



{ FOOD DETECTIVE }

A brand-Nguyen start for underprivileged youngsters in Vietnam

SHORT ORDER

PUNJAB-BORN Harpreet Singh, better known as Jessi, is owner-chef at **Dhaba at the Mill**, in Kyneton, Victoria, which serves a weekly changing menu of simple, home-style curries in a historic, bluestone flour mill.
Best recent dining experience: Matteo's in Fitzroy, Melbourne . . . delicious flavours, beautiful presentation, colour and textures all in one meal.
Must-buy ingredient: Pomegranate powder, which I use in chana masala (chickpea curry) and to marinate meat.
Most embarrassing pantry item: A secret bottle of Tabasco for some extra kick.

Can't live without: Lots of different spices, especially cardamom, fennel seed, cinnamon and star anise.
What I'm cooking at home: Prawn and scallop coconut curry with wholemeal roti bread.
Next big thing: High quality, healthy takeaway food.



I hate: Processed "instant" foods.
Favourite cuisine: Indian, of course.
Worst meal I ever ate: An airline version of curry on a recent flight to Thailand.
Biggest culinary influence: My village of Behlana in the north Indian state of Punjab, where life is happiest when sharing food with friends, family and neighbours.
My last supper: Goat curry with a cannoli for dessert. If I can't get to New York for that perfect cannoli, I'll happily take one from T. Cavallaro & Sons in Footscray.
 • dhabaattthemill.com

THE SERVE

EUROPEAN grocery chain **Lidl** has incurred the wrath of animal rights campaigners for selling reindeer steaks in its stores. *Detective* is appalled; if they continue along those lines who is going to deliver the Christmas pressies this year? • In the get-a-life category, exploding escargots are at the centre of a lawsuit against a seafood restaurant in California. Two male diners who got garlic butter on their faces and polo shirts have sued over the supposed "humiliation", one complaining to *The Seattle Times*, "Do I need this on my birthday?"

MICHELLE ROWE



CELEBRITY chef could be the most overused term of the decade, with seemingly everybody who has stepped into a restaurant kitchen turning out a cookbook, appearing on television, launching kitchenware lines and putting *Food Detective* right off her dinner. But it's good to see some of the high-profile breed are using their new-found fame and fortune to do a bit of good in the world.

Sydney chef **Christine Manfield**, who has joined **Plan Australia's Food Fighters** campaign in an ambassadorial role, will travel to Zimbabwe next week to help highlight the growing food crisis there, and the always energetic **Kylie Kwong** is developing a range of kitchenware to support the **Oxfam** charity. *Detective* is also impressed by

Luke Nguyen, who runs Sydney's **Red Lantern** restaurant and whose new **SBS** series, *Luke Nguyen's Vietnam*, has smashed records for international sales. (See *Affair of the Heart*, *Wish* magazine, December 3.)

While the handsome 30-something could easily sit back and lap up the plaudits, Nguyen is instead focusing on what he tells *Detective* is his most important project to date: setting up a charity for underprivileged kids in Vietnam.

The Little Lantern Foundation came about after Nguyen met a young girl working on a mango stall at a Hoi An market and discovered her family was too poor to send her to school. "It costs about \$100 a year there for an education and I thought of all the times I had spent a hundred bucks on a meal or blown it in an hour," Nguyen tells *Detective*.

"This girl was so bright and if she had an education she would go

so far, but as it is she's stuck in a market with no future."

Nguyen vowed to return and do something to help. "My plan is to open a little guesthouse where youngsters can train in hotel operations and in a restaurant,

doing front of house and commercial cookery," he says.

"It will be hands on, with a good curriculum, an 18-month training course. At the end of it I'd hope these kids can go out and get a job in the industry but, if not, it will at least set them up for other things."

Nguyen and his partner **Suzanna Boyd** are searching for a central Vietnam site in which to set up Little Lantern HQ. "There's a lot to do," says workaholic Nguyen. However, one of the first things is tracking down the girl who was the inspiration for the project. Nguyen has not seen her since that fateful meeting at the mango stall. "She was gone the next time I went there looking for



her," he says. "But I will find her." More: plan.org.au; oxfamshop.org.au; littleantern.org.

- ONE of the things *Detective* loves about her neighbourhood in Sydney's inner west is **Galluzzo**, an old-style, family-run greengrocer where you still get

service with a smile and the produce is always perfect.

Detective has been doing her fruit and veg shopping here for years but is ashamed to say she knew little about the background of this Glebe Point Road institution. Thanks to a new website celebrating the city's traditional Italian greengrocers, however, she's now a font of knowledge on one of her favourite local businesses, established in 1934 by Calabrian migrant **Sam Galluzzo** and his wife **Caterina**. Galluzzo is still run by the same family (son Frank and his wife have taken over the reins) and

Detective reckons they could teach many of today's dismissive young shop assistants a thing or two about customer service.

