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COVER Attica's whipped emu egg and sugarbag (page 21). Photography Colin Page
Introduction

Hello world. We hope you brought an appetite because there’s lot to see and plenty of good stuff we’d like you to taste.

Dining in Australia has never been more dynamic, and whether you’ve come from the other side of the world for your first visit, or you’re just crossing town to get to know a corner of your own neighbourhood in a bit more detail, there’s never been a better time to be a gourmet traveller on these shores.

It’s not hard to eat well in Australia today (and it’s even easier to find a good coffee or something else interesting to drink), but there’s wisdom in the idea that knowledge enhances pleasure, so in these pages we’ve gathered together some of the most exciting and fun dining experiences the Gourmet Traveller team has enjoyed around the country of late.

What’s the taste of Australia exactly? It’s not always easy to pin down, yet you know it when you see it. It’s about making it look easy (especially when it’s not), about not taking it too seriously (but taking as much pleasure in the moment as you can), and about sharing it with friends. And if it can be done outside, preferably near a body of water (and, better yet, without shoes), then all the better.

What you’ll find in these pages is just the beginning. Join us in this exploration of Australian flavour: we hope you’ll be back for seconds.

Happy dining,

Pat Nourse
Managing Editor
Australian Gourmet Traveller

Welcome to Australia

Australia is a place that excels at many things and that includes food and wine. So it’s not surprising that the honour of hosting The World’s 50 Best Restaurants in 2017 has been bestowed on the country. It’s a testament to our people, produce and place that together they create an exceptional food and wine scene not found anywhere else in the world.

We’re lucky to live in a country where sunshine, clean air and a vast landscape deliver a rich array of fresh produce that underpins our world-class culinary offering. Not to mention a spectacular backdrop to match.

We’re fortunate to also have so many talented individuals in Australia, from farmers and fishermen to providores, artisans, cooks, chefs and winemakers who love our produce and nurture our industry.

And we’re spoilt to live in a country that brings together so many different cuisines, shared by people of diverse nationalities who have chosen to make Australia their home. Complementing the multicultural flavours are the bush ingredients that have long been used by Indigenous Australians but, in more recent times, have become incorporated into contemporary dishes.

These attributes are what we are encouraging others to experience for themselves as part of our Restaurant Australia campaign, which we launched in 2014. It’s all about shining an international light on Australia’s food and wine.

Inside this booklet you will get a taste of the very best Australia has to offer, and I encourage you to explore beyond these pages and immerse yourself in the food and wine experiences we are so very proud of.

Please join us in celebrating Australia’s outstanding food and wine culture. We look forward to welcoming you to Restaurant Australia.

John O’Sullivan
Managing Director
Tourism Australia
The dishes that define Australian dining now

What are the flavours that will take Australia into the next half-century? Here are the dishes making waves right now around the country, from the fine-diner to the café and back again, plus notes from GT wine editor Max Allen on what we’re drinking on the side.

EIGHT-HOUR LAMB SHOULDER, CUMULUS INC

It’s so simple: whole lamb shoulder cooked low and slow until it’s magicked into a crust of dark gold and the meat surrenders on favourable terms. Consider it less of a dish, more of a patriotic duty.

Cumulus Inc, 45 Flinders La, Melbourne, Vic, (03) 9650 1445

AVOCADO WITH CITRUS, TOAST AND LOCAL KELP SALT, THE KETTLE BLACK

There are now around 1.2 billion versions of avocado on toast across the globe, but this combination gets it right by playing it straight and simple. Half a perfectly ripe avocado (stone out, skin on) arrives with sourdough toast, a wedge of lime, and salt made with dehydrated kelp. It’s DIY made perfect with carefully sourced, top-notch ingredients.

The Kettle Black, 50 Albert Rd, South Melbourne, Vic, (03) 9088 0721

TOO MANY ITALIANS AND ONLY ONE ASIAN, NORA

Sarin Rojanametin’s witty tribute to Carlton’s Italian food culture might look like pesto pasta, but the pasta is actually green papaya, and the pesto a mix of roasted cashew nuts, sator beans and pieces of school prawn tossed with sorrel oil and fermented garlic powder. It’s a clever trick that succeeds on the strength of balance and flavour.

Nora, 156 Elgin St, Carlton, Vic, (03) 9041 8644

WHAT WE’RE DRINKING

Imagine stashing a case of booze in a time capsule that won’t be opened for another 50 years – a taster that tells a story of what we’re drinking right here, right now. What would you put in the box? On the following pages are some of the drinks I’d choose.

PROSECCO

Tasmanian sparkling might well be the quality pinnacle of fizzy wine production in Australia (and a good late-disgorged example really deserves to be in the line-up, too), but the bubbly we’re drinking most at the moment is prosecco, both locally made and imported.

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Veal sweetbread schnitty sanga, Fleet

The perfect bar snack for a perfectly outré wine bar? It’d have to involve something fried. It would want to be a sandwich. There ought to be anchovies involved, possibly in a mayonnaise. And it’d need a clever twist. We give you Fleet’s schnitzel sandwich: rounds of soft white bread enfolding hot, golden-crumbed veal sweetbreads and a lick of anchovy mayo. Just add wine.

Fleet, 2/16 The Terrace, Brunswick Heads, NSW, (02) 6685 1363

Fish fingers with charred toast, Bodega

On the menu since day one of service 10 years ago, Bodega’s signature dish sounds pretty straightforward on paper: fish, garlic, burnt toast. But it is truly more than the sum of its parts. Slices of kingfish on fingers of blackened toast with a confetti of cuttlefish ceviche, coriander, onion and grated mojama come together in a brilliantly balanced mouthful of flavour. Bodega, 216 Commonwealth St, Surry Hills, NSW, (02) 9212 7766

Laham nayyeh, Gerard’s Bistro

It’s lamb rather than beef that makes the cut in this clever textural twist on a classic Lebanese tartare. Bundles of hand-chopped lamb and pickled radish, spiced up with fiery harissa and fragrant with preserved lime, arrive dotted on a crisp saj flatbread. Swirls of creamy cured yolk with a scatter of lemon balm bring the zing. Gerard’s Bistro, 14-15 James St, Fortitude Valley, Qld, (07) 3852 3822

Spaghetti fresca with clams and smoked tomatoes, Tipo 00

The world’s finest carbohydrate is magicked to a Platonic ideal with house-made spaghetti, clams, garlic and chilli. Then the Tipo kitchen takes it to a whole new level with the addition of smoked cherry tomatoes. Two words: pasta perfection.

Tipo 00, 361 Little Bourke St, Melbourne, Vic, (03) 9942 3946

SINGLE-VINEYARD WINE

In the old days, Australia’s most revered wines were multi-regional blends. Now terroir is king; fine-wine lovers care a lot about the precise patch of dirt where the grapes are grown, particularly if those grapes are of the pinot noir variety.
Chef Dan Pepperell may have jumped ship to Hubert, but his pretzel with bottarga remains a stalwart on the 10 William St menu. The seeded pretzels arrive at the table hot, with a plate of feather-light dip made zesty with bright salty roe. Umami for days – it’s a bar snack to be reckoned with.

10 William St, 10 William St, Paddington, NSW, (02) 9360 3310

Brown rice bowl, Tricycle Café
The brown rice bowl changes daily and is always delicious – the Sri Lankan chicken curry is a standout – but it’s Adam James’s umami-rich, often spicy fermented vegetables and condiments that make this dish memorable. And, of course, there’s the rice. It’s biodynamic, rain-fed brown rice with pepitas and sunflower seeds, kale, spring onion and chilli oil mixed through it. It might even be healthy. Tricycle Café, 77 Salamanca Pl, Hobart, Tas, (03) 6223 7228

Flour & Stone, 53 Riley St, Woolloomooloo, NSW, (02) 8068 8818

Garlic bread, burnt vanilla, brown butter, Gauge
Sticky fermented black garlic and treacle add to the sharp aesthetic, which is then neatly undone by a smooth quenelle of rich salty-sweet brown butter garnished with bitter burnt vanilla that also adds richness and balance. It has become so popular it now appears on Gauge’s evening menu as dessert, too. Gauge, 77 Grey St, South Brisbane, Qld, (07) 3638 0431

PANNA COTTA LAMINGTON, FLOUR & STONE
Nadine Ingram takes everything you love about this Australian classic and turns it up. First, she soaks the vanilla sponge squares with panna cotta. They’re then layered with berry compote, coated with dark chocolate, and finished with desiccated coconut and coconut flakes. Crunch, squish and cream – witness the evolution of an Australian icon. Flour & Stone, 53 Riley St, Woolloomooloo, NSW, (02) 8068 8818

Brown rice bowl, Tricycle Café
Super-hoppy, sour, barrel-aged, in a can. Not since the glory days of the 19th century, when there was a brewery in every suburb and a pub on every corner, has there been such a diverse array of beers on offer as there is today. And Australia’s brewers have never been so adventurous.
**PRAWN, FIG-LEAF CREAM AND TURMERIC WAFER, ALOFT**
The extraordinary thing about this dish is the fig-leaf cream, which tastes like coconut. It’s haunting and addictive, weirdly taking you straight to South East Asia, which is exactly Glenn Byrnes’ plan. The flavour of coconut is wrought using Tasmanian ingredients. The turmeric wafer and herb-spiked sambal are exceptional, too. Aloft, Brooke Street Pier, Hobart, Tas, (03) 6223 1619

**Macaroni, pig’s head and egg yolk, Acme**
Many of Acme’s brightest moments come when skilfully made fresh pasta meets flavours it seldom encounters in Italy. And few are as bright (or as satisfying) as one of the kitchen’s earliest hits. Mitch Orr takes the key elements of sisig, the Filipino classic of pig’s head double-cooked, marinated in vinegar and served topped with a raw- or runny-yolked egg, and grafts them onto impeccable macaroni. Acme, 60 Bayswater Rd, Rushcutters Bay, NSW, (02) 8068 0932

**ANCHOVY AND ITS BONES, PROVENANCE**

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**ARTISAN SPIRIT** Of course. It’s the hottest drinks trend. But which one? Every week, it seems, so many new small-batch Australian gins pop onto the scene – not to mention paddock-to-bottle rums and single-cask whiskies – it’s hard to keep up. Not that we’re complaining.

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**STRAWBERRY GUM AND SET BUTTERMILK, ORANA**
This elegant palate-cleanser is built around the unlikely foundation of eucalyptus. A quenelle of set buttermilk sits in a pool of strawberry juice and wildly fragrant green oil made from strawberry-gum leaves. This has been the finishing note on Orana menus since the restaurant opened, and long may it continue. Orana, 285 Rundle St, Adelaide, SA, (08) 8232 3444

**SNACKS, IGNI**
Even the pre-dinner bites are stars at Igni. House-made guanciale. Swatches of chicken skin topped with whipped cod roe. Baby zucchini flowers harbouring just-cooked mussels. Umami-rich beef jerky. And as for the crisp saltbush leaves dusted in vinegar powder, they ought to be packaged and sold in vending machines. Igni, Ryan Pl, Geelong, Vic, (03) 5222 226-
** Nahm prik nuum sandwich, Boon Café **

Half Thai, half Sydney café, and pure Boon, this spicy sanga takes a fiery relish traditionally served with crudités and remixes it with salted butter and Brickfields sourdough into an inspired and utterly devastating take on the salad sandwich. Thailand meets the tuckshop in the most interesting of ways. **Boon Café, 425 Pitt St, Sydney, NSW, (02) 9281 2114**

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** Mackerel dumplings, Shandong Mama **

It’s the ShanDong MaMa mystery: how can mackerel’s assertiveness be tamed into cumulonimbus-light, aromatic dumplings that practically levitate their way to your mouth? (Spoiler alert: the fish is turned into a fine mousse with ginger, coriander and chives.) Either plain boiled or pan-fried, they’re the stuff of dumpling reverie. **ShanDong MaMa, Shop 7, 200 Bourke St, Melbourne, Vic, (03) 9650 3818**

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** Oyster Ice, Brae **

It’s the oyster exponential: oyster brine combined with sheep’s milk curd into a savoury ice-cream, topped with a blitz of powdered freeze-dried sherry vinegar and dehydrated oyster and sea lettuce. The pure taste of the sea – served on the shell, naturally. **Brae, 4285 Cape Otway Rd, Birregurra, Vic, (03) 5236 2226**

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** Vermouth **

Or one of the ever-growing number of aperitivi and digestifs and bitters being produced in Australia today. Many, like the artisan gins, are being made using indigenous botanicals – inspiring mixologists to create local versions of classics like the Negroni and the Spritz.

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** Croissants, Lune Croissanterie **

The definition of “artisan” may have been bastardised beyond meaning in an era of mass production, but Lune will brook no slights. Kate Reid has moved to bigger digs in Fitzroy, but her exacting iterations of French pâtisserie perfection remain truly artisanal – which explains why the queue forms before sunrise and they sell out by mid-morning. **Lune Croissanterie, 119 Rose St, Fitzroy, Vic, (03) 9419 2320**
**BANJAAN BORANI, PARWANA**
The easy harmony of eggplant simmered in fresh tomato sauce produces the most seductive of slippery vegetable dishes. The secret is the texture – silky-soft without collapsing into mush – and its balanced accents of garlic yoghurt and fresh mint.

Parwana, 124B Henley Beach Rd, Torrensville, SA, (08) 8443 9001

**BLOODY SAUSAGE, SANGA, ESTER**
Mat Lindsay’s inspired take on the classic backyard sausage sandwich sees minced pork belly mixed with rice, pine nuts and a healthy dash of pig’s blood. It’s steamed and then roasted in the wood-fired oven before being placed on his canny replacement for spongy sliced-white: a steamed bread reminiscent of Chinese mantou buns. Sticking to tradition, it’s best folded in half and eaten with your hands. Ester, 44-52 Meagher St, Chippendale, NSW, (02) 8068 8279

**FRIED CHICKEN, ELEVEN BRIDGE**
Think of it as the world’s fanciest chicken nugget: a round of boned-out chicken wing, deep-fried, skewered with a bone for ease of snacking, and then bathed in kombu butter and topped, for good measure, with a healthy dollop of caviar. A finger-lickin’-good union of the sublime and the ridiculous. Eleven Bridge, 11 Bridge St, Sydney, NSW, (02) 9252 1888

**PECAN STICKY BUNS, SWEET ENVY**
Master pâtissier Alistair Wise’s croissant-based dough rolled with frangipane spiked with orange zest and amaretto is a unique homage to buns he ate at Thomas Keller’s Bouchon. Before baking, the buns are doused in dark salty caramel cooked just short of being burnt, which cuts the sweetness, infusing everything – even the pecans. Sweet Envy, 341 Elizabeth St, North Hobart, Tas, (03) 6234 8805

**PALE, DRY ROSÉ**
After years and years of wine experts wondering why Australians don’t drink more pink, sales of the best wine for summer have finally taken off – with a vengeance. So very now.

**BLOOD SAUSAGE, SANGA, ESTER**
Mat Lindsay’s inspired take on the classic backyard sausage sandwich sees minced pork belly mixed with rice, pine nuts and a healthy dash of pig’s blood. It’s steamed and then roasted in the wood-fired oven before being placed on his canny replacement for spongy sliced-white: a steamed bread reminiscent of Chinese mantou buns. Sticking to tradition, it’s best folded in half and eaten with your hands. Ester, 44-52 Meagher St, Chippendale, NSW, (02) 8068 8279

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**CHINIZZA, LEE HO FOOK**
You’d have to be some kind of po-faced stick-in-the-mud not to get this “Chinese pizza”, a glorious so-wrong-it’s-right arrangement of fried pancake base massed with thinly sliced spring onions, shallots, chilli and brilliant buffalo mozzarella. So salty, crunchy and soothing you’ll want to order one for breakfast. Or at the end of a long night. Lee Ho Fook, 11-15 Duckboard Pl, Melbourne, Vic, (03) 9077 6261

**BURRATA AND SHELLFISH OIL, AUTOMATA**

In a roundabout way we have Clayton Wells’s partner, Tania Fergusson, to thank for this unlikely flavour bomb. It was for Fergusson’s amusement at home that Wells had been recreating the shellfish oil he’d learnt to make at Tetsuya’s, and when he was looking for an interesting spin on the increasingly ubiquitous cheese, there it was. The only thing better than cutting into the creamy-centred cheese to release the vibrant orange oil is tasting it.

