

Interview



Features

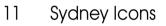


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Mike Whitney



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INTERVIEW



CARLOS DE ABREU CONSUL GENERAL OF BRAZIL

By D.R. Lennox

"The city is ready. This will benefit Rio for years to come. Many generations will talk about this. It will become part of the history, not only for Rio but Brazil."

Carlos de Abreu is the Consul General of Brazil, and currently calls Sydney home. But in 2009, Mr. de Abreu was posted in Washington (as Brazil's Deputy Chief of Mission) when it was announced that his hometown of Rio would host the 2016 summer Olympics. And he couldn't have been happier or prouder; both as a Brazilian and a Carioca.

"I was very happy, in a way surprised. It was the first time a city in Latin America would host an Olympic Games," he says, recalling that Rio out-bid Chicago, Madrid and Tokyo. "I was happy, surprised. It's a huge, huge challenge."

A challenge Mr. de Abreu believes Rio is ready to meet. "I was in Rio last December, and it is amazing the transformation of the city in the past eight years. It created havoc during the construction, for those who live there, but now that they've seen the outcome they are delighted," he says. "The city is ready. This will benefit Rio for years to come. Many generations

will talk about this. It will become part of the history, not only for Rio but Brazil."

Sadly for Mr. de Abreu, he won't be attending the Games in his home town. "I go back to Brazil every two years but don't forget, if I use my holidays to go home to Brazil I won't get to see more of Australia. I cannot travel during work, so I take my holidays as an opportunity to get to know the country and the region," he explains.

But Mr. de Abreu believes that the Cariocas – those born and bred in Rio ("I was born in Copacabana, but everybody was born in Copacabana in those days.") – will make it an unforgettable experience for everyone. "The Cariocas create a special atmosphere, it's a magical thing."

That work which will keep Mr. de Abreu in Sydney is furthering diplomatic relations between Australia and Brazil, a relationship which celebrated 70 years in 2015. "It's a new relationship. I would say our relations have always been cordial and friendly but I would also say, in these last years, this relationship has been going through a turning point," he explains, one as a consequence of increased tourism between the two countries, as well as students: there are some 20,000 Brazilian students currently studying in Australia.

"It's also amazing the interest of companies. Our companies are investing more, in both directions. We have more than 100 Australian companies doing business in Brazil; we have about 20 Brazilian companies, many of which are large multinational corporations, doing business in Australia," he says.

"I think the next 70 years [of the relationship] will be one of substance, and I think it will be one of the most positive chapters of international history in this century. The two giants of the hemisphere discovering each



other; it will be good for economic growth and social inclusion."

But it's not all work and no play for the Consul-General. Mr. de Abreu, who is is halfway through his posting in Australia, as he, his wife and daughter are all "very happy" living in Sydney. "We plan to travel a little bit more, and hope to see more interesting parts of Australia but it's such a large country with so many interesting places. It's an amazing part of the world."

As a Brazilian, Mr. de Abreu has an affinity with the water though admits he was never much of a surfer but more of a beach soccer player. "During the summer [in Sydney], we will go to the beach. In other seasons we may take the car and drive around.

Sydney, it's never ending," he says. And there's always somewhere to go or something to do. "The Brazilian community here in Sydney is very large, I would say about 40,000, and you're always invited to go somewhere – the northern beaches, the Blue Mountains. The Consular Corps here is also very active; we're always enjoying social events. We're just like a big family, always inviting each other to our homes and functions."

But when Mr. de Abreu is missing Brazil he will take the car and go to a Brazilian restaurant; listing Braza (in Darling Harbour) and Char & Co. (Double Bay), amongts many others, as the better proponents of Brazilian cuisine, particularly for the meat lovers. For Brazilian food in general, the Bronte Belo cafe in Bronte, is always popular. "It's amazing how many Australians are starting to enjoy our way of barbecuing," he says.

Another shared interest between the two largest economies of the southern hemisphere that will no doubt keep the relationship going strong for another 70 years.

Photo by Mateus Cemal, supplied by the Consulate General of Brazil.



RHYTHM BRAZIL

By D.R. Lennox

"Brazilian shows have been one of the most popular forms of entertainment in Australia for a very long time and we've never been quiet. You have your quiet periods but we've never not had work, thank heavens."

It's Tuesday night at Amera's Palace in Marrickville: the floor is moving and the windows lightly rattling. But it's no earthquake, no minor tremor – it's energia! For Tuesday nights are when Rhythm Brazil, Sydney's foremost exponents of Brazilian music and dance, come together to rehearse. This night, a troupe of some 14 (female) dancers and five (male) drummers have gathered to practise their routines.

