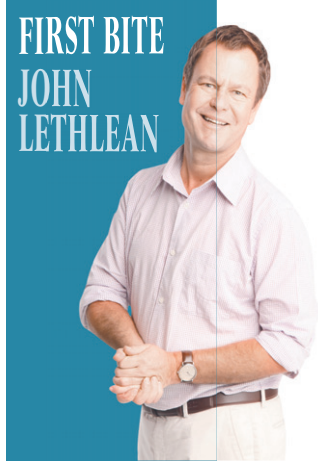


PERSONAL OZ

Food & Travel



FIRST BITE
JOHN LETHLEAN

ANOTHER nail in the coffin of Westfield Sydney as a restaurant destination? You'd have to say so as Pizza Six (nee Spiedo) quietly disappeared last week, a long-inevitable white flag for restaurateur/chef **Alessandro Pavoni** of Ormeeggio renown. Pavoni launched Spiedo alongside other smart dining outlets (anyone remember Becasse?), but ultimately realised the centre's demographics were all wrong for rustic, regional Italian cuisine. So it went downmarket with pizza and pasta about six months ago. "I just didn't want to do that kind of food myself," says Pavoni. "I mean, the business was good, but I prefer to concentrate 120 per cent on Ormeeggio."

CHEF **Damien Heads** is pondering his next move after resigning from the Pony Group last week, a step that follows the successful launch of the group's third restaurant, at Brisbane's Eagle Street Pier, last year. The group has two other Pony restaurants, at Sydney's The Rocks and Neutral Bay. Heads says the regular interstate work in Brisbane wasn't working for him or his young family, and that after the sale of the Steel Bar & Grill earlier this year, there was less actual cooking for him than had previously been the case. "It had really just become an admin role," he says. Heads remains a partner in Pony Neutral Bay.

BRISBANE'S Moubarak brothers, savouring a critical hit with Gerard's Bistro (they also have Fortitude Valley's Laruche Bar and West End's Lychee Lounge) are set to open their next food-oriented venture. **Elie, Johnny and Mel Moubarak** have signed a lease to open Hatch & Co, a 150-seat venture for "home-style food" with wood-oven pizza a feature, at the emerging

Gasworks urban renewal precinct in Newstead. They hope to be open by mid-July, although no head chef has been engaged as yet. An interior theme of "raw timber, steel mesh ceilings and concrete floors... will complement the Gasworks steel structure", we're told. With a background in bars, Gerard's has proven a savvy toe in the waters of dining for the businessmen, taking out several important awards in its first year.

IN more Brisbane movement, bistro king **Philip Johnson** has farewelled his head chefs at both his restaurants, Bistro One Eleven and e'cco. Who'd want to be a boss? **Norman Harvey** (e'cco) has quit to join Alfred & Constance, but in a bizarre love-triangle twist, A & C's **Mathias Andersson** has quit for the head chef's position at... Bistro One Eleven, replacing departing head chef **Damien Draper**. If you're still with me, One Eleven's senior sous chef **Sam Brading** is going over to Johnson's e'cco as the new head chef. And Harvey will move to Alfred & Constance owner **Damian Griffiths'** new pizzeria Alfredo's when it opens later this year. Phew.

"NO pressure, really," says **Peter Conistis**, the Sydney chef most closely associated with modern Greek cuisine in that city, proving he hasn't lost his sense of humour, despite career ups and downs, as he speaks about the massive new venture in Castlereagh Street he's fronting on behalf of Sydney's Hellenic Club. "Four million has been spent just on reconstruction, and that's before we get into design and fitout. One executive chef, so, no pressure on me at all." For about 40 years, the historic site has been owned by the Hellenic Club, but it has been little more than "a hotel for pigeons", says Conistis, who came on board as exec chef last year to turn Alpha, as the various outlets will be collectively known, into reality. The ground floor will include a meze bar, cafe, Greek cantina and produce store. It's due to open within six weeks, with design work by Sydney's DS17. "I've never worked on a project at such a grand level," says Conistis. It is indeed a grand, indulgent project, for in six months, a first-floor restaurant — as yet unnamed — will open, a place for the chef to ply his trade. "I haven't cooked for anyone in two years," he says. "I cannot wait."

lethleanj@theaustralian.com.au

2012 Scorpio pinot gris

MORNINGTON PENINSULA \$29-\$37

WHEN it's good, pinot gris provides one of the most luxurious, hedonistic drinking experiences — the kind of rich, textural white wine that makes you crave pate or buttery lobster. And this is a good one: glorious perfume of spiced nectarines, a creaminess that sits plumply on the tongue and a long, dry-ish finish. The prices above are for selected independent retail stores and direct from the vineyard.

THE MARK-UP: The wine is available in some wine bars and restaurants for between \$55 and \$80 a bottle. scorpovines.com.au



MAX ALLEN

QUICK BITE

Depot Auckland

The pitch? Local chef-hero Al Brown's rocking, rollicking, all-day restaurant is one of Auckland's hottest dining tickets.

The reality? A table here, inside or out, really is worth fighting for (there are no bookings); the place has more positive energy than the Dalai Lama. Bare tables, mismatched cutlery in old mackerel cans and the rest of the fun, depot-styled room might lead you to suspect that the big investment has been in the food.



