

CAFE

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NONNA'S

BAKERY

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NONNA'S BAKERY

Local Business



From a village in the mountains of Calabria, Italy, the recipes for the bread made by Nonna's Bakery have been passed down from generations, and across the ocean, to arrive in modern-day Sydney where they are made to perfection. "Since coming to Australia in the 1950s, we've taken those traditions and techniques and used them, first at Vieto Bakery, which my dad's mum owned with her brothers, and now here," explains Tony Sergi.

"Seeing where this business has come from - I was seven years old in 2005 when my parents started Nonna's, making pizza bases from the garage - and to watch it grow from what it was to what it is now," Tony reflects. "Going from pizza bases in a garage to being in our first factory unit and making traditional Italian bread. Dad didn't let product leave this place, or start supplying shops with bread, until the quality was what he expected to bring home."

Today that quality bread is distributed nationwide. "We supply our fresh products all around Sydney, Wollongong, and as far as Canberra. Our par-baked products are sent all over Australia; we've got distributors in Queensland, Adelaide, and now in Perth - pretty much all over," Tony states. "We're appreciative of our customers and clients, like Earlwood Growers Market. The boys there are like family to us. We've got a couple of others who have been with us since the beginning, since we were at Vieto, and some that have been with us close to 20 years."

With bread made in four distinct categories - Classico, Originale, Par-Baked and Gluten Free - Nonna's bread is "very versatile". "There's a bread for every application, it all depends on what you're after. We've got our traditional, core Nonna's products that are high hydration, long fermentation, which is your traditional, ridgey-didge recipes,

and then we've got our sourdough with no artificial sours in there."

"We try to make it like a big family here [at Nonna's]. It's all about teaching our bakers the processes. This is not your normal, run-of-the-mill bakery. We do things very different: there's no corners cut. Even with the Turkish bread and the French baguettes, we're still using our Nonna's techniques and putting our Nonna's twist on them and making them our own. It's all about bringing that difference. And this place runs 24-7: there's always someone here, there's always bread being made. It doesn't stop!"

Tony Sergi
Nonna's Bakery
www.nonnas.com.au

MARCELLO NADILE

EUROESPRESSO ANNADALE NSW

Local Business

From humble beginnings, Marcello Nadile, and wife Vera, have built up a successful business roasting coffee and selling La Pavoni coffee machines. Approaching 40 years in business, the seeds of the Nadiles' success were planted long before 1986.

“One person’s life is not made up of just one thing; it’s what you pick up along the way, what you’ve been taught from your parents. Our parents came from humble beginnings, from Italy, Calabria, in the south, up in the hills. It was almost subsistence living, you could say.”

“It all started when dad was in the Second World War, under the Mussolini regime, caught up in Libya, North Africa, and became a [Allied] prisoner in 1943. He was lucky enough to be brought here to Australia and spent most of those two years on a farm up in Bellingen; he was 23 years old.”

“After the war, he asked the farmer, Mr Cooper, if he were to come back to Australia would he sponsor him. He went back home, got married, 1947, but there was no work in Europe so he decided to borrow money off the family and return to Australia [Marcello still has the timber bag which carried all his parents’ possessions]. Dad began in Bellingen and worked his way down to Sydney, and that is where we are today. When we came out to Australia, mum, myself and my sister, in 1956, dad had already bought a house and was paying it off.”

“I was four-and-a-half-years old when we came to Australia; my dad left in October 1950 and I was born in May 1951. Mum would send photos to dad to let him know he had a son, and would tell us that one day we would go to this faraway place. My teenage years were mixed up; I think every teenager has that bit of being mixed up: where are you going to go? What are you going to do? That was in the late 1960s, the era of the sharpies and the bodgies and the long hair. I was never a great scholar. My ambitions were always to be an architect; I helped dad with an extension to the house when another sibling came along. Everything was DIY in those days.”

“We also experienced the backyard: the beans, the fruit trees, gardening, animals – chickens, ducks, turkeys, rabbits. We grew up with that knowledge, and making wine, making salami, making tomato sauce. That was our teenage years. And we would go to school and try because dad said “in-house you talk Italian, out-of-house you can talk English” to keep the culture.”

“1986 was an era when things were already changing. The coffee industry wasn’t an exciting area to be in; there were restaurants,

I suppose, but not as many cafes as there are today. The person we bought the business from had been there for 15 years. We just followed suit with what was happening at the time, and living, working and hoping whatever the occasion was would give us an income, give us customers. We’ve been in Annadale since 1986.”

“Any business really comes back to its beginnings; your family environment, what happens in a family, how creative your family is – not just making children but the bare essentials – and having an understanding of what you do, and the commitment you have to your family. It has to resonate but it also must come naturally to you. What resonates for us is the family unit and extending that feeling to our customers.”

**Marcello and Vera Nadile,
Euroespresso, Annadale NSW**
www.euroespresso.com.au



FACTORY DIRECT COMMERCIAL KITCHENS

Local Business

“I began the company in 2017. Before that I was an astrophysicist, and I just tried different fields; I would get bored and move on to the next thing. Before this I was managing a restaurant, but I didn’t like the kitchen. It was not an efficient kitchen.”