Officially forming in 2010, Rhythm Brazil co-founders Sashya Jay Brito and Timbalada Souza had been friends and fellow entertainers for years before combining their talents for dance and percussion to form their ensemble. Today, Rhythm Brazil, with its mix of international dancers, percussionists, musicians and performing artists, are a hit at weddings, festivals, corporate events and Mardi Gras.

"I guess everyone wants to have the Brazilian experience, in that environment, at least once in their lifetime," says Tim, explaining that their ongoing popularity is a combination of the energy produced by the drums, colourful costumes and lively performances. "It's contagious." "Brazilian shows have been one of the most popular forms of entertainment in Australia for a very long time and we've never been quiet," Sashya adds. "You have your quiet periods but we've never not had work, thank heavens."

And with the Rio Olympics now in full swing, Rhythm Brazil, who have performed at previous official engagements for the Australian team and broadcasting partner, Channel 7, will no doubt be flavour of the month. "We've been pretty involved so far. Since the [soccer] World Cup in 2014 it's been 'Brazil, Brazil!," Sashya says.

Tim, who has been in Australia for 15 years and hasn't been home to Brazil for about five years, isn't too fussed about missing the Rio Games. "But I will have a sense of pride watching the Olympics; it will show a different side of Brazil. To have something like this is a positive thing, especially if it goes well." But he would love to go home for Carnival. "I've missed out on it for the last 15 years."

Carnival is what most Australians imagine when they think of Brazil, and, to a degree, what most clients have in mind when they hire Rhythm Brazil. "What people generally want are the samba, the live drums and the capoeira – the show-stopping stuff," Sashya says. "Whenever we get the opportunity to do stage shows, like the 'One-Year-To-Go' Rio show, then we can produce something that's a little more stage friendly."

"We challenge ourselves more when clients allow us to do what we do best," Tim adds. And Rhythm Brazil have amassed an impressive list of clients in their relatively brief existence. "People who love what we do and want to have us at their events." One of those clients is Braza, which has restaurants in both Darling Harbour and Miranda, and where you will find Rhythm Brazil performing regularly.

And they both look forward to performing. "I can't wait for Saturday night every week. I know that every Saturday night I'm going to be, in some way, doing what I love the most," Tim says. "We really do love it. We'd have to be crazy do to this if we didn't love it," Sashya adds.

Images: Catalina Briceno www.rhythmbrazil.com

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MEDIA



MIKE WHITNEY

By Howard Rich

"I guess I'm a bit of a perfectionist in that way but I always respect the people I work with and, in turn, they seem to respect me."

'Passion' and 'Heart' are the two most endearing characteristics which encapsulate the life of popular Sydney icon Mike Whitney, host of one of Australia's longest running television shows – Channel 7's Sydney Weekender – dynamic former fast bowler for NSW and Australia cricket teams, and lead singer with his own group The Mike Whitney Band.

"I feel I'm one of the luckiest people around when it comes to combining three of my loves in life: sport, business and music," he says. "To have represented in cricket at the top level, including 12 Tests for Australia and a long, successful career with NSW having played with and against some of the greatest names in the world, then progressing to a business career hosting shows such as Who Dares Wins, Gladiators and Sydney Weekender – the latter for the past 22 years – is more than I ever dreamed of. It doesn't get much better than that. I have to pinch myself that I have come so far."

Mike's introduction to Test cricket came when he was not even originally chosen in the Australian team to tour England in 1981.

"I was playing some cricket in England during the off-season when I got a surprise call from management to say that I was required to join up with the Test team because of injuries to the Australian squad. I then found out that I was rooming with the great fast bowler, Dennis Lillee, a cricketing 'god'. I was keen to ask him for advice early on. Dennis replied by pointing to the Australian coat-of-arms badge on his cricket shirt: 'That's what you play for. Always give 100 per cent. Just keep going at full bore no matter what.' They were words of wisdom that have served me well in all facets of my life. Life is all about making the most of the opportunities that come your way and that is my main driver in life giving 100 per cent."

"Hosting *Sydney Weekender* only came about because a particular executive at Channel 7 was keen

to give me a chance. They basically took a punt on me – a big punt at that! I think they wanted someone who was a bit outside the square who had a personable style," Mike says, rather modestly. "I guess they saw me as a bit of a knockabout bloke with fuzzy hair who somehow seemed to relate to the cricket crowds at the game or else those watching on TV – or maybe even some of the fun TV ads which I was luckily chosen to be a part of. All I knew was that having been given the nod as host, I didn't want to let management down. I have always strived to do the very best I can in my role and somehow it seems to be working okay."

