

## events

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Karen Graham

Send event listings to metroevents@smh.com.au

### METROPICKS

#### SHAKUHACHI FESTIVAL

The largest congregation of shakuhachi players will perform old and new expressions of the Japanese bamboo flute at the World Shakuhachi Festival '08. **Today to Tuesday**, various times, **City Recital Hall, Sydney Conservatorium of Music and Art Gallery of NSW**, 8256 2222, free to \$80, [www.worldshakuhachifestival08.com](http://www.worldshakuhachifestival08.com).

#### KIDS AT THE MUSEUM

Nicholson Museum gets into the spirit of the Olympics. Macleay Museum's *People, Power And Politics* explores Australia's anthropological history and kids can keep a journal of their travels. **Monday to Friday**, Ancient Olympic Games at 11am, What is Anthropology? at 1pm, **University of Sydney**, Camperdown, 9351 2812, free, [www.usyd.edu.au/museums](http://www.usyd.edu.au/museums).

#### AUSTRALIAN YODEL

Round one of Australia's first stand-alone yodelling competition begins. **Today**, 6.30pm, **Lowenbrau Keller**, corner Playfair and Argyle streets, The Rocks, 9247 7785, free, [www.lowenbrau.com.au](http://www.lowenbrau.com.au).

#### WINTER HOT SPOTS

School holiday entertainment south of Sydney includes a concert by the lake and an animal farm. **Saturday to Thursday**, various times, **Bingara Gorge**, Pembroke Parade, Wilton, free, phone 4630 0300 for bookings. **Rachel Olding**

## AROUND THE BLEND



Anyone want a cup of coffee? ... last year's Aroma Festival.

IT'S COFFEE, TEA AND CHOCOLATE TIME AT THE ROCKS DURING THE AROMA FESTIVAL. **RACHEL OLDING** REPORTS.

THERE'S no denying Australians love coffee. Per capita consumption is 2.4 kilograms a year and rising, with the food-service industry brewing 1.26 billion cups a year, amounting to more than \$3 billion in sales.

It is a figure that has been steadily growing since Sydney's love affair with the coffee bean and the tea leaf began in The Rocks more than 100 years ago.

In 1904, the Andronicus brothers established Australia's first chocolate shop and coffee business, roasting coffee daily in their store on George Street. Two decades later, the Bushells Tea warehouse at The Rocks became the first purpose-built tea production store in the country.

This weekend, the best coffee, tea and chocolate traders return to The Rocks for the 11th Aroma festival.

"It's the Sydney lifestyle that makes us such lovers of coffee and tea," says event manager Karen Graham. "Sydneyers enjoy being outdoors, especially near the harbour and The Rocks heritage quarter."

The event has grown to become the largest coffee festival in the southern hemisphere, featuring the best in gourmet coffee, chocolate, tea, spice and sweets. It will have more than 100 stalls and is expected to beat last year's attendance of 100,000 people.

Aileen Young, co-owner of boutique coffee brand Velluto Nero, is not surprised that Sydney has grown into a city of coffee connoisseurs and caffeine addicts.

She roasts the special coffee in the front window of the Velluto Nero Clarence Street cafe and will take it to the Aroma festival.

Boutique roasting is "definitely becoming a trend because consumers are becoming more educated about getting fresh coffee," Young says.

"Australians are leading the way in terms of coffee and having local micro-roasteries. We've had visitors from Europe who are trying to emulate what the Australian coffee industry is doing because they have a huge focus on live roasting."

Young aims to seduce the Aroma festival's masses with Velluto Nero's espresso blend, which won the Champion Espresso title and a gold medal at this year's Sydney Royal Fine Food Show.

Festival-goers will be able to try a range of coffee blends in sample sizes for \$1 a cup. "And no doubt go home buzzing," Graham says.

#### THE ROCKS AROMA FESTIVAL

**Sunday**, 10am-5pm, **The Rocks**, 9240 8500, free, see [www.therocks.com](http://www.therocks.com).