

# Melbourne Cup CARNIVAL

**Herald Sun**



## **FANTASIES ON FOUR LEGS**

Racehorse owners  
living the dream

## **CUE CARNIVAL GOOD TIMES**

Jo Stanley on fun  
and Flemington

## **DINING'S NEW BREED**

Fresh favourites  
for Cup Week

# *Enchanted days*

The irresistible charm of  
Melbourne's magic season

## **MARQUEE ATTRACTION**

Win four tickets  
to a fabulous  
cocktail tent on  
the first Tuesday





# Dish it up

Challengers are plentiful in the Melbourne culinary stakes; restaurant writer Ed Charles critiques 10 new favourites for the week when we all like to live large

## Giuseppe, Arnaldo & Sons

Crown 9694 7400 idrb.com  
Local legend Maurice Terzini and Robert Marchetti book-ended Bondi with their Italian style (Icebergs and North Bondi Italian Food), refined it and brought a blockbuster to Crown.

There are many clever things about this restaurant. First, the room is divided to create a labyrinth in what would otherwise have been a plain box. Then there's the hand-made Italian tiles, the stunning marble benches and the trough from where wine is poured by the carafe.

The pedestal-mounted Red Berkei slicer guards the glass exhibit case, a modern art installation masquerading as a salumi fridge.

You can simply choose a plate of pasta (or *offal* if that's your thing) while the punters await your precious table.

**Starters \$10-\$17, mains mostly \$21-\$29. Ten per cent surcharge Sundays and public holidays.**

No bookings. Open noon-late, seven days. Food service is limited to the bar from 4-6pm.



## Bistro Guillaume

Crown 9693 3888 bistroguillaume.com.au  
Chef Guillaume Brahimi arrived at Crown via Sydney, where he commands the restaurant at the Opera House, Guillaume at Bennelong. In Paris he was understudy to Joël Robuchon.

It's called a bistro but is quite definitely an upmarket restaurant. The food is the top of the classic French league in Melbourne. But the wine prices are as scandalous as the frou-frou knicker flashing ceiling lampshades (which I rather like).

Tuck into a sculptural fried fish on a bed of railway sleeper chips, whole roast chicken and a classic steak frites au béarnaise sauce. The lemon tart, available upstairs and down at Le Bar, demands a glass of something sparkling to wash it down.

**Starters \$16-\$25, mains mostly \$39-\$45. Ten per cent surcharge Sundays and public holidays.**

Breakfast 8-11am weekends, lunch noon-3pm seven days, dinner 6-11.30pm seven days. Le Bar open from 5pm, seven days.



## Gills Diner

360 Little Collins St 9670 7214  
A venture between Melbourne's king of cool Con Christopoulos (see Siglo) and his former business partner at Benitos, Chris Kerr.

You'll probably never find it, the chairs are from school and the refectory tables shared. But there is something very chic about this spot tucked away at the Elizabeth St end of Little Collins St.

Morrissey spins on the valve-amplified vinyl while you flick through an eclectic wine list and settle for something rustic to match the food.

Two blackboards across the back wall spell out what is available, mostly organic and seasonal. Starters range from fresh shucked oysters to a filling slab of terrine. Mains tend to be meaty and cooked slow, but that doesn't mean the fish should be ignored.

**Starters \$18-\$22, typical pasta dish \$23, mains \$28-\$34.**

Open noon-5pm Monday, noon-11.30pm Tuesday to Friday, 6-11.30pm Saturday.



## Maha Bar & Grill

21 Bond St 9629 5900 mahabg.com.au  
Chef Shane Delia arrived at Maha via Chateau Yering and a tour of Europe and the Middle East. Maha is backed by the same people behind the popular Press Club.

A counterpoint to the city's rooftop action, Maha has gone underground. To be precise, in a basement in Bond St, conveniently near Flinders Street station — slip into the underground courtyard and chuff on herbed tobacco from the *sisha* (aka hubble-bubble pipe).

With its tiled floor and square edges, the bar room could be an executive lounge where you can sober up over an iced tea, mezze and pastries. The main restaurant is full of Middle Eastern promise and mostly delivers. Don't miss its turkish delight-filled doughnuts. *Sa'hra*, a shared supper, is served from 11pm Saturday.

**Bar: Small dishes \$6.50-\$12, large dishes \$18.50.**

**Lunch: Small \$14-\$15, large \$24-\$38. Dinner: Small \$14-\$20, large \$38-\$40.**

Open noon-2pm, 6pm-late weekdays, 6pm-3am Saturday.



## Cumulus Inc.

45 Flinders Lane 9650 1445 cumulusinc.com.au

In July, Andrew McConnell resigned his post as executive chef at St Kilda's Circa to concentrate on this foray into the city and the impending move of his Carlton restaurant Three, One, Two to Gertrude St.

