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good food
GUIDE **2017**

EDITED BY CALLAN BOYS



The team

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Callan Boys joined Fairfax Media as the National Food and Drink Writer in 2014 after contributing many eating-related articles to *The Age* and *The Sydney Morning Herald*, and holding a position on the *Good Food Guide* reviewer panel. His love of food stems from a young age, making cakes with his grandmother and growing up on a steady diet of Margaret Fulton's and Peter Russell-Clarke's recipes. He is now very proud to call Brisbane home.

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Cover photo Michelle Smith

5th edition published by Fairfax Media

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1 Darling Island Road, Pyrmont NSW 2009

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Printed by Fairfax Media Print & Distribution North Richmond and Beaudesert, 159 Bells Line of Road, North Richmond NSW 2754 and 12 Short Street, Beaudesert QLD 4285

ISBN 978-1- 921486-92- 0

Contact sales@goodfood.com.au for any advertising or sponsorship inquiries.

Thank you Our gratitude to Vittoria Coffee and Citi, whose generous support has ensured that the *Brisbane Times Good Food Guide* continues to be considered an authoritative, independent and well-respected guide.



Brisbane

Getty Images

85 Miskin St



Alchemy



1889 Enoteca

WOOLLOONGABBA
12 Logan Road
07 3392 4315

 **GOOD WINE LIST**

ITALIAN **15.5/20**

A charming operator with timeless elegance, generosity and a good Italian heart

A fine list of naturally made wine from The Boot is the lure for many to this vintage brick landmark at the cool end of Logan Road, but modern Roman cooking, the kind only time, knowledge and quality ingredients can produce, is equally responsible for carving Enoteca's reputation. Pristine peach slices with cool and creamy mozzarella, cheerful basil leaves and crisp endive make a lovely light entree before the serious end of the menu. That might include a wonderfully complex braised beef and pork ragu, with savoury notes offset by a hint of orange generously spooned over silky pappardelle. Fork-tender lamb served with impossibly smooth polenta is similarly generous, accompanied by a punchy red wine vinegar sauce. This is a place for all occasions from family celebrations in the beautiful wine cellar to a quick spaghetti cacio e pepe for one at the marble bar. Finishing with Averna or Maraolo is a grand idea – nothing like a grappa near the Gabba.

Pro tip Aperitivo is a glam way to welcome the weekend, every Friday from 4.30 to 6pm

Open L Tue-Fri & Sun; D Tue-Sat

Price \$\$\$

Cards AE MC V eftpos

Chef Matthew Stubbing

Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, private dining, wheelchair access

www.1889enoteca.com.au

85 Miskin St

TOOWONG
85 Miskin Street
07 3371 4558

 **GOOD WINE LIST**

CONTEMPORARY **14.5/20**

Stumble upon fine dining in the suburbs

In the valley of an unassuming Toowong street sits this little cottage with a big reputation. The menu is uncomplicated yet inventive, letting the star of each dish shine – like blushing lamb belly or the humble potato, taken to the next level with a sprinkle of salty bottarga. Mushroom paired with delicate blue cheese, candied walnut and pear is an unbeatable introduction to Miskin Street dining and a main of confit duck in a parcel of crisp skin slightly pales in comparison. Gone is the pomp and ceremony that once took place within the Queenslander's walls; the crisp white tablecloths tossed aside to reveal a pared-back space fit for special occasions, long lunches and laid-back breakfasts. While food and wine menus are somewhat restrained, servings are generous and extra layers of sophistication can be added by opting for a degustation. To cap things off, gracious waitstaff will likely guide you towards honeyed, aerated lemon curd – a dessert sure to please the very sweet of tooth.

