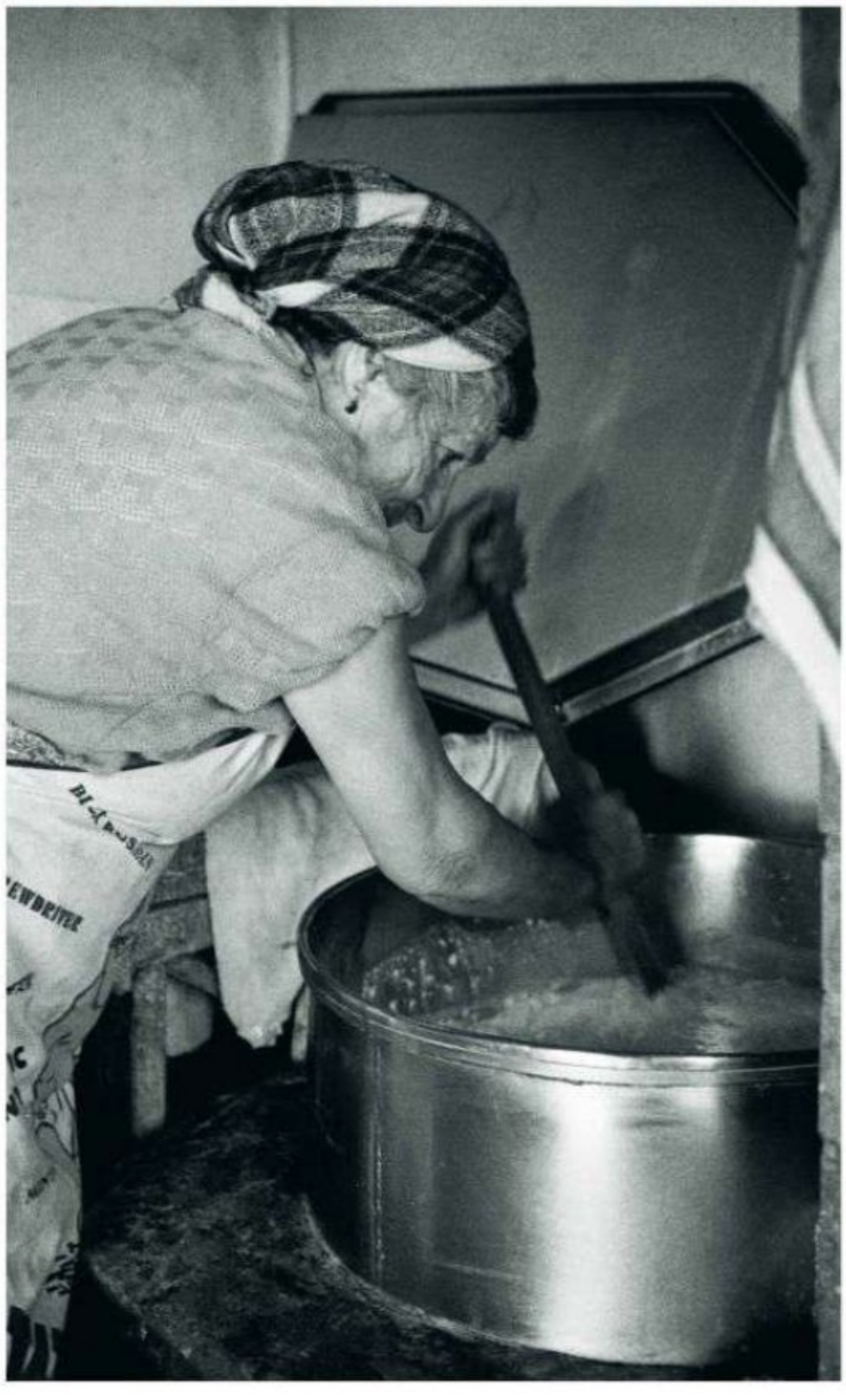
"Another big part of it was my nonna – there was a deep understanding of who I was because of her. She's like this real strength and pillar. My nonno was too, but he was more that stern Italian man, where she's motherly, so it became about getting to know her."

Nonna (Giovannia Sirianni) died in 2006, aged 93. "I was in Melbourne the week she passed away. I cuddled up with her for the last night on the farm. We slept well, I had no worry in the world when with her," Serena recalls.

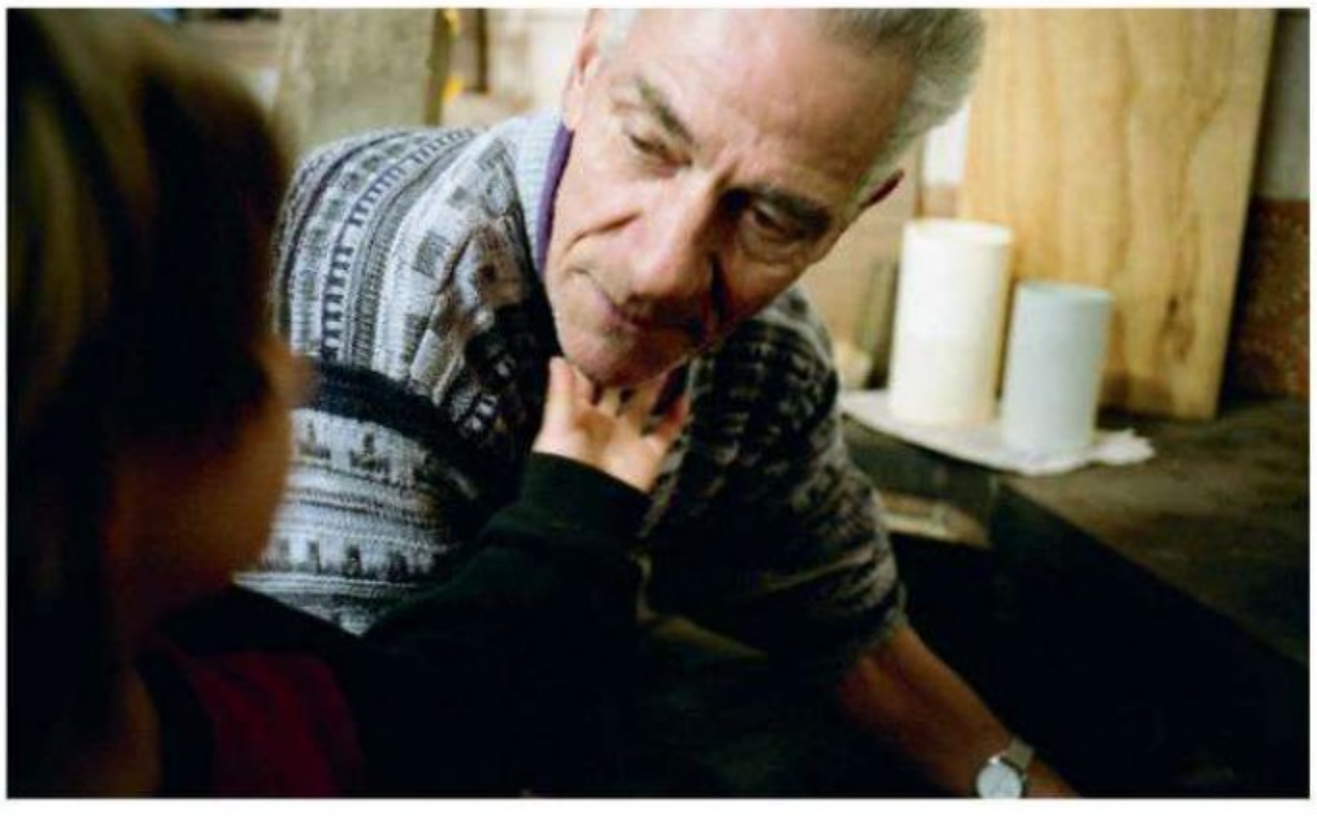
In 2012 she organised a family gathering in the hall in Preston, the Melbourne suburb the family originally settled in, and printed 200 of the photographs to hang on the wall. "I understood then the value of it," she says. "There were four generations there. I realised the importance of the little ones knowing about their culture because of this work." This feeling intensified after having her own child in 2013. "After Jakob was born, I realised I've got to make this into a book."

The book, which is to be called *No English Darling* (which Nonna used to say to Serena when she tried to talk to her), will feature images from the period she's been photographing her family, plus 40 recipes she's slowly but surely extracting from her aunties and quotes from each of the 10 children. She is currently looking for publishers. **serenastevenson.com**.









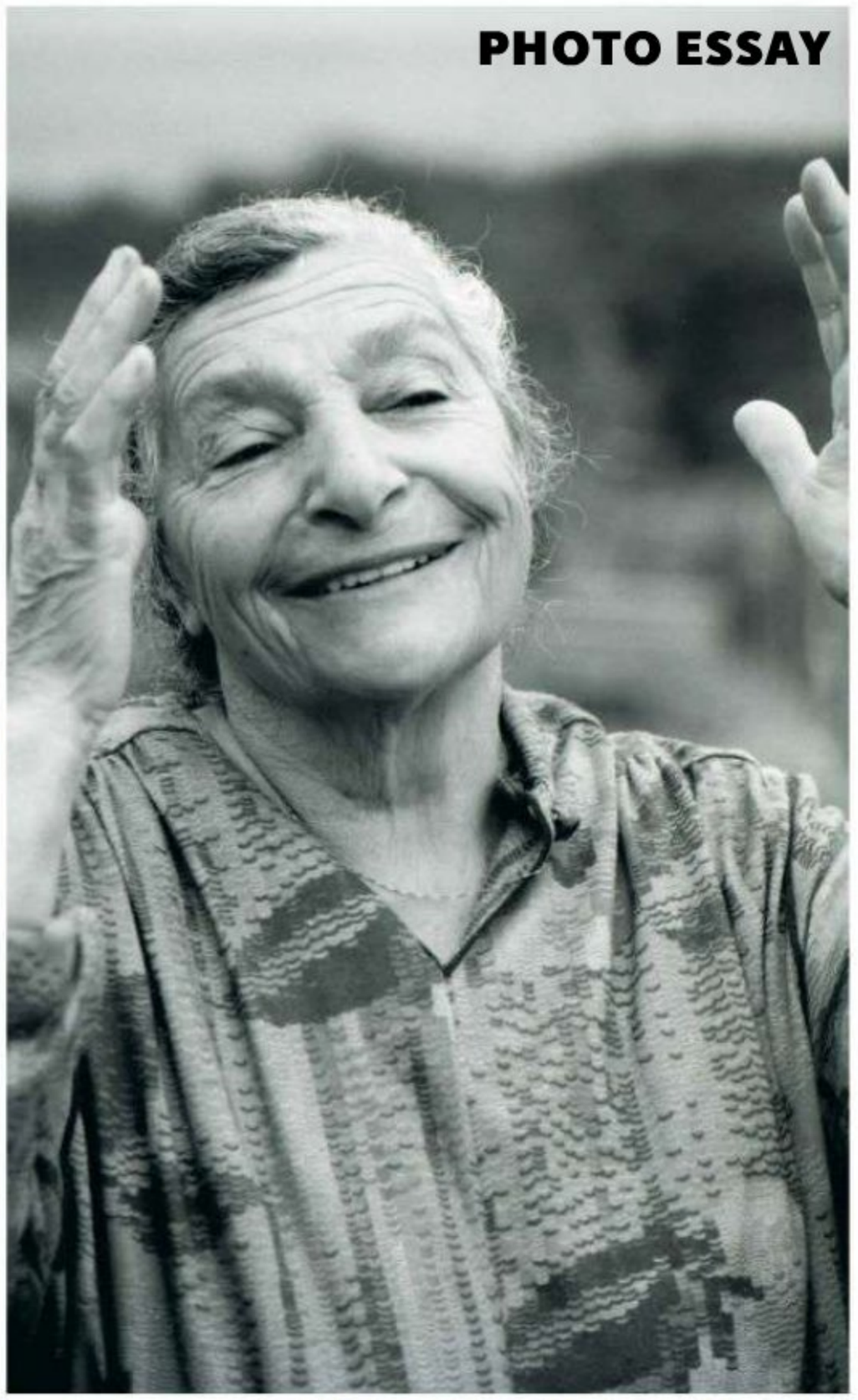


TOP: Zia Angelina serving up pasta shuta cu sucu in 2004 **ABOVE:** Nonna turning cheese in the cheese room **OPPOSITE PAGE:** (clockwise from top left) Nonna's dressing table, circa 2004; Nonna in 1996; a family meal circa 2001; Serena serving up her own homemade pasta earlier this year **OVERLEAF:** Zio Antonio with his homemade wine in the early 2000s

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PASTA CU SUCU

SERVES 6

The pasta shuta recipe here came from Serena's aunt, Zia Maria (Carolina) and is a simple fresh pasta.

"It's really basic but the thing about it is the time and – it sounds a bit cliched – but the love that goes into it, and the history. I know in my family we make a bowl of pasta shuta and it's handmade, or if someone makes gnocchi, it's still a really big deal... it's this excitement."

Everyone in the family knows how to make pasta cu sucu, Serena explains, another simple dish that lets the quality of the ingredients shine.

"It's about the order it's cooked in, the length of the cooking time, the type of meat – homekill or bought organic, it makes a huge difference."

She advices buying organic, preferably Italian, canned tomatoes, paste and puree for the best results.

For the pasta shuta

3 cups plain flour, plus extra for sprinkling
4 eggs

With clean hands, mix the flour and eggs with a pinch of salt and 4 tablespoons cold water until it has come together as a dough. Wrap in plastic wrap and leave in the fridge for 30 minutes. Remove from the fridge and cut into pieces small enough to roll through a pasta machine. Continue to roll through the pasta machine until the pasta is thin.

Put the pasta on a clean bench and sprinkle with flour. Change the pasta machine setting to the style of pasta you want and cut away. Serve with homemade sauce, such as the suco below, and grated parmesan.

For the suco

olive oil for frying
1 onion, finely chopped
½ teaspoon mixed dry or fresh herbs
3 bay leaves
2 large cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 whole organic chicken (size 16), cut into 8-10 pieces
800g organic fresh diced tomatoes with sauce
350g organic tomato puree (passata)
200g organic tomato paste

Heat some olive oil in a deep saucepan. Add the onion, herbs, bay leaves and garlic and cook over a gentle heat until the onion is transparent.

Add the chicken pieces and lightly brown on all sides. Mix to combine then add the tomatoes, puree and paste.

Bring to the boil then lower the heat and simmer for 3-4 hours or until the meat falls off the bone, stirring every 15-30 minutes. Serve with pasta shuta. ✱

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What to do with...

PORCINI MUSHROOMS

Porcini (*botulis edulis*) are found across the northern hemisphere in Europe, Asia and North America, and has also been introduced to several southern hemisphere countries, including New Zealand. Dried porcini are sold at good supermarkets and specialty food stores, usually imported from Italy. Stored in an airtight container, they will keep for up to a year, making them a great pantry staple. They need to be rehydrated in warm or hot water or stock before using. Save the soaking liquid for a stock or sauce.



Fresh porcini If you can get your hands on some **fresh New Zealand porcini** (foraging is your best option – search 'The secret world of porcini hunting' on stuff.co.nz for *Cuisine* contributor Ewan Sargent's account of a porcini hunt at Hagley Park), they are great sauteed in **butter** with **garlic** and lots of fresh **herbs**.

Porcini powder Try grinding **dried porcini** in a spice grinder to a fine powder and sprinkling over cooked **meat** or **fish**, **soups** or **risottos** to give a fresh burst of intense flavour. Add the porcini powder to vinaigrette and drizzle over **beef carpaccio** topped with **artichokes**, **parmesan** and **wild rocket**.

With pasta or gnocchi You can soak **porcini** in warm water for 30 minutes then reduce the mushrooms and the liquid to a syrupy consistency, add a little **cream** and liquidise to make a great-tasting sauce for **pasta** or **gnocchi**; it's also fantastic as a sauce for **roast chicken**.

Stews & casseroles I think my favourite way to use **porcini**, especially in the winter months, is simply to add a small handful to a stew or casserole and let them cook slowly in the liquid to release all their robust flavours.

✱ **SIMON WRIGHT**

Potatoes & porcini Soak **porcini** in hot water for 20 minutes, drain but retain the soaking liquid. Fry the porcini in oil with slivers of **garlic** until golden, add the soaking liquid and cook until most of the liquid has evaporated. Add peeled, sliced **potatoes** to the pan, stir well then arrange in a single layer on a shallow baking tray. Season generously with **salt** and **black pepper** and bake in a hot oven until the potatoes are cooked. Excellent with **lamb**.