Automata, 5 Kensington St, Chippendale, NSW, (02) 8277 8555

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**BRAISED BONE MARROW, LALLA ROOKH**
Joel Valvasori-Pereza’s knack for reimagining robust Friulano cooking traditions made him one of the west’s most interesting dining prospects.
Few dishes exemplify his flavour-first thinking quite as boldly as this split beef bone, cooked osso buco-style, and served with fat fingers of charred focaccia. It was a crowd favourite at Lalla Rookh, which he left in 2016; if you can’t catch it there, expect it to resurface on the menu at Valvasori-Pereza’s newest venture, Lulu La Delizia, a trattoria in Subiaco focusing on handmade pasta. Lalla Rookh, lower ground floor, 77 St Georges Tce, Perth, WA, (08) 9325 7077
A definitive 2017 mixed dozen has to include at least one bottle of wine from the lo-fi camp: a preservative-free, biodynamically grown grenache, perhaps, or a skin-fermented organic sauvignon blanc, or a no-additions amphora-matured riesling.
RED-CLAW YABBIES, LEMON JAM, CULTURED CREAM AND BUCKWHEAT PIKELETS, BENNELONG

Uniting that most Australian of crustaceans, the yabby, with that most Australian of after-school snacks, the pikelet, could, in the wrong hands, be a clunky piece of stunt-casting. In the hands of Peter Gilmore and Rob Cockerill at Bennelong, though, it’s Australia on a plate, the yabbies poached and chilled, ready to be forked onto the pancakes, warm and toasty in a fold of linen.

Bennelong, Sydney Opera House, Bennelong Point, NSW, (02) 9240 8000

WOOD-ROASTED ABALONE, FRANKLIN

Knowing how good it was when he’d cooked it beachside over coals, David Moyle decided abalone had to be on Franklin’s menu. It’s steamed whole for more than an hour, cleaned, thinly sliced, then returned with seaweed to its shell and roasted in the wood-fired oven. Finished with house-made oyster sauce spiked with black pepper and lightened with eggwhite, it’s magnificent.

Franklin, 30 Argyle St, Hobart, Tas, (03) 6234 3375

WHIPPED EMU EGG AND SUGARBAG, ATTICA

Take an emu egg. Slice it open. Take out the contents and whip them with mead until they reach a consistency something like a sabayon. Pour it back into the shell and serve it with sugarbag honey from stingless native bees, pickled quandongs, Daintree dark chocolate and wattleseed ice-cream.

And there you have it: one of Australia’s most interesting desserts.

Attica, 74 Glen Eira Rd, Ripponlea, Vic, (03) 9530 0111

Peri peri chicken, Africola

Chef Duncan Welgemoed transforms this Portuguese staple with robust South African vigour into a spectacular meal for two. Roasted chicken from the wood-fired oven is basted in “Mpumalanga fire” (Welgemoed’s feisty take on caramelised peri peri sauce), accompanied by iron pots of chicken hearts and livers, cornmeal porridge topped with tomato gravy and leek ash, and a side plate of banana curry.

Africola, 4 East Tce, Adelaide, SA, (08) 8223 3855
RAW WAGYU SHOULDER WITH
GRILLED ENOKI, DUCK-EGG CREAM
AND SEAWEED, THE BRIDGE ROOM
Inspired by a memorable meal at a Kyoto restaurant
that specialises in Kobe beef, Ross Lusted created
this tartare, blending Japanese and Australian
flavours. Translucent slices of well-marbled wagyu
shoulder melt onto a bed of enoki mushrooms.
They’re finished with a salted duck-egg cream
and Olsson’s red gum-smoked salt. Lusted’s
decision to slice rather than chop the meat
means the dish is less of a tartare and more
of an ode to raw beef.
The Bridge Room,
44 Bridge St, Sydney, NSW, (02) 9247 7000

RICE AND FLESH,
DINNER BY HESTON
BLUMENTHAL
There’s an historical
backstory to the dish,
of course, but all you
really need to know about
Heston Blumenthal’s rice
and flesh to enjoy it is
this: it’s a sunflower-
yellow pond of tangy,
saffron-spiked risotto
lapping at pieces of
kangaroo tail subtly
cooked in curried red
wine sauce. Comfort food
circa 1390.
Dinner by Heston Blumenthal,
Crown Towers, level 3, 8
Whiteman St, Southbank,
Vic, (03) 9292 5779

MASSAMAN TARTARE,
RICK SHORES
Chopped to order, and
presented with an ochre-
coloured salt-flecked yolk
at its centre, this radical take on
diced raw beef is amped up
with a gutsy massaman paste,
white pepper, slivers of pickled
garlic and more. Rick Shores,
43 Goodwin Tce, Burleigh
Heads, Old, (07) 5630 6611

Saltbush cakes, Billy Kwong
Is it a dumpling? Is it a doughnut? Kylie
Kwong’s savoury Canto-stralian saltbush
cakes recall a number of things, but their
taste is pure outback. Crisp deep-fried
pastry is filled with leaves of the glossy
native green, and house-made chilli
and tamari sauces are on hand to
complement the leaves’ bitterness.
Billy Kwong, shop 1, 28 Macleay St,
Potts Point, NSW, (02) 9322 3300

PHOTOGRAPHY MARCEL AUCAR (DINNER, HELLENIC REPUBLIC), WILLIAM MEPPEM (HUBERT), AJ MOLLER (RICK SHORES), ROB SHAW (BILLY KWONG) & JOHN PAUL URIZAR (BRIDGE ROOM)
We can’t get enough of the vibrant, smashable reds flooding our bottle shops and bars in 2017 – particularly those made from grapes such as nero d’Avola and touriga, or less mainstream French grapes like gamay, using techniques such as carbonic maceration and whole-bunch fermentation.

Kimchi and beef sandwich, Esquire
Ryan Squires is famous for pushing the envelope, but this cracker of a snack is more about filling it beautifully. A crisp wafer of house-fermented and dehydrated kimchi arrives sandwiched between slivers of beef, one air-dried, the other raw, dialled up with powdered sesame seeds, dried ginger and toasted nori in sesame oil. Consider that umami goodness signed, sealed and delivered.

Kimchi and beef sandwich, Esquire

CRAB NOODLES, LONG CHIM
Long Chim branches opening around the country is one instance of chain dining we can get behind, not least because Thai food authority David Thompson has developed a selection of dishes exclusive to each restaurant. In Perth, a dazzling riff on Chanthaburi’s regional signature, sen chan pad pu, a medium-hot noodle dish packing crisp crab, tomalley, fish sauce and tamarind. Long Chim, basement, State Buildings, cnr St Georges Tce & Barrack St, Perth, WA, (08) 6168 7775

TIRAMISÙ, ICEBERGS DINING ROOM & BAR
This Icebergs dessert is a little bit of a treasure hunt, and a lot of tiramisù. When it first hits your table, the sizeable slab of mascarpone mousse looks relatively unassuming but underneath you’ll find cubes of coffee jelly, Marsala caramel sauce, coffee sorbet, meringue sticks and gold dust – and that’s just the first bite.

Icebergs Dining Room & Bar, 1 Notts Ave, Bondi, NSW, (02) 9365 9000

PHOTOGRAPHY JODY D’ARCY (LONG CHIM), AJ MOLLER (ESQUIRE), JESSICA REFTEL EVANS & MARTIN REFTEL (DAINTY SICHUAN) & ROB SHAW (ICEBERGS)

MA PO TOFU, DAINTY SICHUAN
“Pockmarked grandmother’s beancurd” – Team Dainty didn’t invent the name, but their version of the dish has achieved international fame thanks to its take-no-prisoners onslaught of tofu and minced beef with chilli and enough Sichuan pepper to numb the mouth into next week. It ought to come with a warning. In fact, it does: a two-chilli legend on the menu. Take it seriously.

Dainty Sichuan, 176 Toorak Rd, South Yarra, Vic, (03) 9078 1686
The flavour of Sydney

The Sydney restaurant scene has never been more fertile. Here’s a snapshot of the most notable recent openings from GT chief restaurant critic Pat Nourse.

It’s been a rollercoaster 12 months in Sydney. But the highs have significantly outweighed the lows. Despite the closing or rebranding of some big players (Marque, Rockpool, Guillaume) and the startlingly short lifespans of some ballyhooed arrivals, the past year has seen a record number of openings of note. Among these are expansions from local restaurant groups (Merivale and Solotel among them) or would-be groups, and many are part of large new dining precincts (most notably Barangaroo and the Harold Park Tramsheds in the city’s inner west), but there’s also a sprinkling of owner-operators making waves (hello, Saint Peter; hi there, Pino’s Vino e Cucina), plus a clutch of promising pop-ups. Here’s the best of the latest.

**SAINT PETER**

362 Oxford St, Paddington, (02) 8937 2530, saintpeter.com.au

**EAT** Come here for the best seafood cooking in town – it serves everything from fine fish’n’chips to John Dory liver and delicious parsley butter on toast.

**PLUS** Saint Peter is perhaps the best showcase for the flavour of Australian fish in the whole of the country right now.

**MINUS** The dining room isn’t quite as superb as the food delivered by chef Josh Niland.

**THE STRATEGY** Can’t get in for dinner? Weekend lunches are the smart move, if you are struggling to make an evening time-slot.

**RUN OR WALK?** Make haste. This place is a true standout.

**BODEGA 1904**

68 Wellington St, Paddington, (02) 8624 3133, bodega1904.com

**EAT** A reminder that before Porteño, Continental, Stanbuli et al, chefs Ben Milgate and Elvis Abrahannoniez made their names with rock and roll tapas.
This return to their roots is the pick of the Tramsheds restaurants, not least for the grilled queso fresco with burnt white wine.

PLUS Bright flavours; Bentley's signature polish and smarts front and back of house; plus a badass wine list.

MINUS The trek past three other restaurants to the toilets.

THE STRATEGY Lunch is the best showcase for its light, brightness. Order the seafood platter and go large on great white wine.

RUN OR WALK? Run. The food, wine, service are all in sync.

ELEVEN BRIDGE

TI Bridge St, Sydney, (02) 9252 1888, rockpool.com.au
EAT This reboot of Rockpool, one of the city's landmark fine-diners, offers all the thrills and luxury of Phil Wood's eclectic cooking with the flexibility of an à la carte menu. Take it outé with abalone roasted in brown butter and XO sauce, or go comfort-plus with charcoal-roasted chicken stuffed with pork and prawn.

PLUS Fine dining with all the trimmings.

MINUS We miss the bar menu.

THE STRATEGY Pack some extra money for the wine list; it's every bit up to any impulse you may have to lash out.

RUN OR WALK? Neil Perry has reworked the formula of his flagship roughly four times in the past 10 years, so sooner might be better than later.

PLATE CLASS
Sydney's Long Chim; (inset) marron with beach banana at Cirrus

RUN OR WALK? This complex and breadth of Thai cuisine finds a new local showcase.

MINUS The extractor fans are not quite up to the complexity and breadth of Thai cuisine.

THE STRATEGY The wine list invites a leisurely investigation of the menu over dinner, but don't discount lunch – it's a pacy service.

RUN OR WALK? Go early, and go often.

CHAT THAI

Lvl 1, Gateway, 1 Macquarie Pl, Sydney, (02) 9247 3053, chatthai.com.au
EAT Thai, the city's best-liked Thai-owned Thai eatery, might've expanded at a rapid clip of late, but its newest branch might be its best yet, with great new dishes such as Thai takes on prawn toast and Vietnam's golden khonam bueng pancakes.

PLUS Legendary sommelier Charles Leong wrote the wine list, and the team from celebrated Oxford Street bar This Must be the Place consulted on the cocktails.

MINUS That ventilation is awfully loud.

THE STRATEGY Don't skip dessert; it's a feature here.

RUN OR WALK? Your new pre-theatre lifesaver.

PADDDINGTON INN

338 Oxford St, Paddington, (02) 9380 5913, paddingtoninn.com.au
EAT Not to be confused with The Paddington, which sits on the same block, this pub has been redone from scratch by Aria chef Matt Moran, who cut his teeth here in his early pub-chef days. Big flavours don't disguise ex-Rockpooler Justin Scott's careful cooking; charry octopus with spicy 'nduja or juicy roasted flathead with beans and sesame.

PLUS Smart eats that won't scare the horses: oysters, steak, fish, lamb, but plenty more besides.

MINUS Noisy. The public bar seems a missed opportunity, too.

THE STRATEGY Team Aria's reputation for excellent wine lists hasn't let them down – go hard.

RUN OR WALK? An excellent offer for anyone who is not seduced by 10 William St, Saint Peter or Fred's.>

CHAT THAI GATEWAY

SHOP 3, 490 Crown St, Surry Hills, NSW 2010, chatthai.com.au
EAT Chat Thai, the city's best-liked Thai-owned Thai eatery, might've expanded at a rapid clip of late, but its newest branch might be its best yet, with great new dishes such as Thai takes on prawn toast and Vietnam's golden khonam bueng pancakes.

PLUS Legendary sommelier Charles Leong wrote the wine list, and the team from celebrated Oxford Street bar This Must be the Place consulted on the cocktails.

MINUS That ventilation is awfully loud.

THE STRATEGY Don't skip dessert; it's a feature here.

RUN OR WALK? Your new pre-theatre lifesaver.
**BANKSY**

33 Barangaroo Ave, Barangaroo, (02) 8072 7037, banksi.sydney

**EAT** It’s billed as a vermouth bar and bistro, but that doesn’t do justice to the eats from Bar H’s Hamish Ingham. If there’s a theme here, it’s freshness of product and ideas: grilled prawns in curry-leaf butter with pickled turmeric, for instance, or prosciutto with grilled peach and glazed almonds.

**PLUS** Ingham is all about the flavours of China and Japan at Bar H, but his more European stuff (shot through with Belt) is stuff (shot through with Barossa) is definitely one for outdoor fun.

**MINUS** No dinner. Yet.

**THE STRATEGY** Borrow a picnic rug and take breakfast or lunch to Hinsby Park.

**RUN OR WALK?** Worth a detour.

**FLOUR EGGS WATER**

Harold Park Tramsheds, 1 Dalgal Way, Forest Lodge, (02) 9188 7438

**EAT** Flour plus eggs plus water equals (among other things) pasta. In the hands of gun in the hands of gun in the hands of gun

**PLUS** They sell the pasta to go. It’s $95!

**MINUS** The pasta itself is good, but perhaps not the greatest in town.

**THE STRATEGY** Book ahead. They’re nowhere near as adept with wood-roasted grapes? Yes, please.

**RUN OR WALK?** If you don’t mind the volume of the room as full-bore as the flavours.

**BISTRO REMY**

The Langham Sydney, 89-113 Kent St, Sydney, (02) 9256 2222, langhamhotels.com

**EAT** The Langham swaps its Terrace dining room at Saint Peter; the kikasame burger at Ume Burger.

**SAINT’S ALIVE**

Above: The pared-back dining room at Saint Peter; the kikasame burger at Ume Burger.

