

JULY 2009 • VOLUME 23 • NO. 6

# hotelnews

Official Publication of the Australian Hotels Association (New South Wales)

## Chase away the winter blues

with winter  
warming recipes

Causing quite a  
stir...

The Watershed Hotel mixes it  
up for the Sydney Breast  
Cancer Foundation

State Budget analysis and the focus on jobs

Hotel dining at its finest at The 3 Weeds in Rozelle

Visit Sydney Director to strengthen city's international reputation

Live music in hotels... the answer to giving your hotel a point-of-difference



The restaurant is furnished with a simple and elegant style, designed for maximum comfort.



Attention to detail.

# Weeding out the competition

## hotel dining at its finest

With a toasty, sandstone open fireplace, dark timber floors and lacy wooden chandeliers, this hotel is the perfect place to hibernate during the colder months – and a chart-topping restaurant seals the deal.

Established in 1881, the 3 Weeds Rozelle (also known as the Rose, Shamrock & Thistle), is one of the original inner west hotels and has evolved over the years to become one of the area's most popular hospitality destinations.

There was a significant rise in the number of pubs around Balmain and Rozelle during the 1800's and whilst they were known mostly for their 'rough and tumble', many of these historic pubs are now known for offering a far more refined and complete hospitality experience. The 3 Weeds is the perfect example.

A complete refurbishment of the hotel a few years ago transformed it into an architectural masterpiece, featuring ornate wooden chandeliers and luxurious furnishings. The atmosphere has been described as 'modern chic meets ye olde pub' and offers patrons combination seating in different areas to make the most

of a cosy, quiet drink with friends, a quick and hearty meal for lunch, or a long, three-course dinner with a great bottle of wine.

The Front Bar has retained its traditional, low key local vibe with long communal tables, a pool table, plasma screens and specialty beers on tap. The Front Bar then leads to the Back Bar, which features lofty ceilings, a sandstone fireplace, lush green garden outlook and leather banquettes oozing ambience and style.

The Wine Bar is the hidden gem, perfectly housed in the 3 Weeds Hotel. Filled with an old-world charm, it is exquisitely furnished with brown leather armchairs and booths, rich drapery, softly-lit lamps and an intricate, pressed-metal ceiling – begging for an intimate chat over a glass of port or fine wine. A separate lounge area with rich Florence Broadhurst wallpaper and red velvet banquettes make it ideal for private functions and gatherings.

"In our bars, our customers tend to be people who live or work in the local area," Licensee Michael Hogan told *Hotel News*.

"Being in Sydney's inner west, our clientele is predominantly young-to-middle-aged professionals who enjoy the stylish surrounds and atmosphere that we offer."

'A complete refurbishment of the hotel a few years ago transformed it into an architectural masterpiece, featuring ornate wooden chandeliers and luxurious furnishings.'

There is no shortage of hotels in the local Rozelle area, which is abundantly peppered with restaurants and cafés and even local markets and art galleries. So for the 3 Weeds to stand out from the rest, it needed to go a step above the standard hotel offering and provide a real point-of-difference for its customers.

The ambience is spot on, particularly on a busy day or night, where the buzz in the different bar areas is somewhat amplified – ensuring the customers keep coming back. The service staff are friendly and knowledgeable and pride themselves on their customer service.

"There probably isn't one, single aspect that I can attribute to the hotel's success alone," Mr Hogan continued.

"In fact, the success of the 3 Weeds Rozelle is due to the multi-faceted aspect of the operation which brings people in for all sorts of different reasons."

According to Michael Hogan, whether it be for drinks with friends, to attend a function, play trivia or to have a meal, once the customers are inside the hotel, they tend to stay and see what else is on offer.

"Our patrons will usually come back again for a different reason. It's great we can provide so many different things to cater different tastes and occasions."

With its exceptional modern European menu, The Restaurant at the 3 Weeds has picked up some pretty impressive awards.

In 2007, it was named *Best Restaurant in a Pub* by the Australian Restaurant & Catering Association; in 2008 it claimed the *AHA (NSW)'s Gastronomic Hotel of the Year* award as well as *Gourmet Traveller's Wine One Glass* award; and featured in this year's *Good Food Guide*.

"It's great to be acknowledged in the public domain for the hard work and dedication that is put in at all levels – from management through to the individual staff out on the floor," Mr Hogan said.

"It's also an indication that our customers and industry experts have high regard for our products and the way in which we deliver them."

The Restaurant is furnished in a simple, yet elegant style and is designed to enable diners to relax and

...continued next page...



A modern European menu focuses on the highest quality ingredients.



The mouthwatering open mushroom lasagne. See page 16 for this 'winter warming' recipe.



Chef Leigh McDivitt.

## Weeding out the competition hotel dining at its finest

'Being in Sydney's inner west, our clientele is predominantly young-to-middle-aged professionals who enjoy the stylish surrounds and atmosphere that we offer.'

enjoy their surroundings.

"Similarly with our bar areas, The Restaurant attracts people from a wider area because of its reputation for dishing out excellent food. People with an appreciation for fine food and wine will come across Sydney to try it out," Mr Hogan continued.