Pro tip There's a breakfast degustation on weekends

Open B Sat-Sun; L Wed-Sat; D Tue-Sat

Price \$\$\$

Cards DC AE MC V eftpos

Chef Brent Farrell

Features Accepts bookings, BYO, licensed, degustation, private dining

www.85miskinst.com.au

Alchemy

BRISBANE
175 Eagle Street
07 3229 3175

 **GOOD WINE LIST**

CONTEMPORARY **15/20**

A theatrical dining experience in a spectacular riverside setting

With large bay windows opening onto views of the Story Bridge and Kangaroo Point, Alchemy's location sets the scene for a full bells-and-whistles dining experience. The interior finishes are tastefully modern, if a little unmemorable, but the al fresco terrace (providing a very pleasant plenary option, weather permitting) more than makes up for it. The culinary focus distills a familiar modern Australian feel and is strong on fresh seafood, beef and lamb from some of the country's best suppliers, as well as a notable Italian influence. Hervey Bay scallops with caramelised orange, radicchio butter and a dish of Grimaud duck breast, served with earthy sweet cappuccino foam, both traverse the innovation tightrope without becoming overwrought. The desserts are the biggest performers. A gorgeous cherry soufflé in a copper pot, an explosively chocolate marquise and the "liquid nitrogen demonstration" (flash freezing of various sweet things before your eyes) all make sense of the restaurant's name.

Pro tip Seasonal degustation menus are available in vegetarian, vegan, pescatarian and omnivorous options

Open L Mon-Fri; D Mon-Sat

Price \$\$\$

Cards DC AE MC V eftpos

Chef Brad Jolly

Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, degustation, wheelchair access

www.alchemyrestaurant.com.au



Buccì

Buccì

FORTITUDE VALLEY
Shops 11–12, 15 James Street
07 3252 7848

GOOD WINE LIST

ITALIAN **14/20**

A buzzing Italian eatery in the heart of the James Street glamour strip

Buccì appears quite comfortable in its role as the place to sit and be seen in this trendy James Street precinct. Service is relaxed and casual (occasionally to the point of inattentive), but the space buzzes with the energy from the groups within and the passers-by. The menu draws inspiration from the breadth of Italy, with executive chef Shaun Malone gifting classic dishes his own contemporary flourish and using local ingredients where possible. Diaphanous slivers of wagyu come dressed with olive oil, warm truffled pecorino, herbs and lemon while polpettine di patate offers deftly fried potato balls, seasoned by the saltiness of smashed green olives. Gnocchi is presented with crisp pork cheeks lending a pleasing texture to the perfectly smooth pillows, while duck breast is served saltimbocca, wrapped in smoked pancetta and sage. Desserts are a stand out, particularly the delightful blending of pumpkin spiced with ginger-nut crumble and served with vanilla and macadamia ice-cream.

Pro tip If you get tired of people watching, you can always watch the chefs work from the kitchen-facing table

Open L-D Daily
Price \$\$
Cards MC V eftpos
Chef Shaun Malone
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, wheelchair access
www.buccijamesstreet.com.au

The Catbird Seat Bistro

EAST BRISBANE
Shop 2, 888 Stanley Street East
07 3392 2645

CONTEMPORARY **14/20**

An intimate bistro melding the foundations of French cooking with quality Australian ingredients

According to the James Thurber short story for which it's named, to "sit in the catbird seat" is to sit pretty. Enconced within this compact, charming bistro, one appreciates the sentiment. A wooden nook houses cookery books and pickling jars sitting on a crisp white wall, and a high ceiling suspends handsome art deco lamps. The provincial-striped awnings and quaint bistro feel ground the diner in France, and there's plenty of supporting argument in the inclusion of foie gras, profiteroles and Glasshouse Mountain snails. However, the menu marches in larger arcs, with the dysphemistic "bits from a pig's head" annexing Nordic pickling through shards of preserved rhubarb riffing against the assorted porcine anatomy (tongue and crisp flakes of ear, for example) on a bed of forest mushrooms. Dishes are artfully presented on expanses of porcelain, delicately portioned and flavoured, like rare-cooked duck breast with baked persimmon, against a painterly flourish of rich onion gravy.