Fish & porcini Soak **porcini** in hot water for 20 minutes, drain but retain the liquid. Fry the porcini in oil with slivers of **garlic**, **chilli flakes** and **thyme**. Add the liquid and a knob of **butter** and reduce until it has mostly evaporated. Make a foil bag, add a piece of **fish** and top with porcini. Add a dash of **wine**, close the bag and cook on a preheated tray in a hot oven for 10 minutes. Serve with braised **greens**.

Chicken fricassee with porcini
Cut a **chicken** into serving pieces (or use skin-on chicken drums and thighs). Heat a pan with **olive oil** and brown the chicken until golden. Add chopped **garlic**, cook for a minute, then add **white wine** and reduce. Add soaked **dried porcini** and the liquid, a **sprig of thyme** and a can of **tomatoes**, coarsely chopped. Half cover with a lid and simmer gently until the chicken is cooked through. ✱ **GINNY GRANT**



PHOTOGRAPHY: JASON CREAGHAN; BACKGROUND MARBLE FROM ARTEDOMUS; FOR FULL DETAILS, SEE CREDITS INDEX

WHAT TO DO WITH

PORCINI BROTH, EGG YOLK, CELERIAC, TOASTED RYE & WINTER LEAVES

SERVES 6

This is a weekend project kind of recipe but it's totally worth the effort. Much of it can be prepared in advance.

For the broth

50g unsalted butter
2 onions, thinly sliced
3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
handful of fresh thyme
1kg button mushrooms, sliced
100ml madeira
25g dried porcini, soaked in 75ml warm water
1.5 litres chicken or vegetable stock
6 free-range, organic eggs

Melt the butter in a large heavy-based saucepan then add the onions and garlic and cook, without colouring, until soft. Add the thyme and button mushrooms and cook until the mushrooms have softened and released their juices.

Add the madeira, boil for 1 minute then add the dried porcini, along with their soaking liquid, and the stock and bring to the boil.

Turn the heat down slightly and simmer for 20 minutes. Strain the porcini broth through a fine sieve into a clean container, pushing hard on the mushrooms to extract as much juice as possible, then season with sea salt and cool. Once the porcini broth has cooled, refrigerate until cold.

Carefully separate the egg yolks from the whites, keeping the 6 egg yolks separate from each other for the confit. Whisk the egg whites together to break them up.

Pour the cold porcini broth into a clean saucepan and whisk in the egg whites. Set the saucepan over medium heat and bring to a low simmer. As the porcini broth warms, the egg whites will set and rise to the surface, creating what's known as a raft, clarifying the stock as it does so.

Allow the stock to very gently simmer for 10 minutes, then break a hole in the side of the raft to expose the clarified broth underneath. Using a small ladle, strain the broth through a fine sieve lined with a coffee filter into a clean saucepan. The broth is now ready for use or can be refrigerated for up to 4 days.

For the toasted rye

200g rye crumbs, made by blitzing rye bread in a food processor, toasted
30g toasted pine nuts

Blitz the toasted rye crumbs and pine nuts together in a food processor, season with sea salt and quickly pulse together to combine. Keep to one side.

For the winter leaves

6 curly kale leaves
6 red cabbage leaves

Preheat the oven to 70˚C. Tear the kale and cabbage leaves into large pieces, blanch separately in boiling salted water for 1 minute and refresh in iced water.

Drain the leaves, pat dry with paper towel and place on a baking tray lined with baking paper in a single layer, making sure the leaves are not touching.

Dry the leaves in the preheated oven for about 4 hours or until crisp. Remove from the oven and store in an airtight container until required.

Celeriac puree

50g butter
1 small onion, thinly sliced
1 small celeriac, peeled, diced
milk (about 250ml)

Melt the butter in a large heavy-based saucepan and cook the onion, without letting it colour, until soft. Add the celeriac and continue to cook for 2 minutes.

Add enough milk to cover then bring to the boil, season with salt and simmer until the celeriac is soft to the bite.

Drain the celeriac, retaining the cooking liquor, then put the celeriac into a blender and blend on high speed, using a little of the cooking liquor to obtain a smooth consistency. Correct the seasoning and keep warm.

For the egg yolk confit

6 egg yolks (reserved from the broth)
180ml olive oil

Preheat the oven to 65˚C. Divide the 6 egg yolks among 6 small ovenproof vessels (such as ceramic or glass), cover each with 30ml oil and put in the oven for 40 minutes.

For the garnish & to serve

knob of butter
100g mixed mushrooms, thinly sliced
1 small fresh black truffle

Warm the porcini broth and the celeriac puree on the stove. Put the rye crumbs in a warm oven for 1 minute to heat through.

Cook the mushrooms in a little butter, season with sea salt and keep warm. In a deep bowl, place a pile of the mushrooms and a spoonful of the celeriac puree side by side.

Drain most of the oil from the egg yolk, very carefully pour the egg yolk into the bowl, season with sea salt and top with freshly grated black truffle.

Spoon a little of the toasted rye crumb next to the egg yolk and garnish with a few of the winter leaves. Put the porcini broth into a jug and pour table side. *

This edition of What To Do With celebrates the porcini, with Simon Wright from The French Cafe sharing the recipe he created specially for the launch of the MercedesBenz Masterclass series, adapted for the home cook.

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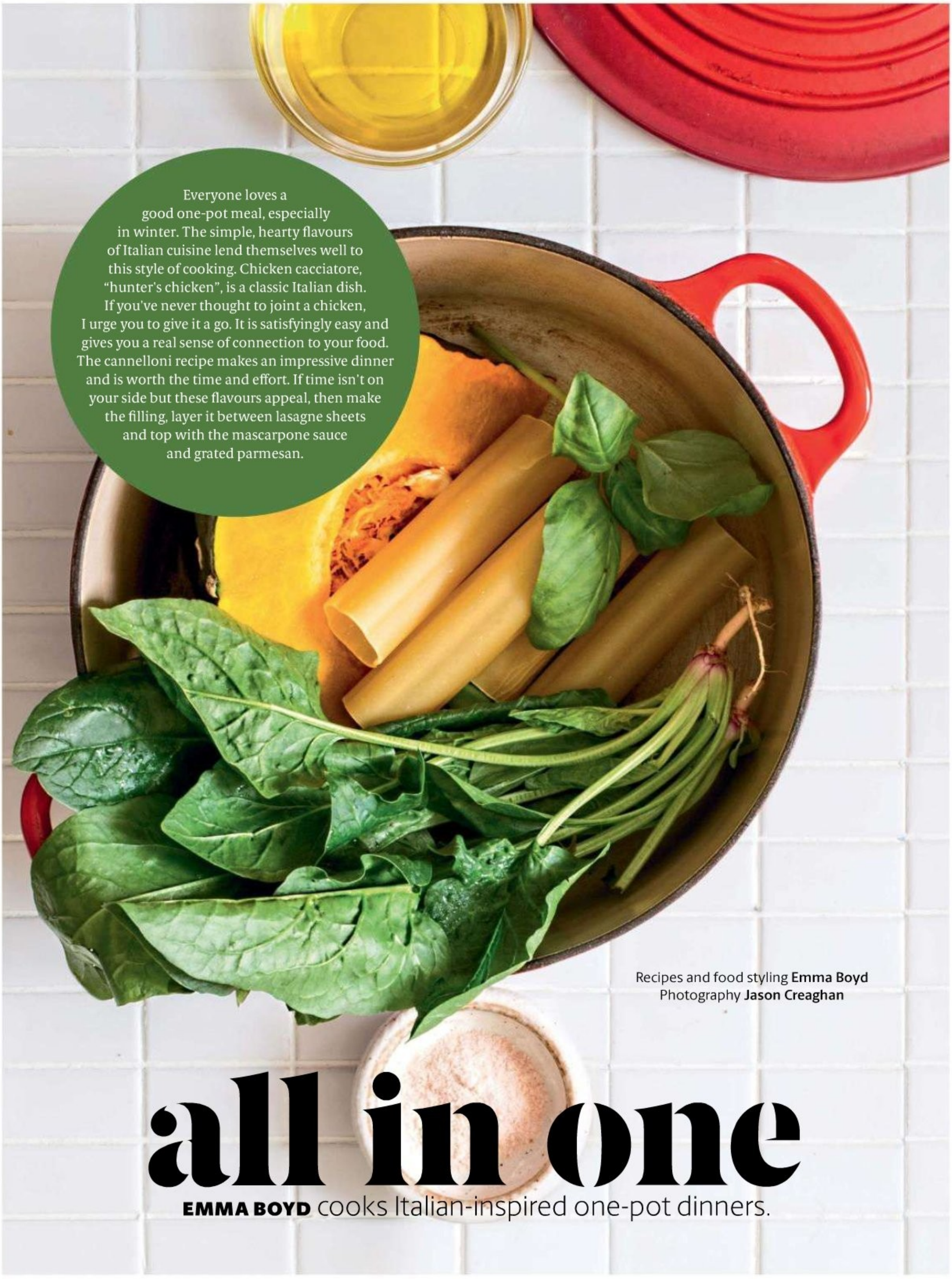
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Everyone loves a good one-pot meal, especially in winter. The simple, hearty flavours of Italian cuisine lend themselves well to this style of cooking. Chicken cacciatore, "hunter's chicken", is a classic Italian dish. If you've never thought to joint a chicken, I urge you to give it a go. It is satisfyingly easy and gives you a real sense of connection to your food. The cannelloni recipe makes an impressive dinner and is worth the time and effort. If time isn't on your side but these flavours appeal, then make the filling, layer it between lasagne sheets and top with the mascarpone sauce and grated parmesan.

Recipes and food styling **Emma Boyd**
Photography **Jason Creaghan**

all in one

EMMA BOYD cooks Italian-inspired one-pot dinners.

VEGO NIGHT

PEA & MINT TORTE

SERVES 4-6

Preparation 15 minutes
Cooking 45 minutes

When I was 14, my neighbour lent me a copy of the *River Cafe Cookbook* and it proved a defining moment in my culinary journey. This is inspired by a River Cafe recipe and makes a quick weeknight meal.

2 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
3 cloves garlic, crushed
4 cups frozen peas
4 eggs, separated
⅓ cup cream
100g ricotta
100g parmesan, grated
150g feta, crumbled
2 tablespoons flour
zest of 2 lemons
⅔ cup mint, coarsely chopped
green salad to serve

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Heat the olive oil in an ovenproof frying pan over medium heat and fry the onion and garlic until soft and golden. Add the peas and continue to fry until heated through then remove from the heat.

Put the egg yolks, cream, ricotta, parmesan (reserving a good handful for the top) and feta in a bowl, season with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper and mix to combine. In a separate bowl, beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form.

Sprinkle the flour over the pea mixture in the frying pan then stir in the lemon zest and mint, followed by the cheese mixture. Gently fold in the egg whites and sprinkle with the remaining parmesan.

Cook for 35 minutes or until cooked through and golden. Pop under the grill if it needs a bit of extra colour. Serve with a green salad.

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CHICKEN CACCIATORE

SERVES 4

Preparation 30 minutes plus soaking and resting time / Cooking 1½ hours

If you joint your own chicken, reserve the carcass to make chicken stock or bone broth (throw in a slow cooker with an onion cut into 8, add sea salt, cover with water and cook for 24 hours).

½ cup (10g) dried porcini mushrooms
1.5kg chicken, jointed (or 1.5kg chicken pieces)
1 cup red wine
large sprig rosemary
large handful thyme sprigs
2 bay leaves
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, finely chopped
4 cloves garlic, crushed
¾ cup (125g) black olives
400g can chopped tomatoes
2 teaspoons sugar
2 red capsicums, cut into long thin slices
crusty bread and green salad to serve

Put the porcini in a heat-proof bowl, pour over 2 cups boiling water and let sit for 30 minutes. Remove the mushrooms, reserving the liquid, and chop finely.

Put the chicken in a large bowl, pour over the porcini liquid and red wine then add the porcini, rosemary, thyme and bay leaves and season with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper. Cover and let sit for at least 3 hours or overnight.

Preheat the oven to 180°C. Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a heavy-bottomed ovenproof saucepan and fry the chicken pieces in batches until browned. Remove and set aside. You may need to add more oil.

Heat the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in the saucepan and fry the onion and garlic over medium heat until golden and soft.

Return the chicken to the saucepan along with the liquid and herbs, olives, tomatoes, sugar and capsicum.

Cook in the oven for 1½ hours. Serve with crusty bread and a simple green salad.

COMFORT FOOD

EMMA BOYD

SATURDAY SPECIAL

PUMPKIN, WALNUT & SPINACH CANNELLONI

SERVES 6

Preparation 45 minutes / Cooking 1 hour

¾ cup (100g) walnuts, toasted, finely chopped
1.2kg pumpkin, peeled, cut in small chunks
300g spinach
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 large red onion, finely chopped
4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1 cup basil, coarsely chopped
1 cup (150g) olives, pitted, chopped
150g parmesan, grated
350g ricotta
200g mascarpone
1 egg yolk
pinch of nutmeg
3 tablespoons milk
280g cannelloni tubes (I used 24 tubes)
30g bread (I used a slice of Vogel's bread), processed into breadcrumbs
salad to serve

Preheat the oven to 180°C. I used a 20cm ovenproof saucepan, which is 11cm deep.

Put the pumpkin in the saucepan, cover with water, bring to the boil then simmer for 5 minutes or until soft. Remove from the saucepan, put into a large bowl and mash.

Wash the spinach and leave some water clinging to it. Put in the saucepan and steam for 2 minutes to wilt. Remove, squeeze out the excess liquid then roughly chop before adding to the pumpkin.

Heat the oil in the saucepan then fry the onion and garlic until golden and soft. Add to the pumpkin mix along with the walnuts, basil, olives, half the parmesan and 150g of the ricotta. Season well with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper.

In a small bowl, mix the remaining ricotta with the mascarpone, egg yolk, nutmeg and milk and season with sea salt.

Cook the cannelloni tubes in a saucepan of salted water until al dente, then drain and drizzle with olive oil to prevent them from sticking together.

Pour a quarter of the mascarpone mix into the bottom of the saucepan. Put the pumpkin mixture into a piping bag (I used a sealable plastic bag and cut off the corner) and fill each of the tubes, standing them up in the pot as you go.

Pour the remaining mascarpone mix over, tapping the saucepan to get it to work its way downwards, then sprinkle with the remaining parmesan and the breadcrumbs. Bake for 30 minutes or until golden. Serve with a salad. ✱

HOME BAR

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THE SPECIALS

THE APERITIF

To stimulate the appetite try Riccadonna Prosecco ($16.99), or a Dry Martini. When offering your guests a Martini you've got 3 questions to ask them...

GIN OR VODKA?

Be a classicist and enjoy the botanical notes using gin, or for smooth, supple pepperiness try Smirnoff Double Black (700ml $37.99), or Ciroc Vodka (750ml $109.99).

DRY, WET OR PERFECT?

A Martini needs Vermouth & our pick is the Martini Extra Dry (750ml $31.99) from Piedmont, Italy.

To check out the third question and learn how to impress your guests with easy variations of the Martini go to www.lk.co.nz

FOOD MATCH

All produced using local or fair traded, sustainable ingredients, we have the full range available both online and in store, pick them up and get tasting!

East Bali Cashews, Garlic Pepper, Chilli Crunch, Sea Salt, 85gms $4.99

The Baron Pistachio, Lightly Salted Mixed Nuts, 110gms $4.99

Crispy Corn Nibbles, Chill, Sea Salt, BBQ, 75gms $3.50

Masion Therese Pickles & Relishes, $6.99 or 3 for $18

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THE SPECIALS

THE MAIN

IMPRESS WITH PINOT

Lighter style reds for Italian, and if you prefer local over International wines go for the Martinborough region for an earthy quality that's a great match with the rustic flavours of Italian Cuisine. Our picks are:

LIGHT, FRUITY, APPROACHABLE

Russian Jack Pinot Noir 2014 (750ml $19.99). Bright notes of wild strawberry, red cherry and herb makes this a lovely drop for pizza.

RICHER, DEEPER, SPICED

Martinborough's Te Tera Pinot Noir 2014 (750ml $29.99). Wonderful aromatics of dark cherries and dried herbs and spices, perfect with pasta.

FOR THE TABLE

Entertaining the numbers? Make a delicious lower in alcohol sangria bowl – using Pinot Noir, soda water and fresh fruit. Find the recipe online!

THE SPECIALS

THE DIGESTIF

A FRESH FINISH

Serve a rich and zesty Italian limoncello or orangecello (Santa Marta Limoncello 500ml $29.99) (Earles Orangecello 500ml $32.99).

