

state of the nation

Thousands of votes poured in for this year's *delicious* Cafe Awards. Here are your top picks from around the country.

australian capital territory

A BITE TO EAT, A DRINK AS WELL

Taking the ACT top spot for the second time, this character-filled cafe features mismatched retro chairs, laminex tables and even a potter's table – a reflection of co-owner Danielle McKeon's interior design background. The menu is equally diverse: chef and co-owner Rebecca Kelly borrows from Spain, Morocco and Thailand to create dishes such as *torrijas* (sweet Spanish bread fritters), or a Chiang Mai chicken salad. **Shop 8, Eggleston Cr, Chifley, (02) 6260 3703.**

Runner-up, **Gus' Cafe** (Shop 8, Garema Arcade, Bunda Pl, Civic, (02) 6248 8118) is the perfect place to sip on a coffee and people-watch morning, noon and night, while the leafy outdoor area at **Beess & Co** (5/29 Bentham St, Yarralumla, (02) 6285 0116) is another popular spot.

new south wales

BERTONI CASALINGA

Balmain's family-run Bertoni Casalinga again takes first prize for NSW, and, with its lasagne, *ciambelle alla Nutella* (Italian-style doughnuts) and coffee made with beans sourced direct from growers, it's easy to see why. Inspired by the food of their Naples-born mother, Maria, and produce grown by their Sicilian father Alfonso, Anthony and Albert Iacono opened Bertoni five years ago, and now also have cafes in Mosman and the CBD. **281 Darling St, Balmain, (02) 9818 5845.**

City workers flock to **Velluto Nero** (3/259 Clarence St, Sydney, (02) 9268 0755) for excellent coffee and a tempting array of cakes and cookies. On the other side of the bridge, colourful **Chaos** (194 Military Rd (at rear), Neutral Bay, (02) 9953 8625) offers friendly service and generous breakfasts.

northern territory

WATERTANK CAFE

The Wilkinsons first hatched the idea of opening a cafe within their nursery four years ago, and have since nurtured it into the NT's favourite. There are healthy juices and salads aplenty, plus dishes featuring bush ingredients – such as wattlesed muffins, or apple, celery and pistachio salad with lemon myrtle – that are also available to buy from the nursery. **Bloomin' Desert Nursery, 14 Hele Cr, Alice Springs, (08) 8953 0655.**

In Darwin, enjoy strawberry crepes or wild barramundi while overlooking the Timor Sea at **Cornucopia Museum Cafe** (Conacher St, Fannie Bay, (08) 8981 1002). **Roma Bar** (9-11 Cavenagh St, Darwin, (08) 8981 6729), renowned for its coffee and colourful history, blends world flavours in dishes such as coconut sago and an Indian breakfast of roti and dahl.

cafe food.



south australia

TAYLOR BLEND

Following on from the success of his artisan coffee business, Josh Taylor opened this Italian-style cafe two years ago in response to customer demand. Carrot cake, chocolate gâteau, croissants and cannoli all complement a cup of his rather fine, locally roasted espresso. **1/34 Hallet Rd, Stonyfell, (08) 8431 7716.**

The Barossa's **Blond Coffee** (Shop 2, 60 Murray St, Angaston, (08) 8564 3444) is popular for lattes and tarts, while **The Cafe at The Store** (Level 1, 157 Melbourne St, North Adelaide, (08) 8361 6999) offers mod-Oz fare in polished surrounds.

victoria

National winner APTE was followed by Melbourne institution **Brunetti** (194-204 Faraday St, Carlton, (03) 9347 2801), which offers rich coffee, decadent opera cake and biscotti that'd rival what you'd find in the Angelé family's homeland of Rome. At trendy **Las Chicas** (203 Carlisle St, Balaclava, (03) 9531 3699), the crowds come for great coffee and steak sandwiches with wasabi mayonnaise.