Pro tip Walk-ins are possible on weekdays, but book by mid-week to ensure a weekend table

Open L Tue-Fri; D Tue-Sat
Price \$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef James Guldberg
Features Accepts bookings, licensed, wheelchair access
www.catbirdseatbistro.com.au

Cha Cha Char

BRISBANE
Eagle Street Pier, 1 Eagle Street
07 3211 9944

GOOD WINE LIST

STEAKHOUSE **14/20**

Riverside dining where the steaks mean business

Choosing a steak here isn't simple. The riverside restaurant's wood-fired grill offers 10 different cuts of quality pasture and grain-fed beef with different accoutrements all vying for attention. Each steak has its own resume and the 500-gram grass-fed, 70-day grain-finished black angus rib-eye aged 18–24 months from Tasmania (did you get all that?) is a fine choice. Rubbed in a Montreal spice mix, this forms a wonderful crust over the large juicy cut. Two accompanying jamon croquettes prove excellent sponges for mopping up jus. Off the a la carte menu, a main of paperbark-smoked duck breast is a succulent piece of bird, working harmoniously with sweet caramelised peach segments and pomegranate jus. Include an entree of thinly sliced wagyu wrapped asparagus with a ginger and soy dressing to complete a round-the-world flavour trip. Cha Cha Char's menu weaves its way between Asian and European cuisine. It's a shame the dining room itself is a little bland, although this may explain its continued popularity as a clean slate for business lunches.

Pro tip The kitchen is open until 11pm every night

Open L Mon-Fri; D Daily
Price \$\$\$
Cards DC AE MC V eftpos
Chef Richard Brown
Features Accepts bookings, licensed
www.chachachar.com.au

Chow House

FORTITUDE VALLEY
Shop 4, 39 James Street
07 3852 5155

MODERN ASIAN **14/20**

Perfect for a casual bite before or after a visit to the neighbouring cinema

Given the portion sizes at this casual eatery, military slang term "chow" is an apt name. Certainly big enough to feed an army, dishes impress with their quality of ingredients. The menu is swayed to modern interpretations of Asian street food, such as the deservedly popular Peking duck with shallot pancakes, and the mini pork banh xeo filled with crunchy pork belly. Other dishes span the globe, with Middle Eastern flavours defining the juicy pasanda-spiced baby chicken with beetroot, yoghurt, pomegranate and hazelnuts. There's a further fowl adventure with a massaman curry chockers with large, meaty portions of confit duck. Dishes are designed to be shared, and by the time dessert comes around, sharing a single dish is all that two can manage. Layers of raspberry jelly and dainty slices of lime add subtle tang to the coconut and white chocolate panna cotta, the perfect conclusion to an al fresco meal on a summer evening.

Pro tip An old-fashioned cocktail at the bar is a civilised way to kill 10 minutes before your picture show starts next door

Open B L Daily; D Tue-Sat
Price \$\$
Cards DC AE MC V eftpos
Chef Timmy Kemp
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed
www.chowhouse.com.au



Cinco Bistro

Cinco Bistro

CAMP HILL
589 Old Cleveland Road
07 3843 6666

GOOD WINE LIST

CONTEMPORARY **14/20**

Bustling and vibrant neighbourhood local

This quintessential bistro is high on the radar for those wanting to escape the city and still experience some daring dining. Peter Stubbs helms a full and noisy dining room that attests to Cinco's continued wide appeal. The menu reflects current influences of Italy, the Middle East and Asia, and traverses them adventurously. Stubbs cherry picks flavours others might shy from, like a full flavoured salt-and-pepper quail atop green papaya salad with chilli tamarind sauce. Less successful is the risotto of king prawns with its basil and chilli outgunned by saffron. Spatchcock roulade is an inspired centrepiece, artfully combined with apricot, date, tabbouleh and beets, and anchored by saffron yoghurt. It's clever and delicious stuff. Desserts twist the familiar and the airy almond mousse works well with shards of mango 'glass', peach and a fresh mango sorbet, but an oversweet peach and plum soup lets it down. The staff are professional and dedicated, although you might have to pour your own wine when things are busy.