Galluzzo is one of nearly 200 fruit shops listed at sydneyitalianfruitshops.com, an extensive archive of traditional fruit shops, past and present, which includes old photographs, store descriptions and recollections from owners and their families. The group behind the project, **Co.As.It Italian Heritage**, hopes to have at least 2000 merchants registered during the next five years and *Detective* would love to see similar initiatives rolled out Australia-wide, if only to provide an enduring record for future generations of what good, old-fashioned service was like before the superstores finally took over the world. More: sydneyitalianfruitshops.com; coasit.org.au.

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MENU WATCH

DETECTIVE is not sure what a thermocirculator is (sounds like something she needs to rest on her legs after another day eating chips) but she understands it's in the kitchen at the new-look **The Woolshed Pub** in Melbourne and is being put to good use. While waiting to launch his seafood extravaganza — **The Atlantic** restaurant in Melbourne's **Crown Casino** complex — early next year, chef **Donovan Cooke** has turned his hand to pub grub, teaming up with ex-**O'Connell's** and **Albert Park Hotel** chef **Catherine Kalka** to revamp the menu at the Docklands venue. But it's not your bog-standard steak and chips; Cooke and Kalka have introduced sous vide cooking, olive oil confits and water baths, turning out the likes of slow-roast free-range chicken breast with vegetables and tarragon sauce, and saltbush lamb with broadbeans, baby onions, lettuce, peas and anchovy jus. *Detective* admires a man who can multi-task.



- 1. Gavin Piras, Claire Thomas, Nick Ries and Vanessa Seidel
- 2. Jamie Wilson, Heather Murphy, Robyn Branigan and Kath Carroll
- 3. Elita Lotis and Tass Gyenes

All the fun of fund-raising

Last Friday night at Peninsula at Docklands, the curtains were drawn and the table places set for a Melbourne gala event of mass proportions. It was the Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation's Silver Ribbon Exposure gala ball, and celebrities, big spenders and those touched by the illness got frocked up and were swept away in a night of extravagance. With all proceeds going to help fund research into the disease, there were many reasons for guests to smile – and smile they did.





Rain may ruin Bulldogs' party

BY LANCE JENKINSON

MOTHER nature, you couldn't be so cruel, could you?

Weather forecasts show heavy downpours in the Melbourne area from Thursday through to Saturday.

That could be enough to ruin a thrilling climax to Footscray Edgewater's bout with Geelong in the Premier Cricket at Merv Hughes Oval in Footscray on Saturday.

Spectators saw an enthralling opening day unfold with the Bulldogs posting an above-average 8-309 off 100 overs.

The second-versus-third clash has already lived up to its blockbuster billing.

Bulldogs coach Barry Neivandt believes his side has done the groundwork to go on with the job on day two.

"It was a good day because nearly everyone contributed, except for one duck at the top," he told the *Weekly*.

"He'll be washing the dishes on Thursday night." Shaun Dean was the only Bulldog not to trouble the scorers. He was out lbw in the fourth ball of the first over.

The Bulldogs settled when opener Dean Russ was joined at the crease by England A star and new recruit Rory Hamilton-Brown.

Hamilton-Brown, the former England under-19 captain and Somerset skipper, made 21 on debut. That positive start came four days after signing on the dotted line from Casey-South Melbourne.

"It was quite an extraordinary couple of hours," Neivandt said of Tuesday's lunch which netted the promising Englishman.

"I got him in the last minute, which was great, and we pinched him from Casey and probably Essendon. He would have been playing seconds because they have two club professionals already."

Russ went on his merry way to 65 off 113 balls. The left-hander is one of the form batsmen

at the club, and in the competition. Travis Dean followed soon after for 30 and the Bulldogs' progress was halted on 4-121.

The pendulum shifted the way of the Bulldogs with a 117-run stand between Ben Green (71 off 142) and captain Travis Gloury (56 off 125).

A late flurry of 34 not out to Michael Kelliher in his first dig for the season saw the Bulldogs eclipse 300.

Meanwhile, the Bulldogs chairman's lunch at Central Pier at the Docklands on Friday attracted more than 380 people.

Merv Hughes was the master of ceremonies and Doug Walters the special guest on a great day for the club.

PREMIER CRICKET

Firsts: Footscray Edgewater 8-309 v

Geelong; Seconds: Geelong 2-167 v

Footscray Edgewater 143; Thirds: Footscray

Edgewater 4-45 v Geelong 135; Fourths:

Geelong v Footscray Edgewater 8-250



Fired up: Dean Russ is aiming for a career-best season at the crease for Footscray Edgewater.

Picture: Darren Howe