

mx Nosh



TASTY MORSELS

TRY THIS



FAT BUSTING CHIPS

Pitos pita chips (above) offer 80 per cent less fat than regular potato chips, and plenty of flavour. They're baked not fried and high in fibre. Try sweet chilli and sour cream, smoked salmon bites, smokehouse BBQ, tzatziki and spicy Moroccan. \$1.15-\$4.15 at supermarkets.

QUALITY DINING

Drop everything, it's the Chandon Supper Club tonight, when half the city dines out in aid of Camp Quality. For a last-minute ticket call 1300 662 267 or visit www.campquality.org.au

IT'S CHOC AWAY

Cadbury's has a whole new selection for chocolate lovers. Choose from Old Gold Mildly Dark (a mix of milk and dark choc), Old Gold Peppermint, Rum 'n' Raisin, Roast Almond or Original, Old Gold Raspberry dark chocolate or the Old Gold liqueur selection. In supermarkets for \$4.70.

CAUSE FOR A CUPPA

Australia's Biggest Morning Tea fundraising breakfast for the Cancer Council Victoria will be held at Deck 10, Adelphi Hotel, 187 Flinders La, on May 29 at 7.30am. Tickets \$30. Ph: 0438 152 203.

LET'S VEG OUT

Check out Buddha's Day multicultural festival this weekend at Fed Square for a vegetarian feast. Starts 10am.

— Something happening in Melbourne food and wine? Let us know at hunt@mxnet.com.au



PIZZA E BIRRA Fitzroy St – St Kilda Ph: 9537 3465

Occupying the ex-Termini space at the Fitzroy St tram stop, Pizza e Birra has an odd story.

Melbourne restaurateur takes pizza-and-beer concept to Sydney and makes it a success in the burgeoning Surry Hills foodie precinct. Then brings the concept back to his home town.

The name doesn't fully cover the deal. Yes, there are traditional, "modern" and even sweet pizzas, but there is also a selection of entrees, pastas and mains.

A blackboard offers daily specials, so the choice is broad and the food seasonal.

There is a breezy friendliness to the staff and a relaxed "join us for a lazy lunch" atmosphere.

The grilled calamari with radicchio, rocket and wilted salad and salsa verde dressing was a great version with tender squid on a subtly bitter and peppery salad, the dressing pulling the elements together.

Prosciutto italiano with stracchino (aged mozzarella), radicchio, white

truffle oil and foccacio was less successful, mainly because of the mawkish effect of a liberal dose of truffle oil.

I have not joined the truffle oil-bashing club as I think judicial use can be beneficial but, like saffron, it should be haunting, not dominating.

A pan-seared snapper – an underrated fish that kicks barra's butt – with tomato, mussels and vermouth restored the faith, cooked perfectly and sauced to enhance, not dominate, the sweet flesh.

Finally, the pizza – lasagna pizza sounds like two dishes in one, but is simply a deconstruction of the lasagna elements on a pizza base.

So a light mix of tomato, mozzarella, ham, creamed ricotta, basil and parmesan made up the topping.

The base is medium thin and the pizza rates pretty well in a town blessed with some great pizza makers.

One pizza seemed enough (pizza bread comes with other dishes) so sweets included a classic tiramisu

showing balance of mascarpone, coffee, marsala and chocolate. This is a dish so often done badly, but this was very good indeed.

But the Strega panna cotta with raspberry compote was far too sweet – the compote more like jam and the vanilla flavour of the liqueur exacerbating the sweetness.

The beer side of PeB has good boutique brews available and, while the wine list is short, it does offer a well-selected mix of Australian and Italian.

At this relaxed level of dining this is more than adequate as all are available by the glass.

Pizza e Birra scores well – the menu is well constructed and offers loads of choice, and could suit a quick snack or a three-course meal.

Some dishes really nail it and the staff are friendly.

Price is \$50 a person.