**BISTRO GUILLAUME**

259 George St, Sydney, (02) 8622 9555, bistroguillaumesydney.com.au

**EAT** This is Guillaume Brahimi’s third branch of Bistro Guillaume (following Melbourne and Perth), but could it have the hometown advantage? The Barossa chicken roasted for two with tarragon and Paris mash argues the affirmative.

**PLUS** The counter selling pastries, sandwiches, cakes and bread from Iggy’s.

**MINUS** The corporate lobby.

**THE STRATEGY** Go bientôt.

**RUN OR WALK?** Go bientôt.

**CORNERSMITH ANNANDALE**

33 Barangaroo A88 View St, Annandale, (02) 8084 8466, cornersmith.com.au

**EAT** Following the success of his burger pop-ups in Surry Hills, chef Kerby Craig has planted his flag at Barangaroo with this Japanese-flavoured smart-fast takeaway.

**PLUS** The prawn burger finds a permanent home.

**MINUS** The Bolognese on the Ume burger.

**THE STRATEGY** Book ahead. They’re nowhere near as adept with wood-roasted grapes? Yes, please.

**RUN OR WALK?** At your leisure.

**UME BURGER**

Wulugul Walk, Barangaroo, umeburger.com

**EAT** Following the success of his burger pop-ups in Surry Hills, chef Kerby Craig has planted his flag at Barangaroo with this Japanese-flavoured smart-fast takeaway.

**PLUS** The prawn burger finds a permanent home.

**MINUS** The Bolognese on the Ume burger.

**THE STRATEGY** Book ahead. They’re nowhere near as adept with wood-roasted grapes? Yes, please.

**RUN OR WALK?** At your leisure.

**BARZAARI**

65 Addison Rd, Marrickville, (02) 9569 3161, barzaari.com.au

**EAT** The flavours of Cyprus, Greece and Lebanon presented with contemporary restaurant smarts and plenty of smoke and flame. Orange-scented loukaniko sausage paired with wood-roasted grapes? Yes, please.

**PLUS** Friendly neighbourhood service, and generous serves.

**MINUS** Very, very loud.

**THE STRATEGY** Don’t drink the sand-roasted coffee if you want to sleep in the next 36 hours.

**RUN OR WALK?** If you don’t mind the volume of the room as full-bore as the flavours.

**BEAUX ARTS**

Bistro Guillaume; (inset) char-grilled octopus at The Paddington Inn.
Mediterranean, osso buco and farro appearing in vine leaves, tahini binding silverbeet and chickpeas in a pleasing leaf. PLUS A gleaming fit-out that references the old lines of its Glebe-landmark Valhalla cinema premises. MINUS The acoustics are brutal. THE STRATEGY Leave your dealer friends and relatives at home, or bring the ear trumpet. RUN OR WALK? Meander; it’s a pleasant new local.

TINOLO
2/166 Glebe Point Rd, Glebe, (02) 9518 4592, tinello.com.au
EAT The brief is Italian cooking with influences from the greater Mediterranean, osso buco and farro appearing in vine leaves, tahini binding silverbeet and chickpeas in a pleasing leaf. PLUS A gleaming fit-out that references the old lines of its Glebe-landmark Valhalla cinema premises. MINUS The acoustics are brutal. THE STRATEGY Leave your dealer friends and relatives at home, or bring the ear trumpet. RUN OR WALK? Meander; it’s a pleasant new local.

T-NOODLE
Shop TG3, 8 Quay St, Haymarket, (02) 8385 9880
EAT Outlets specialising in Chongqing-style noodles and Sichuan flavours are quietly taking over Chinatowns all over the country, but none balance polish with smarts in the kitchen so well as this newcomer. The wontons are top-notch, too, and they also do interesting soft drinks. PLUS A Chongqing noodle eatery where as much care has been taken with the setting as the noodles themselves. MINUS It’s really small. Could be even spicier, too. THE STRATEGY Don’t neglect the sides; the peanut and chicken salad is definitely worthwhile. RUN OR WALK? Like noodles? Like spice? Go without delay.

OSAKA TRADING CO
Harold Park Tramsheds, 1 Dalgal Way, Forest Lodge, (02) 8880 0773, osakatrading.com.au
EAT Moving on from the yakitori focus of their Surry Hills outpost, the crew from Tokyo Bird open their menu up to a broader izakaya brief; potato salad with miso mayo, fried chicken et cetera, plus creative cocktails and plenty of Japanese whisky. PLUS A Japanese-style katsu sando (in this case the classic pork schnitzel number) to go. MINUS But not to eat in? What? THE STRATEGY Underorder slightly when you’re seated, then get the katsu sando for the ride home. RUN OR WALK? To reach Osaka Trading Co you walk past Bodega 1904 on one side or Belle’s Hot Chicken on the other. Tough break.

PINBONE WIZARD
81 Enmore Rd, Enmore, (02) 9517 2060, pinbone.com.au
EAT Last seen cooking Italian at 10 William St, and modern Australian on the Buzo site, the Billy Kwong-trained Pinbone team returns to its roots cooking fresh takes on Chinese food in a very DIY pop-up space on Anzac Parade. Say hello to raw prawns with buttered and seaweed-dusted white bread and Sichuan oil, and killer pork ribs with black bean, ginger and longans. PLUS Low prices, high quality, no fuss, pleasant service. MINUS No bookings, no décor, quite a lot of noise. THE STRATEGY It’s unlicensed, so go hard on the BYO. The space is also quite dark at night, so if you like to Instagram (or merely see) what you’re eating, go for lunch instead. RUN OR WALK? Run. It’s fun and excellent value. The building is due for demolition in early 2018.
hummus provide the busy backdrop for poached chicken
PLUS A different perspective.
MINUS Maybe a bit too much going on.
THE STRATEGY Groups are welcomed with set menus of five, seven and 10 courses.
RUN OR WALK? A fun addition to the neighbourhood rather than something you might cross town for.

SOTTO SOPRA
The Palms, G04/316-324 Barrenjoey Road, (02) 9997 7009, sottosopra.com.au
EAT Neighbourhood-restaurant charm and relaxed rusticity meet modern-Italian chic in this latest outing from Alessandro Pavoni, owner of Sydney’s most ambitious Italian eatery, Ormeggio. Wood-roasting is a theme, whether it’s porchetta, chicken done cacciatora-style with green olives, sage and parsley, or whole flathead with brown butter, capers and lemon.
PLUS Possibly the fanciest garlic bread in the state.
MINUS A pretty solid trek from the CBD, let alone further south.
THE STRATEGY A worthy mission; roll it into a beach-day for maximum value.
RUN OR WALK? Get in before the weather turns.

PINO’S VINO E CUCINA
Pino’s Vino e Cucina, 199 Lawrence St, Alexandria, (02) 9550 2789
EAT With its saloon-like decor (all that’s missing is the swing doors and the pianola, Westworld fans) and Italianate menu, wags have nicknamed Pino’s style spaghetti Western. And yes, we are those wags. We like the pasta, but we love the drinks offer.
PLUS Outstanding cocktails
MINUS Some odd moments with the food.
THE STRATEGY Approach it like a bar with good eats rather than a restaurant with great drinks.
Whether you take your caffeine straight up or you’re after smashing sustenance, too, nowhere rivals the café culture found in Australia’s capitals.

**ACT**

Coffee in the capital? The best is found at Mocan & Green Grout (1/19 Marcus Clarke St, New Acton, South), Lonsdale Street Roasters (7 Lonsdale St, Braddon, 02 6156 0975), Ona on The Lawns (4 Palmerston Ln, Manuka, 02 6295 0057), and its sister, The Cupping Room (1/1-13 University Ave, Canberra, 02 6257 6412). Barrio Collective Coffee (59/30 Lonsdale St, Braddon, 0423 100 816) also makes a great brew and breakfast. Stand by Me (7/9 Lyons Pl, Lyons, 0458 962 716) serves hearty snacks and fun tunes.

**SYDNEY**

The question with coffee in Sydney today isn’t whether it’s good so much as how many can you cram into a day. There’s the outstanding milk work from Neighbourhood by Seán McManus (16 Buckingham St, Surry Hills, 0412 061 899), or a window seat and a batch brew at Artificer (547 Bourke St, Surry Hills). Skittle Lane (40 King St, Sydney, 0466 406 463), Edition Coffee Roasters (265 Liverpool St, Darlinghurst) and Cross Eatery (155 Clarence St, Sydney, 02 9279 4280) channel Scandi-cool fit-outs, with equal care given to what’s on the menu. The team behind Reuben Hills (61 Albion St, Surry Hills, 02 9211 5566) and Paramount Coffee Project (80 Commonwealth St, Surry Hills, 02 9211 1122) are behind the very likeable Hills Bros (5 Martin Pl, Sydney, 0432 269 006). Roasters-turned-café with a focus on terroir include Campos (193 Missenden Rd, Newtown, 02 9516 3361), Gypsy Espresso (6/81 Macleay St, Potts Point, 02 8356 9264), Mecca (26 Bourke Rd, Alexandria, 02 9698 8448), Single O (60-64 Reservoir St, Surry Hills, 02 9211 0665), Central Roasters (8/10 Central St, Sydney), Coffee Alchemy (24 Addison Rd, Marrickville, 02 9516 1997), Micro (23 Barangaroo Ave, Barangaroo) and Gumption (Shop 11, 412-414 Strand Arcade, 02 9211 0665). Sample Coffee (118a Devonshire St, Surry Hills, 02 9517 3963) and Room 10 (10 Llanckelly Pl, Potts Point) do big things in tight spaces, and 212 Blu (212 Australia St, Newtown, 02 9516 0115) nails all-day breakfast. And when food is the priority? Brunch is best at Three Blue Ducks (161-163 Macpherson St, Bronte, 02 9389 0010) and Ruby’s Diner (Shop 1, 173-179 Bronte Rd, Waverley), or opt for Thai sandwiches at Boon Cafe (425 Pitt St, Sydney, 02 9281 2114), or duck vermicelli at Glider KS (26 Kensington St, Chippendale), Cornersmith (314 Illawarra Rd, Marrickville, 02 8065 0844) and West Juliet (30 Llewellyn St, Marrickville, 02 9519 0101) are inner-west gems, while the original branches of the Insta-famous Black Star Pastry (277 Australia St, Newtown, 02 9557 8656), ever-expanding Bourke Street Bakery (633 Bourke St, Surry Hills, 02 9516 0116) and Ruby’s Diner (Shop 1, 173-179 Bronte Rd, Waverley).

**Cafés for days**

*RISE AND SHINE*

The Kettle Black, Melbourne. Opposite: the breakfast salad from Ruby’s Diner in Sydney.

*PHOTOGRAPHY MARTIN & JESSICA REFTEL EVANS (KETTLE BLACK) & JOHN PAUL URIZAR (RUBY’S)"
blood pancake, leg ham and smoked sabayon. Its sibling venue, Sourced Grocer (11 Florence St, Teneriffe, 07 3852 6734), is another innovator, offering an airy warehouse vibe and a locavore larder. In the CBD, laneway destination Felix for Goodness (50 Burnett St, Brisbane, 07 3166 7966) rethinks local, mostly organic produce; get a taste of the Moya Valley chicken wrap with spiced labne and peach.

Coffee Anthology (126 Margaret St, Brisbane, 07 3210 1881) has won a devoted following with beans sourced countrywide. Are you all about the coffee and nothing but the coffee? The hidden Strauss (189 Elizabeth St, Brisbane, 07 3236 5232) and bar-café John Mills Himself (60 Charlotte St, Brisbane, 0434 064 349) are both worth tracking down for their exciting approach to caffeine. Vieille Branche (10 Fox St, Albion, 07 3682 1840) is a bohemian lair with Mariage Frères teas, French farmhouse cuisine and Bear Bones coffee. King Arthur café (164c Arthur St, Fortitude Valley, 07 3358 1670) has a firm hold on crowd-pleasing fare. Sister venture Merrinweather café (27 Russell St, South Brisbane, 07 3844 3609), also serves seasonal dishes with brio. Ben O’Donoghue now has two notable eateries to his name, Billykart West End (2 Edmundstone St, South Brisbane, 07 3177 9477) and Billykart Kitchen (1 Eric Cres, Annerley, 07 3392 9275). Down in the Valley, Ltd Espresso & Brew Bar (362 Brunswick St, Fortitude Valley, 0417 638 070) and Reverends Fine Coffee (372 Brunswick St, Fortitude Valley) answer the prayers of coffee aficionados. Out in the suburbs, Wild Canary (2371 Moggill Rd, Brookfield, 07 3378 2805) is a botanical bistro with a lush garden setting. Bare Bones Society (Shop 22, Jindalee Homemaker Centre, 34 Goggs Rd, Jindalee, 07 3715 5571) has a simple, pared-back approach, while Sarmic Artisan Provisions & Café (4/7 Apollo Rd, Bulimba, 0426 485 405) is Bulimba’s most appealing place for brunch. Chouquette (1/19 Barker St, New Farm, 07 3358 6336) sets a benchmark for French pastries, while Lokal + Co (6 O’Connell St, West End, 07 3844 1676) brings Nordic finesse to the inner city. Did somebody say Scandinavian waffles?

ADELAIDE

Market St (11 Market St, Adelaide, 08 8231 5014) is a smart café with the lot: a bakery supplying pastries to Dough in Adelaide Central Market, deli selections and superb cold-brew coffee. More treats are found inside the market at new eateries Comida Catering Co (Stall 11, 0421 833 375), Lucia’s Charcuterie Traiteur (Shop 4, Central Western Mall, 08 8231 2260) and Poh Ling Yeow’s Jamface (Stall 28/29, 0433 815 137). Delicious breakfasts define Hey Jupiter (11 Ebenpezer Pl, Adelaide, 0416 050 721) and The Flinders Street Project (27 Flinders St, Adelaide, 08 7230 1817). For serious coffee, head to Exchange Specialty Coffee (12-18 Vardon Ave, Adelaide, 0415 966 225), Coffee Branch (32 Leigh St, Adelaide, 0451 661 980), Billykart (77 Grey St, South Brisbane, 07 3844 3609) and bar-café King Arthur (40 Charlotte St, Brisbane, 07 3236 5232) and bar-café The Flinders Street Project (276 Grenfell St, Adelaide, 08 8123 7488).

HOBART

At Alistair Wise and Teena Kearney-Wise’s Sweet Envoy (341 Elizabeth St, North Hobart, 03 6234 8805) savour croissants and pecan buns in the morning, sandwiches with house-made bread at lunch, and cake (especially Opéra cake) and macarons any time. Tricycle Café & Bar (77 Salamanca Pl, Hobart, 03 6223 7228) is especially worth a visit for its daily rice bowl and occasional congee. The menu at Pigeon Hole (93 Goulburn St, West Hobart, 03 6236 9306) is built around produce from its owner’s organic farm, while Berta (323a Elizabeth St, North Hobart, 03 6234 4844) serves eggs in all manner of ways. For top-hole java, head to Pilgrim Coffee (4/8 Argyle St, Hobart, 03 6234 1999) and its sibling, Bright Eyes (Stall 21, Brooke St Pier, Franklin Wharf, Hobart). Yellow Bernard (109 Collins St, Hobart, 03 6231 5207), Straight Up (202a Liverpool St, Hobart, 03 6236 9237); and Shake a Leg Jr (85 Main Rd, Moonah, 03 6228 2222) know their beans.