Pro tip It's BYO from Tuesday to Thursday

Open L Thu-Fri; D Tue-Sat
Price \$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef Daryn Bonhomme
Features Accepts bookings, bar, BYO, licensed, wheelchair access
www.cincobistro.com

Citron

WILSTON
3 Macgregor Street
07 3856 0066

MODERN ASIAN **14.5/20**

A local hero keeping the mix fresh after more than a decade

There will always be long-time favourites in a neighbourhood restaurant like Citron, here at Wilston for 11 years now. Longevity, however, doesn't come to those who keep the same dishes on a menu year-in-year-out and Citron manages to surprise and delight with bright combinations to coax diners beyond the loved starter of betel leaves with prawns, shaved fresh coconut, chilli and coriander. Pork hock brings the classic sweet-and-sour concept into a new era, the pulled meat compressed into a cube and fried to golden with a charred chilli relish, sweet spark of pineapple and subtly sour broth. Thai basil offsets a vegetarian dry red curry of fried eggplant, banana chilli, mustard greens and shredded ginger while an aerated rice pudding is a heavenly cloud of kaffir lime jelly, fresh mango and toasted coconut. Slightly dated decor is forgiven in light of the welcoming service and thoughtful menu.

Pro tip Tiger prawn laksa and a spicy congee warm body and soul in winter

Open L Tue-Sun; D Tue-Sat
Price \$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef Mark Newman
Features Accepts bookings, licensed, wheelchair access
www.citronrestaurant.com.au



Gaslight Bistro

NEW FARM

726 Brunswick Street
07 3254 1130

CONTEMPORARY **14/20**

A converted Queenslander home offering plenty of charm and a contemporary Australian menu

Casually contained in a handsome worker's cottage overlooking the neon sign of New Farm Cinemas opposite, this bar and bistro is more charming conversational piece than blockbuster or polarising arthouse offering. Edison bulbs aside, there are no hallmarks of a new-style eatery. Service is warm without pandering (diners invited to place orders at the bar) and the breezy veranda with characteristic carved brackets will take any former children of Queenslander homes back to memories of dinner on the deck. The menu is similarly refined but accessible. Bar snacks abound, such as the crisp parmesan clouds with zesty tomato dipping sauce and truffled kipfler potatoes, their leathery hides sweetly tanned with rooftop-harvested honey. The mains menu offers fare big enough to share, like tender-braised sticky ribs served on a bed of sweet potato mash, a vaguely Asian sesame and peanut dressing delicately infusing crisp apple and celery slaw.

Pro tip Lucky 4005 locals get 10 per cent off the bill

Open L Sat-Sun; D Wed-Sun

Price \$\$

Cards AE MC V eftpos

Chef Graeme McKinnon

Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, outdoor seating private dining

www.gaslightbistro.com

VITTORIA COFFEE RESTAURANT OF THE YEAR

Gauge

SOUTH BRISBANE

77 Grey Street
No phone

GOOD WINE LIST

CONTEMPORARY **15.5/20**

A small, casual cafe and restaurant hiding some of the most innovative cuisine in the country

It doesn't really look the part – not much more than a glammed-up coffee-shop with whiffs of bespoke Scandinavian diner. Behind the nonchalant facade of Jerome Batten's Sourced Grocer follow-up, though, is a kitchen underpinned by a spooky understanding of technique and texture. Breakfast, lunch and dinner menus are intertwined and burnt garlic bread makes all three. It's hardly a piece of overdone toast either. Think bitter chocolate muffin meeting a slice of burnt-garlic-infused sourdough, sided with caramel butter and a sprinkle of vanilla dust. Neither sweet or savoury, neither breakfast or dessert. Blood tacos are brilliant, bursting with bone marrow, native thyme and mushroom duxelles, while house-made cavatelli pasta, fat like witchetty grub, mixes with smoked celeriac and apple. Plates are predominantly small and mostly shareable – roast chicken with raw spinach shiitake, and kombu sabayon might be as hefty as things get. With switched-on service and a savvy range of left-field wines riding shotgun, Gauge sets the level for modern dining.