The cuisine? I want to eat here five nights a week. A one-page menu kicks off with seafood from the raw bar, moves on to local charcuterie and share plates. It's compact, and compelling.

Highlights? Everything we ate. Clams and oysters served on ice shards; fig toasties with prosciutto & Kingsmeade blue and arugula; cumin-battered warehou tortillas with slaw; and a brilliant hapuka belly with eggplant kasundi (NZ hapuka is far better than ours).

The wines — 22 by the glass, all but two from NZ. The high-energy staff, especially the manager who sweeps under the table between sittings...

Lowlights? It's a fair hike from Oz. And I'm not too thrilled about drinking wine from café glasses.

The damage? Small plates \$NZ15-\$NZ18, bigger plates \$NZ24-\$NZ32.

More: eatatdepot.co.nz
NECIA WILDEN

THE WELL HEALED TRAVELLER



From post-surgery recovery to spiritual awakening, wellness tourism is the shot

SUSAN KUROSAWA

The Byron Bay Detox Retreat includes a one-week 'purification holiday' in Bali that brings together naturapathy, yoga, meditation, hydrotherapy, fasting and massage

TO recover from surgery or serious medical treatment, many Australians long for the kind of privacy and healing atmosphere not always found at home or at mainstream hotels and resorts.

Enter the prospect of "patient recovery holidays", a trend being promoted by tourism operator Lorraine Allanson, who lives in the Blue Mountains west of Sydney.

This region is known for its tranquil and timeless scenery and clear, invigorating air, which decades ago was sold in cans to weary holidaymakers from the plains and still attracts urbanites filling their lungs with nature's purest. Allanson runs Mountain Whispers, a boutique portfolio of self-contained heritage homes for rent. In the past two years she's noticed more of her guests have included cancer and heart disease patients who've been through long-term treatment and are "looking for a refreshing and soothing change from city life and hospital rooms".

"We've had cancer patients come here to switch off, allowing their bodies and minds to heal. While the travel and hospitality industry caters to (those who go on) fun-driven holidays, it is

equally important to cater to those on recovery holidays."

Allanson has lost two family members to cancer and another is undergoing protracted treatment. She has seen "the suffering, pain and loss such diseases cause" and "understands the importance of support and creating a comfortable and safe environment not just for those who are recovering, but for terminally ill patients who want to create special memories with their loved ones."

Apart from providing moral support and special attention to her guests in recovery, Allanson has qualified massage therapists on call and can cater to dietary needs in the tariff-included breakfasts. The district hospital is less than 2km from each property and urgent medical attention can be arranged if required. The Mountain Whispers range of cottages covers Varenna, Leura Rose, Strawberry Patch and The Gatsby, all of which have been awarded T-QUAL accreditation, the federal government's quality benchmark for the tourism industry. Guests can expect multiple bedrooms, with space for carers and family, four-poster beds, luxury bathrooms and a deep level of comfort.

Other tourism operators are hopping on the wellness wagon with promises of spiritual healing and cosmetic procedures at rates well below the Australian norm.

A collaboration between Desa Seni Resort and Byron Bay Detox Retreats includes a one-week "purification holiday" in Bali from June 14-21. Think fasting on juice made from Desa Seni's organic vegetable garden (supplemented by coconut water, herbal teas and broths), yoga, meditation, colonic hydrotherapy and Balinese massage.

"The retreat will bring together naturopathy and Balinese spirituality," says Natalie Purcell of Byron Bay Detox Retreats. "An

opening ceremony with a Balinese monk or priestess will prepare retreaters for their journey.

"We'll also have consultations and seminars about detoxification and use specialised supplements."

Also in Bali, Bliss Sanctuary for Women at Berawa, Canggu, which is 10 minutes by car north of Seminyak, has seven-day packages that focus on diagnostic and relaxing massages, unlimited yoga, cooking classes and options such as tarot-card readings.

"It's a place in which to seek a highly personalised version of extreme relaxation," wrote travel journalist Helen Anderson, who recently completed the seven-day program. "I sweated, inhaled and

chanted my way through 90-minute sessions of kundalini, hatha and ashtanga yoga, sound meditation and an exhilarating dance-like-no-one's-watching hybrid known as NIA (non-impact aerobics), combining martial arts, yoga, nightclubbing and meditation."

In southern Thailand, Asia's only medically licensed rehabilitation and detoxification centre is promoting "unique new personalised solutions for addictions".

Bhavana Phuket is billed as a "boutique rehabilitation centre" set on a beachfront estate with 17 guestrooms, and claims all patients receive "highly personalised treatment and focused attention to ensure their recovery stays on track".

Bhavana Phuket's flagship BEAT (Bhavana Evaluation Assessment Treatment) alcohol detox programs can be taken for a minimum of seven days. Founder and chief executive Dr Kai Goh, an internationally acknowledged addiction specialist, says the programs can be tailored for periods of about 10 days to "address addictions to sleeping pills, prescription drugs, opiates and party drugs".