MELBOURNE

The seriousness with which Melbourne approaches its caffeine intake can be both admired and mocked, but the fact that it’s harder than ever to find a dodgy coffee can only be a good thing. The most fanatical places, like Market Lane (Shop 13, Prahran Market, 163 Commercial Rd, South Yarra, 03 9804 7434; 176 Faraday St, Carlton; 109-111 Trinity St, Melbourne; Shop 73-76, Dairy Produce Hall, Queen Victoria Market; 8 Collins St,>
Melbourne), Brother Baba Budan (359 Little Bourke St, Melbourne, 03 9606 0449), Dukes Coffee Roasters (267 Flinders Lane, Melbourne, 03 9477 5578), Traveller (2/1 Crossley St, Melbourne, 03 9547 3866) and Patricia (cnr Little Bourke & Williams Sts, Melbourne, 03 9642 2237), keep food to afterthought status at best, the attention going to the beans and brewing. But there’s plenty for those in need of sustenance and caffeination. The team behind Top Paddock (658 Church St, Richmond, 03 9429 4332) and The Kettle Black (50 Albert Rd, South Melbourne, 03 9088 0721), two of the city’s most innovative cafés in terms of both food and design, also count Higher Ground (650 Little Bourke St, Melbourne, 03 9899 6219), a 160-seater in a beautifully renovated former power station, that blurs the line between restaurant- and café-food while keeping an eye on the coffee. Design and food are also given equal billing at the lovely and airy Mammoth (736 Malvern Rd, Armadale, 03 9824 5239), South of Johnston (66

Oxford St, Collingwood, 03 9417 2741), Crabapple Kitchen (659 Glenferrie Rd, Hawthorn, 03 9078 5492), and Small Victories (617 Rathdowne St, Carlton North, 03 9347 4064), where the pared-back aesthetic is a perfect match for a kitchen that churns its own butter and makes its own sausages. For a Japanese hit head to Cibi (65 Keefe St, Collingwood, 03 9077 3941), where deliciously clean, light food makes eating seem virtuous, and you can shop for Japanese homewares. Find great Middle Easternflavours at Brunswick Foodstore (29 West St, Brunswick, 03 9388 8738) and modern Greek tastes (and great coffee, wine and ouzo) at Demitri’s Feast (141 Swan St, Richmond, 03 9428 8659). In the west, places like Rudimentary (16-20 Leed Street, Footscray, 0497 058 173), a good-looking venue fashioned from three shipping containers, keep this area’s café-hotspot status on the boil.

PERTH

The ringleaders behind Perth’s coffee order continue to blur the lines between café and restaurant and Asian influences abound. Deluxe congee and kimchi toasts help to explain the permanent queues at Tbsp (10 King William St, Bayswater, 08 9371 9334); nasi goreng hitam and pork katsu are deftly deployed at university café Grindhouse (Building 3, Edith Cowan University, 2 Bradford St, Mount Lawley, 08 9371 6886), while kaya-filled croissants and matcha pastries figure among the baked treats at the cultish Chu Bakery (498 William St, Highgate, 08 9328 4740). Mary Street Bakery (507 Beaufort St, Richmond, 0409 509 300) continues to command a loyal following at its original Highgate location, as well as at a spin-off (272 Railway Pde, West Leederville, 0498 880 012). Baristas at coffee haunts Sprolo (258 Canning Hwy, South Perth, 0401 625 134) and Architects and Heroes (Shop 25, 17-31 Rokey Rd, Subiaco) are both geeky and gracious.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Just because it’s hot doesn’t mean you don’t want a nice hot drink. In Darwin, exceptional coffee is on offer at The Foreshore Restaurant & Café (255 Casuarina Dr, Nightcliff, 08 8948 4468), which serves three meals a day and is worth a visit for its picturesque seaside location alone. Nearby newcomer Lucky Bat Café (3/7 Pavonia Pl, Nightcliff, 08 7099 1160) is a colourful spot showcasing local art as well as sensational salads and eggy treats. Meanwhile, landmarks such as The Trader (T3, 60 Winnellie Rd, Darwin, 0416 462 578) and The Roma Bar (9 Cavenagh St, Darwin, 08 8961 6729) still offer reliable coffee and winning specials such as The Roma’s Reuben sandwich.

The café fun doesn’t end when you leave the capital, either. In Katherine, for instance, The Finch Café (10 Katherine Tce, Katherine, 08 8972 1990), fashions the region’s best coffee, cakes and brusch dishes. For daytime eats in Alice Springs, meanwhile, visit Page 27 Café (3 Fan Arcade, Alice Springs, 08 8952 0191), or Watertank Café (16b Wilkinson St, Alice Springs, 0408 854 472), which is notable (especially in a desert town) for the fact it’s set in a nursery.

LOFTY STATION

Class acts

Australia has a feast of fine-diners, cutting edge to classic. Here’s our pick of the best-dressed tables in the country.
Momofuku Seiobo
THE STAR, 80 PYRMONT ST, PYRMONT, (02) 9777 9000
seiobo.momofuku.com

The food of Barbados figures minimally in the history of Australian fine-dining. Or at least it did until Paul Carmichael took the reins at Seiobo and looked to his heritage for a bold new direction. The glassed-in fridges now hold pineapples, pork and pumpkins; the Mud plates often come lined with banana leaf. But while Carmichael’s sunny ease seems a world away from the intensity of Momofuku’s earlier days, the attention to detail and focus in the kitchen haven’t wavered. Koji butter and fronds of young coconut coax real magic from marron grilled with exquisite care, just as jerk-spiced crisp chicken skin adds interest to a bundle of chicken flecked with citrus. Wine and service are mannered but not unpleasantly so. Things you may have found irksome about Seiobo – the volume of the music, the focus on bar seating, the online quality of the reservations, the casino of its setting – remain, but they are transcended anew by a fresh vision.

Attica
74 GLEN EIRA RD, RIPPONLEA  
(03) 9530 0111 
attica.com.au

One of Ben Shewry’s great strengths is his ability to transform the potentially hokey into something genuine and heartfelt. After the savoury courses, you retreat to the restaurant’s tiny backyard to have a cuppa and a kangaroo-shaped biscuit while chatting with a chef about the garden. That could be twee, but instead it adds an attractive earthiness to the fine-dining experience. It helps that the food you’ve just eaten – perhaps a sublime pie flavoured with Vegemite, Goowla pips shimmering with seaweed butter, sensational kangaroo meat teamed with a bunya bunya cream, or diced emu and red cabbage – is witty, dazzling and original. And that the service and wine-matching is approached with intelligence and wares, avoiding the longeurs. Add a low-key, dark-hued room with immaculate linen-dressed tables which reads as professional and sophisticated, and it’s little wonder securing a table here is the only tricky part of the equation.

Brae
4285 CAPE OTWAY RD, BIRREGURRA  
(03) 5236 2226 
braerestaurant.com.au

Prepare to enter a picture of the country framed by note-perfect Australiana but painted in bold, elegant and unsentimental strokes. Over 10 or more courses, Dan Hunter celebrates his region with dishes that are formally daring (crunchy prawn heads! Creamy oyster soft-serve! Sea urchin and chicory bread pudding!), yet rich in flavour and substance. The menu could benefit from an edit, but the plates are tightly composed – and what could you cut? Certainly not the limpid broth bathing fronds of abalone and calamari, nor the clever arrangement of lobster played off against charred waxy fingerlings under a swatch of milk skin. The adventure is significantly the richer for the cool gloss of the dining room, some of the most engaging service in the nation and wine pairings that roam with an easy-going confidence. Maturing and relaxing without surrendering a drop of its ambition, Brae is more compelling than ever.

Quay
UPPER LEVEL, OVERSEAS PASSENGER TERMINAL, THE ROCKS  
(02) 9251 5600 
quay.com.au

Share plates. No bookings. Bar dining. None of these things trouble you at Quay, a restaurant that floats beyond trends as serenely as its dining room floats above the harbour, affording perfect views of bridge and Opera House both. Chef Peter Gilmore creates his own culinary language on the bespoke plates with rare ingredients and even rarer emphasis on texture in tandem with flavour. Crisp feathers of seaweed and dried scallop bring radical savoury richness to a take on XO sauce that counters the powerful sweetness of marron, while the layering of tastes in a composition of white walnuts, smoked eel, fermented mushrooms and pancetta is both adroit and artful, echoed later by a dessert playing the same nuts against prunes soaked in Madeira and caramelised white chocolate. It’s a big operation, and service remains more rote than relaxed, but buffered by acres of ironed linen and a fine wine list, it can’t obscure Quay’s essential lustre.

Sepia
201 SUSSEX ST, SYDNEY  
(02) 9283 1990 
sepiarestaurant.com

Surprise is the name of the very grown-up, very polished game at Sepia. The food is a lesson in texture, beauty and ingenuity all at once. Chicken skin and artichoke crisps shaped like autumn leaves shield cod from view, while a toffee-like twig made of dehydrated mushroom sits atop wagyu. Every spoonful brings surprise: translucent sheets of squid are spliced into ribbons, then rolled and peppered with yuzu, while shiitake floss brings sweet-savoury crunch to a sushi-like ball of rice. Whether you’re dining at a low table in the bar or in the plush main dining room, service is as seamless as the décor. Sommelier Rodney Setter helps navigate the extensive wine list with charm – quick to suggest a glass of Cerasuolo di Vittoria, perhaps, or a single-vineyard Victorian syrah poured from the magnum. He’s equally excited by tea, which has its own carte. Your pockets will be lighter when you leave, yes, but your heart will be fuller for the ceremony of it all.

PHOTOGRAPHY JEREMY SIMONS (SNOW EGG)
Shannon Bennett's flagship makes it look easy. The hefty, broad-ranging wine list, glamorous room, spectacular views, lofty price tag, designer cutlery and immaculate staff seem the natural way of things when dining 55 floors above Melbourne. But, while it’s a high-end, well-oiled machine, Vue de Monde doesn't lack personality or humour. Snacks that start the dégustation might include a miniature Chiko-like roll filled with fermented barley, while a marron “snag” is barbecued over charcoal at the table and popped into a tiny brioche. It’s not all gimmickry, though. Slivers of Blackmore beef are served raw, while superbly cooked duck breast is teamed with leeks rolled around a truffle filling. Then Jerusalem artichoke doughnuts – fried, sugared and pumped full of a hazelnut emulsion – arrive, keeping things from getting too serious.

Special occasions are the default for this kind of setting, but Vue's moments of whimsy and surprise push those moments into the memorable.

The Bridge Room was until recently one of the few restaurants in its class that continued to focus on service à la carte, which perhaps explains its popularity with the business crowd. On the plus side, the new tasting menu provides an opportunity to try both the steamed scallop pudding (an airy, barely there quenelle packed with flavour, contrasted with the textures of abalone and biltong) and the slow-roasted beets (currant grapes, sheep’s milk curd and radicchio butter making it a picture of autumn) in the same outing. Larger courses are typically built around beautifully cooked pieces of protein: grilled lamb loin on walnut cream cut with pickled caper leaves, say, or a buttery fillet of Murray cod, steamed just so, textured with surf clams and celtuce. Service is not as finessed as might be expected in so soigné a room served by so expensive a cellar, but even if the atmosphere isn’t perfectly special, the food remains a knockout.

Step into Bennelong and witness the power of architecture. The soaring space, refreshed with burnished brass, lustrous hues and molten-metal lights, elicits awe. Peter Gilmore keeps things simple with two or three prix-fixe courses and restraint on the plate. To upend the natural order, let’s talk dessert. Do. Not. Miss. Most popular is the lamington, with coconut cake, cherry jam ice-cream, glossy bitter chocolate, all nested in curls of coconut. The courses before it are equally praiseworthy: delicately balanced white corn polenta crowned with sweet spanner crab and slivers of palm heart, perhaps, or steamed Murray cod atop ginger-scented congee, with toasted pepitas adding crunch. The wine list will impress, as will the sommelier who deftly helps navigate it. In fact, the entire floor crew is one of Sydney’s finest. There’s an energy and ease that feels modern (we love the unclothed tables) and, dare we say it, iconic.

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Even if Brent Savage were somehow limited to a toaster oven, the plates coming from his kitchen would be far from predictable. At Bentley, where he has a few more gadgets to play with, his dishes are some of the most forward-looking and accomplished in town. Small bites are as intricate as the main event: a pretzel puff with chicken-skin purée, a scallop ceviche that bursts with the freshness of sorrel granita, or spot prawns bound with a silky macadamia sauce. Pumpkin spaghetti with kombu oil and black-bean crumb is as thoughtful a main course as any protein. For dessert, violet ice-cream with Coco Pop-like honeycomb and musk sticks is both artistic and tasty. The wave of creative energy flows through the vibrantly modern Pascale Gomes-McNabb interiors and the well-oiled front-of-house, down to Nick Hildebrandt’s carefully curated wine list (Jura fans take note). A microcosm of relentless perfectionism.
Italian heritage may seem incongruous, but to taste what’s on the plate is to be convinced, over the course of a great number of dishes (and quite a few hours) of the sincerity of his commitment, the confidence of his craft and the importance of his mission. There’s theatre in potato damper cooked on coals at the table, invention in puffy chips of kangaroo tendon, and pure pleasure in sweet marron scented with Geraldton wax and cut with watercress purée. The backdrop is a hip (if inescapably poky) room lined with wine fridges housing the bottles that provide a brilliant, largely local counterpoint in the glass. To finish, a barely set buttermilk infused with the unique perfume of the strawberry eucalypt is a revelation.

**Rockpool Bar & Grill**
66 HUNTER ST, SYDNEY
(02) 8078 1900
rockpool.com

It’s the exceptional steakhouse that lays claim to having some of the finest seafood in town. But, then, Rockpool Bar & Grill is the exception to most rules. Somewhere with such a tight lock on the business-lunch crowd has no right being this glamorous, all Deco of line and soaring of column. Anywhere with a cellar so dazzling has no business having a superb cocktail bar. And how is it that a menu so sprawling, in the American grill tradition, is executed with such consistent clarity? Meaty, buttery slices of abalone done meunière-style might compete with the steaks anywhere else, but here, where the ageing and wood-grilling of Australia’s best beef is raised to art, there’s no chance. Service responds well to challenges, and sharing is the way to profit, so place your faith in your waiter and carve your way through the menu (with no skimping on the excellent sides), right through to the warm blackberry and almond pudding to close.

**Sixpenny**
83 PERCIVAL RD, STANMORE
(02) 9572 6666
sixpenny.com.au

Incongruity is one of Sixpenny’s chief charms. Step through the door of the unassuming shopfront in suburban Stanmore and you’re rewarded with the calm charm of a small dining room elegantly appointed with unclad tables, fine glassware and crisp botanical prints. The music is quietly hip, the service quietly radical. Sommelier Dan Sharp’s cool confidence with wine matches sees him boldly offer an all-white pairing that segues smoothly through a tasting menu from, say, a Loire muscadet that pops with a tartare of kingfish and black garlic concealed under rounds of umami-rich baby zucchini to a pink sliver of smoked duck with salty roast turnip, a silken swede purée and a splash of plum sauce, effortlessly abetted by a spätlese riesling from the Mosel. Chef Daniel Puskas offers as compelling and coherent a vision of modern Australian food as anyone in the city, making Sixpenny essential Sydney dining.

**Restaurant Hubert**
15 BLIGH ST, SYDNEY
(02) 9232 0881
restauranthubert.com

Dripping candles. Bow-tied waiters. Piaf and au poivre, tartare and Tatin. Hubert could so easily have been yet another cookie-cutter bistro, one of those Madame Tussauds eateries where the patter from the waiters is as waxy as the food. Instead it crackles with life, not bound by the old-school details but glorying in them. This sprawling basement space is a collaboration between the bar czars behind The Baxter Inn and the chef from 10 William St. That means the couple in the next booth tapping their feet to Sinatra are as likely to be decked out in neck tatts and Ramblin’ Rascal tees as diamond necklaces and couture, the tarte Tatin will be the complement to a toasty slice of boudin noir, and it’ll be a confit field mushroom with the au poivre, not a steak. The really likeable thing about Hubert is that, from the food to the service to the superb wine list, it might be fun but it also really delivers. Welcome to your new favourite night out.