Pro tip There's a well-priced, six-course degustation if you have the time

Open B L Daily; D Thu-Sun

Price \$\$

Cards AE MC V eftpos

Chefs Cormac Bradfield, Phil Marchant

Features Licensed, degustation, outdoor seating

CITI CHEF OF THE YEAR

Gerard's Bistro

FORTITUDE VALLEY

Shop 14, 15 James Street
07 3852 3822

GOOD WINE LIST

CONTEMPORARY **16/20**

Culinary globetrotting meets botanical intrigue in a glam laneway

Adventurous pairings that hark back to the familiar yet catapult us into southern Europe, the Middle East and northern Africa is the magic evoked in these designer digs. Oysters arrive on a plate of pebbles and the sea theme continues in a samke nayyeh (raw fish) dish with high notes from chamomile oil and fresh grapefruit, the kingfish mingling with green almonds and the unmistakable lilt of walnut milk. Turnips land us back to earth, pickled and roasted for contrast, with Iranian pistachios, marjoram emulsion, coconut cream, and tiny violas that bring memories of grandma's garden. Blackmore wagyu is charred, sliced and ready to share and the signature roasted whole eggplant has been marinated with turmeric and mint, roasted whole, smoked and put with slowly roasted onions made chewy at the darkest point of caramelisation. Ben Williamson's cooking has never been more focused and any old wrinkles in service have been ironed out. Gerard's fire is burning bright.

Pro tip Sip a pre-dinner negroni and house charcuterie at Gerard's Bar out the back

Open B Sat-Sun; L D Tues-Sun

Price \$\$

Cards AE MC V eftpos

Chef Ben Williamson

Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, outdoor seating, wheelchair access

www.gerardsbistro.com.au



Jamie's Italian

BRISBANE
237 Edward Street
07 3144 3000

ITALIAN 14/20

A relaxed setting and menu perfect for the whole family

Whether it's because it's no longer the new kid on the block, or because of a change in policy that now allows phone bookings, the queue at this offshoot of Jamie's worldwide behemoth rarely extends out the door these days. A very good thing for those who don't like to wait (that is, everyone). Located over two floors in the historic Rowes Arcade, it pays to try for the less claustrophobic upstairs section if you can. Despite the crowded tables, the service is upbeat and cheerful, and there's a genuine feeling of stepping into an Italian deli as guests walk past a mighty pasta machine towards a bar strung with salumi. In this dark and moody yet casual setting, an array of deftly prepared dishes await, many of them old favourites, such as the piping hot arancini, and others with a more contemporary twist like bruschetta topped with crab and avocado. Porchetta stuffed with garlic, chilli and herbs is exactly what you want for Sunday lunch and orange blossom polenta cake is precisely what you want to follow it.

Pro tip Children are well catered for with high chairs, colouring sheets and crayons

Open L D Daily
Price \$\$
Cards DC AE MC V eftpos
Chef Joey Goldman
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, wheelchair access
www.jamieoliver.com/italian/australia/restaurants/brisbane

Jellyfish

BRISBANE
Boardwalk Level, 123 Eagle Street
07 3220 2202

SEAFOOD 14.5/20

Fresh seafood with doors thrown open to the riverside promenade on balmy nights

When a fillet of fish costs \$32 to \$42 and comes with only a small bowl of sauce and a lemon wedge, you know you'll be giving the credit card a beating. Jellyfish is aimed at devout seafood lovers happy to pay premium market price for premium fish. Service is attentive and you can see the care that has gone into the menu, with eight to 14 species of fish available each day, cooked to perfection. You'll want a couple of sides to ride shotgun and it's best to keep things simple with lemon and thyme Dutch cream potatoes or chilled green beans with almonds. An entree of two tiger prawns halved atop a tian of avocado with crab remoulade and Yarra Valley salmon roe costs \$40, yes, but the freshness and quality of the produce warrants the price tag. Non-seafood alternatives include wagyu brisket cooked in coffee and ginger, and duck breast with parsnip puree. Kick back over a dessert of roast strawberry ice-cream with wisps of white chocolate and strawberry jelly.

