

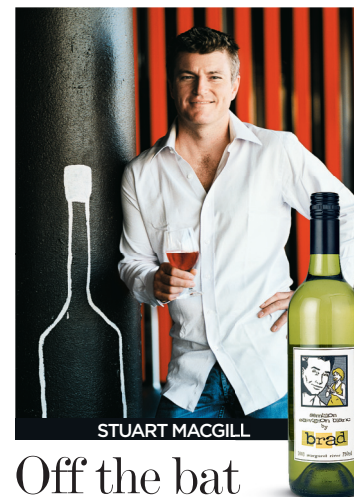
APPETITE

Edited by Jane Hutchinson



Fine shavings of fennel add pizzazz to winter salads. Wash fennel, remove leaves and any tough outer layers. Using a vegetable peeler, slice the bulb lengthwise. Soak shavings in iced water for 10 mins before using.

You'll find great fennel recipes at www.taste.com.au.



Off the bat

During my first unsuccessful stint at university, I spent most of my time with friends who lived on-campus. Although I was a dismal failure on the academic front, that's not to say I didn't get an education.

One of our earliest lessons was that while beauty might be skin deep, most people are surface dwellers. We covered up with layers of cool stuff, hoping that by the time people sifted through our random collection of music, clothes etc, they'd be too confused to care how we looked.

My on-campus mates had the advantage of public advertising space. The open door policy at uni meant cutting-edge prints on your wall provided street cred when the object of your desire visited. Most walls seemed to feature pop art revivalists Brad and Janet - who was so busy being fabulous that she kept leaving her baby on the bus.

Even though I realise a cartoon on my bedroom wall won't fool anyone now, I couldn't help but smile when I discovered Wine by Brad. This winery from the Margaret River selects small parcels of fruit to present regional varieties and styles at approachable prices. There's no flash cellar door, just [cartoon-visaged] Brad and his website www.winebybrad.com.au.

Brad's **Semillon Sauvignon Blanc 2007** is full of tropical fruit with citrus highlights and, at \$18 (online or at selected liquor stores), it's a steal.

Stuart MacGill will host a second series of his award-winning TV show, Uncorked, on the LifeStyle Food channel later this year.

PHOTOGRAPHY: TENY AGHAMALIAN, EDWARD URRUTIA, CORBIS.



BAR NONE

Piano Room, cnr of Kings Cross and Darlinghurst Rds, Potts Point. Call (02) 9356 8238 or visit www.pianoroom.com.au. Open daily.

The look: Super glam 1950s. Think mischief-making dark corners, stunning chandeliers and sweeping views of the Cross. **The soundtrack:** A regularly remixed iPod-DJ leads into nightly live music. **Signature drink:** All Night Long (\$14) is a sweet, fruity mix of 42 Below passionfruit vodka, peach and Licor 43 liqueurs, and blood orange juice. **Bar snacks:** The roasted paprika almonds (\$7) and the chipotle-spiced squid (\$16) from the tapas menu make ideal party fare. **Best for:** Impressing the over-30s crowd with a hot outfit - dress to impress. **Wow factor:** The likes of Daniel Johns, Mischa Barton and Miranda Kerr have all dropped in for the free live entertainment that mixes jazz, R&B, blues and pop. **If this bar were a moviestar, it would be...** Super-sexy Jessica Rabbit.

For more hot bars, check out Deck of Secrets' Bar Secrets: Sydney. Visit www.DeckofSecrets.com.

GLUTTON

A TAVOLA 348 Victoria St, Darlinghurst. Call (02) 9331 7871

Stepping off busy Victoria Road, A Tavola feels like a glowing den of pleasure. Nothing seedy; it's just that the owners have somehow managed to transform the usual long space and communal table formula into a setting combining warmth with Euro cool. AB and I take our seats at the 'couples' end of the long marble table (although I spot a sunken room out the back where there's more space) and we're presented with crusty foccacia and a dish of olive oil. From the permanent menu, we share warm brown mushrooms in a salad of ricotta salata, mint and peas (\$15), which burst with sweetness, plus the elegant rocket, vine tomato, buffalo parmesan and prosciutto combo (\$15). The main course options are expanded by an artfully scribed specials board. We've spied the veal scalopine (\$36) being devoured by the couple beside us and know it's just our thing, while the fresh pappardelle (\$35) with cinghiale - wild boar - sounds too good to resist. (The fresh pasta specials prepared each day by chef Eugenio Maiale are more expensive than the dried options, but both are worth a try.) While we wait for our mains, the vacant seats beside us are filled, but it's not until a few sips into my light red Italian varietal that I realise my new neighbour is star chef Luke Mangan. As we fill our bellies with golden potato chunks topped with lemon-drenched spinach and tender veal, and wrap the pappardelle sheets around the rich ragu, AB urges me to converse with the celeb, but I let him be. After all, we're both here for the same reason, and I prefer good food served with a side of peace. **CLAIRE BRADLEY**

Three of a find... kitchen timers

1.



2.



3.



1. Metaltex Rooster, \$4.95. Who better to keep track of time than a rooster? He won't cock-a-doodle-do for you at sunrise (which is probably a good thing), but this one will ring a bell when your cooking time is up. Just wind him clockwise for a one-hour countdown or less. Stockists: (02) 8884 6000.

2. Robert Gordon Australia Pink Daisy Cake, \$19.95. Cakes are notorious for being time-sensitive, so it seems fitting to have a timer that's shaped like one. This pretty little cake has a 60-minute time limit and an easy-twist action to start the clock ticking. Stockists: (03) 5941 3144 or www.robertgordonaustralia.com.

3. Jole Mech-timey, \$9.95. This is eggsactly what you've always wanted for your kitsch kitchen. Plus, it's practical, too. Hold the feet in one hand and, with the other, turn the body to the desired number of minutes. Stockists: (02) 8884 6000.