“When we’re designing a ventilation system for a client, we look at what equipment they use for cooking and how much smoke it creates. Our goal is to provide a ventilation system to extract the heat, smoke and grease from the kitchen. There are architects and

mechanical engineers involved with designing a kitchen; we work with them to provide the best ventilation system for the client.”

“The first step is we use marine-grade stainless steel so it doesn’t rust; secondly, we ensure the filtering systems are the latest design. We provide enough ducting to suck out the air, using a powerful air motor compatible with the size of the client’s operation. These motors that we source are Australian made by an Australian company, with an Australian warranty and energy efficient.”

“I use stainless steel because it’s durable and easy to clean and maintain. It’s one of the best materials for use in a commercial kitchen. I’m inspired by efficiency: how to make an efficient commercial kitchen. Of course, the size of the space, and council and Australian regulations are also factored in.”

“We have clients across NSW as well as Canberra and the ACT.”

Zain Khan
Factory Direct Commercial Kitchens
Condell Park NSW
www.instagram.com/fdckitchens



CONISTON BAKERY

NSW Travel



“My mum owns a cafe, and as a kid I used to sit in the cafe with her and we just started to bake.”

“We went in shows and everything locally, and you know how it goes: if you win a prize you think ‘this is good’ and you want to do it again. If you’re a kid, you don’t plan stuff out. If you do something and you like it, you keep doing it. I left school at 15 to start an apprenticeship with a bakery in Gerringong. TAFE was hard because I didn’t do very well at school because I didn’t like it [school].”

“If you have success and you become good at something, well you do it more and you enjoy it and you do it more – they feed off of each other. Even as a kid, the feedback that you get for making a product that people enjoy is massive; it’s not a monetary reward, it’s a feeling you get. Yes, in business you have to make money, but you get more back in feelings

than what you do in dollars. Whenever you do a job where you get that back by feeling something, you’ll continue to do it and do it well. But once you lose that feeling and connection of what you do, and why you do it, it’s over.”

“As an apprentice, you learn early on that things take time; that you have to take the time to make things right. But if you worry about the time it takes, you won’t do it properly.”

“I used to like making the larger cakes. Not fancy but really nice. I can still remember as a kid making big carrot cakes, like big batches of them, and shredding the carrot. And even today, when they come out of the oven right, you just know. There wasn’t one particular cake I liked to make, I just like to see it come out of the oven. When you pull something out of the oven, you know [right away] if you’ve hit the mark or missed the mark.”

“I enjoy working with people who get back the same that I do, and generally we do it better together. As we get more people [employees], we get more enjoyment, and we share that same joy and passion; we have a crew of about 30 now. It’s hard to get good staff because it’s hard work. I think humans tend to gravitate towards what’s easy, but what you don’t get with easy is rewards. It’s about what we get back for what we give.”

“I, personally, have always been into pastries, pies, and sausage rolls. Pies are a massive interest for me, but I love all of it.”

“You have to remember why you do it. If you’re just jamming stuff in bags and shoving it out the door, it won’t work.”

Jason and Robyn
Coniston Bakery, Coniston NSW
www.conistonbakery.com.au

CUMMINGS RACING

Local Business

Cafe Reporter ventured out to Leilani Lodge, Randwick, for Cummings Racing's annual stakeholders' open day, where members of various syndicates get to see their horses up close, and perhaps be introduced to the opportunity of a future investment.

"The thing that always strikes me as very interesting about these open days is how great the appetite is for people outside of our walk of like to come and see what we do. We treat it like it's our job, but for so many people it's totally different; it's completely different to most people's ordinary lives," explains Edward Cummings.

"We get to provide people an opportunity to walk into a little oasis in the middle of town, and then explain to them what we see every day: the horses in themselves, why things are bigger or smaller, shorter or taller, the age difference, whether horses are bred to sprint or stay, and then you get to see and go back through the performances of those horses and marry up what we're saying with reality and hopefully there's not too much difference between our reality and everyone else's."

"You've got to have nice horses, because that gives you a future. Our job is to predict the future, relying on the past as some guide but certainly relying on nature, pedigree and experience to put it all together and make it work," adds Anthony Cummings. "The standouts are always the fast ones! But in terms of development, you get a view of each horse when you see them as yearlings and what they're going to grow into, because that's the horse you take to the races."

"I would say, by and large, it is almost impossible to know with any great certainty how good a horse will end up being, because there are so many horses bred by the best and out of the best that turn out not to be the best, and yet horses from humble beginnings, from mothers and fathers of very little pedigree, can end up being absolute champions," says Edward. "And this stable is a good example of that because we have a lot of horses that we try to find for a greater value as possible - value being the double underlined word there. We try to make sure that the money that people are spending isn't too great in order to get a good experience. We pride ourselves on trying to provide people with the best of experience for the least amount of money."