LIQUID DESSERT

For more warming flavours try a luscious Amaretto Galliano 500ml $44.99); the perfect balance of almond, cherries, roasted cocoa beans and vanilla, or the irresistible nuttiness of Frangelico Liqueur (700ml $47.99), made with plump Tonda Gentile Hazlenuts from the Peidmont region in Italy. Match with richer puddings as a nip over ice, also sublime in coffee.

STICKY END

Sticking with wine? We recommend Marisco A Sticky End (375ml $33.99); and The Ned Noble (375ml $25.99) -these Sauvignon Blanc stickies are beautiful with Meringue based and creamy desserts.



a bitter sweet symphony

Aperitivo time? Whip yourself up a Negroni or one of these tasty twists on the theme.

The classic Italian aperitivo the Negroni has enjoyed a massive resurgence in popularity in recent years, and no wonder – it's seriously good. There's no single definitive account of the Negroni's birth, but the most popular version is that it was invented in Florence in 1919, when Count Camillo Negroni asked a bartender to strengthen his favourite cocktail, the Americano, by replacing the usual soda water with gin. Variations on the classic Negroni have developed over the years and here are some of our favourites (plus the original), thanks to Alessandra Ierardi, a cocktail whizz from Italian restaurant and bar Farina, in Auckland's Ponsonby.

BLOOD ORANGE AMERICANO

MAKES 1

The classic Americano is a Negroni precursor made with Campari, vermouth and soda. There are various stories about its origin, the most common being that it was created at Caffe Camparino in the 1860s and originally called Milano-Turino (the Campari came from Milan, the vermouth from Turin), then became known as the Americano due to its popularity with American expats. This is a twist on the classic Americano, using Sanpellegrino blood orange soda (Aranciata Rossa) and Solerno, a Sicilian blood orange liqueur (available in New Zealand at selected liquor stores).

15ml Solerno Blood Orange Liqueur
30ml Campari
30ml Martini Rosso vermouth
200ml Sanpellegrino Aranciata Rossa
slice of orange to garnish

Put all the ingredients in an old-fashioned glass with crushed ice and stir. Garnish with an orange slice.



Recipes and drink styling **Alessandra Ierardi**
Photography **Jason Creaghan**

NEGRONI SBAGLIATO

MAKES 1

Sbagliato means mistaken or messed up, and this drink was reportedly created when a bartender accidentally added prosecco instead of gin to the Negroni he was making. It turned out to be a very happy accident indeed, as it's delicious. If you're a Negroni novice or perhaps aren't in the mood for something as boozy as the classic Negroni, a Sbagliato is a great option.

30ml Campari
30ml Carpano Antica Formula vermouth
60ml prosecco
slice of orange to garnish

Build the cocktail in a highball glass with ice, stir, garnish with an orange slice and serve.

BOULEVARDIER

MAKES 1

The boulevardier is like the love child of a Negroni and a Manhattan.

15ml Campari
15ml Martini Rosso
30ml bourbon whiskey
3 dashes angostura bitters
piece of orange peel to garnish

Chill a Martini glass with ice. Pour the Campari into a mixing glass filled with ice and stir for 30 seconds, then strain out the Campari, leaving the ice (it will retain the perfume of the Campari). Build the Martini Rosso, bourbon and bitters in the mixing glass, stir for 30 seconds then strain into the martini glass. Garnish with orange peel.

CLASSIC NEGRONI

MAKES 1

30ml gin (we use Bombay Sapphire)
30ml Campari
30ml Carpano Antica Formula vermouth
wedge of orange and/or dried orange slice* to garnish (optional)

Build the cocktail in an old-fashioned glass, using 1 large cube of ice. Stir, squeeze the orange wedge into the glass and use as garnish, along with a dried orange slice, if using.
*Cut an orange into 2mm-3mm slices, put on a baking paper-lined oven tray, sprinkle with icing sugar and a pinch of salt and dry in a 40˚C-50˚C oven for 6-8 hours. If short on time, you can do this in a 100˚C oven for 2-3 hours but check often, as they can burn. ✱



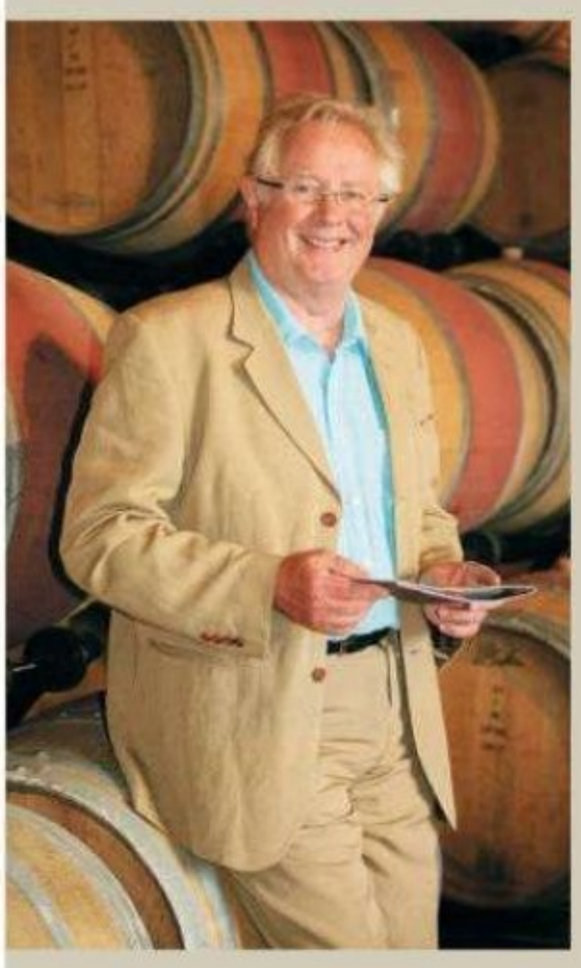
WINE NEWS

JOHN SAKER with the latest from the world of wine



App and away

You do the walking while an app does the guiding at Marlborough's Yealands Estate. The Awatere Valley producer has created the Yealands Estate White Road Tour app, a first for a New Zealand winery. The app gives directions and provides commentary on the many points of interest over the 40-minute, 7.5km vineyard tour. Of course, if you have any curly questions, you'll have to wait until you get back to the cellar door to have them answered. But then the app isn't expecting a tip at the end of the tour, either.



Hugely successful UK wine merchant Tony Laithwaite, left, was in New Zealand recently to launch a Kiwi arm of Laithwaite's wine delivery service. Laithwaite's Wine Group is one of the world's largest wine operations, and it stakes it reputation on quality, offering a "100 per cent, quibble-free refund for any wine that is not enjoyed". For its NZ operation, it has chosen 250 wines from around the world (go to laithwaiteswine.co.nz). Laithwaite has long been a fan of New Zealand wine, and of the country itself. "I feel really proud to sell in New Zealand," he says. "I love this place. This is the country I've always felt the safest."

Three's company

It's now Tom times three. Hawke's Bay winery Church Road has added a third varietal to its prestigious Tom range, which owes its name to the winery's pioneering winemaker Tom McDonald (1907-1987). There's now a syrah to accompany the Bordeaux blend original (which first appeared with the 1998 release) and its more recent sidekick, Tom Chardonnay. Giving the expansion a nudge was the stellar 2013 vintage, a year particularly favourable for syrah in the Bay. Church Road has recently released the Tom class of 2013, which is made up of all three varietals. It's a very classy trio. Winemaker Chris Scott, who has had a hand in producing most of the Toms so far, describes the journey: "It's been a big evolution... one of which I'm very proud."



Billed as a series of TEDx-style short talks and panel discussions, Wine Day Out is coming to NZ for the first time on 1 July. It's run by Bottle Shop Concepts, an organisation founded by Aussie wine commentator Dan Sims, and will be held at Auckland's St Matthews in the City. Speakers include Sims, sommelier Meg Abbott-Walker of Masu and Rippon winemaker Nick Mills. winedayout.com

For the latest news, events and wine-and-food matches, sign up for The Ferment, Cuisine's wine newsletter, at cuisinewine.co.nz

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MAICA ISTOCKPHOTO/GETTY IMAGES

in vino veritas

In keeping with the theme of the issue, here's John Saker's selection of some Italian vinous treats worth hunting down. Look for them at fine wine merchants such as Glengarry, the Fine Wine Delivery Co, the Village Winery and Advintage.

PROSECCO

Luna Argenta Prosecco NV ★★★★½ $24.99

Col de'Salici Valdobbiadene Prosecco Superiore 2015 ★★★★ $27.22

Tosti Prosecco NV ★★★★ $17.99

SPARKLING MOSCATO

Pelissero Moscato d'Asti 2014 ★★★★ $31

STILL WHITES

Alpha Zeta 2014 Single Vineyard Terrapieno Pinot Grigio ★★★★★ $26

Castello Soave Classico 2014 ★★★★ $29

Alpha Zeta G Garganega 2014 ★★★★ $22

Umani Ronchi Casal Di Serra 2014 ★★★★ $26

Ca di Rajo Nina Incrocio Manzoni 2013 ★★★★ $30

ORANGE

Vej Bianco Antico 2006 ★★★★½ $42

CHIANTI

Rocca delle Macie Tenuta Sant Alfonso Chianti Classico 2012 ★★★★ $35

Castello di Radda 2011 Riserva Chianti Classico DOCG ★★★★ $55

OTHER REDS

Aglianico del Vulture 'Sine Die' 2005 ★★★★½ $35

Castello Banfi Cum Laude 2010 ★★★★ $40

Pipoli Aglianico del Vulture ★★★★ $22

Susumaniello "Elfo" 2014 ★★★★ $19

Umani Ronchi San Lorenzo 2013 ★★★★ $24

Rivera Rupicolo Rosso DOC 2013 ★★★★ $17

Riparosso Montepulciano 2013 ★★★★ $17

Jacopo Biondi Santi Sassoalloro 2010 ★★★★ $49

Tormaresca Neprica IGT Puglia 2013 ★★★★ $26.50

Contesa Vigna Corvino Montepulciano d'Abruzzo 2013 ★★★★ $21.50

Prunotto Dolcetto d'Alba 2014 ★★★★ $26.50

I Muri Negroamaro 2013 ★★★★ $20

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personality plus

The latest batch of NZ syrahs boast a distinctive Kiwi identity, writes **RALPH KYTE-POWELL**.

NEW ZEALAND WINEMAKERS are still on a learning curve when it comes to syrah, but the outstanding 2013 and 2014 vintages have provided excellent raw materials for them to work with. Consistency isn't yet on par with Australian shiraz, but the star-rated syrahs tasted by the *Cuisine* panel were a very good collection with a distinctive New Zealand identity. The '14s seem a bit bigger and firmer than the more understated 2013 wines at the same stage, but both exhibit qualities that should support good cellaring potential.



Craggy Range's Gimblett Gravels Vineyard



John Belsham



Nick Picone



Ralph Kyte-Powell

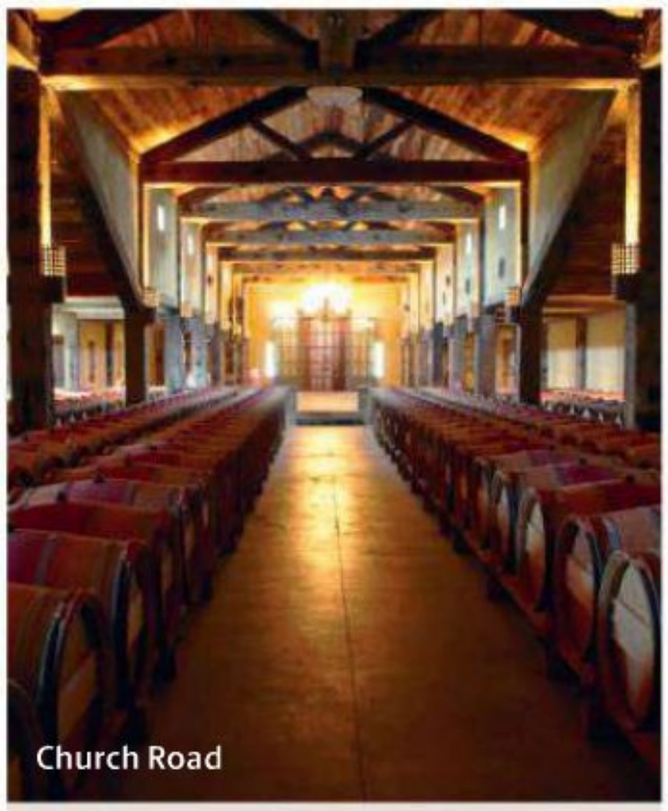
Tasting Panel
Tasting New Zealand syrah were John Belsham, an international wine judge and owner of Foxes Island Wines in Marlborough, Nick Picone, group chief winemaker at Villa Maria and The Wine Society's Young Winemaker of the Year for 2012, and Australian-based *Cuisine* wine writer Ralph Kyte-Powell.

BEST BUY

Best Buys

Those wines offering an outstanding mix of quality and price are awarded Best Buy status. Price points differ, depending on the varietal, but if you see the Best Buy sticker you can rest assured you're getting a great wine at an excellent price. Look out for the sticker on wine bottles at all good wine retailers.

TASTING PANEL: JASON CREAGHAN & OLIVER LI


Church Road

TOP 5

1 Villa Maria Reserve Syrah 2014 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★★ $60

2 Villa Maria Cellar Selection Syrah 2014 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★★ $25 BEST BUY

3 Church Road McDonald Series Hawke's Bay Syrah 2013 ★★★★★ $26.60 BEST BUY

4 Villa Maria Reserve Syrah 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★★ $60

5 Craggy Range Gimblett Gravels Vineyard Syrah 2014 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★½ $31.95 BEST BUY

Tasting results

★★★★★ outstanding	4
★★★★½ excellent	2
★★★★ very good	14
★★★ good	19
No award	30
TOTAL	69

Top NZ syrah



1

Villa Maria Reserve Syrah 2014 (Hawke's Bay)

★★★★★ 9-10 $60

Perfection in Hawke's Bay syrah from Villa Maria. The concentrated nose of dark berries, liquorice, spice and cola is immediately impressive. In the mouth it translates into a lush, richly flowing, finely balanced syrah of intensity, lingering aromatic flavours, and poised sandy tannins. All it needs is bottle age to confirm its classic status.

› A WINE FOR GRAND CUISINE LIKE ROAST RIB OF BEEF WITH A RED WINE JUS

For Ralph Kyte-Powell's video review of our top NZ syrah, visit cuisinewine.co.nz


Oliver Powrie

Respecting the source

The secret of success, according to Villa Maria viticulturist Oliver Powrie, starts with the grapes. "Villa Maria planted 12 hectares of syrah between 1998 and 2000 on some of the stoniest ground at Hawke's Bay," says Powrie. "Harvesting decisions are generally made slightly earlier, retaining freshness in the wine and ensuring preservation of aromatics alongside dark berry and cassis notes. Very judicious irrigation ensures the vines are under moderate stress but don't become too dry on the hottest days." The emphasis on fruit quality works well. For the second year, Villa Maria Reserve Syrah took out top accolades at the *Cuisine* tasting. With the 2014 vintage, whole bunches were used in fermentation for the first time, reinforcing the winery's obsession with faithfully reflecting the quality achieved in the vineyard.

NZ SYRAH



5

2 Villa Maria Cellar Selection Syrah 2014 (Hawke's Bay) BEST BUY

★★★★★ 1-1 to 8 $25

An inky, young syrah to serve with a hearty daube of lamb. Complex floral, blueberry, boysenberry, anise and vanillin aromas are immediately seductive, and it tastes ripe, full and rich, with an open, generous personality. Tannins are still a little tough, but not too much so – a bit of time in bottle will soften the wine nicely. Great value at $25.

3 Church Road McDonald Series Hawke's Bay Syrah 2013 BEST BUY

★★★★★ 1-6 $26.60

Named in honour of pioneering Hawke's Bay winemaker Tom McDonald, this is another wine that offers the highest quality for less than $30. "There's great varietal purity here," said Nick Picone. "A lovely wine." The nose exhibits a broad spectrum of aromas ranging through raspberries, blackcurrant, pepper, spices and beetroot. It's opulent with ripe fruit, rich and long-tasting, with a finely textured tannin finish.

4 Villa Maria Reserve Syrah 2013 (Hawke's Bay)

★★★★★ 1-1 to 8 $60

"Robust but generous," is how John Belsham accurately summed up this 2013 syrah. It offers ripe boysenberry, liquorice and white pepper aromas, with oak a subliminal seasoning. A little less lush than the outstanding 2014 vintage, but no less impressive, it's a flavoursome wine but elegant, with lovely persistence and supple background tannins.