**Penfolds Magill Estate**
78 PENFOLD RD, MAGILL
(08) 8301 5551
magillestaterestaurant.com

Views across vineyards over the city. A timeless Keith Cottier building with an of-the-moment interior refit. A cellar offer that ties the site to its history as the place where Grange was first made. Staff are highly drilled.
rather than perfectly at ease, but there’s no mistaking their eagerness. Magill Estate could’ve been just the most glam tasting room in the country, but chef Scott Huggins has taken it to the next level with a tasting menu that is both progressive and comforting. Sautéing corn in bone marrow makes it a rich complement to juicy hapuku, while the minimalism of dry-aged wagyu served simply with black garlic and tomato leaves room for the other guest at the table: superb selections from the Penfolds back catalogue for a luxe drinks pairing. First-class desserts, such as mandarin ice and set honeyed Jersey milk and quince (and a splash of ’75 Yquem), conclude an adventure in the sublime.

Dinner by Heston Blumenthal
CROWN TOWERS, LEVEL 3, 8 WHITEMAN ST, SOUTHBANK
(03) 8582 2061
dinnerbyheston.com.au

It’s cashed-up, old-school hotel glamour at Dinner, from the city-lights backdrop to the leather-upholstered horseshoe booths. It’s also home to some of the city’s most refined cocktails (the clear Bloody Mary is a thing of wonder). Bare tables and timber flooring make it a more relaxed room than when it housed the Fat Duck and the food follows suit. Tricks and surprises have been replaced with a new à la carte menu of precise modern interpretations of historic British dishes, among them the much-documentied Meat Fruit (chicken liver parfait in mandarin jelly), a garlic and parsley savoury porridge spiked with abalone, the amazingly juicy, flavoursome chicken served with grilled pomelo jewels and zesty coastal greens – just the kind of subtle cooking you’d expect from a former Etxebarri chef. While the price-point might beg for a longer sitting, the prospect of a glass of wine, meat and greens at the bar should not be ignored – especially if it’s delicately grilled cos with translucent sheets of guanciale next to a big-hitting steak. A brilliant finale of sticky roasted peaches is sweetened all the more by Minnie Riperton riffing overhead. Quietly confident, beautifully executed.

Minamishima
4 LORD ST, RICHMOND
(03) 9429 5180
minamishima.com.au

It’s the rice that gives it away. The restaurant itself, tucked behind a discreet façade down a suburban side street, is perfectly in keeping with the way things would be done in Tokyo, as is the crisp corporate-cool of the fit-out, warmed gently by the quiet burble of jazz. But to take a finger of nigiri, the temperature just so, each grain of rice distinct, from Koichi Minamishima is to know the finest sushi in the state. He tops his rice with beautifully cut swatches of fish from near and far – fatty, almost crunchy meat from under the fin of a flounder; outrageously buttery Japanese tuna belly; fine local whiting; saline Victorian salmon roe folded in a battleship of luxe nori. There are hot dishes for those not sitting at the counter, but really it’s all about the sushi. Sommelier Randolph Cheung gives proceedings a gentle twist: rare is the sushi-ya in Ginza that offers wine pairings this en pointe alongside sake and beer options. Pure elegance.

Cutler & Co
55-57 GERTRUDE ST, FITZROY
(03) 9419 4888
cutlerandco.com.au

This is how Melbourne likes to party: a quick sashay through a dining room packed with up-for-it-punters, and then great bread and even better wine hit the unclothed tables in no time flat, followed shortly by rock oysters, briny and bright, and tiny fingers of roast topped with fillets of Ortiz anchovy. From there it’s a choice of more small and delicate things (spanner crab sweet and wholesome in a golden chicken broth; flounder framed by browned butter sauce and pickled cucumbers), or going big: a kilo of dry-aged Angus rib-eye grilled on-
the bone, for instance, or a quarter of a suckling pig, roasted and served with spiced cauliflower, baby cos and a sour-cream dressing. Some compositions border on busy, thrown into contrast, perhaps, by the spare elegance of the plates at Marion, the sister wine bar next door, but the larger Cutler package – especially the service – trumps it with big-night-out sparkle nonetheless.

Tetsuya’s
529 KENT ST, SYDNEY
(02) 9267 2900
tetsuyas.com

This shrine to refined gastronomy has been offering patrons its velvety signature confit ocean trout for 18 years (26, if you count the original Rozelle site) while they muse upon the Zen garden at the heart of Tetsuya’s temple and pay homage – or celebrate birthdays and corporate deals. Tetsuya’s relaxed yet attentive service team guides your journey as culinary cultures meld seamlessly over 10 or so small courses: a succulent octopus on fregola. The wine and its unpasteurised roe; marinated shiso salad, perhaps; that famous trout and its unpasteurised roe; marinated toothfish on fregola. The wine compendium compels, too, mingling the new and the classic, with several notable bespoke Tetsuya’s bottlings. As the dégustation unfolds, you’ll marvel at the consistency of this institution – on its sake selection, near-encyclopedic sommeliers, contemporary art collection and swoon-worthy chocolate finale. It’s there in the Neil Perry’s steakhouse is an exercise in restrained elegance. It’s there in the handsome colour palette of Burgundy and black, the polished service and estimable wine list, and the cabinets of ageing meat at the entrance, which add the moody drama of a Dutch master’s oil painting. This measured approach is evident on the plate, with the finest dishes featuring the fewest ingredients. To start, there’s crab linguine slick with spicy prawn oil and a hint of kaffir lime, or wood-fired octopus with hand-pounded pesto and the salty thwack of olives. Perfectly charred steaks are simply adorned with a wedge of lemon and mustard. There’s nowhere to hide with this style of cooking, but the top-notch produce and the kitchen’s skill require no culinary crutches. Refined desserts include vanilla slice with burnished pastry and tonka bean cream. Fine dining like this comes at a price, but, for the most part, it’s worth it.

Franklin
30 ARGYLE ST, HOBART
(03) 6234 3375
franklinhobart.com.au

A slab of blue-eye trevalla, a wedge of iceberg and some crunchy wakame. How those three basic ingredients could be prepared so perfectly that they replay in the mind for weeks afterwards is a secret known only to Franklin’s chef David Moyle, though that wood-fired Scotch oven in the corner must tell some of the story. A very savoury fish congee stuffed with juicy generous mussels makes just as much of an impression, as do heirloom tomatoes tucked into a featherbed of cicely, buckwheat grains bound as a thick coconut soup strikes a blow for contemporary art collection and more than a few dollars, if Ormeggio is any guide. It doesn’t require a perfect setting. The view from the modern dining room onto Middle Harbour? Magical. The walk through the marina’s boat-sales floor to get there? Less so. But the team conjures wizardry on the plate, not at least in the Trip Through Italy menu, which transports the happy diner to the wilds of Piedmont with a bosky mulch of hazelnut shavings, chestnut, truffles and black truffles, for instance – it’s his plant-based creations that impress the most. Pea and buckwheat grains bound as a thick ‘risotto’ and enhanced with gherkin powder, nasturtiums and green olives taste as striking as they look. Roasted cauliflower dressed with a Thai-style coconut soup strikes a blow for cosmopolitan thinking and cooking. Refined service and well-chosen, mostly European wines underscore Urbane’s merited reputation.

Ormeggio
D’ALBORA MARINAS,
THE SPIT, MOSMAN
(02) 9969 4088
ormeggio.com.au

What does it take to be the nation’s top-ranked Italian restaurant? It takes ambition, a good whack of creativity, and more than a few dollars, if Ormeggio is any guide. It doesn’t require a perfect setting. The view from the modern dining room onto Middle Harbour? Magical. The walk through the marina’s boat-sales floor to get there? Less so. But the team conjures wizardry on the plate, not least in the Trip Through Italy menu, which transports the happy diner to the wilds of Piedmont with a bosky mulch of hazelnut shavings, chestnut,
porcini and crisps of Jerusalem artichoke, and reimagines risotto alla Milanese as al dente carnaroli enriched by saffron and bone marrow, with slices of marron the luxe stand-in for osso buco. Bottone are the crowning glory: “buttons” of perfect pasta filled with a hot grilled-Parmesan broth and dusted with roasted malt. Courty, earnest service is an asset, especially when it’s a conduit to the exceptional cellar.

Icebergs Dining Room & Bar
1 NOTTS AVE, BONDI
(02) 9365 9000
idrb.com

It’s a bright Bondi afternoon. The sun is bouncing off the breakers below this most glamorous of beachside eateries, and the dining room is in full effect as savvy waiters ferry plates of oysters and salumi and tall glasses blushing with Campari to an appreciative dolled-up crowd. The Icebergs of now has evolved to incorporate the modern impulses of chef Monty Koludrovic (bone marrow making a winning appearance with lush braised octopus on cavatelli and seaweed teaming up with fresh fusilli, broccoli, chilli and anchovy) and a newer natural lean to the wine list while communing anew with the things that made it great in the first place. Namely simple, expensive proteins such as superb steaks and sparsely plated seafood, handled with care in the kitchen and delivered with a wink and a smile by a floor team as strong as this space has seen in years. The riotous house take on the tiramisù makes a perfectly fitting finale.

Estelle by Scott Pickett
245 HIGH ST, NORTHCOTE
(03) 9489 4609
estellebysp.com

Scott Pickett’s seductive showpiece takes northside dining to new heights. Under a sculptural light fitting, deep leather chairs flank generous tables and high-backed stools front an open kitchen. While Pickett takes centrestage at the pass, he hasn’t resorted to theatrics. Instead, the dégustation melds native ingredients and contemporary technique. There might be snacks of smoky wallaby tartare, or cured kingfish anchored by crunchy radish and cucumber. Perhaps a Cognac-hued kangaroo consommé with saltbush and salted egg, or a curl of Moreton Bay bug draped in sweet jamón. It’s one high note after another, building in intensity like a crescendo to the duck with spiced cherries and foie gras. Pickett hedges his bets with desserts, offering first an ethereal lavender cream with basil sorbet and burnt fig, followed by crowd-pleasing chocolate mousse with strawberry sorbet and coconut sponge. It’s a polished, considered experience.

Est
LEVEL 1, ESTABLISHMENT,
252 GEORGE ST, SYDNEY
(02) 9240 3000
merivale.com.au

The theatre starts with the room. Elegant banquettes, soaring columns, pressed-metal ceiling and glorious arched windows set the scene for formal dining that is becoming increasingly rare in Sydney. A Champagne trolley adds to the atmosphere and kicks off an experience where cloches are gracefully pulled from plates in tandem and sauces are poured from copper pans by smartly dressed waitstaff. The dishes, too, are all quality and tradition, and while there may be few surprises, the deft execution of one of Australia’s most respected chefs, Peter Doyle, and his head chef, Jacob Davey, guarantees class and finesse. A beautiful Moreton Bay bug tail with yuzu curd, finger lime and kombu butter is a study in balance, the cocoa-crusted venison with cherries, beetroot and boudin noir rich and generous, and poached rhubarb with cheesecake ice-cream and strawberries is just as it sounds, a safe finale from a revered stalwart.
Automata
5 KENSINGTON ST, CHIPPENDALE
(02) 8277 8555
automata.com.au

If the name conjures images of something chilly, the reality is anything but robotic. Sure, the decorative detailing, involving valves and steel flanges, has a touch of the Fritz Lang about it, but the warmth and buzz of the place (projected in no small part by the impressive floor team) makes it more of an engine room than assembly line. All the pistons are firing in the open kitchen, certainly. The lumpen plates are duff, but chef Clayton Wells’s compositions are perfectly tuned. He presents onions both pickled and cooked to softness as a foil for grilled bonito on kumbo butter, throws a toasty scatter of za’atar over duck hearts and roasted lettuce for texture, and slips the surprise of capers into an inspired, texturally daring dessert of yoghurt sorbet, plum and bee pollen. The set five courses fly by the impressive floor team) makes it spans, especially taken in conjunction with the feisty, foxy drinks offer.

Esquire
165 EAGLE ST, BRISBANE
(07) 3220 2123
esquire.net.au

Esquire isn’t a restaurant for everyone. Control freaks, for instance, won’t like letting the kitchen choose the set-list, just as the hard-of-hearing will struggle with the acoustics of the stark room. The disengaged service, too, seems at odds with the restaurant’s reputation. Yet, despite all this, Ryan Squires’ bold cooking continues to lure eaters craving the cutting edge. Seafood is a strong point. An oversized prawn is served with a fermented lettuce leaf filled with green garlic and orange marmalade. Crumbed and char-grilled cuttlefish with finger lime and a slick of savoury mushroom sauce speak to an active kitchen imagination. Risk doesn’t always equal reward: plum, macadamia milk and fenugreek oil tastes less harmonious than it sounds, while ill-considered wine pairings jar. But then along comes a dazzling “strudel” comprising papery apple flakes, thyme and hay-infused cream to remind you how great this renegade can be.

Flower Drum
17 MARKET LA, MELBOURNE
(03) 9662 3655
flowerdrum.melbourne

Courtly service and superior Cantonese cooking are immediately apparent to even the greenest of horns, but it’s the details that untouch the Drum’s regulars: the untouched retro pleasures of the dining room, the acres between tables. The menu is packed with thrills, but devotees prefer the Socratic method: ask the staff what’s looking good and let them guide you in its preparation. The pick of today’s catch might be whitening; have it delicately battered, they’ll recommend, with a nest of enoki mushrooms. How best to enjoy the jade tiger abalone? With slippery swatches of mung bean noodle to contrast the shellfish’s tender firmness. This all comes at a cost, but the quality is on the plate, in the just-so crispness of green vegetables, say, or the crystalline quality of the broth holding a dumpling bulging to contrast the shellfish’s tender firmness. This all comes at a cost, but the quality is on the plate, in the just-so crispness of green vegetables, say, or the crystalline quality of the broth holding a dumpling bulging with crab and scallop meat. Make it all up on the genteel mark-ups on the weightier end of that excellent wine list. A tour de force.

Café Di Stasio
31 FITZROY ST, ST KILDA
(03) 9525 3999
distasio.com.au

Café Di Stasio represents the ideal of dining as a particularly adult pleasure. The experience starts entering a room that’s as dark, theatrical and strangely moving as the Bill Henson photograph on the wall, and continues with the dance of white-jacketed waiters of long standing. The menu has always expressed continuity with Italian tradition rather than the ego of any chef. These are simple, good, familiar things, done exceedingly well. Angelhair pasta with spanner crab is a typical example, glossed with a prawn bisque in place of olive oil for a deep Italian umami effect. Classics such as veal cotoletta and porchetta – the latter sweetened smartly by a sage-topped baked apple – both achieve the crisp surfaces one desires. Millegotlie, with layers of light pastry, vanilla cream and caramelised apple, makes for an elegant ending. For the finest Negroni south of the river, try Bar Di Stasio next door.