Says Goh: "The BEAT (process of) short-term addiction manage-

ment (is for) anyone who is not yet ready — or does not have the time — to commit to comprehensive treatment."

The initial detox treatment restores the patient's physical health, says Goh, supported by a clinical team "providing a crucial opportunity to gain understanding and insight into the personal issues that have led to the individual's dependency".

Forms of anxiety, phobias and post-traumatic stress are also disorders that can be treated using Bhavana's integrated approach.

On a lighter note, Bali is leading the "spa extras" revolution. Boutique resort Semara Seminyak offers a 30-minute teeth-whitening service promising to make choppers "between three and 10 shades lighter" for about \$170. Resort spokesman Sean Waddington says the procedure is approved by strict European standards and is safe for gums and enamel. "The spa's experienced therapists use a high-intensity lamp, mouthpiece and whitening gel with the active ingredient sodium perborate to achieve the sparkling results. The spa does not use UV lamps or peroxide."

Sounds like a holiday to keep you smiling.



The Mountain Whispers cottage Varenna in the Blue Mountains

essentials



FLYING ALL motorists recognise Australian airports as ruthless fiscal vampires when it comes to short-term parking charges. But whether they suck the marrow from your bones or just leave you anaemic and confused depends on location. Australian Competition & Consumer Commission figures show Sydney airport in 2011-12 applied Dyson-like suction to its motorist victims to relieve them of \$16 for the first hour, while those parking in Adelaide paid just a quarter of that amount. Perth was also at the low end of the spectrum at \$6 an hour, while Melbourne charged \$12 and the parking Nosferatu in Brisbane levied \$14.

STEVE CREEDY

FASHION JULES Lander spent a year travelling and collecting gorgeous pieces of contemporary jewellery from cities including New York, London and Milan. To meet the appetite of fellow jewellery lovers wanting to avoid the jetlag, she has since very kindly started an online store, **Eve Adorned**, showcasing the work of some of the designers she discovered during her travels, including **Anton Heunis, Rebekah Price and Katerina Psoma** (Serpent earrings, \$192, pictured). The **Eve Exclusive** section features one-off designs. Everything is pretty much in the "statement" realm of jewellery, so be prepared to make an impact. Head to eveadorned.com if you want to yield to temptation.

GLYNIS TRAILL-NASH

CARS ONE of the year's hottest segments is compact SUVs, which could do to hatchbacks what big off-roads have already done to large sedans. They offer a command driving position and plenty of space, but take up no more room than a small car. With a dozen models, demand is up 21 per cent to date and the **Hyundai ix35** is top with one in four buyers. However, a flood of fresh product from August will multiply choices, with newcomers including the **Holden Trax** and sibling car the **Opel Mokka** (pictured) just confirmed, plus the **Nissan Juke** and **Peugeot 2008**, while the **Ford EcoSport** and **Renault Captur** are due early next year.

PHILIP KING



GADGETS WANT a chatty caddy sitting on your wrist, on your belt or hat? **GolfBuddy** has released the **Voice**, a tiny GPS rangefinder that's preloaded with more than 36,000 golf courses worldwide and more than 1000 in Australia. Button presses tell you distances to the front, centre and back of the green, based on GPS position. It automatically recognises the course and hole you are on, and has a dynamically rotating view of the green. It will speak distances in any of 10 languages or you can view them. Promised battery life is 11 hours, enough for two rounds of golf, and it's tournament approved. \$220.

CHRIS GRIFFITH

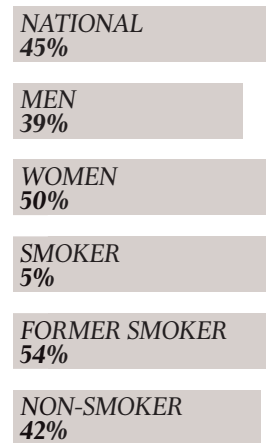
IN PERSONAL OZ TOMORROW FASHION

Does my lapel look big in this? The changing shape of men's suits

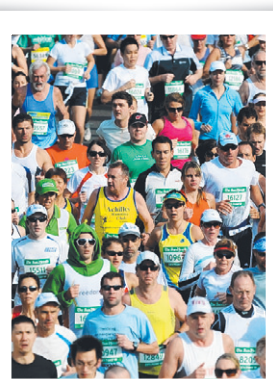


HEALTH

WHERE THERE'S SMOKE Concern about a family member smoking



SOURCE: PURE PROFILE SURVEY 2013



FITNESS HITTING the pavement for a run burns fat like nothing else, but as the mercury plunges, it gets harder to find the motivation. One solution is to have a goal, such as one of the dozens of fun runs around the nation. Give yourself at least eight weeks to train and stick to a program. Here are some options: **City2South** (Brisbane, June 16, city2south.com.au); **City to Surf** (Sydney, Aug 11, city2surf.com.au); **City-Bay Fun Run** (Adelaide, Sept 15, city-bay.org.au); **Sydney Running Festival** (Sept 22, sydney-runningfestival.com.au); **Melbourne Marathon Festival** (Oct 13, melbournemarathon.com.au); **Bridges Fun Run** (Perth, April 7, wamc.org.au).

WALLY MASON