There are many choices to make at McConnell's new city joint, all of them good. Do I go there for breakfast, lunch or supper? Do I sit at the funky black pressed-steel bar to the left or to the right at the traditional marble one overlooking the open kitchen? Or am I going to take a table flanked by the two? And which of the seven types of oyster (at last count) do I choose?

The guarantee is that the food and the wine list are exquisite, making any choice a no-brainer.

**Oysters from \$3.50 each, starters predominantly \$7-\$21, mains \$17-\$39.**

No bookings. Open 7am-11pm weekdays, 9am-11pm Saturday.



## Seamstress

113 Lonsdale St 9663 6363 seamstress.com.au

The first city venture between Jason Chan of Batch Espresso in St Kilda and Anthony Herzog, a former sommelier at Pearl in Richmond.

It's a daring location on the corner of Lonsdale St and Cohen Place, a skinny three-storey building that houses a restaurant and three bars. The interior develops the theme of the building's rag-trade roots. The grungy sweatshop bar is in the basement, while up the wooden stairs is the top-floor cocktail bar hung with colourful cheongsams.

While both serve nibbles, the real eating action is in the warehouse-like space on the middle floor where you'll need to book.

The food is Asian with a twist, divided logically into small, medium and large plates while the wine list offers value.

**Small \$10-\$18, medium \$12-\$18, large \$20-\$32.**

Open 11am-1am weekdays, 6pm-1am Saturday.



## Siglo

161 Spring St 9654 6300

From Con Christopoulos, the man who brought us The European, The Supper Club and Gills Diner, this is the rooftop version of his vision.

The sky's the limit at Siglo where the views of the Princess Theatre's rooftop and Parliament House across Spring St are free. Siglo has all those things to make grown-ups feel comfortable — a well-stocked cigar humidor, caviar and properly mixed martinis, as well as champagnes that are expensive enough to make a footballer's wife blush. And they've even thought to heat the outdoors for those unpredictable Melbourne spring nights.

For those with humble tastes, party pies, sausage rolls and a simple croque monsieur are on tap, chased by, perhaps, an imported beer or a modest glass of European red.

**Snacks \$12.50-\$40.**

Open 5pm-3am Tuesday to Friday, 8pm-3am Saturday-Monday.



## Movida Next Door

1 Hosier Lane 9663 3038 movida.com.au

Movida chef Frank Camorra and partners have quite literally opened up next door on the corner of Flinders St and Hosier Lane.

Movida Next Door has dumped all the baggage of a restaurant and focused on the bar aspect of the Spanish experience. While it shares Movida's name and is also entered through graffiti-sprayed Hosier Lane, it has its own identity.

Valencian roof tiles are fashioned into lampshades while tiles from Seville face the central bar. Sip a nutty, dry sherry or a stone-fruit toned chilled Albarino. Eat authentically southern Spanish food with traditional tapas and raciones, a fair amount fried. The fish and shellfish, stored in a bar on ice, are pricey but worth it.

**Tapas \$3-\$8.50 each, raciones (larger dishes) \$8.50-\$20. Fish at market price.**

No bookings. Open 5pm-late, Tuesday to Saturday.



## Pizza e Birra

60a Fitzroy St, St Kilda 9537 3465

Mauro Marcucci, part of the original Café e Cucina rat pack, moved to Sydney where he perfected Pizza e Birra before returning to Melbourne and making it even better.

In Naples they cut hands off for using a rolling pin, owner Marcucci once said. Indeed here the pizza base is of the thin, delicate variety, having been stretched out by two intact hands.

There are two types to choose from. The tomato-based "pizza traditional" include the margherita, napoletana or the rich lasagna. The "pizza bianca" are deliciously mushroom heavy and sometimes even greer, being topped

## Anada

197 Gertrude St, Fitzroy 9415 6101 anada.com.au

Owners Jesse and Vanessa Gerner arrived in Gertrude St via Movida and the UK, from where they travelled to Morocco and Spain. Jesse was a chef at London's Moro and Vanessa at The River Cafe.

In a city teeming with tapas bars Anada stands out for authenticity and value. It buzzes because of the quality of the Moorish-influenced food. Plus it has a trendy wine list featuring mostly Spanish and Portuguese wines, and more than a few European beers.

Try a refreshing single white anchovy staked to a palm heart before moving on to salt cod croquetas, chorizo and more tasty dishes than you could point the inevitable churro at. With so much choice, sometimes it is easier to simply choose the chef's barqueta for \$48 and order another sherry.

**Individual tapas \$2.50-\$6, raciones \$18-\$28.**

Open 6pm-late, seven days.