"These days, I like to get involved in all facets of the show by offering some suggestions whenever I think there may be an opportunity to add value to a particular scene. I guess I'm a bit of a perfectionist in that way but I always respect the people I work with and, in turn, they seem to respect me. Above all, I admire everyone's dedication in order to produce a great program."



"Tve learnt so much from working on the show and I have advanced my knowledge of NSW considerably in the process. I think if I threw a dart on a map of the State, our *Sydney Weekender* team could give you the run-down on just about any village or town the dart happened to land on," Mike asserts. "That's because the nature of the program has allowed our team to visit so many fascinating places and meet intriguing characters on the road from all walks of life."

"One such visitation for one of the show's segments gave me the opportunity to do an interview with a natural foods expert who has now steered me into leading a healthier way of life. I follow this guy's food regimen and it absolutely works for me," he says. Perhaps there might be a Mike Whitney cookbook in the pipeline?

To release the pressures of everyday life, Mike believes music provides the solace he needs. "I grew up listening to The Beatles amongst other great artists. The group was so inspirational in the eyes of my sister and myself. In particular, I was a great John Lennon fan." In later life, Mike has been fortunate enough to meet the likes of such music luminaries as Elton John (who is a great cricket fan), Ronnie Wood of The Rolling Stones and legendary guitarist Eric Clapton." As far as producing his own music with The Mike Whitney Band, Mike says: "We just love the interaction with our fans. It's great to see people having fun and we hope we can keep it going for many more years."

Mike equates the teamwork aspect involved in cricket, his TV work and his band, as being instrumental in "putting on a good show for fans".

"With my band, if everyone does their job and does it well, we are going to sound good. If everyone pulls their weight in a cricket team, you'll generally win the game. And in business, if everyone is on the same page, the results will come."

CAFE



EUROBAY

By D.R. Lennox

"A place to meet to conduct a spot of business, catch up with an old friend or a lunch date, or even whilst travelling to and from the airport, it's the ideal spot to enjoy coffee and cake, tapas and wine, or a three-course meal."

Since opening in 2002, EuroBay has become a favourite food destination for locals and visitors alike; for those seeking European flavours and comforts, with excellent customer service and a nearby ocean setting.

Located in the heart of Brighton Le Sands, the first thing you'll notice when you walk into EuroBay is the unique Eurowall: a collage of framed chocolate wrappers, beer ads, newspaper clippings, cigars, cigarette packets and the like.

An extensive mod Oz menu boasts flavours and dishes from and inspired by France, Italy, Greece and Spain; from fish and chips through to tapas, pastas, burgers, salads, and breads (Roman, Athenian, Parisian and Norwegian), there's something to please every palate. There's also a kid's menu (with meals including a free drink), and with everything reasonably priced.

Some of the standouts on the all-day menu include the risotto, the salads (which are main meal in themselves), the chicken or lamb souvlaki (served with Euro chips, Greek salad and on pita bread), lamb cutlets, chargrilled octopus, salt and pepper calamari, Arancini balls, pizza, and schnitzels.

There's also the ever-popular Euro Burger: grilled chicken, lettuce, tomato, onion, grilled Haloumi, roasted capsicum and topped with the special Euro sauce. Too much choice may lead to indecision, but the staff will readily give suggestions and accommodate slight menu alterations. The new breakfast menu has also seen EuroBay's morning morsels take a quantum leap forward.

A place to meet to conduct a spot of business, catch up with an old friend or a lunch date, or even whilst travelling to and from the airport, it's the ideal spot to enjoy coffee and cake, tapas and wine, or a three-course meal.

EuroBay is also fully licensed with wine choices available by the glass (or BYO) and a selection of international beers, it is also a non-smoking venue, inside and out. Open 7 days, 8am till around 11pm.

86 The Grand Parade, Brighton Ph: 9597 3300 www.eurobay.com.au

SYDNEY ICONS

GERRY HARVEY

By Jeff Bird

"Harvey's empire was looking a little shaky at the beginning of the decade. Famously derisory about the prospects of online retailing, Harvey was slow to embrace the internet."

We all know Gerry Harvey. For decades he's popped up in television commercials for his Harvey Norman stores, spruiking the latest bargains with his gravelly voice and ocker accent.

