

THE  AGE
GOOD
FOOD
GUIDE
2010

edited by Janne Apelgren



30TH ANNIVERSARY
EDITION



NEW
GREAT
GOURMET



Pizza e Birra

60a Fitzroy Street, St Kilda 9537 3465

Pizzeria / Italian

14/20

It's pizza, it's birra (beer), and it's so much more. Simple logo-stamped brown paper covers the tables, grey bentwood chairs look chic against black-washed floorboards, and a large distressed mirror reflects wine bottles and the broad Fitzroy Street window that catches a good bit of sky and scenery. On-the-go waitstaff (at times overstretched) flit from bar to kitchen, where superb pizzas are loaded in and out of the wood-fired oven on big paddles. Hand-stretched dough creates crisp, bubbled bases supporting flavoursome toppings, like mozzarella, spinach, mixed mushrooms, cherry tomatoes, olives, parmesan and basil – teamed with a gutsy house pale ale, it makes a perfect duet. The broader menu offers dishes with well-balanced flavours and ingredients, such as neat rows of buffalo mozzarella, roasted yellow capsicum and tomato with basil and balsamic; or elegant asparagus spears with toasted walnuts, aged balsamic and a knob of parmesan gelato. Mains broaden to a handful of meat dishes, including a juicy prosciutto-wrapped lamb fillet on a knobbly bed of garlic potatoes. Dessert could be a punnet's worth of strawberries with a ball of yoghurt-like gelato. Bella!

Open Tues–Sat 6pm–late; Sun noon–10pm

Typical prices E \$13 M \$20 D \$11

Cards AE MC V

Wine Selected Australian, NZ, French and Italian wines; house beer on tap

Owners Mauro Marcucci, Khali Khouri & Silvana Iacobaccio

Chef Silvana Iacobaccio

Seats 45; outdoor seating

Map page 262 **Melway** 2P A4



Pizze Vini Spuntini

Shop 3, 1 Carre Street, Elsternwick 9077 8815

Pizzeria / Italian

13/20

Tucked beneath an apartment block, this local diner doesn't create huge expectations from outside. Even inside, some flamboyant Italian references – a column painted the green, white and red of the flag, and black walls scrawled with Italian food names – struggle to enliven the boxy dining room. But flattering lighting, service spiced with a bit of Italian brio and the spunky, honest Italian food inject life into the rather severe setting. Large, thin-crust rectangular pizzas are a central part of the enterprise. They might come with tomato sugo, fried eggplant, parmigiano reggiano and fresh basil, or mozzarella, speck and artichokes. It's not just a pizza joint, though. There's plenty to like about the good range of well-crafted, albeit familiar, entrees and mains: think tender deep-fried calamari with lemony mayo, an organic chicken cacciatora, or terrific crumbed, deboned veal cutlets complemented by the sweet-sour flavours of a capsicum peperonata. Respectable desserts might include limoncello crepes with raspberries or millefoglie, its puff pastry 'leaves' layered with poached rhubarb and custard. This is a comfortable, well-priced local, evidenced by the happy hum of contented patrons.

Open Wed–Sun 5.30–10pm

Typical prices Pizzas \$18 E \$13 M \$25 D \$14

Cards AE MC V Eftpos

Wine A brief list of reasonably priced Australian and Italian wines, all available by the glass; BYO (corkage \$4 a head)

Owners Antonio de Thomasis, Anthony Mortellaro & Carlos Massaria

Chef Marco Zaia

Seats 42; outdoor seating

Map page 267 **Melway** 67 G3