

## FOOD &amp; WINE

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LISA  
ROCKMAN

## Young gun takes gold

ZOE Harrison has cooked her way to the 2022 Nestlé Golden Chef's Hat Award grand final in Melbourne.

The 23-year-old chef, who works at Raymond Terrace's The Riverhouse Cafe, won over the judges at the TAFE Hunter - Hamilton Campus on June 22.

Competitors were required to use pork neck or pork cutlets in their main course. Harrison plated up a pork cutlet with pork stuffed leek, fondant celeriac, apple gel, Dijon demi-glace and carrot as her main, and a condensed milk cake with spiced pears, meringue, pecan praline, thyme, and white chocolate crumb for her dessert.

The judging panel rated each dish to globally recognised culinary standards, and said Harrison's plate presentation was "beautiful, with ideal portion sizes and perfectly balanced flavour combinations".

Harrison started her apprenticeship when she was 16 and a student at Whitebridge High School.

"I stayed at school as I completed my apprenticeship and have worked at quite a few places to get as much experience as I possibly could," she says.

"I love creating dishes and writing menus and experimenting with food - I get an idea and try different things to work out what looks best and tastes best.

"Eventually I'd like to be an executive chef in charge of several kitchens, working across different cuisines. I'd love to work with older chefs in the industry to learn how they got to where they are,

and how they've stayed in the industry so long because it can be tough.

"Basically I want to learn as much as I can and then figure out where I fit into the industry."

Harrison is one of 12 chefs from across Australia and New Zealand who will cook off at Fine Food Australia in Melbourne this September. Up for grabs is a \$10,000 cash prize.

Now in its 57th year, the Nestlé Golden Chef's Hat Award is Australia's longest running culinary competition for young chefs.

### An epic long lunch

I attended the Hungerford Hill Epic Lunch at Muse Restaurant on Saturday and can confirm the event's name is no exaggeration. Service is impeccable however staff members are still friendly and approachable. Chef Troy Rhoades-Brown works closely with senior winemaker Bryan Currie to get the balance of flavours just right and, presentation wise, each dish is consistent and pleasing to the eye. The entertainment, too, is top shelf and the diners always in good spirits - and in good voice.

The standout dish of the day, for me, was the cured and lightly smoked ocean trout with pea puree, yuzu, apple and puffed koshihikari. The vibrant orange and green on the plate pleased the eye and the clever combination of textures made your mouth sing. Delicious. Currie chose well with the accompanying 2021 Hungerford Hill Tumbarumba Fume Blanc and the 2017 Hungerford Hill Dalwood Vineyard Semillon.



**TALENT:** Zoe Harrison will cook off for Nestlé Golden Chef's Hat glory at Fine Food Australia in Melbourne this September. **Picture:** Supplied

The next "epic" lunch at Hungerford Hill is the Yuletide Celebration @ Muse Restaurant on November 26.

### Countdown begins

TINTA Belmont is opening its doors at 5pm on Friday, July 29. The Lake Macquarie waterfront venue will be open seven days for breakfast from 6.30am; Wednesday to Sunday from 11.30am for lunch; and Wednesday to Sunday from 5pm for dinner.

Bookings are now being

taken (for lunch and dinner only) at [TINTAbelmont.com.au](http://TINTAbelmont.com.au).

"We want to reiterate our appreciation for the patience and support that everyone's showed us," managing director Ben Stehr said.

"We've had dozens and dozens of enquiries each day since we went live and the majority of people have been so understanding. We've booked a handful of weddings and events in already by literally showing people through a construc-

tion site and asking them to use a bit of imagination. But everyone is so excited to see it open, we're excited to get it open, and we're working hard to make sure we get it right."

### High Tea fun

Reece Hignell is planning another High Tea series at his popular Hamilton bakery, Cakeboi, in July. Go to [cakeboi.com.au](http://cakeboi.com.au) to book your ticket (\$69, a two-hour package which includes cakes, tarts, sandwiches,

savouries and unlimited tea and coffee).

"The past few high teas have sold out super quickly so we wanted to give *Food & Wine* readers the first chance to purchase tickets," Hignell said. Any event involving this *MasterChef Australia* fan favourite is a lot of fun. Be quick or you'll miss out.

### Street food breakfast

Rosa Bar at Lambton is branching out with Rosa Del Sol, a "pop-up cafe" operating at the Elder Street site throughout July. Day one is this Friday, July 1.

"Rosa Bar operates in the evenings and focuses on Spanish tapas and cocktails," owner Maree Ruse, who also owns Cargo Espresso Bar at Redhead, said.

"Rosa Del Sol will run every Friday, Saturday and Sunday in July from 7am, serving a Columbian and Venezuelan specialty, arepas. These are totally gluten-free, cornbread pockets stuffed with delicious breakfast fillings. We'll be focusing on these and brekkie bowls, plus coffee from Sprocket Roasters and brunch cocktails.

"If the response to the pop up is positive (and if we can find more crew in this chronic staff shortage), we will be looking to open six or seven days for a regular breakfast/brunch service and possibly lunch.

"No bookings - it's first come, first served or you can grab a takeaway and head to Lambton Park."

Rosa Del Sol is fully licensed.

"We'll be serving Columbian and Spanish beer, Mimosas, jugs of Bloody Marys and Mojitos," Ruse added.

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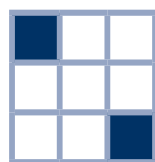


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