BRW journalist James Kirby described him as "a big-time ordinary guy ... a battler multimillionaire" in his book subtitled *Business Secrets of Harvey Norman's Retailing Mastermind*. For many years few could dispute the description of Harvey as a "retailing mastermind".

Growing up in rural NSW, he moved to Sydney to attend university but quit after a couple of years. "I didn't enjoy university," he told Fairfax Media in an interview a few years ago. "The studying and the accountancy, economics, I just hated that stuff ... I always wanted to be a farmer"

Rather than return to the land, Harvey began selling vacuum cleaners and other appliances, doorto-door. After a while he teamed up with a fellow door-to-door salesman, Ian Norman, to open a small store specialising in electrical goods. The year was 1961. This grew to become a retail chain under the name Norman Ross, which had 42 stores and sales of more than \$240 million by 1979.

Norman Ross was sold in 1982 but Harvey and his partner, Norman, had only just started their retailing adventure. A year later they set up their first Harvey Norman store in Auburn. The company listed on the ASX in 1987 and today has about 280 stores in Australia and overseas. Ian Norman died a couple of years ago but Gerry Harvey, 77, continues to prosper, not always without a scare or two.

Despite his legendary status as a retail marketing guru, Harvey's empire was looking a little shaky at the beginning of the decade. Famously derisory about the prospects for online retailing, Harvey was slow to embrace the internet. In 2008 he told *Smart Company* magazine that online retailing was "a complete waste of time". But by 2013 his company's profits were dropping and Harvey

had to concede that it was time for Harvey Norman to match its online competitors. Later that year the company began online sales and an aggressive "omni-channel" strategy that saw profits return. By the end of 2015 net profit rose 31 per cent in just six months.

Harvey's net worth is reportedly around the billion dollar range but he is well known for shying away from many of the trappings of the billionaire class. He is notoriously frugal and was even described by biographer Kirby as "a tightwad". His greatest indulgence is horse flesh – and he has plenty of that. In fact he is reputedly one of the biggest horse breeders in the world, with about 1,000 thoroughbreds in his stables. He also has major interests in breeding and exporting Wagyu beef.

So you could say that he has achieved his ambition of becoming a farmer, though on a scale it's unlikely he could ever have imagined as a boy growing up in country NSW.



NUMERO UNO COFFEE ROASTER

By D.R. Lennox

"I hope to inspire women no matter what industry they are in or want to enter, but particularly in coffee. Don't be afraid; don't ever see it as a male-dominated industry. Whatever women want to do in coffee, they can."

Gina Di Brita, founder and director of Numero Uno Coffee Roaster, readily admits that, as a woman, she is a rarity in the Australian coffee industry; one of the few women heading up a specialty coffee brand. "But I don't view it as a man's world or a woman's world. It's really how you position yourself. Yes it is predominantly male but that's never ever fazed me," Gina says. "I've always seen myself as a businessperson not a businesswoman."

And 14 years after starting out on her coffee journey, business is good. In a converted 1920s warehouse in Sydney's Beaconsfield, sits the 30-kilo Brambati batch roaster ("the best investment I ever made") which Gina imported from Italy. "From that point on, I just feel that I went from strength to strength with the business; I was just on this wave of excitement and discovery."

The word 'discovery' keeps coming up for Gina. "Throughout this whole journey it's just constant discovery; discovering my strengths, discovering the most unique and complex coffees available from season to season.

different varietals, new processing methods, people who you do and don't want to do business with. It's an ever evolving journey. Coffee is so dynamic, and there's so many different aspects to this product which keeps me wanting to explore."

That journey has included traveling to Central and South America to visit the farms where her beans are grown and to meet the people who grow them; part of her hands-on approach and belief in transparency and traceability. "We're not mass producers of roasted coffee, we are batch roasters: everything we do is produced with lots of care and I've become much more conscious of how and why we do what we do, from sourcing the beans to delivering the end product at the cafe level. I want to know everything about the farmer, the coffee bean itself: how it's grown, what goes into it, do they care about their own land and environment. Before purchasing the raw beans, these are important factors I look for and learn about," Gina asserts.