western australia

BOUCLA

Inspired by her Greek heritage and love of North African art, Despina Tanner's cafe and gift shop, Boucla, is a sanctuary of warmth and good food. Persian rugs, lanterns and candelabras fill the space, while the counter groans with treats such as white chocolate and raspberry cake, sweet and savoury *soufra* (a Greek pastry of Despina's own creation) and salads of Moroccan rice or roast vegetable. **349 Rokeby Rd, Subiaco, (08) 9381 2841.**

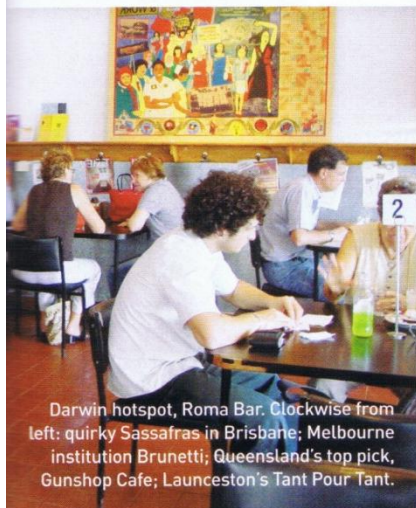
Voyage Kitchen Delicatessen (128 West Coast Dr, Sorrento, (08) 9447 2443) is the perfect spot to appreciate Sorrento's laid-back way of life while indulging in spicy baked beans and housemade pies. **Coode Street Cafe** (24 Coode St, Mt Lawley, (08) 9371 9900) buzzes with breakfast crowds dining on eggs benedict or grilled peaches with ricotta. **d.**

tasmania

VILLINO ESPRESSO

Coffee mad Richard Schramm and his wife Melissa left careers in Melbourne to open Villino 18 months ago. With its dark timber decor and menu of panini, soups and pastries, the cosy cafe has a distinctly European feel, and the baristas wax lyrical about the art of espresso. **30 Criterion St, Hobart, (03) 6231 0890.**

The blinis, poached eggs on truffled polenta and superb pastries have locals raving about **Tant Pour Tant** (226 Charles St, Launceston, (03) 6334 9884). Nearby, **Aroma's Fine Food** (272 Charles St, Launceston, (03) 6331 4150) does a good trade in salads and simple rolls.



Darwin hotspot, Roma Bar. Clockwise from left: quirky **Sassafras** in Brisbane; Melbourne institution **Brunetti**; Queensland's top pick, **Gunshop Cafe**; Launceston's **Tant Pour Tant**.

queensland

GUNSHOP CAFE

Since Jason Coolen and Karen Crawford took over this cafe two years ago, it has come into its own. Original floorboards, an old hitching post and other features of the 120-year-old building have been preserved; light spills in through bay windows; and a bar and alfresco dining area have been added. Local fare shines in dishes such as hot-smoked trout salad and Catalan seafood stew. **53 Mollison St, West End, (07) 3844 2241.**

In a cottage filled with quirky retro wares, popular **Sassafras** (88 Latrobe Tce, Paddington, (07) 3369 0600) does frappes, lassis, and breakfasts of orange and buckwheat pancakes. **Jam** (3/1208 Sandgate Rd, Nundah, (07) 3266 1704) brings a hip sensibility to suburbia with its gallery of works by local artists and cafe staples such as corn fritters.

your say

The five best Cafe Awards reader reviews won fantastic prizes.

Danielle Moretti wins a trip to Italy for her review of Don Adan Coffee, Mosman, NSW: "If Don Adan were my man, he'd greet me every day with coffee strong and sweet and hot - superb in every way... I never thought I'd fall so hard in love with such a man. The sunshine of my breakfast time, the cafe Don Adan."

Nina Strahan wins a Krups Compact Espresseria coffee machine for her review of Pellegrini's, Vic. **Rob Harper** and **Maris O'Sullivan** each win KitchenAid food processors for their reviews of Cafe Mint, NSW and Mixed Business, Vic. And **Rachella Birch-Samios** wins a Vetta hamper for her review of Gingerlee, Vic.