People like Nick, a member of the Beaches Racing syndicate whose 40 to 50 members have nine horses with Cummings Racing. "I like the fun factor of racing; the fun factor of having horses here at Leilani Lodge with Anthony and getting out to the track and hoping for a bit of success. At the end of the day it's an excuse to get together with a few blokes and get out to the track," Nick explains.

"I love what Anthony, and now Edward, has done here at Leilani Lodge. The experience for me is what I think it's all about. Anthony would've looked at thousands and thousands of horses over the years and eventually that experience has to play on your mind - you know what you're looking at."

And as Leilani Lodge stable manager Jonathan Crowley says, you don't have to be an investor in order to drop in for a look.

"There's an array of horses here that suit people who want to race in all manner of races. Some people like sprinters, some people like stayers and horses that perform better a little bit older - there's something here for everyone. One of the things I like about Leilani Lodge is it's very relaxed; people walk around the stables, and we like to make people feel at home. People are always more than welcome to come and visit the stables."

Anthony Cummings
Cummings Racing
Randwick, Sydney
www.anthonycummings.com.au
02 9663 3088



CIMINI'S PASTICCERIA CAFE & BAKERY

Local Business

"I've been a pastry chef all my life, and my dad, a baker, started when he came to Australia in 1954. We grew up in the cake shop in Leichhardt, aka Little Italy. At about 15 or 16, I thought this is probably what I would like to do [become a baker], and that's where my story began."

"I learnt from my father. My older brother also worked there and we eventually took over the family business. We had a business together for 30 years with our younger brother. We sold that about 10 years ago, but it was a good partnership. I always thought that something like an Italian pasticceria was missing from the area, and I always wanted to introduce that to the St. George area, and many people would ask me when I would open a real authentic pasticceria that bakes in-house from scratch. I have the love and the passion, and I had the confidence in myself and my wife, Lena, to put it into play."

"A lot of cafes and food shops buy things in. Everything is baked

fresh here. I wanted to challenge myself as well; I had confidence in myself and I just wanted to prove to myself that I could actually do it, open a business from nothing. And being the perfectionist that I am, there's no short cuts. I knew with that mindset it would be a winner. We've entered multiple pie competitions and consistently won silver medals each time, which brought more people in to taste our product and it's just grown and grown from there."

"I've started to enjoy cake decorating, which is something I didn't do too much of before; to see the pleasure people get when they order a cake and go 'oh, wow, that looks nice'. They're celebrating big events in their lives - weddings, birthdays - and it's just good to see that reaction. I'm really enjoying doing that."

"We do get people requesting things not on the menu and we always try and accommodate. If people come in with an unusual request, for example: we had a request for a birthday cake with

pistachio paste, which isn't uncommon but we don't normally do that. So the customer brought in the paste and we put it into our cream mix and it actually came out really nice. We're always up for any ideas people may have."

"The more product I sell, the more product I make which obviously tells me that people are liking what I'm doing. People are always coming in complimenting what we do, and that includes my wife Lena and daughter Bianca. They are the driving force of the business at the front of shop and a big part of the success of Cimini's. We keep doing what works and what people like."

John Cimini
Cimini's Pasticceria Cafe & Bakery
Kogarah NSW
Instagram.com/
www.ciminispasticceria





THE GRAND ROXY

Local Business



“Hospitality is a business I got involved with back in the ‘80s; something I always wanted to be in. I started with The Lazy Lobster and then after a few years I got the Botany Bay Restaurant, a couple of hundred metres down the road. Those were the golden years - we all enjoyed hospitality.”

“The goal is to be successful. I think that is the main goal of every person in hospitality, and I have achieved that. But meeting people, looking after people also matters. I’ve met a lot of people and made a lot of friends; a lot of people in Sydney know me.”

“Look after the staff; love the staff and they will give you more. I call the staff a team that you have to love and care for, in turn they will produce more and look after the business and the customer. And I believe the return of the customer is my profit.”

“With The Lazy Lobster and the Botany Bay Restaurant, I specialised in seafood. It was very successful, and still is.”

“Brighton Le Sands was a suburb I loved from a young kid when I came to Australia in 1961. I remember saying to my dad ‘one day I will open a business in Brighton Le Sands’. He didn’t believe it. In the ‘70s, my mum and dad went back to Greece; when they came back in the ‘80s for a holiday, I had a couple of businesses then and my dad couldn’t believe his eyes!”

“I never stopped [working], I kept going. We had two children - Peter and Helen - and they helped me with the business, and now that I have six grandchildren, they’re also getting involved. I’m getting older and want them to continue my dream, my passion - what I’ve built over these years.”

“We now have The Grand Roxy, a large function centre. Many years ago it was called The Roxy, and was operated by celebrity chef Bernard King; I am just the third owner. I thought I would change the name to The Grand Roxy, which also represents Brighton’s Grand Parade. About 20 years ago

when the upstairs [to the Botany Bay Restaurant] became available - it was the Australian Surf Lifesaving Association headquarters at the time - I took it over. There was a need in the area for a venue for wedding receptions, christenings and the like. We have since turned the downstairs into a function area as well.”