4½

5 Craggy Range Gimblett Gravels Vineyard Syrah 2014 (Hawke's Bay) BEST BUY

★★★★½ 1-1 to 10 $31.95

Craggy Range, nestled under a spectacular range of hills that are, actually... very craggy, is one of the most impressive wineries in Hawke's Bay. The 2014 syrah has blackberry and plum, sweet spice, well-measured oak, and earthy/ironstone characters in a very concentrated, fleshy wine, structured well by fresh acidity and dry tannins, finishing long and aromatic.

Mission Estate Reserve Syrah 2014 (Hawke's Bay) BEST BUY

★★★★½ 1-6 $25

Everybody should visit Mission Estate in Hawke's Bay. No winery in New Zealand shares its unique combination of history, culture, hospitality and good wine. This is an intense syrah with floral, dark berry, spice, white pepper and anise aromas. The palate is youthfully fresh with generous flavours and ample, grainy tannins.

Syrah for the future

Until recently, conventional wine wisdom in New Zealand held on to the idea that Kiwi vineyards were no place for syrah. The warm, dry vineyards of Australia, where it's called shiraz, suited it perfectly, but NZ? Too cold, too wet; weedy, ungiving wines. That's all been changing as New Zealand winemakers learn more about this great grape variety from France's Rhone Valley. Revised vineyard and viticultural techniques with syrah, and, most importantly, searching out the ideal spots to grow it, have combined in a new breed of high-quality wines that are turning heads at home and across the globe.

gentle giants

Value, consistency and versatility make Aussie shiraz a sure bet, writes **RALPH KYTE-POWELL**.

"THESE WOULD HAVE TO BE the most consistent, best-value wines on earth," declared *Cuisine* wine panel chair John Belsham at the end of our tasting of Australian shiraz. A scan of the results confirms it, with star awards going to 57 of the 83 wines tasted, and most of those that didn't quite achieve star status were still acceptable, if not very exciting. Wines with actual winemaking faults could be counted on the fingers of one hand. Not many international wine types can boast such a positive strike rate.

Aussie shiraz continues to evolve, and the gradual refinement of the type over the years means that there are fewer big, butch wines in the alcoholic, jammy, oaky style than before. In their place is a slightly gentler take on Australian shiraz. "They're still full of flavour, ripe and satisfying," said Ralph Kyte-Powell. "But there's an increasing sophistication among them. They're easier, less obvious, more friendly."

Australian shiraz is versatile too. Most drink well in the first flush of youth, with ripe fruit centre stage, but the age-worthiness of most is beyond question, and the extra complexities that evolve as the years pass make it worth putting a few bottles away for a rainy day.

On the value front, two of our Top 5 wines have price tags that hover around the $17 mark, and another four that made the four-star rating sell for less than $20. These stand out, but panellists were struck by the value to be had in the $20 to $30 range, where our top wine can be found. John Belsham summed it up succinctly, asking,"In bang for your buck terms, do these wines have any peers?"

4

Awaroa Melba Peach Syrah 2014 (Waiheke Island) ★★★★ 🍾-8 $58

Church Road Grand Reserve Hawke's Bay Syrah 2014 ★★★★ 🍾-8 $44.35

Coopers Creek SV Gimblett Gravels Syrah 2014 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ 🍾-1 to 6 $28.95

Elephant Hill Reserve Syrah 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ 🍾-5 $49

Elephant Hill Syrah 2014 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ 🍾-1 to 6 $34

Esk Valley Syrah 2014 (Hawke's Bay) BEST BUY ★★★★ 🍾-2 to 8 $25

Left Field Syrah 2014 (Hawke's Bay) BEST BUY ★★★★ 🍾-4 $25

Matua Lands & Legends Syrah 2014 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ 🍾-8 $30

Te Awa Single Estate Syrah 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ 🍾-7 $35

Trinity Hill Gimblett Gravels Syrah 2014 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ 🍾-2 to 10 $35

Vidal Legacy Syrah 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ 🍾-10 $80

Vidal Legacy Syrah 2014 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ 🍾-3 to 12 $80

Villa Maria Private Bin Syrah 2013 (Hawke's Bay) BEST BUY ★★★★ 🍾-3 $20

Wairau River Reserve Syrah 2014 (Marlborough) ★★★★ 🍾-1 to 8 $50



Jacob's Creek, Barossa Valley

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AUSTRALIAN SHIRAZ

BEST BUY

Best Buys

Those wines offering an outstanding mix of quality and price are awarded Best Buy status. Price points differ, depending on the varietal, but if you see the Best Buy sticker you can rest assured you're getting a great wine at an excellent price. Look out for the sticker on wine bottles at all good wine retailers.

Tasting results

★★★★★ outstanding	3
★★★★½ excellent	3
★★★★ very good	21
★★★ good	30
No award	26
TOTAL	83

TOP 5

1 Jim Barry The Lodge Hill Shiraz 2013 (Clare Valley, SA) BEST BUY
★★★★★ $27

2 Kirrihill Regional Range Shiraz 2014 (Clare Valley, SA) BEST BUY
★★★★★ $17

3 Shingleback D Block Reserve Shiraz 2012 (McLaren Vale, SA)
★★★★★ $56

4 Peter Lehmann H&V Barossa Valley Shiraz 2013 BEST BUY
★★★★½ $23

5 Jacob's Creek Reserve Barossa Shiraz 2013 BEST BUY
★★★★½ $17.30


John Belsham


Michael Ivicevich


Ralph Kyte-Powell

Tasting Panel

For this Australian shiraz tasting, John Belsham, an international wine judge and owner of Foxes Island Wines in Marlborough, was joined by Michael Ivicevich, general manager group operations viticulture and winemaking for Delegat Ltd, including Barossa Valley Estate in Australia, and Australian-based *Cuisine* wine writer Ralph Kyte-Powell.

Top Australian shiraz



1 Jim Barry The Lodge Hill Shiraz 2013 (Clare Valley, SA)

BEST BUY

★★★★★ 1-4 $27

A great example of modern Australian shiraz from the picturesque Clare Valley. Unlike some blockbusters of yesteryear, this is a fragrant, medium-bodied shiraz of lovely varietal purity. Aromas are floral, herbal and spicy, with a generous core of ripe berryfruit on nose and palate. Texture is silky and fine with lingering flavours backed by balanced, easy tannins. (G)

› A GREAT PARTNER FOR HERBED ROAST VEAL

For Ralph Kyte-Powell's video review of our top Australian shiraz, visit cuisinewine.co.nz


Tom Barry

Marching to a different tune

"Our Lodge Hill label came about because we wanted to make single-vineyard Clare Valley wines," says third-generation Jim Barry winemaker Tom Barry. "We started with riesling in 1999 and shiraz in 2001. The style we are going for in Lodge Hill is a more elegant, perfumed, medium-bodied type of shiraz." Clare Valley tradition is more about full-bodied, robust shiraz, but Lodge Hill marches to a different tune. "We think Clare can do the elegant style extremely well when the vineyards are managed correctly and grapes are grown in the right locations," says Barry. *Cuisine*'s shiraz tasters affirmed the success of the new direction, with Michael Ivicevich describing the wine as "aromatic, plush and poised".



5

2 Kirrihill Regional Range Shiraz 2014 (Clare Valley, SA)

BEST BUY

★★★★★ 1-3 $17

Kirrihill's Clare Valley wines have impressed the *Cuisine* panel before, and this 2014 edition continues the fine form. It smells like a juicy summer pudding of blueberries, raspberries and blackberries, with a good level of fruit ripeness, yet it's not jammy or overdone. There's a savoury touch of spice, too. In the mouth, lovely fruit intensity and weight lead through a soft finish. A bargain. (H)

3 Shingleback D Block Reserve Shiraz 2012 (McLaren Vale, SA)

★★★★★ 1-2 to 15 $56

Shinglebacks are solidly built, prehistoric-looking (but harmless) lizards that sun themselves in this McLaren Vale vineyard, hence the name. This harmonious shiraz has a nose suggesting dark berries, spices, flowers and earth, with a slightly gamy undercurrent. It's rich and full flavoured, stylish and complex, with well-modulated tannin balance. Braised oxtail would match it perfectly. (A)

AUSTRALIAN SHIRAZ



4½

4 Peter Lehmann H&V Barossa Valley Shiraz 2013 BEST BUY
★★★★½ -5 $23

This is a ripe and complete Barossa shiraz with a nose of blackberries, dusty spice and a whisper of sweet oak. It has good body and intense flavour backed up by tight, firm tannins. A generous, characterful, crowd-pleasing wine that looks its best alongside top-quality barbecued meats. (B)

5 Jacob's Creek Reserve Barossa Shiraz 2013 BEST BUY
★★★★½ -4 $17.30

Jacob's Creek's credo with its famous red wines is constant improvement, and they really mean it. The result is keenly priced, quality shiraz like this Barossa number. The classy nose hints at ripe berries, earth, sweet and savoury spices. This wine is surprisingly complex for $17 shiraz – it's flavoursome, easy textured, seamless and lingering, with a well-measured dry finish. (I)

St Hallett Blackwell Shiraz 2013 (Barossa Valley, SA)
★★★★½ -2 to10 $40

The best Barossa shiraz is uniquely satisfying wine, especially with hearty braised meats and the like. Blackwell, named after long-time winemaker Stuart Blackwell, has berry, plum, chocolate and vanillin aromas introducing a powerful, full-bodied red that's kept in trim by some butch tannins and fresh acidity. Should develop well. (D)

4

Angove Family Crest Shiraz 2014 (McLaren Vale, SA)
★★★★ -5 $27

Angove Long Row Shiraz 2014 (South Australian blend)
★★★★ -2 $15 Best buy

Elderton Greenock One Shiraz 2013 (Barossa Valley, SA)
★★★★ -10 $36

Elderton Shiraz 2013 (Barossa Valley, SA) ★★★★ -4 $31

Grant Burge 5th Generation Shiraz 2014 (Barossa Valley, SA) BEST BUY
★★★★ -5 $25

Grant Burge Balthasar Shiraz 2013 (Eden Valley, SA)
★★★★ -1 to 6 $39.50

Hardys Tintara Shiraz 2014 (McLaren Vale, SA)
★★★★ -2 to 8 $29

Jim Barry The McRae Wood Shiraz 2012 (Clare Valley, SA)
★★★★ -8 $63

Kirrihill Peacemaker Shiraz 2013 (Clare Valley, SA)
★★★★ -1 to 12 $60

Mitolo G.A.M. Shiraz 2013 (McLaren Vale, SA) ★★★★ -5 $48

Mitolo The Nessus Shiraz 2013 (McLaren Vale, SA) BEST BUY
★★★★ -5 $24

Penfolds Koonunga Hill Shiraz 2014 (South Australia) BEST BUY
★★★★ -5 $15

Pepperjack Shiraz 2014 (Barossa Valley, SA) BEST BUY
★★★★ -5 $25

Red Knot Shiraz 2015 (McLaren Vale, SA) BEST BUY
★★★★ -3 $17

Shingleback Davey Estate Shiraz 2013 (McLaren Vale, SA) BEST BUY
★★★★ -2 $17

St Hallett Faith Shiraz 2014 (Barossa Valley, SA)
★★★★ -6 $32

Thorn-Clarke Shotfire Shiraz 2014 (Barossa Valley, SA)
★★★★ -5 $26

Wolf Blass Grey Label Shiraz 2012 (McLaren Vale, SA)
★★★★ -2 to 10 $40

Wynns Black Label Shiraz 2013 (Coonawarra, SA)
★★★★ -12 $35

Yalumba Patchwork Barossa Shiraz 2013 BEST BUY
★★★★ -6 $25

Yering Station Shiraz Viognier 2013 (Yarra Valley, Vic)
★★★★ -4 $40

Distributors

To source wines listed contact the distributor, indexed by letter.
(A) EuroVintage: 0800-338 766
(B) Giesen Wines: 03-344 6270
(C) Hancocks: 0800-699 463
(D) Lion: 0800-835 554
(E) Macvine: 09-579 7451
(F) Mineral: 021-464 320
(G) Negociants NZ: 0800-634 624
(H) Niche Wines: 021-061 7179
(I) Pernod Ricard NZ: 09-336 8300
(J) Treasury Wine Estates: 0800-367 837

multi love

Hawke's Bay rules the complex family of wines in this category, writes **RALPH KYTE-POWELL**.

"Bordeaux blend" is a loose term that can mean a straight varietal wine, a cross-pollination of two varieties, or a multi-varietal blend of very complex make-up. The grape varieties involved are cabernet sauvignon, merlot, cabernet franc, malbec and petit verdot, all of which originate in the countryside of Bordeaux, on France's Atlantic coast. The result is a group of wines with a distinct family resemblance, yet the ability to be incredibly complex and multi-faceted.

In New Zealand, the Bordeaux blend is at its best in Hawke's Bay, and the region has a longer story of success with these grape varieties than any other in the country. In this *Cuisine* tasting, Hawke's Bay wines dominated, with the excellent 2013 and 2014 vintages looking the goods.

Many of the wines tasted need bottle age to realise their potential, and this influenced the assessments of them, thus reducing the award tally. Of 80 wines tasted, a little over half (41) were awarded star ratings, and those wines showed admirable consistency and ripe appeal.



Elephant Hill

Tasting Panel The NZ Syrah tasting panel also tasted NZ Bordeaux blends.

Tasting results

★★★★★ outstanding	7
★★★★½ excellent	2
★★★★ very good	8
★★★ good	24
No award	39
TOTAL	80

TOP 5

1 Babich The Patriarch 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★★ $70

2 Villa Maria Cellar Selection Merlot Cabernet Sauvignon 2014 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★★ $18 BEST BUY

3 Villa Maria Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★★ $50

4 Elephant Hill Reserve Merlot Cabernet 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★★ $49

5 Church Road Grand Reserve Hawke's Bay Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot 2013 ★★★★★ $44.35

BEST BUY

Best Buys

Those wines offering an outstanding mix of quality and price are awarded Best Buy status. Price points differ, depending on the varietal, but if you see the Best Buy sticker you can rest assured you're getting a great wine at an excellent price. Look out for the sticker on wine bottles at all good wine retailers.

Top Bordeaux blends



1

Babich The Patriarch 2013 (Hawke's Bay)
★★★★★ 🍷-12 $70

Hawke's Bay cabernet sauvignon blends rarely get better than this. Dense in colour, it has a captivating nose of blackcurrants, red fruits, balanced sweet/smoky oak, and a hint of leafy austerity. In the mouth it's ripe and intense, with complex flavours starting to develop ahead of a lingering fragrant aftertaste. Superb New Zealand red.

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For Ralph Kyte-Powell's video review of our top NZ Bordeaux blend, visit cuisinewine.co.nz


Josip Babich

In the name of the father

Named in honour of Josip Babich, the patriarch of Babich Wines, who planted his first vineyard in 1912 and made his first wine in 1916. Babich's Gimblett Gravels vineyard is one of the most uniform in the area, which guarantees even ripening, and vine age of 22 to 26 years reinforces fruit quality. The 2013 is a blend of 49 per cent cabernet sauvignon, 27 per cent malbec and 24 per cent merlot, but the balance varies from year to year. "With The Patriarch, we allow ourselves the flexibility to play around with the blend," says senior winemaker Adam Hazeldine. "This helps achieve the most well-balanced and flavourful wine we can in any given year. We've had 100 per cent cabs, predominantly merlot and predominantly cab franc in past years, but it's recognisably Patriarch every year, a true reflection of place, or terroir if you like."



5

2 Villa Maria Cellar Selection Merlot Cabernet Sauvignon 2014 (Hawke's Bay)
BEST BUY
★★★★★ 🍷-4 $18

Villa Maria's budget credentials get yet another fillip from this young merlot/cabernet blend. It's an aromatic, fresh drop, with blueberry, cassis and mocha on the nose, followed by a smooth and complete mouthful of ripeness and charm. Finely textured tannins complete the picture. A bargain. Try it with Peking duck.

3 Villa Maria Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★★ 🍷-2 to 12 $50

A very fine young cabernet merlot that's still a bit closed up in youth, ideally needing evolution in bottle, but it's still delicious right now. Aromas combine a delicate violet perfume with deeper fruit notes of berries and cassis, and savoury touches of liquorice and herbs. Flavours are ripe and sustained, with a backbone of fine, grainy tannins holding it together.

NZ BORDEAUX BLENDS



4 Elephant Hill Reserve Merlot Cabernet 2013 (Hawke's Bay)
★★★★★ 1-1 to 8 $49

A mellow, rich merlot blend that fits well with roast beef. Aromas of raspberries, herbs and mocha introduce a welcoming, warm style with ripe flavours woven nicely through barrel complexity. Ample ripe fruit characters balance firm tannins well, in a wine that should develop nicely mid-term.

