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108 | **GOSSIP**
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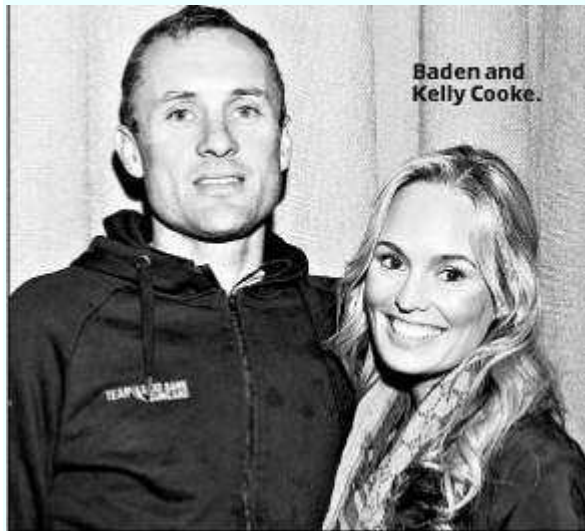


SNAPARAZZI

Luke Dennehy
 at the Caulfield Cup
 with Julie Kiriacoudis

INNER SPIN CYCLING LUNCH – Central Pier

The Event: The cycling world got together before the start of the *Herald Sun* Tour this week with a lunch at Maia at Central Pier in the Docklands on Tuesday afternoon.



Baden and Kelly Cooke.



Nick Green and Marcia Endacott



David Culbert and Ian Cohen.



Michael Roberts and Scott McGory.



SPRING CARNIVAL EPICURE *'Your eating requirements vary enormously'*

The races? Sorry, we've got a lot on our plate

BY JUSTINE COSTIGAN

FROM mini wagyu burgers to beef stroganoff and traditional chicken sandwiches, inspiration for this year's spring racing carnival menus comes from just about every continent and cuisine. Even raw food gets a look in.

Guests at the David Jones marquee at the Caulfield Cup today will eat Huon salmon, pillow sandwiches, confit ocean trout and Eton mess from a menu created by Donovan Cooke. A pop-up lemonade stand will offer gin or vodka spiked lemonade. Over in the BMW marquee it's asparagus, truffles and quail eggs, prawns thermidor, confit duck, oysters and plenty of Pommery Grand Cru.

But the real culinary indulgence this year will be during Cup week at Flemington when corporates compete for kudos, hiring big-name chefs and shipping in gourmet produce and crates of champagne.

Lavazza is promising a collaboration between prominent local Italian chefs (as yet unnamed). Unsurprisingly, there will be a strong focus on coffee, with caffeinated treats including coffee cocktails and gelato. On Derby Day, US burlesque dancer Dita Von Teese will be Lavazza's main guest. On Stakes day (November 5), the younger generation of Valmorbidas, the family behind Lavazza, will take over the marquee. Raph Rashid from

Beatbox Kitchen, known for his funky burger and taco trucks, has put together a menu that takes inspiration from classic American food, but with an Italian twist.

Myer has asked Jason Jones from Mamasita to design the menu for its Butterfly House marquee at Flemington. Among the Mexican-inspired finger foods will be mini tacos, egg and bacon tortilla, a sweet corn ice cream in a waffle cone with caramelised popcorn; and a cocktail list that includes sangria, mojito granitas and caipirinhas.

At the Crown marquee, about 1300 guests will graze on fare from Crown restaurants including Rockpool, The Atlantic, Lucky Chan, Number 8 Restaurant and Wine Bar and Nobu. Sarah Jessica Parker will be Crown's big celebrity drawcard on Oaks Day.

Rockpool's Neil Perry also pops up at the Lexus marquee, where he has designed an Asian-inspired menu including a mini version of his signature Rockpool wagyu slider (that's a small burger) and, to keep traditionalists happy, there will still be a classic chicken club sandwich. Perry will be a guest, while the Big Group (one of a select group of six accredited Victorian Racing Club caterers) will prepare the food. The three-storey marquee will host 220 people each race day.

Emirates will also be working to uphold their reputation at Flemington. Last year, guests

were treated to a Spanish themed event, complete with singer Enrique Iglesias. This year Emirates has been inspired by the Catherine Palace in St Petersburg (a new destination for the airline). Head chef Tony Cimmino from Epicure Catering has created a menu devoted to Russian delicacies, including four kilos of osetra caviar (retail value between \$9200 and \$18,800) and plenty of Mumm champagne. As you might expect, vodka dominates the ingredients list of four Russian-inspired cocktails.

Not all corporate marquees are aiming for such opulence. Swisse Vitamins, in the company's first foray into the Birdcage, is offering a healthy and largely gluten-free menu. Many of the dishes will be raw (no ingredients heated over 50 degrees), with offerings including coconut quinoa pudding, antioxidant salads, a grilled mushroom and sweet corn quesadilla and frozen kiwi lollipops.

Peter Rowland has been feeding racegoers since the 1960s and became an official caterer to the VRC in 1996. While food fashions come and go, he says, in the end it all serves the same purpose. "Over seven hours your eating requirements vary enormously. Without a doubt at the end of the day I think a pie and chips are fantastic, whether you're in the Birdcage or a bloke on Chapel Street in the early hours of the morning. It's the same principle."



THE MARQUEES

DAVID JONES CAULFIELD CUP

■ Donovan Cooke menu including salmon sandwiches, Eton mess and pop-up lemonade stand. Special guest George Calombaris.

BMW CAULFIELD CUP

■ Quail eggs, confit duck and oysters.

MYER FLEMINGTON

■ Mamasita-designed menu including tacos and sangria.

LEXUS FLEMINGTON

■ Neil Perry Asian menu including his famous Wagyu sliders. It will be the only three-storey marquee.



Stylists put the final touches on the David Jones marquee for today's Caulfield Cup. PICTURE: JUSTIN MCMAHUS



LAVAZZA FLEMINGTON

■ Coffee menu including coffee cocktails and will feature 200 champagne flutes suspended from the ceiling.



EMIRATES FLEMINGTON

■ Russian theme includes four kilograms of Osetra caviar, French champagne, beef stroganoff with crispy roast kipfler potatoes, rock lobster and potato and radish salad in wittlof.

CROWN FLEMINGTON

Food from Crown's top restaurants including Rockpool, The Atlantic, Lucky Chan, Number 8 and Nobu.