“In all three of my venues we served mainly seafood. It wasn’t until I sold The Lazy Lobster, and it was sold again, that I bought it back and made it into Meet the Greek, a Greek-style taverna that’s working very well. With Eurobay, a cafe-restaurant that has been in the Brighton area for years, I decided to turn it into a seafood restaurant and rename it The Lazy Lobster, which will be open seven nights a week as well as for Sunday lunch. For me, seafood means freshness; it’s the top priority. That and the service.”

Bill Mougios
The Grand Roxy
Brighton Le Sands NSW
www.thegrandroxy.com.au



FRANK'S PITSTOP MOTORS

Local Business

Starting out in 1987, Frank Failla has built a successful automotive business that runs on passion as much as fuel. "You have to be very passionate to be in this industry, and you never stop learning. The guy who tells you he knows everything about cars is a bullshit artist; you learn every day. The day you stop learning is the day you die – and that's in life, not just cars."

"My business partner, Tony, and I work together to make each car work better. We give clients a list of what's wrong with their car and then ask what they want fixed. They tell us and we fix it and bring it up to scratch. We try and leave it better than it was when it came in. Being able to resurrect the car and watch it drive away is what gives me satisfaction. Not the money; the satisfaction in knowing that I can do that."

"When it comes to classic cars, it's all about passion. If you don't have passion, you don't own these

cars. Design, style, the way they're built, history, culture – it's all there. [Jeremy] Clarkson said 'everyone should have an Alfa once in their life, and having an Alfa is like having a mistress: you never know what you're going to get.' And he's so right. Personally, I drive an Alfa. But my wife is my first love, my car is my second love," Frank laughs.

"Like humans, cars need to detox. How do you detox an Alfa Romeo? Get it on a racetrack, rev it at 6000rpm and give it all it's got. You'll come off the track with a smile from ear to ear. We do a lot of European stuff: Alfa Romeo, Lancia, Fiat, and the odd Ferrari here and there. Maserati too."

"Both eras of car manufacture [classic and modern] are very interesting, but as long as you have that mechanical mind you'll pick it up and appreciate it. I appreciate all mechanical stuff, not just cars. Some new cars have a lot of style, definitely. Different era, different style but still have a lot of style."

Frank's son Daniel works alongside him handling the spare parts division. "I run our online stores. I set them up about four years ago, and we have two stores: one is Alfa Car Centre and the other is OEM Warehouse. Pretty much I sell car parts for Frank and Tony, online and through the store. We sell genuine parts, so the business has credibility," Daniel explains.

"As cars get older it does become harder to find parts, but over the years we've actually compiled so many parts that we have a separate warehouse full of them. There are also international suppliers that we deal with weekly who are also able to supply parts that will make a car look shiny and new again. A lot of the hard stuff you don't see [under the body] you can't get anymore, so that's when you need to get a bit creative."

Frank Failla
Frank's Pitstop Motors
Summer Hill NSW
www.frankspitstop.com.au





NAJI'S CHARCOAL CHICKEN & KEBABS

Local Business



Operating since 2002, Naji's, just across from Arncliffe train station, is as popular as ever. Michael Naji's emphasis on quality ingredients and cleanliness ensures that customers keep coming back.

"Arncliffe is made up of many diverse cultures; Bayside Council is said to have the most diverse population in Sydney. It's important to provide food that is acceptable to all cultures and tastes," says Michael. And, as a local councillor re-elected in 2024 council elections, he would know.