5 Church Road Grand Reserve Hawke's Bay Cabernet Sauvignon Merlot 2013 ★★★★★ 1-2 to 15 $44.35

Established in 1897, this vineyard was the source of New Zealand's first commercial cabernet sauvignon in 1949. Cabernet remains a big part of the estate's story today, and this is an excellent example. Classical blackcurrant, clove, herb and biscuity oak aromas flow through a rich mouthful that's supple and sustained, with a grippy bite of tannin.

Esk Valley Winemakers Reserve Merlot Malbec Cabernet Franc 2014 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★★ 1-8 $60

Few wineries have a location as lovely as Esk Valley, nestled beside terraced hillsides of vines and looking out to the Pacific Ocean. Long-time winemaker Gordon Russell is a merlot expert and it shows here. Plum, cassis and coffee bean aromas are seductively inviting, and the succulent, ripe, plummy palate is in harmony with richly structured tannins.

Villa Maria Single Vineyard Braided Gravels Merlot 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★★ 1-5 $60

From an organic vineyard at the edge of the sought-after Gimblett Gravels, this merlot will sit beautifully alongside thick steaks with Bordelaise sauce. Dark and inky, it offers violet, plum, red fruit and leafy characters that are classically merlot. It's medium bodied with mellow flavours, good structure and a long finish.

FROM THE TASTING PANEL

"The best New Zealand wines hold their own with the best Bordeaux-style reds in the world. These are iconic wines for this country and they represent truly great value." JOHN BELSHAM

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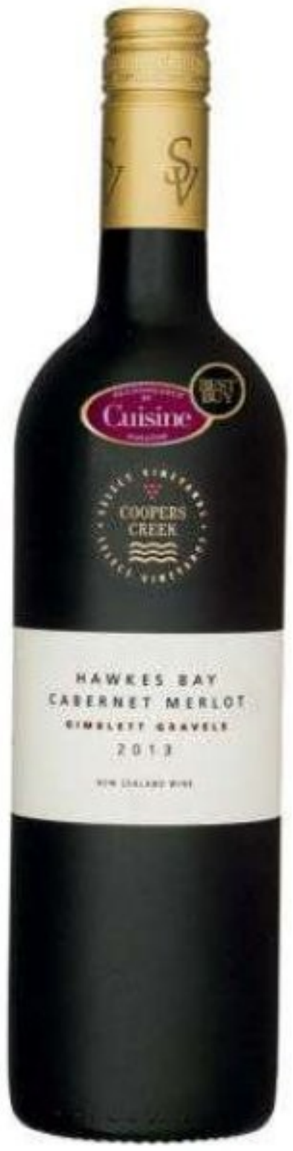
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NZ BORDEAUX BLENDS



4½

Alpha Domus AD The Aviator 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★½ -10 $72

An impressive Bordeaux-style blend of cabernet sauvignon and cabernet franc with malbec and merlot. The nose is full of interest with pure blackcurranty varietal fruit, floral notes and savoury suggestions of cloves and tapenade. It's seamless in the mouth, with medium body and well-sustained flavour, dovetailing into substantial, ripe tannins.

Coopers Creek SV Gimblett Gravels Hawke's Bay Cabernet Merlot 2013 ★★★★½ -6 $28.95 BEST BUY

Coopers Creek's winemaker Simon Nunns is also a wine judge, educator, keen cyclist, true gentleman and all round renaissance type. His skill and knowledge of the Bordeaux varieties finds expression in this fresh cabernet blend. John Belsham thought it "well crafted", which sums it up well: floral notes, cassis, redcurrant and liquorice characters, medium body, good presence and length, a robust tannin backbone.

4

Coopers Creek Reserve Gimblett Gravels Cabernet Sauvignon 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ -2 to 10 $57.95

Elephant Hill Merlot Malbec 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ -4 $34

Mission Estate Reserve Cabernet Franc 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ -2 $25

Mission Estate Reserve Cabernet Merlot 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ -2 to 8 $25

Mission Estate Reserve Merlot 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ -3 $25

Te Awa Single Estate Merlot Cabernet Sauvignon 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ -5 $35

Vidal Estate Merlot Cabernet Sauvignon 2014 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ -3 $16 BEST BUY

Villa Maria Reserve Merlot 2013 (Hawke's Bay) ★★★★ -5 $50

Tasting notes

★★★★★ Outstanding quality

★★★★½ Excellent quality

★★★★ Very good quality (listings only)

★★★ Good quality (website listings only)

Recommended by Cuisine ★★★★★ Magazine

Recommended by Cuisine Magazine

Drink now, don't cellar

-2 Drink now or cellar for up to two years from now

Not ready for drinking yet

Tasting method All wines are tasted blind. If, after discussion, the tasters do not agree on a star rating, the wine will receive the rating given by the majority but dissenting comments will be included in the wine notes. The scores of winemaker judges cannot exceed those of other judges.

Availability All wines entered in *Cuisine* tastings must be readily available at the time of publication. However, high demand and a six-week lead time between tastings and publication can affect availability. If you cannot find the wines, contact the winery or distributor direct.

Prices Suppliers are asked to provide a retail price range for all wines entered in tastings. Prices do vary between vineyard and low-to-high volume outlets and cannot, therefore, be guaranteed. All prices are quoted in $NZ.

Recommended by Cuisine stickers Look for these top wines as your guarantee of quality.

Gold sticker Displayed by wines awarded five stars.

Burgundy sticker Displayed by wines awarded 4½ and four stars.

two fluent Italians

JOHN SAKER introduces a pair of recent Mediterranean migrants to our shores.

The flow of migrants between Italy and New Zealand has never been much more than a trickle. For a long time we were wary of how well the Italians would "assimilate" – they were too different, too hot-blooded, too decadent. And that's just grape varieties. Mind you, it was no different for people.

How wrong that thinking was, on every count. More Italian two-legged immigrants would only have helped and hastened the development of our food and wine culture. And the few Italian grapes that have quietly made their way into the country have assimilated very well, *grazie*. The sangiovese made by Matakana winery Heron's Flight is one example, as is the montepulciano produced by various producers such as Obsidian, Cooper's Creek and Trinity Hill.

Several other Italian varieties have made landfall recently. Two are the relatively little-known lagrein and fiano.

Lagrein

There are just 500 hectares of lagrein planted around the world, one of which can be found at Stanley Estates in Marlborough's Awatere Valley. Northern Italy's Alto Adige region, the grape's birthplace, is home to most of the rest.

There it enjoys cool conditions, with most of it planted at 900 metres above sea level. If its name isn't Italian enough for you (the Germanic influence is strong in Alto Adige), it also goes by the more Italian-sounding lagareno. It's known for having both high acidity and pronounced tannins.

Stanley Estates co-proprietor Steve Pellett began casting about a few years ago for a second red grape to accompany his pinot noir plantings. He considered St Laurent, but decided it was too similar to pinot. Lagrein got the nod, and he made his first wine from the variety in 2014. "We were the first to get it into the bottle," he says. "I think about six other growers now have it in the ground.

"We've found it produces quite a medium-bodied wine. You get good tannin structure from the fruit itself. The flavours are reminiscent of Black Doris plums, cherry, liquorice, leather and a peppery spiciness. Some have described it as being somewhere between shiraz and merlot.

"After three vintages it's now standing on its own two feet. We're chuffed. We see it as a very interesting alternative."

Fiano

Fiano may well have been the original toga party beverage. Evidence points to this white grape from the Campania region around Naples as being responsible for Apianum, a wine prized by the ancient Romans.

Like viognier in France, fiano was threatened with extinction in the latter half of the 20th century. A number of Italian producers in the town of Avellino spearheaded a revival and now, though still an outlier, fiano has a foothold in several countries around the world.

It has a champion in New Zealand in experienced Hawke's Bay winemaker Jenny Dobson. She made this country's first-ever expression of the grape, the BushHawk Fiano 2013, grown on the Bridge Pa Triangle. Dobson has since begun leasing the vines herself and from the 2015 vintage the fiano will be released under her own label, Credo.

"I try to taste any fiano I can get hold of, and I think ours stacks up well," she declares. "It has the texture of the Italian expressions, along with bright acidity. The aromatics are also similar – honey, red apple, apricot – while ours also has a touch of citrus."

Dobson points to the volcanic soils of the Bridge Pa Triangle as being potentially advantageous.

"In Italy it's grown on the pumice of old Vesuvius eruptions, so there's a similarity there. Italians I talk to feel the minerality that came from the soil as being very important. I'm not sure we're seeing it yet." ✱



Northern Italy's Alto Adige region is the birthplace of lagrein

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TRAVEL

Antica Salumeria, Piazza della Rotonda, Rome

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ALL ROADS LEAD TO...

KELLI BRETT uncovers some hidden gems in Italy's most popular spots.

Street art in Florence
OPPOSITE: Cobbled alleyways in the town of Calcata, north of Rome

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ITALY



Italy – a nation with a passion for food, family and life in general. The stunning architecture, the opera, the breathtaking scenery, the iconic movies, the fast cars and the love of drama. Visions of markets bursting with outstanding produce: truffles, olives, porcini, white asparagus, hazelnuts, oils and vinegars, salumi, artichokes, really good bread and locally produced wine. And ohhhhhh the cheese... The idea of eating my way along the road from Rome, through Tuscany and on to Venice – where do I sign up?

The idea of being herded around in a coach with an enormous group of people I don't know? I'd rather be dragged butt naked over broken glass. Not for me the scheduled itineraries, the people in matching parkas and hats, hitting only the major sights and jostling for the same selfies.

So it was with mixed emotions – excitement, anticipation and dread – that I set off on my Luxury Gold Ultimate Italy Trip by Insight Vacations.

In search of authentic Roman flavour

I'm personally met at the airport and transferred to the beautiful Baglioni Hotel Regina, a luxury hotel housed in an elegant stone building that is only 1.1km from the fashionable shopping area on Via Condotti. Dinner needed to be simple after so many hours travelling. I found the perfect plate of *cacio e pepe*, just around the corner at Il Fiammifero Strano. Simple spaghetti, olive oil, pecorino and fragrant peppercorns. A must-have dish when in Rome.

The next morning it's on with the running heels and off to one of Rome's oldest markets, the Piazza di Campo de' Fiori, in search of some authentic, unaffected Roman food. The public square offers a feast of fresh produce, but it was the tiny norcineria (butcher) to the left-hand side of the market that called to me. Viola's front door and window are festooned with salami, sausage and all sorts of dried and cured meat. Inside locals are sampling a selection of salami offered across the counter in crusty bread rolls with small cups of wine. It was dark, salty and musty – and it was worth having travelled for nearly 27 hours to get there.

Outside and back in the square, I needed one of the vibrant orange drinks that seemed to be on

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every table in the surrounding open-air restaurants. Not, as it turned out, typically Roman, the spritz is a wine-based cocktail served as an aperitif throughout north-east Italy. Made with prosecco and a dash of bitter liqueur, mine came with Aperol and tasted just like a grown-up's Fanta.

Back at the hotel and it's time to meet my fellow travellers and take a stroll around the corner to Pizzeria San Marco. An impressive selection of antipasti is served, including an endless list of toppings for bruschetta, but, as is fit for a pizzeria, the pizza is the star. I was transfixed watching the pizzaioli sling dough and slide their creations into an enormous wood-fired oven. Toppings included prosciutto with soft-poached eggs, pumpkin flowers with anchovies, marinated tomato, parmesan, chilli and basil.

The day I met the pope

Well, almost... We meet local expert Amelia for a tour of the Sistine Chapel, before it is opened to the public. This is one of the many touches that make this trip so special. No waiting, no queues, no pushing or shoving, and I'm slightly teary at the sight of something I have only seen in pictures. An opportunity to watch the papal address was something that the good-Catholic-girl part of me could not resist, and then on to the Colosseum, which is, of course, magnificent. I squeeze in a side trip to the Jewish ghetto on the Via del Portico d'Ottavia because, as a food lover, it must be done. I'm not disappointed. I find Roman-Jewish dishes as well as Middle Eastern cuisine. Because the river is close, there are many fish options to choose from and artichokes seem to be everywhere. The *carciofi alla giudia* is a must-try. Following a traditional recipe, the artichoke is cleaned and fried whole, simply seasoned with salt and pepper.

Chocolate, truffles & a Tuscan chef

During a visit to the town of Perugia (home of the famous Baci chocolate) and a walk along the Corso Vannucci with local expert Marco, I discovered *torta al formaggio*, the local cheese bread traditionally eaten during the Easter period but (sadly) now available all year round. It's a salted bread, high and round and bright yellow. The fabulous taste comes from the pecorino, parmesan and lemon juice and I'm told the secret ingredient is a sprinkle of white wine. I love that.

It would be rude not to sample some black Umbrian truffle in the town square before getting back on the road to Tuscany and Villa Le Maschere. This 16th-century building has long been considered one of the most beautiful Tuscan villas. It is exquisite and the food is a perfect match. The executive chef is Giuseppe Frabetti and his food explores the traditions of the Tuscan table, uniting them with modern cuisine. The menu follows the seasons and includes many dishes from the northern Tuscan region of Mugello.

I asked Giuseppe to share something that demonstrated his food philosophy and he delivered three beautiful plates of food. Grilled beef tenderloin, artichoke stuffed with mozzarella, parmesan and a green herb bread, artichoke and pecorino carpaccio and a salmoriglio condiment made of

LUXURY GOLD BY INSIGHT VACATIONS; COOKING POTS, ROMAN STATUE, CHEESE, KELLI BRETT







CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: The Baglioni Hotel Regina, housed in an elegant stone buildling, made the perfect base for exploring Rome; Augustus of Prima Porta with restored polychromy at the Vatican Museums; cheese heaven in Verona; cured meat heaven in Rome; and wood-fired pizza heaven at Barberina di Mugello in Florence; a musical moment at a park in Rome; cooking vessels at the Vatican Museums
OPPOSITE: Rome's famous Trevi Fountain







A taste of Italy a little closer to home

If this issue has left you longing to immerse yourself in all things Italian, but a trip to Europe is not an option, fear not. Here are the best Italian events happening on this side of the world in the coming months.

Festival Italiano 2016
25 September, 11am-4pm
Osborne St and Kent St, Newmarket, Auckland
festivalitaliano.co.nz
Festival Italiano is the one-day street festival of the Italian community in Auckland. Italian eateries including Pasta & Cuore, Gusto at the Grand and Non Solo Pizza organise pop-up restaurants for the day, offering quality Italian food at festival prices. Selected Italian food stalls, Italian importers and artisan producers complete the picture. There is also a large common eating area, live music and entertainment, spot prizes and an area for the bambini.

Italian Wine & Food Festival
21 August, 11am-9pm
Sydney Town Hall – Centennial Hall, 483 George St, Sydney
italianwinefoodfestival.com.au
Cheese- and pasta-making and cooking demonstrations, olive oil masterclasses and food talks with Sydney's top Itaiian chefs, plus a Negroni bar, a food market and live Italian jazz equals a very appealing trip across the ditch...

Hepburn Springs Swiss & Italian Festa
19-23 October
Hepburn Springs, Victoria
swissitalianfesta.com
Celebrating the Swiss and Itaiian immigrants who settled in this district in the 1850s with special events, menus and a tasting of Australian-grown wine varietals.

La Dolce Vita
19-20 November
King Valley, Victoria
winesofthekingvalley.com.au
Taste new-release wines and Italian cuisine, plus enjoy masterclasses and live entertainment with the Italian winemaking families of Victoria's King Valley.

lemon juice, olive oil, minced garlic, chopped oregano and parsley; tortelloni stuffed with ricotta, parmesan and lemon zest on marinated chicken livers with a saffron butter sauce; and cream mousse served with a caramelised orange compote and mandarin sorbet.

Prosecco, paninoteche & David

I wake to contemplate my ceiling. Something I'm sure women have been doing since they first got a roof over their heads. It strikes me that I have been looking at beautiful art on ceilings a lot of late, and that Italian women might have a very different take on counting the cracks. Rosa – another brilliantly chosen local expert – takes us behind the scenes at Florence's Uffizi Gallery and on a private tour through the Vasari Corridor.

Tucked behind the Uffizi Gallery, I discover Ino, a paninoteca using produce from farms that are supported by the slow-food movement. The panini with fennel-infused salami, farm cheese infused with herbs and a rare handcrafted mustard is bliss.