Grossi Florentino
80 BOURKE ST, MELBOURNE
(03) 9662 1811
grossiflorentino.com

They don’t make restaurants like this any more. The royal-blue carpets. The wood panelling. Napier Waller’s 84-year-old murals. It’d be easy to write Grossi Florentino off as antiquated, but the more pertinent thing to do is surrender to Guy Grossi’s vision of old-school elegance. Suited waiters uphold fine-dining traditions, from attentive service to the theatre of avvinare, the Italian ritual of rinsing a glass with the wine to be served. While the cooking can lean more modern than Italian – a painterly arrangement of mussels, yabbies and almond sauce is of the moment, as is an intricate buttermilk panna cotta, milk sorbet and milk crisp dessert – the kitchen gratifies most when it does the least. Bright rabbit agrodolce, egg-yolk ravioli and roast spatchcock stay true to the room’s classic lines, as does the mighty cellar. White tablecloth dining like this doesn’t come cheap, but frills such as veal cotoletta and porchetta – the latter sweetened smartly by a sage-topped baked apple – both achieve the crisp surfaces one desires. Millegotlie, with layers of light pastry, vanilla cream and caramelised apple, makes for an elegant ending. For the finest Negroni south of the river, try Bar Di Stasio next door.
If it’s sparkle you’re after, keep your senses trained on the arresting harbour views that make up the fourth wall of this lofty Sydney institution. Its quietly moneyed clientele isn’t looking for flash or showmanship from the food – happy instead to let the reliably luxurious menu, spectacular wine list and skyscraper prices create a sense of drama. That’s not to say the food doesn’t live up to its promise; it does, if you assume its promise is beautifully cooked dishes that rarely colour outside the lines. A lush Champagne lobster entrée pairs with one of its favourite bedfellows, a rich kombu butter sauce. Roasted breast of corn-fed duck sings the precise tune you’d expect when it sits with caramelised onions and figs, and with the exception of an unusual hit of mushroom in a caramel tart, desserts play by the rules, too. If it’s a special occasion or there are big clients in town, Aria can be relied upon to hold the line.uphold fine-dining traditions, from attentive service to the theatre of.

Concision could be said to be a theme at Oscillate Wildly. Sure, the name (taken from a Smiths song) is exuberant, there’s generosity in the bespoke service and the meal itself is taken over several courses in a leisurely manner, but the crisply monochrome terrace space is small, the wine list is tight and the plates themselves are composed with meticulous care. There’s nothing extraneous in a bowl of shititakes and scallops, the hot, rich broth of fermented mushrooms and black garlic poured at the table poaching the shellfish to a bare opacity, the merest scattering of buckwheat bringing texture. Shavings of frozen foie gras, meanwhile, melt into cauliflower and crunchy fried grains of Job’s tears in a microcosm of carefully balanced flavours and textures accented with maple syrup. Desserts are no less inventive; miso and sesame are the surprise trump cards in a clever play on white chocolate. A must for any passionate diner.

It took an abundance of timber, glass and Mercedes-Benz leather to construct the well-upholstered interior of this riverfront destination. Seven years after Aria’s début, all is in mint condition. There’s pomp and ceremony aplenty, which makes some of the service slips (such as the barely cursory wine service) all the more surprising. A precision-drilled kitchen sets things right. Grilled Moreton Bay bug is deftly paired with a subtle sea urchin-infused custard. Tarty sweet beetroot and rhubarb pickle offsets the richness of duck breast, all crisp skin and rosy flesh alongside swirls of gingerbread cream and crumble. Meticulously grilled Rangers Valley oyster blade needs nothing more than a tangle of watercress to shine, but a glass of Si Vintners Cachorro from one of the state’s most-awarded cellars certainly doesn’t hurt. To cap off the meal, creamed rice with honey cake, pomegranate and toasted rice sorbet earns a little belt loosening.
There are worse places to put a Sardinian restaurant than by the sea, and Pilu is close enough that the waves almost lap at its feet. The interior might be more House & Garden than La Grande Bellezza, but sprightly staff and impeccable sourcing keep the focus on freshness. The restaurant is justly famous for its wine list, a kind of mash note to the island that calls vermentino home. The sommelier steers through it ably, even lovingly, and fine wines can be had without dire fiscal consequences. There are three menus on the weekend: a dégustation, a tradizionale and an innovativo. But supple octopus in a paprika crust with a potato and parsley cake, and tagliolini with Moreton Bay bug, bottarga and cherry tomatoes manage to be both traditional and innovative at the same time. Seafood might seem the natural choice with the deep-blue view out the window, but the roast suckling pig remains the island’s (literally) golden exemplar.

Dining archaeologists may spot vestiges of former owner Jacques Reymond in this grand Victorian mansion, but the French chef's avid successors, Thomas Woods and Hayden McFarland, have made the restaurant their own. From the Nordic-influenced décor and relaxed but precise service to a menu that teams saltbush lamb with sea succulents, and pear soufflé with salted liquorice ice-cream, there’s a genuinely interesting balance here between the traditional and the modern. The wine list favours classic French and Australian labels (the Champagne options are impressive), but the chefs are unafraid to mix and match influences – rock flathead, say, served with puffed quinoa and pickled cucumber, charred abalone with wasabi and ponzu – and manage an impressive strike rate. With the offer of multi-course set menus in a room of linen-dressed tables, this dining is fine but free of any stiff formality the term might imply.

A glass box on the end of a wharf, LuMi is a beacon of life and vigour. At its heart is the open kitchen, where chef Federico Zanellato yokes the fire of his imagination to the precision of his technique. The result is dishes that brim with good ideas, but are coolly delineated by the bounds of good taste and clarity of expression. The battery of snacks that kicks off the tasting-style menu signals the chef’s interest in exploring the meeting of Japan and Italy, most notably in a sublimely textured play on chawanmushi done as a satiny steamed parmesan custard. Tiny, perfect agnolotti burst gently under the tooth to reveal a superbly savoury tomato and caper dashi filling, while hints of lemon thyme and cumquat are surprisingly welcome in supple chitarra with hanks of Moreton Bay bug meat. The modern decorative touches might not please all comers, but engaged service and carefully crafted wine matches make LuMi shine.
Coconut cream proves that salmon and finger limes with simplicity, while tea-smoked charcoal-roasted rankin cod might outshine its turf. Juicy Rockpool's surf and orange, perhaps, or gamy, sweetbreads with almonds luxe steakhouse concept: underscores Rockpool's any given moment, protein six-figures' worth of beef at a restaurant that's dry-ageing casino. As you'd expect from the eater's best bet at the Cheyne. Engaging, snappily gilded room designed by Grant A candle-lined walkway. A ratcheted up a gear with new garden to cleverly inform combinations, yet works in Baker is daring with textural Australia-focused wine list. bottles added to a South floor staff and international crockery, more-accomplished refining touches: elegant stone kitchen. We'd love to see the fine in fine dining. rooftop honey accentuate the restaurant’s own candied desert lime and airy milk crisps with even more so. Desserts such as 69irish cream mousse and apricot compote ensure a sweet exit.

Botanic Gardens Restaurant PLANE TREE DR, ADELAIDE (08) 8223 3526 botanicgardensrestaurant.com.au Pretty as a picture, the neat, white octagonal pavilion in the centre of Adelaide Botanic Garden is a dining room in tune with its surroundings. Chef Paul Baker emerged in 2015 as a rising star, harvesting daily from the garden to cleverly inform a vibrant seasonal menu. The operation has now ratcheted up a gear with new refining touches: elegant stone crockery, more-accomplished floor staff and international bottles added to a South Australia-focused wine list. Baker is daring with textural combinations, yet works in a gentle spectrum of clean, bright flavours. The results are intricate and intriguing, as seen in charred asparagus with cured egg yolk and a salad of toasted quinoa and sprouted lentils, say, or sand whiting with caramelised octopus, warriagal greens and grilled baby leeks. Desserts dodge intense sweetness as airy milk crisps with even more so. Desserts such as 69irish cream mousse and apricot compote ensure a sweet exit.

Wildflower 1 CATHEDRAL AVE, PERTH (08) 6168 7855 wildflowerperth.com This handsome house of glass and marble might just change your attitude towards rooftop restaurants for the better. It doesn't hurt that the rooftop in question is that of Como Treasury, Australia's flashiest new hotel. Or that David Best, former Rockpool general manager, oversees Wildflower's platoon of well-drilled waiters. Most convincing is a kitchen that relishes competing with the arresting views of the city centre. Native ingredients anchor the menu, but the kitchen draws inspiration from all corners. Tender marron might outshine its turf. Juicy charcoal-roasted rankin cod is a convincing masterclass in simplicity, while tea-smoked salmon and finger limes with coconut cream proves that more is sometimes more. That's certainly been the credo of the formidable cellar, although the return of sommelier and long-time Neil Perry collaborator Matthew Bell brings welcome vim to the wine service. Unfussy desserts like featherly doughnut balls with apricot compote ensure a sweet exit.
The seafood of Australia

Australia, being the world’s largest island, is surrounded by water. Its miles and miles of coastline, running from the tropical tip of Queensland to the icy southern reaches of Tasmania, and flanked by the Pacific and Indian oceans, make for both variety and abundance when it comes to seafood. It’s a staple of both cooking at home for Australians, and a focus of the nation’s best restaurants. Seafood is also at the top of the list for visitors to Australia who love to eat. So with that in mind, we present a quick guide to the tastiest of Australian marine life – and where to enjoy it.

1. MUD CRAB
   *Scylla serrata*
   The king of Australian seafood, the mighty mud crab offers meat that’s much sweeter than the name might suggest. The best specimens are caught wild off the tropical coasts of the Northern Territory, Queensland and New South Wales. They commonly weigh around a kilogram and though they’re available year round, peak supply is from January to April in Queensland and New South Wales, and May to August in the Northern Territory. The richness of their meat stands up well to strong flavours.
   **TRY IT:** stir-fried with XO sauce at Spice Temple in Melbourne, or in congee with palm hearts at Quay in Sydney.

2. ROCK LOBSTER
   *Palinuridae*
   Unlike its Atlantic cousin, the Australian rock lobster has no claws, so all the prized meat is in the carapace. In many southern states rock lobsters (also known as spiny lobsters) are referred to as crayfish, which can be confusing because true crayfish are a freshwater catch; rock lobsters live in seawater. At any rate, they have a firmly textured flesh, which is popular in Australia served sashimi-style, but also takes well to grilling, poaching and baking. Tropical rock lobsters are the best for sashimi, while southern rock lobsters are preferred for cooking.
   **TRY IT:** in rock lobster rolls along with mayonnaise and watercress at Supernormal in Melbourne, or sautéed with garlic and e-fu noodles at He Wah in Hobart.

3. MARRON
   *Cherax tenuimanus, Cherax cainii*
   Speaking of meaty crustaceans, visitors to Australia who like to cook and eat are delighted when they discover the marron. It’s a type of freshwater crayfish that’s native to the rivers and creeks of Western Australia and South Australia, and it has the most favourable ratio of meat to shell of any crustacean in the world. It also has a remarkable pure sweetness that’s captivating to chefs.
   **TRY IT:** with young coconut and koji butter at Momofuku Seiobo in Sydney, or in scrambled eggs at Saint Peter in Sydney.

4. MURRAY COD
   *Maccullochella peelii*
   Not a true cod at all, Australia’s largest freshwater fish nonetheless has a firm white flesh that is deeply succulent. It’s named for the Murray, part of Australia’s largest river system, and is mostly found in New South Wales and Victoria. It’s no longer legal to sell wild-caught Murray cod, but farms have sprung up to meet demand.
   **TRY IT:** with shavings of abalone, snow peas, black fungus and a ginger and spring onion vinaigrette at Est in Sydney, or within cooee of the Murray itself at Stefano’s Restaurant in Mildura.
**BARRAMUNDI**
*Lates calcarifer*

Perhaps Australia’s most famous fin-fish, the barramundi takes its name from an Aboriginal word meaning “river fish with large scales”. They live in rivers and estuaries, predominantly in the northern reaches of Western Australia, the Northern Territory and Queensland. At their largest, they can be 1.5 metres long and weigh 50 kilograms, but the typical wild-caught fish is under six kilos, while the farmed specimens are frequently harvested at plate-size. The meat is pale, in medium-to-large flakes, contains only a few, large bones, and is very well suited to barbecuing.

**TRY IT:** fried with surf clams, pickled squid, banana flower and tamarind at Nu Nu at Palm Cove, or sautéed with garlic chives at Flower Drum in Melbourne.

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**CORAL TROUT**
*Plectropomus leopardus*

With its red skin and bright blue spots, the coral trout (technically a rock cod) is nothing if not distinctive. A reef fish, it’s caught wild in the northern parts of Australia, at its peak from September to November. It’s usually available between 500 grams and four kilograms in restaurants, but can grow to more than 20 kilos. It’s mildly flavoured and has few bones.

**TRY IT:** steamed with potatoes at The Fish House on the Gold Coast, or with ginger and spring onions at Red Emperor in Melbourne.

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**PIPIS**
*Donax deltoides*

So popular is the classic pipis stir-fried in XO sauce and vermicelli noodles at the famed Cantonese restaurant Golden Century, it might well be considered Sydney’s signature dish. Pipis are related to the cockle, a kind of clam with a wedge-shaped shell typically around six centimetres in diameter. They’re found in sandy surf beaches all around Australia, and contain firm, meaty flesh.

**TRY THEM:** stir-fried with sticky pork, sea parsley, samphire and sea blite at Billy Kwong, or with clotted cream, lemon jam and pikelets at Bennelong in Sydney.

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**YABBIES**
*Cherax destructor*

A freshwater crustacean, the yabby closely resembles the crawfish popular in the southern US. The most common of the Australian crayfish, it’s found wild in waterholes, dams and creeks throughout south-eastern Australia and south-western Queensland. Getting at the meat is labour-intensive, but it’s flavoursome enough to make it worthwhile.

**TRY THEM:** stir-fried with sticky pork, sea parsley, samphire and sea blite at Billy Kwong, or sautéed with garlic chives at Flower Drum in Melbourne.

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**ABALONE**
*Haliotis rubra, Haliotis laevigata*

Australian abalone is in such high demand in the markets of Hong Kong and Tokyo that it can be hard to find in the restaurants of Australia. Of the 18 species of the valuable mollusc found in Australia, the two most recognisable are greenlip and blacklip abalones. The blacklip is mostly caught wild in the waters of Tasmania, typically harvested at around 350 grams, while the greenlip is the species most often cultivated in aquaculture, in South Australia, and is frequently sold at a smaller size. To make the most of abalone’s unique texture, the flesh is usually cooked either hot and fast, or very slowly for several hours.

**TRY IT:** sautéed and served with maltagliati pasta at Rockpool Bar & Grill in Sydney, or roasted whole in kelp at Franklin in Hobart.
Tropical flavours abound in Australia’s far reaches. Here’s a round-up of the best to be found in the Top End and Broome.

North by north-west

Top End dining is more enticing than ever, starting with a slew of vibrant new offerings in the casual daytime realm. Besser Kitchen & Brew Bar (Shop 6, 116 Coonawarra Rd, Winnellie, 08 8984 3254) and its older sibling, Laneway Specialty Coffee (4/1 Vickers St, Parap, 08 8941 4511), both excel at breakfast and brunch fare – think kimchi and mozzarella jaffles at the former, coconut açai bowls at the latter – as well as top-drawer coffee. Another welcome expansion occurred when the owners of Alley Cats Patisserie (14/69 Mitchell St, Darwin, 08 7978 8679) opened The Rabbithole (Shop 2, 44 The Mall, Darwin, 08 8942 2692), serving satisfying salads and sandwiches, pies and pastries.