"Serving the community gives me great satisfaction. On top of that,

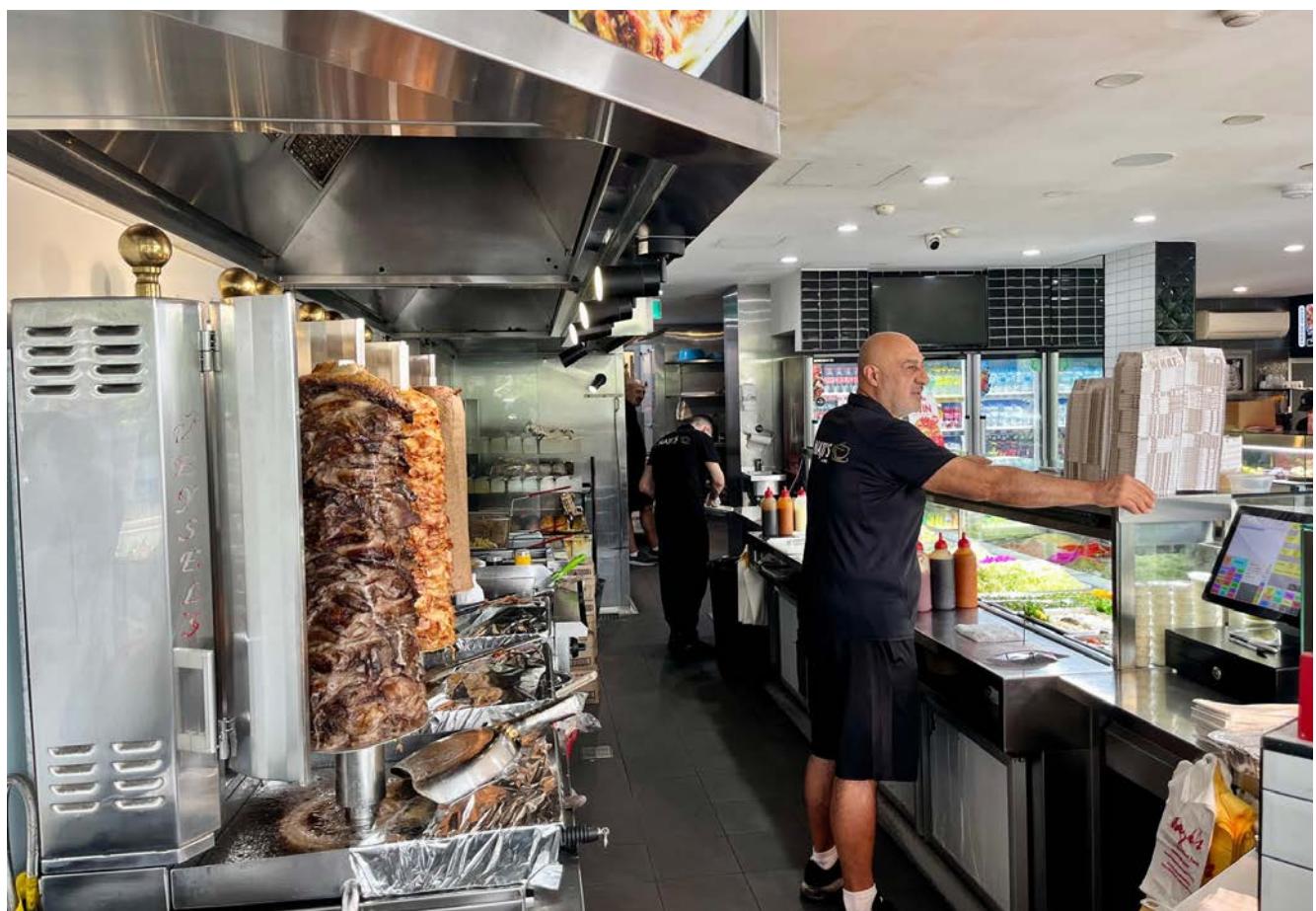
what gives me a greater satisfaction is when people are eating here and enjoying great tasting, fresh, good quality food."

Before Michael puts anything on the Naji's menu, the whole family taste-tests it. "More opinions ensures we get a lot of ticks. On a daily basis the family are involved in the business; all of my family, all of my kids, all eat from the shop. As I say, 'if the owners eat from their own shop, must be good food,' he laughs.

"I've recently developed a new recipe for marinade, using traditional Middle Eastern flavours. We use it

on our charcoal chicken and it has increased our sales triple fold. It's unbelievable!" he says. "When you see the same customers coming back, then you know you are selling a good product."

Michael Naji
Naji's Charcoal Chicken & Kebabs
Arncliffe NSW
Facebook: @NajisArncliffe



EARLWOOD GROWERS MARKET

Local Business

"I grew up in delis, with my family. Earlwood Growers Market offers a variety of products and it's always up-to-date with the new stock that comes in. It's got that old-style feel, like from back home. When breaking bread at home, I always have some olive oil and some ham - always off the bone. And olives."

"People are becoming a bit more health conscious; getting into

chicken breast supreme, turkey breast, nitrate-free hams. I think people still love this stuff, but they're looking at alternatives."

"I like a sundried olive called Halkadiki, and for a dip, a good hummus dip. And I love tzatziki. In summer I'd go for cucumber, watermelon, mango, and oranges. From Earlwood Growers you want the well-known brands, the best:

Princi, Vecchiet, Borgos, Reggiano - they're always great sellers."

Michael
Earlwood Growers Market
Earlwood, NSW
www.egm.com.au



CAFE 31 ON MACQUARIE

Local Business



"I grew up in a family business; my siblings [Pat and Helen] and I coming home from primary school to help my parents. I could see the world through my parents' eyes; the way they came to this country with just a suitcase. I take my hat off to them. We have it easier than them, and were brought up in a good country."

"I grew up in Penrith and school was pretty good. I was into tennis and squash and I had a good group around me who'd always get together. Any sport will give you that drive, that will to achieve; to get to the finish line."

"I've been in hospitality since I was 21, so 40-odd years now. As a proprietor, you've got to have that warmth, that smile on your face when the customers come in. The greeting is number one, it's very important. In winter we like to introduce the soups and of course we taste-test them; if I don't like it, it's not going on the menu. I'm pretty easygoing; I like a lot of things, as you can see from my shape."