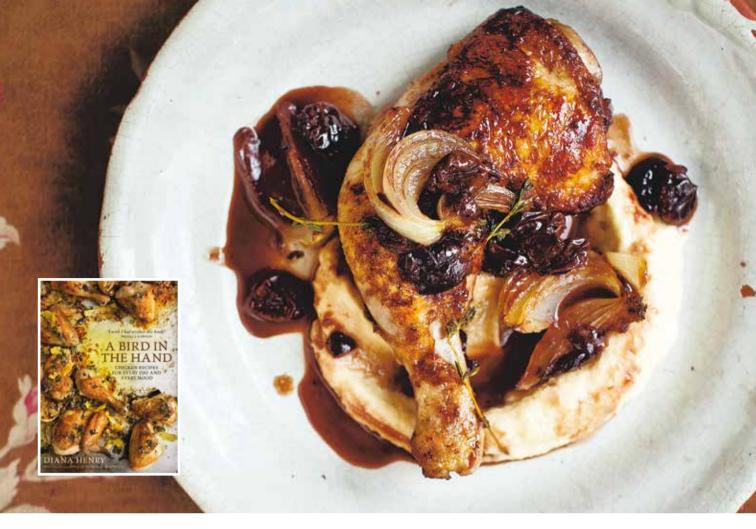
And Gina believes very much in paying it forward. An advocate for the International Women's Coffee Alliance (IWCA), along with other likeminded women in coffee, she is helping to start a Chapter in Australia. "I don't like using the word empowering, rather it's about giving women hope and courage. To give us a voice to say 'yes, we are important. Yes, we can and do contribute to the industry in a unique way to compliment and work alongside our male counterparts, and we're here to stay to serve the industry at every level and whatever level we desire to aspire," explains Gina, a mother to three adult daughters herself who all work with her at Numero Uno Coffee Roaster. We're forming the Alliance in Australia, because there are a lot of women in the industry that have come forward and want to be part of this."

"I hope to inspire women no matter what industry they are in or want to enter, but particularly in coffee. Don't be afraid; don't ever see it as a male-dominated industry. Whatever women want to do in coffee, they can."

www.numerouno.com.au

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chicken legs in pinot noir with sour cherries and parsnip purée

It's amazing what you can do with some chicken legs and a packet of dried fruit! This dish is dark, rich and rather grand-looking. You don't have to use Pinot Noir, but the grape does have cherry tones. Any other light, fruity red wine is fine, though.

serves 4 for the chicken

400ml (14fl oz) Pinot Noir
400ml (14fl oz) chicken stock
4 skin-on bone-in chicken
legs (drumsticks and thighs attached)
salt and pepper
1-2 tbsp olive oil
2 onions, halved, each half cut
into 4 wedges
3 garlic cloves, crushed
4 tbsp sour cherry juice
(optional)
4 sprigs of thyme, plus more
thyme leaves
1 bay leaf
5cm (2in) cinnamon stick

for the parsnip purée

500g (1lb 2oz) parsnips, chopped 500ml (18fl oz) chicken stock 30g (1oz) unsalted butter 75ml (2 ½ fl oz) double cream freshly grated nutmeg, to taste pinch of cayenne pepper, or to taste juice of ½ lemon, or to taste

100g (3 1/2 oz) dried sour cherries

Reduce the wine and the stock, separately, until they each come to 250ml (9fl oz) of liquid.

Trim the chicken of any raggedy bits of skin and season with salt and pepper. Heat the oil in a sauté pan and brown the chicken legs all over. When they're a good golden colour – and it is really important to get this as it looks and tastes much better in the finished dish – remove them to a plate. Pour all but 1 tbsp fat out of the pan. Add the onions to the pan and cook over a medium-low heat until they are pale gold. Add the garlic and cook for another couple of minutes.

Pour on the reduced stock and wine, the cherry juice (if you've been able to get some), herbs, cinnamon stick and sour cherries. Bring to the boil, then reduce the heat to a very gentle simmer. Return the chicken legs – together with any juices that have run out of them – to the pan. Season, cover and cook for 20 minutes, scooping the wine up over the chicken from time to time. Take the lid off and cook for another 20 minutes.

Put the parsnips in a saucepan, cover with the chicken stock and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat a little and cook until completely tender, about 15 minutes. Strain, reserving the cooking liquor. Put the parsnips in a food processor or blender (a blender produces a smoother purée) and process with all the other ingredients, with just enough of the cooking liquor to make a fi ne silky purée; remember you are not making a soup, the mixture should be smooth but not too thin. Taste for seasoning and adjust any elements you think are not quite right. Scrape the purée back into the pan and reheat it gently.

The juices in the chicken will have reduced and you should be left with enough sauce just to coat the chicken legs and the fruit. Taste for seasoning and sprinkle on the thyme leaves. Serve the chicken from the sauté pan with the parsnip purée.

These recipe is from A Bird in the Hand by Diana Henry, published by Hachette Australia RRP \$39.99.