CHRISTOPHER HAYES
Christopher Hayes is principal of Australia's food and wine guide, Eat 5
Drink www.eatanddrink.com.au

Left overs

Take these home for later



Dr Booze

Spiced apples baked in warm puff pastry are just a few words regularly used to describe the white wines of Crozes-Hermitage. Produced using Marsanne and Roussanne grapes, 2006 Domaine Belle Les Terres Blanches is the pick of the bunch. Golden in colour, the aromatic nose is just the first step on a journey leading the palate to levels of satisfaction not yet discovered in a bottle of white wine. Drink now with pumpkin soup or citrus-cured seafood. RRP: \$30-40.

HENRY LIVINGSTONE
sommelier

To feature wines here or for more information, contact drbooze@netspace.net.au

Chef Chat

A boiling pot of stew is one of the oldest and simplest forms of cooking known to man. The appearance of pottery 10,000 years ago would have certainly helped the caveman's culinary aspirations, but he would have to wait a few hundred thousand years for that little clay-fired epiphany. There is ample evidence that primitive tribes boiled and baked foods together in shells, bones, barks and thick fibrous leaves. Hunger, necessity and pleasure are great motivators.

At this time of the year, nothing makes more sense than throwing everything into a big pot and cooking the bejesus out of it. It is also the best of seasons to practise thrift and economy. Cheaper cuts of meat such as blade steak or lamb neck are good choices, and grains, pulses, dried beans and root vegetables give lots of bang for your buck.

So tickle your own culinary creativity and look up a few new recipes to stave off the winter chill. Throw a Lancashire hotpot on to the camp fire or your shiny six-burner stove, or throw a beef bourguignon into a moderate oven for a couple of hours. The real beauty of a good stew, of course, is that once it's bubbling happily away there is absolutely nothing to do – except put your feet up.

GARY MENIGAN
chef, proprietor
Fenix, The Boathouse

What's On

The Good Food and Wine Show is on again, starting on May 30 at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre. Features this year include Tobie Puttock, Ben O'Donoghue and Matt Moran, the Friday Night After Dark session from 6pm to 9pm, the Gourmet Garden Cooking School, the Lindemans Early Harvest restaurant, Lyndey Milan's regional producers' market and the Sunbeam coffee classes. Tickets \$25 through Ticketmaster on 13 6100 or www.goodfoodshow.com.au.

NEW FLAVOURS

Superfruits is one of the new buzz terms and Vitality Brands now offers AntiOx Shots (right) – a superfruit-juice blend with a daily dose of potent antioxidants.

A single 90ml-shot bottle contains mangosteen, a tropical fruit, and pomegranate, which are known as nature's superfruits.

Both are valued for their high concentration of natural plant antioxidants.

A glass of pomegranate juice is believed to have enough folic acid to provide 100 per cent of an adult's daily requirements, and has been linked to improved heart health.

AntiOx Shots is sold at supermarkets in three-bottle packs for \$5.95 and is best served chilled.



COOKING UP A STORM

The Press Club, 72 Flinders St. Ph: 9677 9677

Press Club apprentice chef Petros Dellidis answers a few quick questions and reveals his secret shame snack.

Why become a chef?

I love to cook, in particular for other people.

Favourite restaurant?

Interlude.

Secret shame snack?

Munch sandwiches from 7-Eleven.

Favourite budget eatery?

Like most chefs in Melbourne, I love the Supper Inn.

Where can we find you on a day off?

Doing a hip-hop class at the Melbourne Music Academy.

Quick meal suggestion?

Roasted peppers with pan-fried salmon finished in beurre noisette. In a hot pan, season and seal salmon, skin side down. Place in oven for 4min at 180C. Taking it out, gently turn fish and place butter and thyme in pan. When butter foams, splash over salmon. Drain on absorbent paper and serve with peppers (Hint: best to serve salmon medium rare).

Dessert would have to be Teddy Bear biscuits with milk.