Earlier this year, former sous chef Leigh McDivitt took over the reigns from former chef John Evans. He had big shoes to fill, as Evans was responsible for putting the 3 Weeds Rozelle on the map for its fine dining. But McDivitt has done so with aplomb, making some instrumental changes and adding his own style to both the bar and restaurant menus.

McDivitt's career spans some 10 years and includes several award-winning restaurants such as the Merivale Group's Est., Bistro CBD and Slip Inn. He joined the team at the 3 Weeds Rozelle in 2007 and has since taken The Restaurant to an exciting new level.

There are two distinct food offerings at the hotel. The bar menu provides quality, bistro-style dining ranging from pizza and tapas, to hearty pub fare such as steak sandwiches and pies. The Restaurant on the other hand, provides modern European cuisine with a focus on presenting the freshest ingredients possible in a fine

dining style.

"Overall, the food offering is incredibly important to the hotel's trade and the reason many of our patrons come in the first place," Mr Hogan said.

"We are focused on being at the top of the list of Sydney pubs, whilst trying to raise the profile and standard of The Restaurant. Our menus are constantly evolving as Leigh McDivitt continues to create new and exciting offerings."

The most popular entrée on the menu is seared scallops with morcilla, chorizo, truffled white bean puree and baby coriander and it's a tough choice in the mains between the pan roasted John Dory fillet and braised wagyu short rib with salsify, asparagus and pea puree; and the black Angus fillet with Jerusalem artichoke puree, roasted eschalots, confit golden enoki and shiitake mushrooms.

The 3 Weeds has also just introduced a 7-course tasting menu in The Restaurant on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday nights. This tasting menu showcases the best of what The Restaurant has to offer and puts the hotel on par with some of Sydney's top restaurants.

By Lisa Thompson

# Flavours to savour during the colder months

- 2 eggs
- 4 yolks
- 10ml olive oil
- Pinch of salt

**Method**

Put the flour in a large bowl make a well in the centre of the bowl.

Mix the eggs together add the olive oil and salt with a fork.

Pour into the centre and slowly mix in the flour until combined, then with your hands knead the pasta dough for 1 minute. Wrap the pasta dough in cling

film and let it rest for 30 minutes. Roll the dough in a pasta machine to the lowest setting, cut out 10cm squares then blanch for 30 seconds (three squares per portion).

**The dish**

Sweat the mushrooms until golden.

Add a little bit of butter then add the blanched spinach. Mix all together and then add a small amount of the porcini veloute to coat the mushrooms. Meanwhile re-blanch the pasta sheets and baby vegetables.

Layer the pasta sheets in a bowl with the mushrooms in between the layers and place the baby vegetables on top then pour the rest of the veloute over the top.

*De Bortoli Wines suggests... Deen Shiraz*



**THE WATERSHED HOTEL, DARLING HARBOUR**  
**VEAL SHANKS WITH CALIFORNIA MASH POTATO, SEASONAL VEGETABLES AND RED WINE SAUCE**

Serves 4

**Ingredients**

- 4 pieces veal shank (tipped – ask your butcher)
- 3 litres beef/veal stock



*mushroom lasagne at The 3 Weeds.*

- 500ml red wine
- Mixed herbs (thyme, parsley, oregano) to flavour
- 60gms tomato paste
- 1kg desirée potatoes or new potatoes
- 100ml sour cream
- Green shallots 1/4 bunch
- 2 rashers of rindless bacon
- 1kg of mixed diced winter vegetables (carrots, onions, leeks, parsnips, sweet potatoes, etc)
- 200gm ripe cooking tomatoes
- Salt and pepper
- Garlic 2-3 cloves chopped

**Method**

Pre-heat oven to 160°C

1. Seal veal shanks in pan with little oil and season well, drain off fat, place in deep baking tray.



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2. Dice the mixed vegetables approximately 2cm in size and add to the shanks.

3. Add 400ml red wine, add the 3 litres beef/veal stock, add some of the chopped herbs, chopped garlic, tomato paste, hand squashed ripe cooking tomatoes.

Then cover with foil and place in oven for approximately 3-4 hours. While cooking, check the shanks and if the liquid seems to evaporate too quickly, add some more stock. Depending on the oven, the meat is ready when tender and slowly falling off the bone (but not entirely).

4. While the veal shanks are cooking, peel the potatoes and cook in seasoned water until they are tender, then drain the water.

**California mash**

While the potatoes are still hot, add the sour cream, sliced shallots, season and lightly sauteed bacon chopped into small pieces. With gloves on (careful, as it's very hot) lightly mix with your hands to achieve a chunky consistency.

5. The liquid from the shanks plus the 100ml of leftover red wine should be reduced to a 'desired' consistency.

6. To serve, place approximately 250gms of California mash potato in a deep bowl, then place veal shank on top of potato, ladle sauce and vegetables over the shank.

7. Finish the dish with chopped mixed herbs.

*De Bortoli Wines suggests... Windy Peak Sangiovese*



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