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CAFE REPORTER

FOOD



TG FARM CHICKENS

By D.R. Lennox

"It's our passion to give high quality product. We make sure it meets the highest standard or we won't put it out. As a result, we only use Red Lea chickens."

Steve Reissis and Steve Agoris, who have a shared retail history of some 20 years, were looking for a new challenge when they opened TG Farm Chickens in 2014. But they're no spring chickens; bringing their wealth of retail experience and customer service with them, and doing their due diligence in sourcing the best quality chicken.

"It's our passion to give high quality product. We make sure it meets the highest standard or we won't put it out," Steve asserts. "As a result, we only use Red Lea chickens." Hormone-free and Halal, the boys receive their chicken fresh every day which they then cut into various styles and products.

The TG display counter abounds with every cut of chicken and related product imaginable: drumsticks, wings, breasts, schnitzel, crumbed chicken breast, sausages, thigh and breast mince.

And kebabs. TG produces two varieties: lemon and herb, and the TG Farm spice. Developed over two years, you won't find that same spice anywhere else – and the guys aren't about to divulge the recipe; they're as as tight-lipped as any Colonel.

TG also cater to their large Asian clientele with chicken necks, feet, livers and hearts. "That relationship with the customer is very important to us. They trust us," Steve says. "Our aim is to provide a nice fresh product and to make our customers happy – to wow every customer. And no matter what time you come to the shop, you will get the same product all day, every day."

TG Farm Chickens also has a hot food section, including BBQ chickens for just \$7 – not even the supermarkets can beat that. "Our customers prefer the smaller-sized chicken. It's more tender and more value for money," Steve says.

"We're essentially a retail outlet that sells at a wholesale price." Shop 102-104 Lower Ground Fresh Food Westfield Hurstville Mb: 0400 866 116



Food lovers, look no further! Talk to the two Steves – these guys really understand the importance of clean, trim chicken. Ideal for stews, BBQs, grills and all things beautiful. Open 7 days.

BAKERY



BRASSERIE BREAD

By D.R. Lennox

"When I walk past the ovens and the bread is coming out, and I see the thousands of loaves of bread and they all look perfect and I think 'wow, that is an amazing world!'"

"It was probably with some luck that I got into the bread world when the bread world started to change globally," says Michael Klausen, whose foray into "the bread world" officially began in 2000 with the establishment of Brasserie Bread. Today, more through design and hard work than good luck, Brasserie Bread is an esteemed artisan bakery producing sourdough, Italian rustic, grains and spelt and specialty breads at their Sydney headquarters, as well as in Melbourne and their newlyopened Brisbane operation.

The success of Brasserie Bread, however, is in spite of the Australian palate. "Australia's bread culture, although multicultural, is very white bread. Even the Middle Eastern flat breads are white," Michael notes. Not that Australians are averse to trying new things, but the revolution may be slow coming – and possibly by stealth.

"We're putting 10% wholemeal flour in all the white flour, and it brings beautiful flavours, it brings a little longer life to the product, it brings a lot of health to the product – but it's still a white loaf of bread. That percentage will slowly go to 15% but we still need to have that texture we get from white bread. The majority of people are still looking for white bread and I don't think that will change for a very long time. We need to develop more products inside that category. Let's experiment inside that; let's have different taste experiences and structure inside it."

Experimentation for Brasserie Bread doesn't just occur in the bakery. In growing the wheat for their dough, Michael has adopted a similar practice to that of the wine makers' terre noire. "We want to have complete traceability of the wheat we're using, and that means not working through the millers. You have to start blending," Michael explains.

That meant a year travelling around NSW and finding farmers that were connected to the concept of working directly with Brasserie Bread. "The reason they were

chosen is because they have very sustainable and holistic farming techniques: looking after the soil; belief in non-use of artificial pesticides and fertilisers; a natural way of nurturing the soil to grow the wheat. That means nutrition in the soil, and nutrition brings flavour in the wheat."

"It's the beginning of something new that's pushing the industry," Michael says, admitting that it's all about traceability and control. And yes, perfectionism. "Running a business is not always dance and roses, and when you're a perfectionist like me, it can be hard to deal with if we're not hitting the level of perfectionism that we want or are striving for. But then there are times when I walk past the ovens and the bread is coming out, and I see the thousands of loaves of bread and they all look perfect and I think 'wow, that is an amazing world!' And I know that is [also] happening in Brisbane and down in Melbourne."

www.brasseriebread.com.au





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