

Going bush by the sea

a Chef,
a Menu,
a Bistro



Deep Blue Bistro, Coogee Beach, Sydney, Australia in conversation with... Thomas Heinrich

Food Companion International features the expertise of **Chef Thomas Heinrich** of **Deep Blue Bistro**. To diversify the opinion, reviewers **Jonathan Porter** and **Mel Nathan** spoke with New York chef **Brooke Vosika**, who employed Chef Heinrich at **The Four Seasons** in New York and has worked alongside some chef greats like **Alaine Ducasse**, **Thomas Keller**, **Joel Robuchon** and **Jean George**.

Born? Sydney, Australia.
Culinary education? TAFE.
Experience? Four Seasons, Gustaminos, Dolton House.
Favourite cheap eat? Wasavie in Five Ways, Paddington.
What keeps you going? The love of food and what to create next.
Advice to future chefs? Don't think about money.
Favourite kitchen tool? Japanese knives.
Most controversial menu item? Kangaroo Evolution; Kangaroo Three Ways.
Favourite thing about Sydney? Cooking by the beach.
Most useful cookbook? French Laundry and also Culinary Artistry.
Early influences? White Heat by Marco Pierre.
On working as a chef in New York? I felt privileged to work alongside some of the world's best chefs and loved that such a wide variety of ingredients and produce was so readily available all year round.
Career you would have pursued if you didn't become a chef? A plumber.
Career turning point? Pursuing a career at Four Seasons, New York.
Favourite sport? Rugby.
Ingredient obsession? Truffles.
Purveyor tip? Sourcing unique products and competitive prices.
Your suggestion for culinary name for kangaroo was? Nakobe.



Chef Heinrich is one of the most accomplished chefs in the Coogee Beach area. For the past six years he has run the kitchen at Deep Blue Bistro for owner Mirielle Kilgour, formerly of the successful Bondi Beach brasserie, Lamrock Café. We heard about this place through Native Ingredient Activist, Vic Chirikoff who says Heinrich is one of 250 chefs in Australia who regularly uses native ingredients in his menu. These dishes include Aboriginal cooking methods modified for the commercial kitchen.

So if you've ever yearned to extend your menu natively this is the place to come. Sample dishes like North Queensland crocodile carpaccio with lemon myrtle oil, caper berries and bush tomato confit or wild thyme infused olive oil poached kangaroo with roast yam mash and an Alpine pepper jus. Speaking of the bush tomato I can remember years ago in Perth, when a chef asked his vegetable purveyor for bush tomatoes, he thought he was ordering cherry tomatoes!

Heinrich knows how to apply the basic principles of menu composition to achieve the desired effect for diners. When it comes to native flavours a single ingredient can be a turning point in the evolution of a cuisine.

As he says: "You have to experiment with Australian native ingredients first as they can be powerful and you need to know the right ingredients to partner them with."

Sydney is gaining a lot of fabulous restaurants within the CBD. But by venturing by cab an extra ten minutes to the beaches you can try the six-course Outback Degustation (although it's only served on Wednesday nights).

Heinrich's food doesn't lie. If you're a visiting chef of epicurean tastes wanting to experience more of the classic Australian dining market with a twist, then make a date at this beachside hideaway soon. You'll be enjoying your experience in a sophisticated yet comfortable setting with crisp white linen and glowing candles and likely come away convinced that this Bistro reigns as the suburb's gastronomic king.

Thanks to the great staff who left us with the feeling that we had received an exceptional level of personal service, and especially to Debra who was always striving to exceed customer expectations.



Mel Nathan



Jonathan Porter

Last year when Food Companion International ran a competition to entice chefs to come up with a new name for kangaroo meat, not only did it get you all guessing, but a chef here got his entry into the final list. Around that time we were told that Chef Heinrich had a special talent with kangaroo meat. He'd picked up a new style of presenting ingredients from the raw to the cooked stage while working as sous chef alongside Executive Chef, Brooke Vosika in 57 Restaurant at the famed Four Seasons Hotel in Manhattan. We naturally wanted to hear more on the subject.

Chef Vosika started the Evolution concept back in 2003 when the PR agency for the Four Seasons asked the chef to create a culinary concept that no one else in New York was doing. "Evolution is really three inventive preparations of the same ingredient starting with the simple preparation and working up to a more complex presentation," Vosika says. "It is created by the same chef and presented in smaller portions that will not fill you but indulge your creative taste buds. I am currently working on a cookbook with three sets of Evolution recipes – one for the beginning cook, one for the enthused and one for the avid adventurous cook."

OUTBACK DEGUSTATION MENU

Six courses

North Queensland crocodile carpaccio with lemon myrtle oil, caperberries and bush tomato confit
04 Jansz Tasmania Premium NV Cuvee

Sautéed Murray River Yabbies with lemon aspen and sugarbag butter served on a seaweed salad
04 Pewsey Vale Riesling, Eden Valley, South Australia

Paperbark marinated barramundi with grilled witlof and forest lime gremolata
04 Madfish Chardonnay, Western Australia

Char grilled Emu with goat's cheese gnocchi and an Illawarra plum sauce
04 Kooyong Massale Pinot Noir, Mornington Peninsula

Wild thyme infused olive oil poached Kangaroo with roast yam mash, and an Alpine pepper jus
03 Smith & Hooper Cabernet Merlot, Wrattobully, South Australia

Wattleseed crème brulee. Wild lime panna cotta with native berries. Macadamia biscotti.
04 Yalumba Hand Picked Botrytis Viognier, Eden Valley, South Australia

"Cooking with Australian native ingredients with my New York experience makes me happy."

– Thomas Heinrich

Chef notes By Brooke Vosika
Currently Executive Chef of Four Seasons Hotel, New York.

Thomas (Heinrich) is a talented culinarian with a great passion for succeeding. He worked through some creative times in New York City and always kept a step above the competition. Thomas and I worked with some chef greats like Alain Ducasse, Thomas Keller, Joel Robuchon and Jean George. We often cooked together for fund raisers and charity. Thomas stood out because of his culinary spirit, drive and dedication. As we all know, cooking comes from the heart first and hands second and Thomas has always exemplified this direction and it's great to hear that he is forging the same paths in his native country.

Oh and about the kangaroo, how about 'Hoppin Roo' as in BBQ Hoppin Roo with a sweet corn salad and rosemary potatoes!