"I think Parramatta will come good again, it's just a matter of time. I see it as maybe four or five years' time; it's a long way away as

I see it at the moment."

"Away from work I just like to relax, catch up with family; there's always a lot to do with a big family. A bit of a walk and some time to clear your head, some time on your own is also good. Reading a book is nice too."

Con Moutzouras
Cafe 31 On Macquarie
Parramatta NSW
Instagram.com/
www.cafe3onmacquarie

KONSTAN JEWELLERS

Local Business



“I’ve been a jeweller since the early days, and whatever I learnt, I learnt on the bench. A good friend of mine, a Czechoslovakian man, taught me everything that I know. And I took it on from there, and did what I did.”

“We love making custom-made jewellery; we’ve been here for 22 years and that’s what we pride ourselves in: the making of handmade jewellery for our clientele in Dulwich Hill and surrounding areas. We pride ourselves on the end product. The finish of excellence and the work that we do, and are known for.”

“We’ve got a good variety of stock: diamonds, Cubics, or crystals as we call them and we’re very diversified in what we do; there’s a lot of designs and a lot of jewels we put into the gold to make them look as good as they do. We’ve got a little bit of everything: cuff links, pins, earrings, [religious] crosses. The biggest variety of things in one jewellery shop we have right here.”

“Trends are always changing. At the moment there are some lab-grown diamonds that everyone is purchasing but I don’t keep any in the store. People can order them but I refuse to keep them because

they don’t hold any value. We do stuff that’s custom made in real diamonds and real, coloured stones - whatever people require, we quote and price them.”

“With regards to gold, some people are not spending they way they were before. The trend is changing and the price of gold effects everything that you do. There’s weight behind the solid rings that we make: they’re not imported from China or any other place - they’re all made here, locally in Australia.”

George Konstantinidis
Konstan Jewellers
Marrickville NSW
www.instagram.com/marrickvilleroaddulwichhill/p/CUgdV2rBPdm/

HARIRI CHICKENS

Local Business

There's a line snaking down the street and around the corner on this sunny Sunday afternoon in Kogarah; punters in the queue have travelled from all over Sydney, from the Eastern suburbs to the Western suburbs, from Lakemba to Lalor Park. And they are all here for one thing: juicy roasted chicken and traditional Middle Eastern comfort food.

At Hariri Chickens the focus is on authentic family-style flavours. Side dishes such as okra and jute mallow stew (Mulukhiyah) are ancient recipes that take hours to prepare; Mulukhiyah is a classic dish: a delicious, soupy medley made with jute mallow, a distinctive tasting leafy green. Each individual leaf needs to be painstakingly trimmed and sorted, the leaves are then slow simmered with lemony chicken broth and spices. The result is utterly heart-warming. "Being here reminds me of my mum's cooking back in Lebanon," smiles one of the regulars, as he settles into his favourite spot in the leafy courtyard.

But let's talk about the main event: the chicken. All the ingredients are delivered daily. The chickens are lovingly salt rubbed and marinated for 24 hours before being lodged on the rotisserie.

The recipe is a tightly held secret that the original founder, Frank Hariri, hasn't even shared with his son Moe, the restaurant's general manager. "I've worked in the business since I was 11 years old and still there are restrictions on what recipes I am allowed to know," Moe laughs. All of the classified recipes are burned into Frank's brain, not written down anywhere, and executed on feel and instinct.

Each roast chicken is served blanketed in saj; a fine crepe-like bread.

This bread is beaten by hand from flour, corn meal and water, by a skilful group of elderly local women who have learned the special technique from their villages in Lebanon. The crispy bread sticks to the skin of the chicken, keeping the meat succulent. Pinching open the bread, grasping a chunk of juicy meat inside and dipping it in the home-made garlic sauce is a little bundle of deliciousness.

Frank Hariri travelled to Australia in the 1990s, escaping the war in Beirut with his young son and his wife Nawal, who is a chef at the restaurant. He established Hariri Chickens in 1994 in Lakemba where he built up a large following.

The Lakemba store sadly burned down, but Frank reopened 11 years ago in Kogarah, led by Moe who also works with his brother and mother at the restaurant.