It would have been rude not to celebrate an amazing day with a sparkling wine from Castello di Verrazzano at Spumante Al Ponte Vecchio, an unusual Florentine wine bar on the golden bridge that caters to the curious traveller and the passionate gourmet – that sounds like us! The staff in here are fabulous and the view is magical. The afternoon is spent in more contemplation, this time of Michelangelo's David, and I must say he looks every bit as beautiful from the back as he does from the front.

Dinner is at Barberino di Mugello, a family-run restaurant with what can only be described as delicious, honest food. Breads, pizza, seasonal platters of roast vegetables, cured meats, pillowy handmade raviolli stuffed with farm cheese, and to finish, "Nonna" serves up the most delicious desserts.

Drinking wine & making pasta (while drinking more wine)

A breakfast in the Tuscan hills is not to be rushed. I savour my selection of local cheese and ham and a scoop of decadent roasted potato drenched in olive oil and slow-cooked tomatoes. It's a good thing we are walking to lunch just down the road at Ristorante Le Maschere Enoteca. Here we sample Montalcino rosé paired with fresh farm cheese and honey; a Tuscan vermentino with a truffled omelette and sfogliatella – a shell-shaped pastry filled with vegetables and asparagus – and a Chianti red served with the most decadent game pâté I have ever tasted.

A breakfast in the Tuscan hills is not to be rushed. I savour my selection of local cheese and ham and a scoop of decadent roasted potato drenched in olive oil and slow-cooked tomatoes.

We have to work for dinner and it's probably just as well. At Fattoria Dianella we tour the vineyard with owner and winemaker Francesco Passerin d'Entreves before a private cooking class where we sip more wine and prepare pappa al pomodoro, pasta with meat sauce, zucchini flowers in tempura batter and chocolate cigars with melted hot chocolate sauce.

Here was my chance to see just how little my fellow travellers knew about cooking. As I watched the frantic slicing, dicing and slurping of more wine, I wondered if room service back at the villa might be my best bet. But I was pleasantly surprised by the end result. There is something to be said for making your own pasta.

Romeo, Juliet & a gondolier

Local expert Mauro meets us in Verona and we take a walking tour to visit Juliet's balcony in one of the oldest European shopping districts. The experience is made complete with kisses of Juliet – *i baci di Giulietta* (white cookies with almonds); and sighs of Romeo – *i sospiri di Romeo*

LUXURY GOLD BY INSIGHT VACATIONS; FATTORIA DIANELLA, KELLI BRETT

CLOCKWISE FROM ABOVE: The 16th-century Villa La Maschere is considered to be one of Tuscany's most beautiful; Giuseppe Frabetti cooks exquisite food to match the surrounds at Villa La Maschere; gondolas on the Venice canals; ceiling frescoes at the Uffizi in Florence; traditional Tuscan cuisine gets a modern twist courtesy of Giuseppe Frabetti; inside the villa at Fattoria Dianella, near Florence

(dark chocolate cookies) before a rich carbonara lunch near the Roman arena and a quick sprint through a pop-up food market in the square.

On to Venice to be transported by speedboat to the Bauer Il Palazzo just in time for an early evening gondola serenade. I just wish someone had told me that you step *in* to a gondola, not *on* to the side of it. From my room that night I looked down on the sleeping gondolas and listened to the gondoliers wish each other *buona notte*. Some had obviously had better days than others...

Squid ink & spritz

I could not be in Venice without experiencing the Rialto fish market. Glistening mountains of seafood greeted me and I was interested to note that all locally caught seafood is tagged *nostrano* (local, home-grown). Sustainable fishing has obviously been around for quite some time judging by a marble plaque that shows the minimum size requirements for fish, formulated centuries ago. The gleaming fresh squid inspired me to go in search of a plate of spaghetti with cuttlefish ink, a Venetian specialty. In fact, I tried three different places to make sure I could tell you about the best one!

Trattoria Vecio Portal, near the Piazza San Marco, is run by Mr Pino, originally from Palermo, married to a Venetian – his son cooks in the kitchen. The restaurant has been there for 30 years and on my visit it was full of locals. One couple told me they had been returning to Vecio for 25 years.

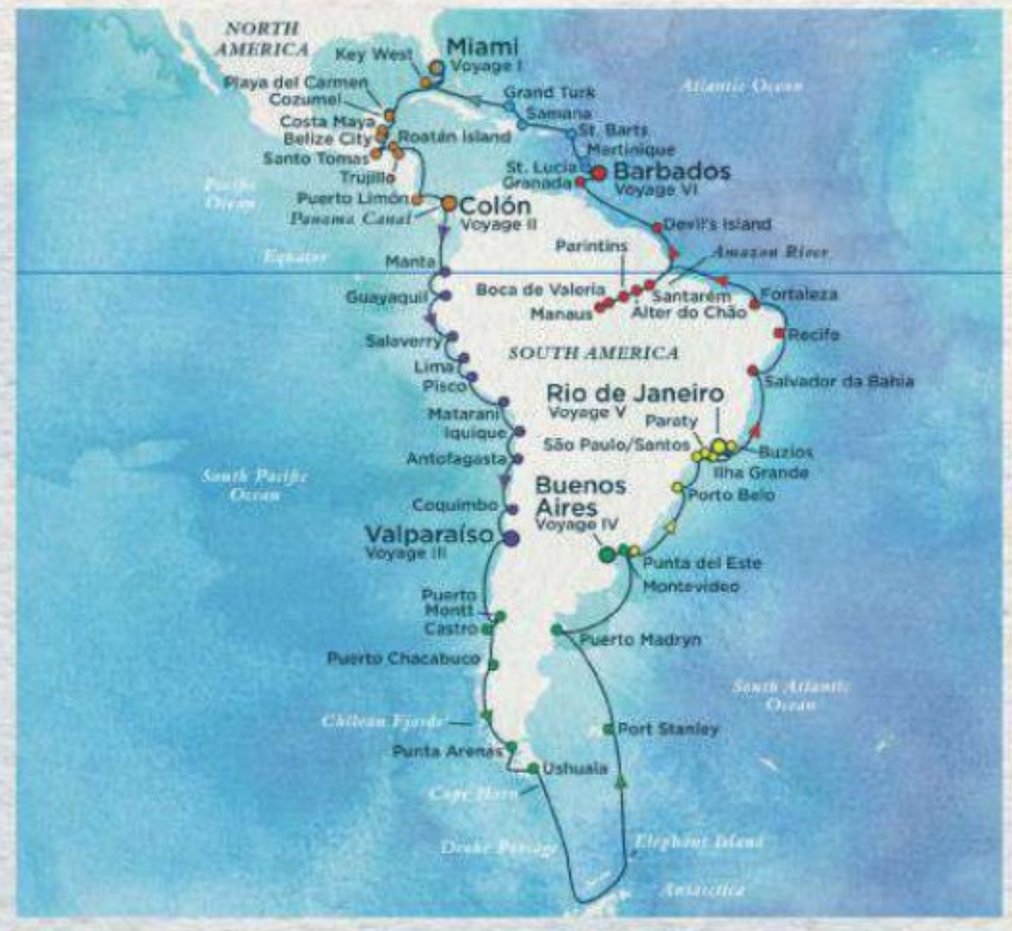
Mr Pino served up a bowl of his black ink pasta and after two bites, I could see this dish becoming an addiction, if only I lived a little closer. I also received a side serving of rant about the restaurants on the canal being fusion cuisine and not true Venetian food. I had another Aperol spritz and settled in for a long chat. Vecio Portal is not flash, but the food is very good. As I checked the mirror on the way out I realised that cuttlefish ink sauce is probably not the best choice if you are on a date. Thankfully I had dined alone.

That evening was to be our final Luxury Gold excursion to the island of Burano and dinner at Ai Pescatori, a seafood restaurant set among the brightly coloured houses of the local fishermen. The food was simple and highlighted the freshness of the seafood mixed into risotto, served frito, baked and with pasta. A song and a story from the man who had caught the fish we were eating made it all the more special.

I have neglected to mention one important person – Daniele, our personal concierge. How he managed 20 people along the long road from Rome to Venice with such grace and good humour I will never know. His knowledge of the regions and his delivery of just the right amount of information was a very big part of the reason I can now say that I survived and loved being on a luxury coach for many hours with a bunch of people I didn't know. ✱

Kelli Brett travelled to Italy with Luxury Gold by Insight Vacations, (insightluxurygold.com, 0800 568769).





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THE REAL DEAL

EWAN SARGENT pays a visit to the 2015 *Cuisine* NZ Good Food Awards Restaurant of the Year, Roots, to find out what's changed for Giulio Sturla and his small team.



FROM TOP: Roots owners Giulio Sturla and Christy Martin; Sturla harvests ingredients from the restaurant's vegetable garden; locally foraged seaweed makes regular appearances on the menu

At 10am, an apron-wearing Giulio Sturla is hunched over a twin sink tucked into the corner of the tiny Roots restaurant kitchen in Lyttelton. He's making careful cuts into a huge, mottled green turbot. The fish is on a chopping board balanced on the sink edge, which makes a tricky operation even trickier. More huge turbot await their turn in a chilly bin.

"A beautiful fish, a very underrated fish," Sturla says admiringly. On benches around him, four young chefs are working hard to prepare for the evening service in eight hours' time. They make a careful dance of twists and turns to avoid bumping each other.

Roots' kitchen must be the busiest place in sleepy London St at this time of morning. From across the road, it might have a slightly newer-looking paint job, but there's little that makes it stand out from the rest of the shambling line-up of small-town shops.

The understated look only adds to the aura. This is the South Island's best restaurant. It's the only one across Cook Strait to have two hats, and last year it was *Cuisine*'s Restaurant of the Year. It's almost like our version of the little French village restaurant at the end of a farmtrack that serves Michelin-star dishes.

Back inside and the turbot's story is a good example of how things work at Roots. A local fisherman rang yesterday at 6.30pm to say, "I've got turbot, I'm in the harbour now, come and pick it up." It took a chef 10 minutes to get down to the wharf and back with the fish.

"We got lucky," says Sturla. He needed a thick, flat fish for what he had planned, not round gurnard or too-thick groper. Turbot was perfect. It will be cured for three or four hours by being pressed hard up against local seaweed. Sturla says salty seaweed takes it to another level than plain old salt.

For diners tonight, it will arrive beautifully presented in a decorative bowl as four rolled-up sashimi slices in a broth of soy sauce, umeboshi and dashi. Possibly some sea lettuce and celery will be the garnish. And some kelp will be in there, says Sturla. He hasn't served this dish before, but Roots' track record suggests it will be yet another stunning little flavour vignette of fish and the sea from Lyttelton's doorstep.

At mystery-menu, degustation-only Roots, the diners will know only that they are eating cured turbot when the dish is presented. And it will be only one of 12 courses for some diners who are splashing out tonight.

PORTRAIT, CARYS MONTEATH; GARDEN, SEAWEED AND LYTTELTON, NAOMI HAUSSMANN/NAY

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Much has changed since Sturla, born in Chile and raised in Ecuador, and his wife Christy Martin, an American, opened Roots at the end of 2012. It was a restaurant run by just three – Giulio and a sous chef cooking, and Christy running front of house.

But that was a big step up from post-quake 2011, when they sold things like gourmet cookies, grissini, puff pastry treats, preserves and vegetable chips from a footpath table to passersby who had drifted beyond the weekly Lyttelton farmers' market.

Why on the footpath? Because they couldn't afford a stall at the market. That humble pavement spot is just a few metres from their restaurant.

Right from the start they had an intense focus on cooking with local, ethical, seasonal and sustainable produce, and having genuine relationships with local suppliers.

Some people liked what they were doing, others didn't get what seemed to be expensive small dishes. In battered post-quake Lyttelton, Sturla and Martin often came up against insular Kiwi ideas on what a meal should cost and how big it should be.

But slowly the people who wanted that kind of food and understood the philosophy began to find them. That accelerated when *Cuisine* reviewed the restaurant favourably in 2013. In 2014, Roots won a hat and was named runner-up best new restaurant in the Good Food Awards. Last year it won two hats and was named restaurant of the year.

Sturla says the recognition has meant more diners, but also a different kind of diner – people who appreciate the effort they put into following their philosophy. Locals use Roots to celebrate special occasions, food lovers come from around the country and tourists hunt them out after researching where to eat online.

Sturla was startled to find out that as a destination restaurant, he's creating business for other Lyttelton places. Bed and breakfasts say they fill up thanks to people who come to dine at Roots.

In the early days there were few takers for the 12-course option ($185 or $305 with wine pairings). Now many more want that, and it's interest in the entry level five courses ($90 or $140) that is fading.

Now, says Sturla, "maybe one in a 1000 diners go, 'Huh, all this money for these tiny dishes'." Once it would have been 500 in a 1000, he laughs. "People understand that what we are serving is pretty special.

"You are eating something that is not available in many countries. Honestly, to get koura, paua, fish, clams, venison – and we are just talking about proteins – in one menu as fresh as it is, that's serious stuff."

What has changed is the size of the operation, even though big-city restaurants would scoff at a place that still stores its ice in Sturla's Rapaki home a few kilometres away because there's no room for a freezer. But now they have nine staff in summer, and seven over winter. Last year they took over the shop next door to create room for 10 more diners (taking the maximum to 35, but Sturla considers 28-30 is full), and also created a place for diners to relax and where drinks can be prepared.

The philosophy of celebrating and promoting good New Zealand food has been taken nationally with Sturla launching the ConversatioNZ movement and hosting a conference in Christchurch last year.

One more glimpse of Roots' genius. Sturla shows me a plastic container of beige-coloured salt. It has an amazing taste with a surprise, almost-umami background flavour.

It's our salt, he says. A local forager brings them 50 litres of fresh clean seawater from north of Pegagus Bay. It's slowly reduced, a touch of seaweed is added and there you have half a kilo of salt unlike any you will taste anywhere else. ✱



Don't miss the *Cuisine* Good Food Guide 2016 in the September issue



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Hallertau Brewery and Restaurant, Auckland

JASON CREAGHAN

RESTAURANTS



LEFT: Food at Wharepuke's lemongrass and kaffir lime panna cotta is a highlight

Northland

Food at Wharepuke

13.5/20
190 Kerikeri Rd, Kerikeri
ph: 09-407 8936,
foodatwharepuke.co.nz
Coffee & lunch Tues-Sun;
dinner Tues-Sat
Mains $28-$40

American army barracks, Asia and tropical rainforest may sound like a recipe for conflict, but harmony and peace are the result of a mission chef Colin Ashton embarked upon at the end of 2008, when he and partner Rachael Goldfinch brought these elements together at Wharepuke gardens in Kerikeri.

A boardwalk overhung with subtropical plants and exotic trees meanders onto generous alfresco dining decks then into the unassuming old barrack building with exposed rafters and pale green walls. Fairy lights outside add evening magic, and, on a sunny afternoon, shade umbrellas create a festive setting where live music sometimes completes the idyll.

When chef Ashton is in Thai mode, his flavours pirouette around subdued heat, bountiful fragrance and freshly picked herbs, producing some of the most delicious fresh spring rolls you are likely to meet, and other sublimely scented dishes. In Euro mode, his care with technique and organic-favoured ingredients is supreme. He appears to have little time for overly structured or designed food, and this played through in our evening visit, as it has on several other occasions, at this friendly place that offers some of the best food north of Auckland. Service, however, is another matter.

Our waiter was chatty and just a little too familiar, but that is sometimes the Northland way. "I like this one" was the only guidance when wine recommendations were requested from a list that covers the options but had no local wines available by the glass, only a few by the bottle. Given the proximity of several good producers, that was surprising. She did offer a generous sample to help our choice. One of the two dessert wines offered was vintage 2010 and really on its last legs.

Strangely, the six blackboard specials had no pricing but we were told upon asking. There was no sense of ownership or direction of the dining experience, which is a pity, because the setting is pleasant and the food on the all-day menu is very good indeed, covering most tastes and catering for dietary issues.

A starter of five prawns on a chunky slice of toasted ciabatta was little more than homemade supper fare, escalated to dining-out only by a sea of too much rich, creamy Pernod sauce.

Tempura zucchini flowers, by contrast, evidenced a light and clever hand with a film of crispy batter over al dente baby zucchini and their carefully handled, herbed, goat'scheese-stuffed, fulsome flowers. A "salsa piccante" to the side was too strong for the dish.

The daily market special of fish is the naked test of a chef's alertness. Chef Ashton not in evidence this night, his deputy performed the task perfectly. A golden-tinged thick piece of hapuku was toasted but moist, uncomplicated, and all you could wish for in fresh seafood. The dish was well focused, and the genius of simplicity was in evidence, with local Mangonui L'Oliveto olive oil rising from the plate along with lemon and fragrant, warmed pitted olives. Fresh rocket, parsley and pickled lemon completed the canvas. How Mediterranean and evocative.