In terms of restaurants, Little Miss Korea (Austin La, Darwin, 08 8981 7092) is still buzzing, with its funky laneway vibe and Korean barbecue food. Lazy Susan’s Eating House (9/21 Cavenagh St, Darwin, 08 8981 0735) serves wonderful duck and other South East Asian dishes, while The Pearl Darwin (Shop 9, 27 Smith St, Darwin, 0435 821 648) is known for clever conceits such as lobster tortellini with scallops on cauliflower purée. PM Eat & Drink (T1, 56 Smith St, Darwin, 08 8941 3925) is also worth investigating for tapas, as is the fun, circus-themed Lola’s Pergola (48 Marina Blvd, Larrakeyah, 08 8941 5711) for burgers and pizza, and Rorke’s Beer Wine Food (22 Smith St, Darwin, 08 8942 1000), an elegant pub in a refurbished old bank. Wharf One Food & Wine (Building 3, 19 Kitchener Dr, Darwin Waterfront, 08 8941 0033), meanwhile, specialises in wood-fired meats, fish and offal. There’s even a suckling pig feasting menu for true sybarites.
During the dry season, from May to October, head for the Nightcliff foreshore to visit pop-up restaurants such as Cucina Sotto le Stelle (Seabreeze Carpark, Chapman Rd, Nightcliff, 0449 731 490) for simple Italian or the Jetty & The Fish (259 Casuarina Dr, Nightcliff, 0424 494 057) on Thursdays, Saturdays and Sundays for exemplary fish and chips.

For more polished dining options, your best bets are Char Restaurant (cnr The Esplanade & Knuckey St, Darwin, 08 8981 4544), Pee Wee’s at the Point (Lot 5775, Alex Fong Lim Dr, East Point Reserve, 08 8981 6868), and SkyCity Casino’s Evoo and Il Piatto restaurants (Gilruth Ave, Mindil Beach, 08 8943 8940).

Outside Darwin, the pickings are a little slimmer. Cicada Lodge (Gorge Rd, Katherine, 1300 146 743), about three hours’ drive south, offers a superb tasting menu to in-house guests and a small number of fortunate outsiders. In Alice Springs, Hanuman (82 Barrett Dr, Alice Springs, 08 8953 7188) has reopened to serve the same reliably excellent Thai, Indian and Nonya food as its mothership venue in Darwin, while Epilogue Lounge (Shop 1, 58 Todd St, Alice Springs, 08 8953 4206) is winning fans with tapas and live music. For reliable Chinese food, try Confucius Palace Dumpling (10/63 Todd St, Alice Springs, 08 8952 3633).

BEST OF BROOME

The Aarli (Shop 2, 6 Hamersley St, Broome, 08 9192 5529) isn’t just one of the dining options nearest to the airport. It’s one of Broome’s best places to eat. Expect modern Asian flavours breakfast, lunch and dinner from former Stokehouse owner Nick Wendland. Nearby at Azuki (Shop 1, 15 Napier Tce, Broome, 08 9193 7211), Scott Thorpe offers pleasing takes on Japanese standards, while small bar 18 Degrees (Shop 4, 63 Robinson St, Broome, 08 9192 7915) sticks to the prevailing casual small-plates and good-drinks blueprint. Over at Café d’Amore (Jones Pl, Broome, 08 9192 7606), it’s all about pizze and big Italian flavours alfresco. For something a little more polished, set sail for Cable Beach Club (Cable Beach Rd, Cable Beach, 08 9192 0400). Masterly Italian remains the draw at the hotel’s Club Restaurant (08 9192 0411), while Zensai (08 9192 0471) and Rambutan (08 9192 0479) specialise in Japanese and South East Asian hawker flavours respectively.
Ten wonderful winery cellar door experiences

From the small and cosy to the grand and historic; from intimate fireside chats with artisan winemakers to afternoons spent wandering through awe-inspiring museums and art galleries; from old wineries with dirt floors to new wineries with gleaming restaurants – Australia’s cellar doors offer something for every wine lover. The 10 featured here are just a handful of the standout cellar door experiences to be found out there in wine country – personal favourites from more than two decades spent travelling through this country’s regions. Think of these as your starting point – the first steps on your journey of discovery.

**GIANT STEPS**
Yarra Valley, Victoria

The town of Healesville in the heart of the Yarra Valley east of Melbourne is wedged between vineyards and forest-covered mountains. This big, buzzy cellar door/restaurant/bar on the main street offers daily tastings of the fantastic Giant Steps wines (look for the distinctive single-vineyard chardonnays and pinot noirs) as well as comfy sofas, wood-fired pizze, great coffee and brilliant artisan bread. This cellar door is a popular hangout for the locals as well as the constant stream of visitors from the city and further afield. Very relaxed, very welcoming. giantstepswine.com.au

**TAHBILK**
Nagambie Lakes, Victoria

A visit to Tahbilk is like walking into the past: down a narrow country lane lined with ancient mulberry trees, past gnarly shiraz vines that date back to the 1860s, over a rickety bridge to the beautiful historic wooden winery buildings and quiet underground cellars. The wines, too, are gloriously old-fashioned: long-lived, cellar-worthy white marsanne, deeply earthy shiraz and cabernet sauvignon. Tahbilk also boasts an extensive rejuvenated natural wetlands area. Visitors can either walk or take a cruise along the eco-trail, while appreciating the tranquil billabongs and native forest of this quintessentially Australian landscape. tahbilk.com.au

*NEIL LARSON, TAHBILK WINEMAKER*
CULLEN WINES
Margaret River, Western Australia

The Cullen family was among a band of winemaking pioneers who established the first vineyards in this far-flung region on the south-west coast of Western Australia back in the 1960s, and present-day winemaker Vanya Cullen has continued the tradition by converting the vineyards and extensive kitchen garden to the biodynamic system of organic farming. The results can be tasted in the cellar door and superb restaurant: exquisitely elegant but intensely flavoured chardonnay and cabernet (and much more) in the glass and stunningly fresh ingredients on the plate. One of the best food and wine experiences in the country. cullenwines.com.au

BELLWETHER
Coonawarra, South Australia

Visiting Bellwether is like hanging out at a friend’s house – if your friend lived in a converted stone shearing shed built in the 1860s by Chinese labourers en route to the goldfields, that is. Winemaker Sue Bell offers personalised tastings of her Coonawarra cabernet and other excellent wines in front of a wood fire in what feels like her living room. Bell also holds popular events here every few months such as the midwinter Sips in the Sticks lunch hosted by Bell and a bunch of her winemaker mates from across the country; you can even camp on-site in a paddock behind the cellar door, under 400-year-old red gum trees. bellwether-wines.myshopify.com

PENFOLDS MAGILL ESTATE
Adelaide, South Australia

On the outskirts of Adelaide, Magill Estate is the birthplace – both literally and “spiritually” – of Australia’s most famous red wine, Penfolds Grange. There are so many great experiences to be enjoyed here: you can visit Grange Cottage, the original 19th-century home of Dr Christopher and Mary Penfold, founders of the estate; tour the cellars – still in use today – where winemaker Max Schubert created Grange Hermitage in the early 1950s; treat yourself to a private tutored tasting of Penfolds top wines; dine in the bistro, Kitchen, or award-winning restaurant. Both have sweeping views across the Magill vineyard and out towards the city. penfolds.com
MOORILLA
Hobart, Tasmania

Take the private ferry from the wharf in the centre of Hobart up the Derwent River to MONA, one of the world’s most incredible new art galleries, and you’ll discover it’s been built underneath one of Tasmania’s oldest and best vineyards and wineries, Moorilla. Once you’ve had your fill of old and new art in the gallery, taste through the range of adventurous wines in the sleek, modern cellar door, then stroll across to the fabulous restaurant, The Source, and plunder its staggeringly extensive wine list. You could spend days here and not get bored – in fact, you can spend days here, in the luxury MONA Pavilions overlooking the river. moorilla.com.au

SAMUEL’S GORGE
McLaren Vale, South Australia

There are plenty of glamorous cellar doors lining the main roads of the rolling McLaren Vale region south of Adelaide, which makes finding this small, low-key, out-of-the-way winery in an old 1850s stone shed up on the hill such a rare, almost secret joy. Winemaker Justin McNamee loves nothing more than to sit down in his cellar door over a glass of one of his rich reds – an earthy grenache, perhaps, or a sumptuous tempranillo – and have a yarn with visitors. It sounds simple, and it is – refreshingly so: a down-to-earth, one-on-one experience that reminds you what’s really at the heart of wine culture. gorge.com.au
TYRRELL’S
Hunter Valley, New South Wales

You can’t visit the historic Hunter Valley, north of Sydney, and not visit Tyrrell’s – with 160 years of winemaking history, the place is an institution. Indeed, the slab hut built by Edward Tyrrell when he arrived here in 1858 still stands near the entrance to the big old cellar door. The Tyrrell’s wines available for tasting here are regarded as Hunter Valley benchmarks, particularly the long-lived Vat 1 sémillon, the rich Vat 47 chardonnay and the deeply earthy shiraz wines made from some of the region’s oldest vines. Tours of the old dirt-floor cellar give visitors a great insight into how it must have felt to make wine here a century ago.

foxeys-hangout.com.au

SEPPELTSFIELD
Barossa Valley, South Australia

There are just so many good reasons to visit this remarkable place it’s hard to know where to begin: perhaps the magnificently restored historic winery buildings (Seppeltsfield was established in 1851), some of which house the renowned Jam Factory craft and design studios, or the fabulous on-site restaurant, Fino, which offers some of the best food and wine of any winery restaurant in Australia. The highlight, though, has to be the daily tours through the priceless collection of barrels of ancient fortified wines dating back to the 19th century. Fancy trying a wine made in 1912, the same year the Titanic sank? Well, you can at Seppeltsfield. seppeltsfield.com.au

foxys-hangout.com.au

FOR MORE ON AUSTRALIA’S WINE EXPERIENCES SEE ULTIMATEWINERYEXPERIENCES.COM.AU.
COAST TO COAST

From Margaret River to Port Douglas and Bowral to the Adelaide Hills, Australia offers some amazing regional food experiences using the freshest local ingredients but drawing inspiration from around the planet. Here are some of our favourites – from vineyard to tropical beach.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Fleet
2/16 THE TERRACE (VIA FINGAL ST)
BRUNSWICK HEADS
(02) 6685 1363
fleet-restaurant.com.au

Nimble by name, small and perfectly formed by nature, Fleet is concise in everything from floor plan (a modern wine bar coolly fitted out with a wide concrete counter and lush bespoke plates) to wine list and menu, but entirely generous in spirit. Much of that is communicated by the warmth of the welcome from co-owner Astrid McCormack, and her passion for Fleet’s wine list, and the remarkable eats conjured from the tiny kitchen by her partner, chef Josh Lewis. Caper-like pickled nasturtium buds and lightly charred curls of guanciale are the elegant foil for gently torched tuna, while an anchovy-spiked mayo makes the sweetbread “schnitzel” on rounds of sliced white the most moreish bar sandwich on the eastern seaboard. Clever ideas abound, many of them upcycling lesser-loved produce into delicacies, while the care with details, right through to cheese and dessert, keeps things high-definition all the way. Destination dining.

Biota Dining
18 KANGALOON RD, BOWRAL
(02) 4862 2005
biotadining.com

Biota Dining sits low in the Bowral landscape, all Scandi-cool polished concrete, mid-century-inspired furniture, scrubbed timber and low light. Local, seasonal ingredients are the focus and several snacks are a happy introduction, whether with fine wine or the interesting soft options. Subsequent dishes are a mixed bag; Sweet spanner crab and slivers of white peach are beautifully delicate, albeit overpowered by the fermented cabbage beneath; beef cooked over coals is textbook rare, paired with charred leek and a crispy potato-water wafer and the unexpected addition of pickled elder leaves. Desserts impress, not least the yoghurt soft-serve with Biota honey. There are good things here – the room, the warm and welcoming service and bold choices in the kitchen. One thing Biota is not is run-of-the-mill.

Paper Daisy
HALCYON HOUSE, 21 CYPRESS CRES,
CABARITA BEACH
(02) 6676 1444
halcyonhouse.com.au

Is this the Northern Rivers or the Riviera? Pandanus-filtered ocean glimpses are a giveaway, but smartly attired and accented staff and the blue-and-white designer décor fuel plenty of Côte d’Azur fantasies. Since Paper Daisy’s opening, the menu has morphed to a fixed format, encouraging DIY mini dégustations. Openers like the smoked raw beef with a feisty tartare, thinly sliced dried watermelon, creamy egg yolk and radish exemplify the sharp execution and inventive...
Line-caught mackerel, skin bronzed, flesh juicy, comes with grilled asparagus and hazelnut purée, zinged up with preserved lemon and toasted rice. Clarence River school prawns are loaded with red chilli and lime, a spicy kimchi mayo at hand for dipping. The restaurant’s crowd-pleaser desserts display the same nuanced care – fluffy meringue and rum caramel elevate Eton mess. Adept staff seem so happy you may want to ditch your job and join the cult.

Queensland

Wasabi
2 Quamby Pl, Noosa
(07) 5669 2643
wasabisb.com

Yes, this may sting a little, particularly the credit card surcharge, but you’ll reminisce about Wasabi’s serene surrounds, the almost psychic waitstaff and regionally nuanced dishes long after the bill fades. The tatami room with sunken seating and rice-paper screens is a mood-enhancing spot to reminisce about Wasabi’s serene surroundings, the almost psychic waitstaff and regionally nuanced dishes long after the bill fades. The tatami room with sunken seating and rice-paper screens is a mood-enhancing spot to

Three Blue Ducks

11 Ewingsdale Rd, Ewingsdale
(02) 6684 7795
threeblueducks.com

Floaty dresses, tanned limbs, thongs – Bronte’s Three Blue Ducks have feathered themselves a rustic, fun and appropriately stress-free nest in the stunning surrounds of The Farm outside Byron Bay. An on-trend wine list is dotted with plenty of organic and biodynamic options, and there’s kombucha and craft beer on tap. Sure, it’s a taste of the good life for townies, but the allegiance to sustainable and seasonal is dinky-di, with the diner focus directed out to the paddocks rather than on the tin-shed décor.

Nu Nu

1 Veivers Rd, Palm Cove
(07) 4099 1880
nu nu.com.au

There are three must-visit places in Far North Queensland: the reef, the Daintree Rainforest and Nu Nu. Located in the prettiest pocket of Palm Cove, this casual but upmarket restaurant partly resembles those heritage-listed destinations in that it offers a true and magical sense of place. The only difference is it’s on a plate (and what good-looking plates they are). You could start and finish in the titbit section of the menu, with dishes such as the crispy chilli salt pork ribs, but then you’d miss the massaman curry of pork belly with palm heart and coconut salad. Here it’s more a paste than a curry, and rich and complex. Finish with a tropical full stop, such as the coconut snow egg with black sticky rice, passionfruit cream, while local pipis star in a lemon curry leaf and paired with macadamia palm heart and coconut salad. Here it’s more a paste than a curry, and rich and complex. Finish with a tropical full stop, such as the coconut snow egg with black sticky rice, passionfruit

The Fish House

50 Goodwin Tce, Burleigh Heads
(07) 5535 7725
thefishhouse.com.au

There’s an energy at play in The Fish House that speaks of a restaurant at the peak of its powers. You can see it in the dexterous floor service and in the kitchen’s confidence to treat the star attraction – a daily varying haul of the finest Australian seafood – simply, eschewing unnecessary flourishes. Raw scampi from Western Australia arrives butterflied and judiciously seasoned with yuzu and cayenne; pristine King George whiting is char-grilled and, like all main courses, arrives with generous shared sides – crisp-edged roast spuds, dill-flecked lettuce and vibrant mixed greens. Every aspect is well considered and complements the remarkable beach vistas and the room’s airy, unfussy interiors. A well-stocked, glass-fronted cellar signals that fish

Rick Shores

43 Goodwin Tce, Burleigh Heads,
(07) 5630 6611
rickshores.com.au

How does a kitchen compete with the finest ocean views on Australia’s east coast? At Rick’s, the answer is with élan – and an impressive raft of inventive, meticulously flavoured share dishes. Interiors have a cool British Raj-meets-Ralph Lauren sensibility, but you may be too preoccupied to notice, instead focusing on your crab miang, or hot and sour bug roll, the soft bun crammed with tempura-battered Queensland bug meat and sriracha-spiked kaffir lime mayo. A cliché-free drinks list fields copious riesling, Rhône and rosé inspiration.
plus some tidy Champagne and cocktail inducement. Service is genial, if occasionally harried. Slow the pace with egg-net salad, a rustic jumble of cuttlefish, pork belly, mint and green mango, or beef tartare boosted with massaman spicing. Mango, kaffir lime meringue and sticky rice ice-cream chimes sweetly with the overall offer.

**SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

**Hentley Farm**
CNR GERALD ROBERTS & JENKE RDS, SEPPELTSFIELD
(08) 8562 8427
hentleyfarm.com.au

The addition of a large yet elegant glass-walled dining room signals the popularity of this ambitious Barossa Valley winery and restaurant. It complements a renovated stone stable that houses the main restaurant and kitchen, blending rugged colonial materials with modern elements. Chef Lachlan Colwill achieves a similar mix of rustic and urbane touches in tasting menus informed by produce from his garden and local farms. Kingfish in verjuice with smoky mettwurst and puffed wild rice is a clever twist on ceviche, while rare tuna with chicken liver parfait and grilled kangaroo on hummus with hazelnut shavings demonstrate exciting textural play and bold bursts of flavour. Hentley Farm wines are the exclusive choice, with older vintages showcased to winning effect. Whimsical flourishes, such as chocolate popsicles presented on a rustic log, complete a surprising and impressive culinary journey.

**The Lane Vineyard**
RAVENSWOOD LA, HAHNDORF
(08) 8388 1250
thelane.com.au

There's a buzz growing around the Adelaide Hills wine region, and this celebrated winery restaurant has something to do with it. All the winning ingredients are in place: a picture-perfect setting overlooking vines and paddocks, a bright, open room and deck to drink in the views, seamless service, and elegant dishes to complement the estate's wines. Rich chicken liver parfait with cornichons and buttery brioche has sensational flavour, while a garlic-laced persillade provides colour and contrast in a moreish pork torchon. The caramelised skin of snapper fillet is sweet against an earthy relish of roast beetroot, horseradish and kalamata. Tender confit duck is rich, its cumin and tahini working beautifully with rocket and roast fig. There's a hint of smokiness in vanilla ice-cream to play against roast peaches, shards of honeycomb and black pepper. It's tempting to linger and work through the impressive portfolio of cool-climate wines. Bravo on all counts.
**Lake House**
84 FORD ST, BEECHWORTH
(03) 5278 1786
theprovenance.com.au

It’s easy to wax lyrical about the culinary talent of Michael Ryan, who turned a heritage-listed former bank into one of the most sought-after restaurants in the state. Provenance’s soothing, dark-toned interior is an ideal backdrop for Ryan’s exquisitely balanced Japanese-inspired dishes. Harriettville trout is beautiful, its skin lifted off and baked into a crispy top for the confit fillet, the orange of its flesh contrasted by a beetroot salad. Snapper arrives with a crisp, tangy salad featuring prawns, pickled radishes, fermented cucumber and a briny hit from sprigs of samphire, pig face and ice plant. Richer dishes include braised goat with eggplant infused with miso and sprinkled with puffed grains, while desserts feature Japanese cheesecake, a lighter version of a classic, enriched by fresh figs, taramasalata, crisp saltbush sprinkled with vinegar powder, zucchini flowers and bassoms – chicken skin slathered in yoghurt and preserved lemons. It begins with a flurry of intriguing snacks – chicken skin slathered in taramasalata, crisp saltbush sprinkled with vinegar powder, zucchini flowers stuffed with mussels, and big-flavoured beef jerky – and then ups the ante further. Chef Aaron Turner’s return to the style of food that earned him the 2013 Gourmet Traveller Regional Restaurant of the Year award for Loam isn’t just the best thing to happen in Geelong for a while, it’s manna for all fans of precise, inventive cooking that doesn’t neglect the delicious. Or the fun. The multi-course menu delivers a different meal to every table, so you might miss out on raw ribbons of salmon, but be thrilled by char-grilled squab for the modern seven-course tasting menu a compelling package.

**Provenance**
86 FORD ST, BEECHWORTH
(03) 5278 1786
theprovenance.com.au

Much lauded and awarded, Lake House strides into its 33rd year without a shred of complacency. A new private room and aperitivo deck – a must for pre-dinner drinks with its cushioned furniture, lake views and Spritz list – underline the point, as does the well-upholstered dining room and crack service team, which nails the sweet spot between formality and country hospitality. The formerly Eurocentric carte now skilfully embraces Asian and Eastern influences. Pan-fried barramundi is teamed with bug slurs, red wine braised in brik pastry, accompanied by yolk and preserved lemon. Local ingredients at the peak of their powers – organic tomatoes, perhaps with burrata, olive crumbs and basil, or berries and buttermilk in the autumn-ramble dessert – form the backbone of the menu, while a superb wine list is yet another reason to enjoy Lake House’s renowned accommodation.

**Royal Mail Hotel**
96 PARKER ST (GLENELG HWY), DUNKELD
(03) 5577 2241
royalmail.com.au

Stuart Bell, chef here since 2007, came via Jacques Reymond and Philippe Mouchel. A Tractor more refined than rustic. Much lauded and awarded, Lake House strides into its 33rd year without a shred of complacency. A new private room and aperitivo deck – a must for pre-dinner drinks with its cushioned furniture, lake views and Spritz list – underline the point, as does the well-upholstered dining room and crack service team, which nails the sweet spot between formality and country hospitality. The formerly Eurocentric carte now skilfully embraces Asian and Eastern influences. Pan-fried barramundi is teamed with bug slurs, red wine braised in brik pastry, accompanied by yolk and preserved lemon. Local ingredients at the peak of their powers – organic tomatoes, perhaps with burrata, olive crumbs and basil, or berries and buttermilk in the autumn-ramble dessert – form the backbone of the menu, while a superb wine list is yet another reason to enjoy Lake House’s renowned accommodation.

**Ten Minutes by Tractor**
1333 MORNINGTON-FLIN德ERS RD, MAIN RIDGE
(03) 5997 6980
tenminutesbytractor.com.au

Pray you’re not the designated driver when visiting this cottage because the wine list is as tempting as the menu. You might start local with the vineyard’s McCutcheon chardonnay, a fine match for triangles of rare tuna with a deconstructed gazpacho, then take a detour to Italy for a pinot grigio with delicate rabbit terrine, and finish with Burgundy as a foil for lamb rack, boned and paired with pumpkin and raisins. While this may not be the peninsula’s most spectacular dining room, it compensates with arguably the region’s most polished service, attention to detail and simple elegance. There’s classicism, too, in the cooking, through to poached trout with lemon ice-cream, white chocolate foam and lemon chiboust. No surprise, then, that Stuart Bell, chef here since 2007, came via Jacques Reymond and Philippe Mouchel. A Tractor more refined than rustic.

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Robin Wickers’ gig at Dunkeld’s Royal Mail means he’s more self-sufficient than most chefs. Direct access to his own beef, lamb, orchards, olive groves, eggs and enormous vegetable plots is put to good use, both in the renovated former Public Bar (now Parker Street Project) and the flagship dining room. Wickers’ plating remains artful, the “casually scattered” look working equally well with garlicky garden snails teamed with toasted rice, and with a gorgeous dessert of chocolate, blackberries and nasturtium leaves and flowers. Precisely cooked lamb is lifted further with dehydrated goat’s cheese and a curiously satisfying blossom gel, snapper by an earthy chestnut custard. The slightly awkward dining space is as inviting as it’s ever been and the service rarely misses a beat. The legendary wine list inspires many to make the three-hour drive from Melbourne, but Wickers’ clever, regional cooking exerts a magnetic pull all of its own.

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As the shutters come down in other Australian capitals, Melbourne’s vibrant nightlife is just hitting its stride. Michael Harden burns the midnight oil at the city’s best late-night bars and diners.

**PHOTOGRAPHY JESSICA REFTEL EVANS & MARTIN REFTEL**
Night owls in Melbourne have never had it so good. Renowned for the small-bar culture that blossomed in the 1990s, the city has never been shy of a late night or short of novel places for a nightlife. More recently, though, a “24-hour city” state of mind has kicked in. That kind of thinking – and support from authorities – has promoted a flexibility and diversity in late-night dining options that’s unprecedented.

“It’s important to remember that late-night dining has been around in Melbourne for a long time,” says Karen Batson, executive chef of a stable of restaurants (The Toff in Town, Colonel Tan’s at Revolver Upstairs, Boney) with a proud history of serving Melbourne, “there’s absolutely more late-night places around than ever catering to this demand.”

Diversity is key. Those seeking a quality burger and a decent beer at the bar at midnight are as well catered for as those after a linen-dressed table, a steak and a glass of Burgundy, or a hot-and-sour baby snapper with a sauce made from its bones – is even more appealing than the atmospherics. Modern wine-bar credentials are further boosted by a list devoted to producers. Even non-believers will like this list, not least because of the similarly appealing service. Hospitality-industry types love the place and they can be a tricky crowd. Embla’s obviously doing the right thing.

Best for Seriously good food with nightcaps.
Drink Bitch Diesel: Marlborough sauvignon blanc with lemonade and fresh lime.
Eat Chicken and white fungus sausages with peanut and ginger coleslaw on the side.

EMBLA
With a central kitchen equipped with a wood grill and a sturdy bar and nightclub, with neon, DJs and a mash-up of seating options from booth to barstool. It’s not about quiet contemplative wind-down, and that’s the way the young cocktail crowd likes it, but neither are the noise levels obnoxious. In fact, they match the feisty food, be it a traditional Thai green chicken curry or sour pork ribs. A clever Spritz list is ideal when the hour demands more liquid, less booze.

Open Daily until 1am.

BAR AMPÈRE
Like the Futurist movement that inspired its design, Bar Ampère has its own manifesto. Its central premise, that “the time of sobriety and false ceremony is past”, is embraced with civilised gusto at this laneway bar featuring a semi-open front terrace plastered in graffiti (and beloved of smokers) and not-so-secret back bar, the New Orleans-themed, Spanish moss-draped Swamp.
At Embla the food emerging from the mood-defining kitchen is even more appealing than the atmospherics.
Room, with an unmarked door leading to sister bar Gin Palace. The crowd arrives in waves after movie, dinner, theatre, gig or club, and the demographic changes noticeably with each influx of new people. Cheery, efficient table service meets the challenge even when there’s standing room only, and the bar food – burgers, raclette, steak tartare – keeps coming all night. Ampère’s cocktails are deftly constructed and heftily alcoholic, appropriate in a bar that worships absinthe, with fountains and other trappings. Viva el manifesto.

Open Daily until 3am.

Best for Night cappers and party starters.

Drink M-CBD: Luxardo Maraschino, Cognac, Bourbon and DOM Bénédictine. Boom.

Eat Prawns, mayo, dill and cos on a brioche roll.

16 Russell Pl, Melbourne, (03) 9663 7557, barampere.com

HEARTBREAKER

A raucous contribution from the team behind Fitzroy’s refined cocktail emporium The Everleigh, Heartbreaker has all its good-time ducks in a row. There’s the red neon sign painting the room a slightly seedy shade of scarlet and a jukebox stacked with tunes from 1968 to 1980 (yes, it’s that specific). This means you may find yourself belting out Queen, Fleetwood Mac, Hendrix, or Blondie before the end of the evening. There’s a pool table, shadowy booth seating and a dangerously comfortable main bar edged in upholstered black vinyl for leaning comfort. The dive drag is convincing but there’s nothing low-rent about the booze. There are four bottled cocktails, a page-long whisky list and plenty of well-crafted draught beer. The food is theme appropriate: New York-style pizza (think Ray’s Famous) in two flavours, ordered by the slice. Sold.

Open Mon-Sat until 3am. Sun until 11pm.

Best for Those looking to get loose, but with good booze.

Drink Bottled Martini, served in a correct, chilled glass with an olive or a twist.

Eat Pizza.

234a Russell St, Melbourne, (03) 9041 0856, heartbreakerbar.com.au

MILK THE COW

A form of madness can take hold when confronted with Milk the Cow’s glass cabinet full of mollycoddled cheese. There’s the real temptation to devour all 150 of them in their washed-rind, stinky blue, smoked and matured glory. Better to stay seated and peruse the Cheesemonger’s Choice section of the menu, particularly when the cheesemongers are such guns. The wine list is less of a dilemma: straightforward, reasonably priced New and Old World wines playing competent second fiddle to the main event. Late-nights not prone to cheese-fuelled dreams and wanting to stay on theme can choose classic cocktails with a matching cheese garnish.

Open Sun-Thu until late; Fri-Sat until 1am.

Best for Cheese lovers.

Drink Dirty Dutchman, a take on the Gibson, garnished with Tête de Moine.

Eat Fondue, Gruyère, Appenzeller, Comté, Emmental.

323 Lygon St, Carlton, (03) 9348 4771, and 157 Fitzroy St, St Kilda, (03) 9537 2225, milkthecow.com.au

FRANCE-SOIR

This 30-year-old French bistro with the menu that never changes and a remarkable French wine list is still one of Melbourne’s best late diners. Its Ratpackish charms seem to improve with age. Though neon signage, flirtatious waiters and closely packed tables filled with an expensively enhanced crowd contribute to its appeal, the secret weapon has always been its reliability. For all its three decades, France-Soir has been open every night of the week until midnight. So the famished post-theatre crowd knows when they arrive at 11pm any night they’ll be washing down freshly shucked oysters with vintage Krug 10 minutes later. Unbeatable.

Open Daily until midnight.

Best for Retro glamour and good Burgundy.

Drink Domaine de l’Évêché Bourgogne.

Eat Steak frites.

11-13 Toorak Rd, South Yarra, (03) 9866 8569, france-soir.com.au

A form of madness can take hold when confronted with Milk the Cow’s glass cabinet full of mollycoddled cheese.
LE BON TON
Every civilised city needs somewhere to drink Champagne with freshly shucked oysters at 4am in the morning. Or, at the very least, have quality fried chicken and a finely constructed Sazerac at that time. Le Bon Ton is Melbourne’s answer to that request, a sprawling New Orleans-channelling bar with American-born owners and chefs who hail from Alabama. They deliver the genuine Southern goods, whether it’s chilli cheese fries or banana cream pie. The very late weekend hours are catnip for night owls and hospitality workers, teamed with excellent service that exerts a civilising influence as the night gets longer and the crowd happier. Add cracking draught beer and cocktail lists (Hurricanes on tap!) and there’s plenty to late-night love.
Open Mon-Thu until 1am, Fri-Sat until 6am, Sun until midnight.
Best for Good times that roll on and on.
Drink Sazeracs are offered, authentically, with rye, Cognac or a blend of both.
Eat Oysters.
51 Gipps St, Collingwood, (03) 9416 4341, lebonton.com.au

BELLEVILLE
Belleville’s artful air of decayed grandeur – gracefully peeling walls, scuffed concrete floor, lofty ceilings – delivers a quintessentially inner-Melbourne vibe. That’s aided by the hidden doorway, down a laneway at the entrance to Chinatown, views of the surrounding cityscape, and an excellent sound system. DJs and live music might lend a club feel but Belleville defies such labels. Sure, there’s dancing but you might also settle in with a beer with the signature rôtisserie chicken, or drop in for a quick post-movie nightcap. The cocktail list mixes well-crafted classics with originals. The crowd skews young but it’s a place that welcomes all comers.
Open Daily until 1am.
Best for A distinctively Melbourne kind of mood.
Drink Purple Haze: white rum, violet liqueur, apple and ginger.
Eat Rôtisserie chicken with poutine and coleslaw.
Upstairs, Globe Alley, Melbourne, (03) 9663 4041, belleville-melbourne.com