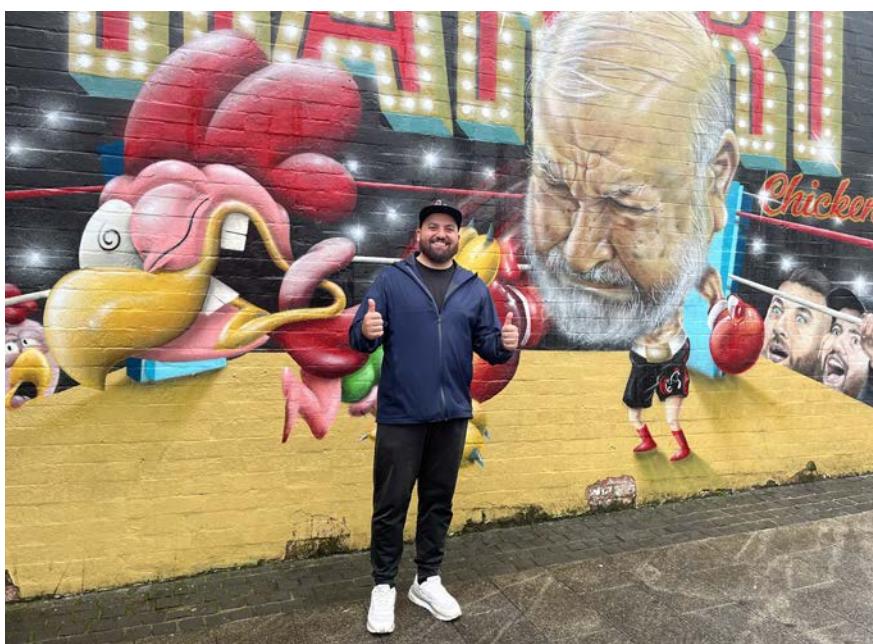
"Our restaurant will always be centred on authentic home-style food, from my family's house to yours, but I've also updated the menu with new burgers and seasonal dishes," says Moe. "One

of our most popular burgers is the Angry Franky, named after my dad. He's got a bit of a spicy temperament; I know I'm doing a good job when he isn't yelling anymore," chuckles Moe. The Angry Franky is a mean chicken burger with gooey American cheese, Hariri Chickens' special sauce, chili relish and fresh lettuce between two lightly toasted buns.

Over the last 10 years, the restaurant has grown into a beloved community all-day gathering place. Mums saving themselves hours in the kitchen pick up a pot of Mulukhiyah stew for the family; hospital workers get their sustenance before a long shift. And at nightfall, young, slick locals in their shiny, fast and furious cars gather for a coffee, burger and shisha with mates.

It's a welcoming roost where you enter as a customer, and leave as a part of the extended Hariri Chickens family.

Hariri Chickens
Kogarah NSW
Instagram.com/hariri_chickens



DESPERATELY SEEKING SATIATION

By Kristina Wong Foster



New York is home to a bevy of fancy eateries slinging everything from a \$2000 gold leaf pizza to \$1000 chicken nuggets with caviar. But at some of the city's beloved institutions you can eat well and still afford your overpriced sublet. I present the petite, the popular, the indie; the humbly under-the-radar golden nuggets that won't max out your credit card (in fact, some of these restaurants still prefer cash). These are a generous handful of the cheapest, nicest restaurants in New York. You may have to queue for a while - but I promise it's worth it.

KATZ'S DELI

Join the long line on Houston at Ludlow for a famed Katz's pastrami sandwich of lustrous pinkish beef slabs, crusted with blackened spices and veined with fat. Drool as you hand over your old-school ticket and watch your white-hatted carver slice the meat, cut by hand with a very long, sharp knife. Grab a couple half sour pickles on the side for a fresh and crunchy combo.

RUSS & DAUGHTERS

At this legendary Jewish deli, the bagel experience is incomplete without smoked fish. Order a bagel with a side of their geshmak (yummy) hot-smoke-cold-smoke salmon combination dip to dunk your bagel into or layer your sturdy bread with the soft corally-translucent, finely sliced Nova lox at this Lower East Side institution.



WU'S WONTON KING

It looks like just another Chinese restaurant, with whole ducks glistening from hooks in the window and coral trout contemplating their last days in a tank. In the rather typical dining room every

table orders a platter of barbecue meat, but wontons are the outright winners; hovering in a robust broth, clouded with fat leached from long-simmering pork bones. The dumpling skins are delicate and reveal tasty meat that's perfectly textured. [Tip: Wu's opens at 10am daily so if you're an early riser you can skip the queues, plus score a side of the Hong Kong breakfast staple 'cheung fan', steamed rice noodles with coriander.]

LOS TACOS NO.1

There's some kind of Tijuana taco alchemy happening at this unfussy street stall-like Mexican outlet where the crew of impressive line cooks press balls of masa, flip steaks on the grill and baste the towering trunk of spit-roast pork for their signature adobada with vinegar, chili and lard. Everything on the menu is really good, from the vegetarian nopal cactus to the free salsa, radish and blistered chilies, but the adobada pork tacos are a flavourful favourite. Topped with thinly sliced pineapple that complements the marinated pork,



oozing with avocado crema and sprinkled with salsa, it's about as magic as a taco can be. The corn tortillas are hand-pressed, the flour tortillas are impossibly thin, slightly charred but still elastic.