What a pity our gentle and lovely waiter seemed unfamiliar with the details of these delights. However, on enquiry she brought small punnets of the salsa and oil for us to take home, and showed us the bottle. Her manaakitanga overrode her lack of training and knowledge, which is very Northland.

A hearty slice of crisped pork belly reclined on crushed golden kumara with a strongly soy-flavoured sauce around and ginger shards atop. Mostly moist and delicious, the pork was a touch dry at the thin end and two florets of broccoli added chlorophyll to the simple but enjoyable dish.

There is no doubting the hero of the dessert list, the "award-winning" lemongrass and kaffir lime panna cotta. Having previously failed to extricate the recipe from the chef, I think I now have it sussed. A tremulous, wobbly lemongrass-infused custard is topped (when turned out) with a thin gel of powdered kaffir lime leaves and accompanied by the poached fruit of the season.

This is heaven, pure and simple, a brilliant combination of silky texture and piquancy balanced by the aromatically spiced fruit.

Our other dessert of Belgian baked chocolate pot was a less sweet version of the ubiquitous warm chocolate pud, although it was more souffle than cream or cake.

Non-drinkers are very well catered for, the coffee is organic, and tea drinkers can access "sniffing jars", which is a nice touch.

The Kerikeri/Paihia side of the Bay of Islands suffers from less-than-stellar cuisine, with offerings aimed more at the backpacker than the gourmet guest. Wharepuke is in a class of its own, and the prosaic building benefits from a delightful setting.

On this occasion the service, while disarmingly friendly, failed to live up to the precision of the carefully crafted cuisine, but on a sunny day with the tuis performing and the tropical forest scents adding to the Thai food aromas, this is nirvana.

MICHAEL HOOPER

Auckland

Hallertau Brewery and Restaurant

14/20
1171 Coatesville Riverhead Hwy, Riverhead
09-412 5555; hallertau.co.nz
Lunch, dinner & drinks 7 days
Mains $15-$32

Over the past year, extensive renovations have transformed Hallertau from a folksy collection of frequently altered spaces into a cohesive and contemporary mix of internal dining room, working brewery and beer garden. It's the inclusion of this latter eclectically appointed and landscaped area that sets the new-look Hallertau alight.

Robust, almost industrial furnishings sit comfortably within a sub-tropical walled garden centred around an impressive concrete bar and grill kitchen. It will take time for the plants to grow, the sandy floor to consolidate and for it to come together completely, but in terms of layout and style, it's streets ahead of any other brewery set-up I've seen in this country. Yes, the outdoor setting will require some careful management over winter months to ensure it remains year-round user-friendly, but the provision of retractable roof, heated seating and woollen blankets shows the owners are already considering these challenges.

Those owners are Steve and Hayley Plowman and, since taking on the remnants of the locally famous Glennie's Wine Bar and winery 10 years ago, the pair has brought the Hallertau beer brand to its rightful place as one of the country's finest craft breweries. They have developed a unique persona for the beer, attracting a strong, diverse and loyal following using innovative marketing techniques, beer events and by working within the local community to gain recognition for their efforts. Their hands-on approach is evident in the new space, once on the fringes of historic Riverhead, now centre stage in a rambling housing development.

They are the first to admit that in the past there have been issues around quality and consistency of the food delivery of their business, but with the same commitment they take to bringing you great beer, they have employed the services of chef Michael van de Elzen to give a stronger direction to the menu and install both local provenance and dishes more appealing to a food-savvy crowd. Van de Elzen's on-trend influence is clear with dishes such as wood-fired gurnard fillet and pulled ancho-spiced lamb shoulder replacing the burger and fries typical of pub-grub fare.

The result is a well-rounded menu with something for all tastes and, while a touch more pricey than local pub food, it provides much greater variety and includes the use of higher-quality ingredients.





RIGHT: Hallertau's jalapeño poppers
BELOW: Beer art and indoor greenery at Hallertau

JASON CREAGHAN

I was glad to find that amid the changes, chef had left the deep-fried jalapeño "poppers" on the menu, as these make great bar-snack companions to some of the darker beers on offer. When it came to mains, our favourites included the dry-rubbed pork ribs – a pig-sized portion of delicately spiced meaty ribs cooked to tender perfection. I was over the moon when they arrived sans the sickly sweet and sticky glug that is so commonplace. These had much greater subtlety. The rosemary-rubbed spatchcocked chicken was another hit, perfectly seasoned and deliciously moist, with a wonderful salsa verde. The burger king in the group rated his hopped beef burger with gherkins and Swiss cheese "the bomb".

Our server, a young bloke who clearly knew his stuff, was gracious and engaging. With all the confidence of a seasoned pro, sharing his favourites and explaining his reasoning, he expertly led us through the menu and beer list. From watching and hearing servers at nearby tables, it seemed that his high standards are the norm here.

With the rise and rise of craft brews, New Zealand needs more places like Hallertau; comfortable, stylish and welcoming dining rooms to savour great beer, where far more than lip service is paid to matching the quality of what's on our plate to what's in our glass.

KERRY TYACK

Artwok

14/20
12 Hurstmere Road, Takapuna,
09-930 0999, artwok.co.nz
Lunch, dinner & drinks Tues-Sun
Mains $27-35

There's a lot to like about Artwok. With its modern, stylish aesthetic, it's a shift from most Chinese restaurants in New Zealand, and certainly a far cry from the grittier places in Dominion Road or Northcote's shopping centre.

Owners Jill Chen and Yan Yang have a background in banking but a love of food, and they wanted to open a place that put a stylish spin on their favourite Chinese dishes. But it helps too that they have a definite idea of the kinds of beers and wine that would appeal to a more populist, North Shore clientele.

It's the kind of place you drop into for a drink and snack that might then turn into a meal. Downstairs is a small seated bar complete with high stools, wood panelling and Seletti hybrid bone china plates that have been turned into lights. Upstairs is a more formal seated dining scenario with banquettes, a fish tank on one wall, the main kitchen and some antique paint brushes for decoration.



LEFT: Artwok pairs modern Chinese food with great New Zealand craft beer
BELOW LEFT: Artwok's casual downstairs dining area

Plenty of cocktails were being drunk on our visit, but we were drawn to the on-tap craft beers and ciders, which handily came by the glass or the flask. The wine list is small but high quality, with a mostly New Zealand focus. Manager Jonathan Wong has a great handle on the wines and staff have been well trained to make suitable matches.

Care too has been taken in choosing to feature the likes of free-range chicken and quality meats. The food is beautifully presented and while aimed to please a Western palate, the flavours haven't been compromised. And for those worried about such things – you can relax knowing the food is MSG free.

The raw bar has oysters, scallops and two types of clams, but you can also order the clams to be wok fried with one of three different sauces.

Panfried beef dumplings (guo tie) were delicious, the thin dough steamed and surrounding a delicate beef and celery filling, the base with the added bonus of lacy bites of crisp starch that form in the base of the pan. Nuomi wanzi – essentially meatballs of tender, light and very moist pork and prawn filling – were held together by the sticky rice encasing them. The rice is just chewy enough to provide texture as well as flavour.

The kou shui ji – Sichuan chicken thighs served cold – was exceptional. The meat was full flavoured, boneless and had great texture. Served with a richly moreish sauce of sesame paste, numbing Sichuan peppercorns and a good amount of heat from the chilli, it's the kind of dish to keep winter chills at bay.

Those with an aversion to garlic should probably stay away from the vegetable dish de san xian – it was gloriously garlicky and salty from a soy sauce reduction. The crunch of the colourful capsicums played against the other textural components, from the seductive steamed and peeled eggplant to the crisp cubes of potato. I found it a strangely addictive dish.

Other dishes that impressed were the Wakanui beef with bean sprouts, Sichuan pepper and chilli; the hand-pulled cabbage; the vermicelli salad with pork, dried shrimps and cucumber; as well as guo bao ro, a delectable version of sweet and sour pork. I also like that the larger dishes to share come in two sizes, perfect for a table of two or for a larger crowd.

The signature dessert, basi digua, failed to spark – the Chinese candy floss with the Jenga stack of candied kumara overwhelmed with its chewiness; but it was mitigated by the deliciousness of the toasted walnuts and a wonderful tea selection to accompany it.

On the Saturday of our visit, they seemed a little understaffed; while the

TONY NYBERG

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on-tap sparkling water was refilled throughout the night, once we had most of our dishes it was hard to get attention to make a late order of rice and wine. But these are minor quibbles about an otherwise great eatery that serves casual Chinese food with a modern sensibility.
GINNY GRANT

Woodpecker Hill

14/20
196 Parnell Rd, Parnell
09-309 5055, woodpeckerhill.co.nz
Lunch, dinner & drinks 7 days
Large plates $26-$38

Auckland restaurateurs Mark Wallbank and Che Barrington have a knack for making concepts work that on paper look questionable, if not downright nuts. Modern Chinese food in a kitsch Pacific-themed paradise; a noodle house where the waiters wear cowboy hats and serve bourbon... and now South-East-Asian-meets-barbecue.

Woodpecker Hill opened early last year in Parnell, across town from Wallbank and Barrington's familiar Ponsonby Rd territory (home of the aforementioned Pacific-themed paradise Blue Breeze Inn, noodle house Chop Chop, and Thai joint MooChowChow, which over the past few years have all become deserved stalwarts of the P-Rd dining scene).

For a first-time visitor to Woodpecker Hill, there's a lot to look at when you walk through the copper wrought-iron-esque doors: big bell-shaped lamp shades, urns, parasols, and a riot of clashing patterns and textures – Cane! Copper! Checks! Stripes! Fur! Argh!

It's the opposite of minimalist (maximalist?) and it's kind of great, if you don't think too hard about it. That's the key to all the Wallbank-Barrington establishments, really – they don't take themselves too seriously. They're fun.

Thankfully, though, those running the show do take their jobs seriously. Former *MasterChef* judge Wallbank was busy working the floor the night we were there, and the waitress who looked after us was knowledgeable, friendly, attentive and efficient.

ABOVE: Woodpecker Hill's market fish fried in turmeric with Vietnamese mint; the restaurant's eclectic interior

As for the food, it's all about smokin' meets hot, says the menu. The South East Asian influence is writ large with ingredients like chilli, coconut, coriander and green papaya featuring heavily, alongside the likes of betel leaf, nahm jim and galangal.

A dish of crispy eggplant, tamarind, coriander, chilli and sesame was pleasant; but the thin, sweet tamarind sauce was a little lacking. We felt the pile of thick slices of eggplant encased in a lovely light, crisp batter called out for a bolder sauce with a bit more tang.

Wild mushroom salad and mushroom wontons came without much in the way of the former, but the latter were delicious – the dough light and tender, the filling rich, flavoursome and nicely seasoned. Again the sauce was a little too sweet, but it didn't detract from the dish's success.

JASON CREAGHAN

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RIGHT: Jude Messenger, chef-owner of The Bistro in Taupo

The market fish was swordfish and it was a treat – a fresh, moist steak, perfectly cooked and topped with a generous pile of Vietnamese mint, spring onions and peanuts. The dill pickles on the menu had been replaced with slices of fresh cucumber. These worked well with the dish but, having a penchant for pickles, I was a tad disappointed by their absence.

There was a bit of a wait for our final dish, one of Woodpecker Hill's signatures – the 14-hour smoked brisket. When it did arrive, we wondered if the kitchen had had to rush it a tad, as my meat-expert dining companion felt it had neither the texture nor flavour of meat that had been smoked for 14 hours. That said, it was tasty, with an excellent spicy-peppery-salty crust.

The drinks offering here is extensive – lots of American wines, interestingly, plus endless Old and New World options and plenty by the glass. Beer wise, Garage Project's excellent Hops on Pointe is on tap, along with a Brothers Beer seasonal offering, and Garage Project dominates the bottle list too. If hard liquor's what you're after, there is an abundance of American whiskey, as well as Woodpecker Hill's own Waiheke-distilled version, and punches and cocktails made with Woodpecker White Lightning, their own unaged spirit.

On that note, I'd recommend having another drink rather than dessert – and that's evidently what most diners here do, as our waitress brought us our bill before we'd even glimpsed the dessert menu. (She was very apologetic when we said we did want dessert, though, so it wasn't a major.) Sticky black rice with coconut ice cream, honeycomb and banana was nice enough, while coconut dumplings with a strangely lurid green interior didn't have much going for them.

All in all, though, Woodpecker Hill is another example of Wallbank and Barrington pretty much nailing it. The atmosphere is fun, the service and drinks impressive, and the food is for the most part interesting and flavoursome. It's the sort of place you go to knowing you're going to have a good time.

ALICE NEVILLE

Taupo

The Bistro

15/20
17 Tamamutu St,Taupo
ph: 07-377 3111, the bistro.co.nz
Dinner 7 days
Mains $24-$39

I've been eating Jude Messenger's food for some years now, since his days as head chef at The Bach in Taupo and then when he headed up the kitchen at Plateau. I've always considered him a very fine chef, technically strong with a great respect for ingredients and a genuine concern for the satisfaction of guests. Our experience at the restaurant he owns with wife Tiffany confirms that he is as true to his inner mantra as ever.

A tight, frequently changing menu built around seasonal ingredients offers up a range of dishes that pretty much cover all the bases. Fish, meat and poultry are all represented and when meals arrive they are complete, a perfectly balanced combination of protein, starch and greens.

Among the variety of cooking techniques Messenger uses is sous vide, a choice of preparation that needs very careful consideration. It doesn't do all ingredients the same justice and when over- or inappropriately used, it can leave food with a ropy or liver-ish texture and missing that element of flavour provided by a searing hot pan or oven.

Messenger has the art mastered and there's no better example of his expertise

JASON CREAGHAN

than his starter of sous-vide calamari with handmade gnocchi, fried capers and Champagne veloute. It had everything: tender, melt-in-the mouth seafood, delicately creamy sauce with a subtle toasty wine flavour and a terrific contrast of textures provided by the lightly spongy gnocchi and fried capers.

Another star on the menu was the grilled eye of scotch fillet, a dream of a dish with perfectly cooked, pink-to-the-centre beef, classic truffle veloute and firm-to-the-bite heirloom carrots. But it was the daily special of swordfish with chestnut puree, Italian parsley and orange wedges scattered with slivered almonds that truly blew us away. Fresh, beautifully presented and simply superb. Dessert was special too, with both our lemon meringue tart with feijoa and pear sorbet and the blood orange and cranberry sorbet with pomegranate molasses a showcase in perfect puddings.

Messenger's food is precisely modulated and considered, yet for some it won't satisfy their need for flamboyance or innovation. For me it transcends that need, delivering instead exquisitely balanced combinations of clean and unfussy taste and texture. Add to that great value, and you can tell we were impressed.

However, not all was perfect at the mill. The dining room on the night we visited was managed by an absolute hurricane – loud, abrupt and a distraction. Her off-hand response to our questions was at first weirdly endearing and then frustrating as on two occasions her wine suggestions were way off the mark. The gamay she recommended to accompany the beef salad on the basis of it being "Thai food with peanuts" was frankly wrong, and left us annoyed. She was neither inefficient nor rude, she just needed to downgrade from a category five cyclone to a more gentle breeze.

The wine list at The Bistro could do with tweaking. While reasonably priced, it would benefit from a few more by-the-glass options and in particular another choice of bubbles and, given the menu, perhaps a gewurztraminer and another not so fruity riesling.

Other than these minor peccadilloes, this was a most enjoyable experience. The dining room in the heart of Taupo, with its unpretentious, comfortable decor of dark furniture and formal table settings was full, with many walk-ins turned away. There was plenty of room to move and at no time did we feel too close to neighbours. Portions are generous and the overall atmosphere warm and welcoming.

The Bistro website (thebistro.co.nz) is a window into the family-oriented ethos that drives Messenger. There is no doubt The Bistro is geared toward families, but there is no dumbing down here. This is high-class food with lashings of integrity.