For newbies, here's the 'How To' at Los Tacos No.1:

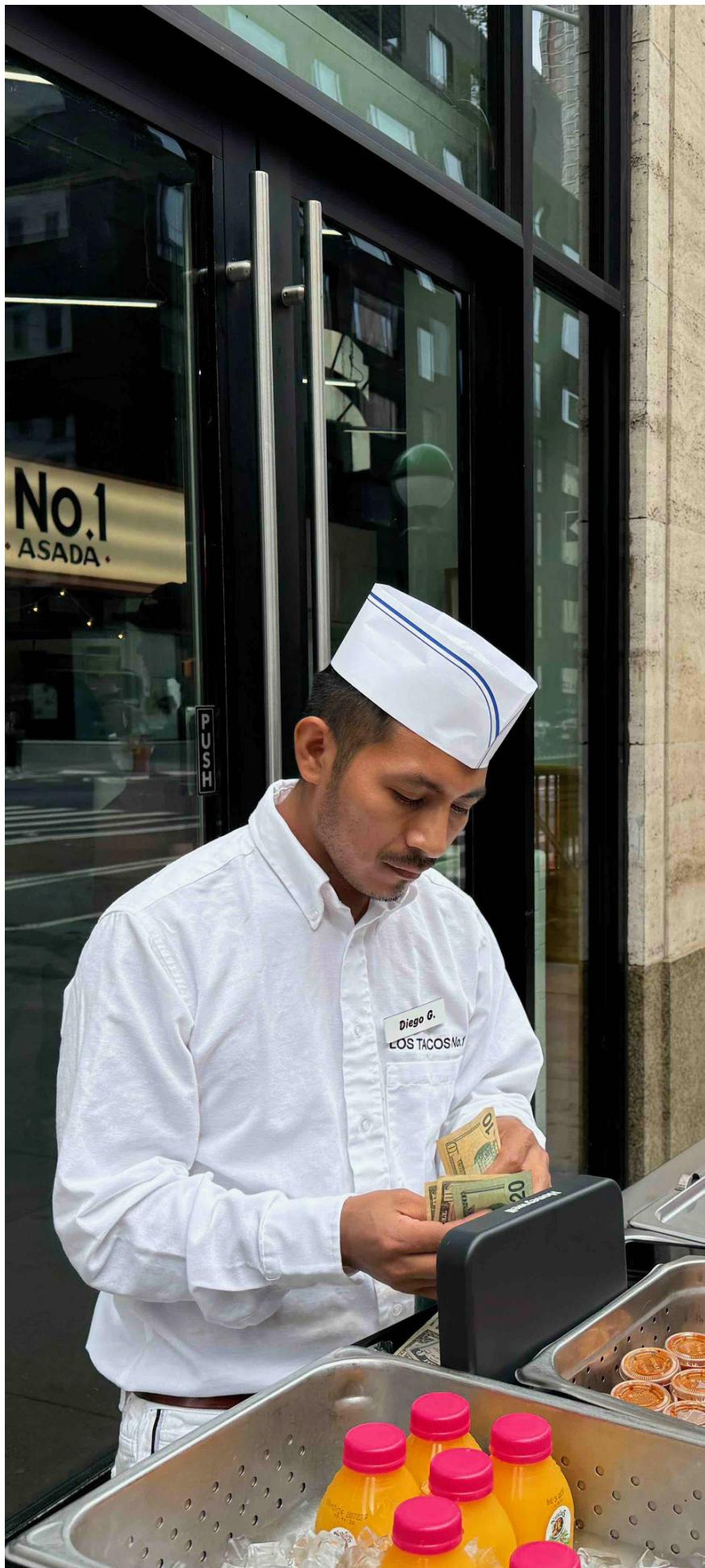
- Order from the menu board and get a ticket
- Pass the ticket to a line cook who asks "corn or flour tortilla?" and if you want "con todo?" (with everything)
- Watch as they construct it and then hand you your taco
- Load it up at the salsa bar then find a standing space to thoroughly enjoy.

SYLVIA'S RESTAURANT

Nowhere in the city serves soul food like Sylvia's. Homestyle cooking in the heart of Harlem. Founded in 1962 by Sylvia Woods, ex-presidents, celebs and tourists alike seek out the house specialities; the chicken and waffles and the sweet falling-off-the-bone barbecue ribs. Take in as many sides as your stomach can squeeze with classics like potato salad, mac 'n' cheese, collards and gumbo, but make sure to leave space for a giant slice of the pie of the day.

TONCHIN

This slick outpost of a renowned Tokyo chain might be New York city's best ramen with chewy, just-right noodles bathed in silky, umami tonkotsu pork broth. Tonchin noodles are made in-house daily. Refresh the palate after the steamy soupy bowl with an enormous matcha green tea shaved ice.



FEEL GOOD FOOD

Best Local Food



Naji's Charcoal Chicken & Kebabs



St Paul & Co



The Larder Wine & Cheese Bar



Cafe 31 on Macquarie



Nonna's Bakery



Coniston Bakery



Hariri Chickens



Mootch and Me



Ciminini's Pasticceria Cafe

FEEL GOOD FOOD

Best Local Food



Hariri Chickens



Banter Barista



Cafe 31 on Macquarie



Earlwood Growers Market



The Larder Wine & Cheese Bar



Nonna's Bakery



Naji's Charcoal Chicken & Kebabs



Factory Direct Commercial Kitchens



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