KERRY TYACK

MAARTEN HOLL



ABOVE: Apache's pig, fish and hen's egg dish – a trio of pork, salmon and egg with sweet ginger caramel, finely cut slaw and crispy pork crackling

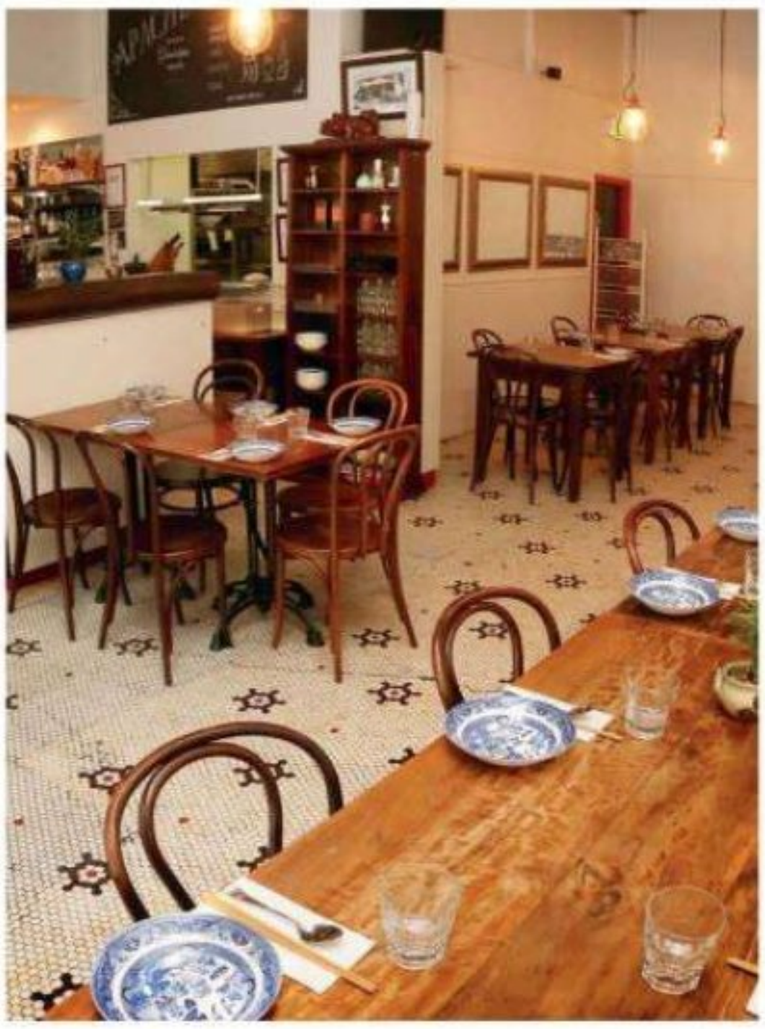
Wellington

Apache

14/20
122 Wakefield St, Te Aro,
04-499 2999, apache.kiwi
Lunch & dinner Tues-Sat
Mains $24-29

No one seems to know why, but Vietnamese food is having a moment in Wellington. Once, you couldn't move for Malaysian food, but now Vietnamese is the plat du jour. Faux phos, rice paper rolls and banh mi are bandied about everywhere in the central city, from simple hole-in-the-wall joints to more refined affairs.

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ABOVE: Apache's Indochine-inspired interior with soaring high stud, tiled floor and plate glass windows

Apache, which falls easily into the latter camp, has been gathering a steady following since opening in January 2015. Chef and owner Le Tranh has done a tour of duty in many of the capital's restaurants, including eight and a half years at Chow, followed by Soi and Dragonfly. Opening Apache in the elegant space on Wakefield St that was formerly home to Finc Cafe (and City Limits Cafe, long before that), realises a long-held dream. The soaring high stud, tiled floor and plate glass windows don't quite evoke what Lonely Planet used to describe as Vietnam's dilapidated French colonial charm, but it's not far off.

Like the restaurant's tagline – When Hanoi met Paris – suggests, it's all about Indochine-style dining here. Tranh doesn't like his food to be described as fusion; he prefers to think of it as modern Vietnamese and says the menu is influenced heavily by what he ate growing up north of Hanoi. He makes everything in-house, including the baguettes, with a focus on organic and free-range ingredients.

Whatever you call it, the menu is reasonably lean; nine smaller plates, four main-sized ones and a few token sides (rice, noodles, baguette). On face value, there's nothing here to scare the horses (in our case, a visitor from the West Coast), but when they arrive our dishes show a great deal of sophistication, technique and attention to detail. Crowd-pleasing popcorn chicken, for example, is light and crunchy, brightened by chilli caramel and kaffir lime. The grilled salmon parcels – chunks of salmon wrapped in rice noodle skins – are moreish and rich, offset nicely by the fresh textures and flavours of the green papaya salad. I feel the salt and pepper squid is the least successful of the small plates we share, but my companions declare it delicious.

We share three main dishes between five of us, which is great in principle but also means you run the risk of ending up with a buffet-style scrum if you're sharing with four other hungry people. At one point I glance longingly at a table occupied by a sole diner and his book, noting that he's not having to fight for a morsel of deep-fried six-minute egg in his "pig, fish and hen's egg".

That said, each of the dishes we choose is distinctive enough to stand out on its own merits. The aforementioned trio of pork, salmon and egg (not to mention the crispy, salty pork crackling) is pulled together by sweet ginger caramel and finely cut slaw. The bang bang chicken mango, a chicken salad writ Vietnamese thanks to generous quantities of coriander, chilli, lime, Vietnamese mint and candied cashews, is a definite crowd-pleaser, both for our table and scores of online reviewers. But it's the sticky and unctuous boeuf bourguignon; the result of marrying French technique with Vietnamese five spice, ginger and rice wine, that wins the evening for us.

It doesn't quite have the hustle and bustle of Hanoi, but on a Friday night the place is full and I'm glad I had the foresight to book a table (the fact that you can still do so is a miracle in itself). Despite the crowd, service is fast, friendly and cool under fire. Even so, there is room for improvement in some areas. Occasionally service veers into slightly too casual; when asked how many dishes we should order to share, our bright young thing shrugs cheerfully and says "as many as you like!" The wine list is a bit uninspiring and the craft beer drinkers at the table are unimpressed by the Vietnamese beer (though concede it would be a refreshing drop on a sticky day in its home country).

That said, desserts are masterful. The visitor from the West Coast demands a whole "broken leaves" – quenelles of dark, almost bitter chocolate mousse with shards of salted wafer-thin pastry, a pool of vanilla anglaise and little piles of white chocolate and mandarin rubble – to himself. The rest of us share an almost nutty black rice pudding, a delectably wobbly lime, coconut and lychee panna cotta, and caramelised banana "cigars" accompanied by peanut butter gelato and chocolate-nut soil.

Apache sits in that middle ground between high and low; it's not an extra-special-occasion joint, but it's a cut above many of its compatriots. Dishes are mostly executed to a high standard, with obvious attention to detail. It's worth (repeated) visiting.
LUCY CORRY

Christchurch

Chillingworth Road

13.5/20
2/478 Cranford St, Papanui
03-352 7784, chillingworthroad.co.nz
Fine-dining dinner, Tuesday to Saturday
Mains $40-$45; six-course degustation $95

Only the strong get to eat at Chillingworth Road. It felt a bit that way after wrestling with the main door out to the Cranford St Mall, a brace-yourself-and-give-it-a-good-heave moment. Maybe it's a clever psychological trick? You respect and desire something more if you've had to fight for it? Anyway, Chillingworth Road is certainly clever.

We were greeted at the bar and guided through the front bistro down a corridor to the windowless fine-dining room at the rear. This has dark walls, chandeliers, big deliberately mismatched chairs, and classy white linen-covered tables. It looks and feels like it takes things seriously and you are here for a cerebral treat.

I hadn't booked so didn't realise Saturday had become "trust the chef" degustation-only, which is the kitchen trying out things. Our upbeat, friendly waitress had to explain why only a winelist was presented. We went for the six-course option, but you can also get eight courses. She would give nothing away on what was coming. So how to choose a wine if not doing the fully matched experience? It was tricky. She offered that a sauvignon blanc or a

MAARTEN HOLL

chardonnay or maybe a riesling would be OK for the first half, and vaguely a red for the second. I gave up and moved into "trust the waitress" mode, and we ended with a Church Road Chardonnay and a Craggy Range merlot.

Chef Darren Wright is in training with the NZChefs' Culinary Olympics team to compete in Germany in October. Perhaps that complex, high-technique environment is having a strong influence on Chillingworth's dishes? They are intricate, very pretty, but at times the intensity of flavour you want from certain parts of the dish seemed lacking.

That wasn't the case for an amuse bouche of celeriac soup and smoked eel in a tiny teacup. It almost stole the show for the entire night. The soup was rich, beautifully seasoned and, when bits of smoked eel appeared, the combination was sensational. The following two dishes couldn't match it. A leek and prawn terrine came with burnt mandarin, salmon caviar, nut brown butter crumb and a horseradish aioli. The aioli needed more kick and the terrine was on the dryish side.

A chicken sang choi bao was an odd choice in a largely Euro line-up, but then we had been warned this was a tasting event. It was the weakest dish – just too bland, soy dominated, with none of the zest I love about sang choi bao, although it did intriguingly include puffed rice for crunch, which was fun.

But some nice touches followed. The pork belly and cauliflower puree in the next dish were excellent, one perfectly cooked, the other very smooth, well seasoned and flavoured.

Once again a non-course extra, a sorbet palate cleanser, really fired. A tangy lemon sorbet combined with a tangy lemon curd, macadamia crumbs and a blob of meringue to make me wish I had a whole bowl for dessert, though could I handle that much tang? Happy to try.

Wright showed his class with lamb in another dish, which gave us perfectly pink rack, loin, and then an oddball choux pastry filled with "lamb bolognaise". The lamb-flavoured filling was thick, savoury, gloopy and I'm still in two minds about it.

Dessert looked stunning. A big half orb of glistening chocolate-covered mousse was the star. Inside were layers of chocolate mousse, Earl Grey tea flavour (though I couldn't taste it) and, oddly, a sultana cake-type base (not a fan). Supporting acts were a white chocolate sorbet (good), white chocolate powder (tasteless), salted caramel blob (fantastic), and a chocolate and salted caramel macaron (good).

So it was a complicated end to an intricate evening. Chillingworth Road does a good job of being that "special occasion" fine-dining restaurant with lots of bells and whistles. But while pushing the presentation boundaries and trying new matches can be exciting, it also risks an uneven result.

EWAN SARGENT



DEAN KOZANIC

ABOVE: The dining room at Chillingworth Road
RIGHT: The restaurant's chocolate dome dessert



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Cruise control

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QUICK SMART

page 22

Marble background (Artedomus)

PRIMADONNA ELITE

page 36

Tiles (Artedomus); bone-handled fork (Antiques of Epsom); black-handled cutlery, glass jug, silver tray and sugar canister (French Country Collections); ridged glass candle, black plate and flowers (Freedom Furniture); ornate glass raised bowl (Farmers).

THE ART OF THE ARTISAN

page 38

Spiegelau Renaissance glasses (Allium Interiors); small gold Nel Lusso pillar candlestick (Junk & Disorderly).

POLPETTE & PASSIONE

page 40

Hair (Emma Bryce, Stephen Marr); make-up and nails (Tanya Barlow); models (Clyne Model Management; Unique Model Management; Red 11 Management); jewellery (Zora Bell Boyd, Mimco, Odette Anscombe-Smith; Karen Walker); dresses (Charmaine Reveley, Trelise Cooper, Camilla and Marc; Cooper); sheepskin stole (Deadly Ponies); shirt, pocket square (Barkers); jackets (Barkers, Zambesi); lace top (Kate Sylvester); braces (Barkers); Upper Half candlestick in nickel and brass, brass napkin ring, marble bowl, marble round board, marble tray, Georgia dinner plates, gold cutlery, Long Beach bread and butter plates, tumbler in smoke, white wine glass in smoke and Gracie eco linen napkins in grey (May Time); Jasper Conran Tisbury pasta bowl and sou plates, Aura Kali dinner plate in white and black, Wedgwood Arris espresso cup and sauces (Smith & Caughey's).

MASTER CLASS

page 80

Cutlery, small black and brass dishes, purple decanter and glass, green and black dinner plates (Father Rabbit); grey bowls (Taylor Road Homewares).

FLASH IN THE PAN

page 92

Pasta bowls and salt and pepper dish (Dots and Lines 10 to 1000); Blood Moon Rising bread plate, large salad server and mug (Sit Still Lauren); platter and dish (Earth and Baker); blue ceramic jug (Little White Dish); rust-coloured plate (Seastone Wares).

HOME BAR

page 116

Piet white ceramic small low bowl, pasta bowls and dinner plates (stacked), long wooden board, round wooden board and enamel utensils (Nest), Fog Linen brass spoon and Fog Linen square brass tray (Father Rabbit).

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STEVE BROWN

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hat tricks

KELLI BRETT shares a glimpse of the work that goes on behind the scenes of the *Cuisine Good Food Guide*.

As you head to your kitchen to rustle up something delicous from this issue, the Cuisine team is spending a great deal of time considering the state of our nation's restaurants to bring you the *Cuisine Good Food Guide* 2016.

As *Cuisine*'s new editor, being involved in the awards process for the first time has been quite an eye opener. It started with a meeting in Sydney with our events team and the Vittoria team (who have been a driving force behind the *CGFG* for five years) to look at where the awards have been, and where we might take them this year. Sponsors give you the money, right? Yes, without financial support an event of this size and significance would not happen.

But as I sat in that first meeting with Vittoria's dynamic father-and-son duo Les and Rolando Schirato, the focus was not the dollars. I was quite taken by their respect for the *Cuisine Good Food Guide* but also their pride in being associated with an intimate awards event that is first and foremost for the chef and the restaurateur. An opportunity to bring together the people responsible for New Zealand's vibrant, continually evolving dining-out culture.

The judging process involves a team of more than 60 of New Zealand's most talented and dedicated food and drink experts. Anonymously, they quietly go about making a reservation, assessing the meal and the restaurant experience, paying for the meal and writing their assessment. If there is conflicting feedback on any restaurant, we may go back two to three times using different assessors before finalising our score.

So why do we do this? The food scene in New Zealand works within a very small circle. Chefs, restaurant owners, editors and writers all know one another and all receive the same invitations to the same openings and PR events. Gaining access to this prestigious inner circle can sometimes carry with it the temptation to acknowledge only the good. Why put *Cuisine* in a position where our coveted relationships with restaurants and chefs might become awkward if that restaurant does not receive the feedback they think they work hard for and deserve? I put some questions to some of our most regular reviewers around why they do what they do so well...

Kerry Tyack

What's important is that we provide a simple, transparent, honest and valued service to our audience. It must also be respectful of those we critique and we must be prepared to defend our decisions. I love the discovery – of new ideas, talent, skill, creativity, innovation and progression. We have true leaders who are making the most of our resources using local, regional and seasonal ingredients. I see a willingness within the industry to be innovative, especially among those who travel a lot and seek out alternatives. But it's difficult for those who can't leave their place of work to be aware of the scope of what is happening globally. I suspect we are not yet as innovative as we could be.

Lucy Corry

The online scrum makes the professional review ever more important. Who trusts a random online person who could have an axe to grind (or a palm to grease)? Without honest feedback, how can you progress? Some are using local and seasonal ingredients really well, and some are really dishonest about it. The latter need to be reminded not to underestimate their patrons, many of whom are more knowledgeable about food than they are given credit for.

David Burton

It's important we do this because online reviews are so unreliable. They are easily rigged by friends or enemies of the restaurant. In some people's minds, quality is synonymous with generous portions! I love to dine with a specific focus and be forced to take note of the most minute details of the experience. Foraging is big, and so is giving prominence to vegetables and healthier fare. Fusion food is enjoying a major renaissance, only now we call it "global flavours". I'd like to see some genuinely regional restaurants, rather than the 70-plus tandoori houses in Wellington all with the same British-Indian menu.

Ewan Sargent

So many so-called honest reviews are staged hidden PR pieces. *Cuisine* reviewers are genuinely independent. In my case, I have eaten at hundreds and hundreds of restaurants and pored over every mouthful. I know what is bad, good and really, really good. I can taste a kitchen's brilliance or laziness. Few people get to eat out enough to do that. It's why the *Good Food Guide* matters so much – it's genuine. We can do foams and blobs as well as the rest of the world, but the most exciting innovation is what we are doing with our own quality products. We are defining our own special taste. ✱

The *Cuisine Good Food Guide* will be in the September Issue of *Cuisine*

How the scoring works

The score out of 20 is our assessment of the total restaurant experience.
Up to nine points are given for food (flavour, technique, produce, balance), up to four points for service (knowledge, care, professionalism), four for wine and wine service (wine menu, staff knowledge, pricing), and up to three points for ambience (decor, lighting, buzz).
Out of 20:
12 = reasonable
13 = solid and satisfactory
14 = good
15/1 hat = very good
16/2 hats = great
17/2 hats = excellent, up there with the best
18/3 hats = consistently outstanding
19/3 hats = extraordinary: approaching perfection
20/3 hats = best of the best





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