Pro tip Tasting platters are available if it's too hard to decide on which dishes to order

Open L Mon-Fri; D Daily
Price \$\$\$
Cards DC AE MC V eftpos
Chef Heath Weber
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, wheelchair access
www.jellyfishrestaurant.com.au

Julius Pizzeria

SOUTH BRISBANE
77 Grey Street
07 3844 2655

ITALIAN 14/20

A sleek industrial space for unpretentious modern Italian

Fast, fresh, modern and right near QPAC, the theatre unfolding within Julius is comparable to onstage at the Playhouse. Chefs toss house-made pasta and rocket salads to their audience from a raised open kitchen, behind them a custom-built oven from Naples roars. In the adjacent room of the industrial chic 1920s building, rows of Aperol gleam above the bar. The sounds of clinking glassware, grinding coffee beans and patron chatter spills into Fish Lane, adding to the atmosphere of the open restaurant. The star-of-the-show is tender black Angus rump with enough potato puree to mop up a rich red wine jus (it delightfully sits at the \$30 mark too). Supporting the bill, salty shoestring zucchini fries cut through the zest of grilled king prawns with a caper dressing, while a soft smoked burrata lightens polenta and rich mushroom ragu. While the menu has stepped away from older sibling Beccofino, favourites remain – pizza with perfectly charred crust, pappardelle duck ragu – but save your applause for the Nutella-stuffed fried ricotta dumplings.

Pro tip Last bookings are taken for 5.45pm

Open L D Tue-Sun
Price \$\$
Cards DC AE MC V eftpos
Chef Joey Goldman
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, wheelchair access
www.jamieoliver.com/italian/australia/restaurants/brisbane



The Lab Restaurant & Bar

BRISBANE
130 William Street
07 3306 8647

CONTEMPORARY 14/20

A refreshed heritage bistro keeping it classic

The white table clothes are gone, there's new flooring and the large-scale blue artworks have disappeared. The dining room's picture rails now hang artistic black and white photographs of the Treasury buildings, but, at the centre of it all, the heritage-listed building's original grand wooden bar still owns the space. Light piano tunes tinkle the background like nothing's changed in this old world parlour with a subtle fresh edge. With chef Anita Green at the helm, the dishes also seem more refined. To start, an entree of rich twice-cooked pork belly arrives, balanced by sweet apple puree and shallot onions. The main sized duck is overpowered by citrus flavours, but the dish of tender veal is beautifully balanced by a mushroom puree and tart vincotto onions. Serving sizes are petite and you'll want to order sides. Gingerbread cake arrives in three little knolls – happily soaked with maple sauce and reminiscent of sticky date pudding. Chocolate truffles and raspberry sorbet accompany it, although we can't help but think vanilla ice-cream might be better suited.

Pro tip Drop in for high tea on weekend afternoons

Open B Daily; D Mon-Sat
Price \$\$
Cards DC AE MC V eftpos
Chef Anita Green
Features Accepts bookings, licensed
www.treasurybrisbane.com.au/restaurants/lab-restaurant-bar



Les Bubbles

FORTITUDE VALLEY
144 Wickham Street
07 3251 6500

STEAKHOUSE 14/20

Superb steak and bottomless chips served with cheeky flair in a former bath house

Fortitude Valley hospitality luminary Damien Griffiths' latest win is this reimagining of the infamous Bubbles bath house. A former brothel and underground casino at the centre of Fitzgerald-era vice, Bubbles gives a wink to the locale's ignominious origins while managing to slap and tickle the taste buds. Waitresses in (relatively tasteful) French maid aprons flit efficaciously from red cushioned booths to black tiled bar, ferrying loads of signature "bottomless frites", under the watchful eyes of '80s icons in framed photographs and a trio of oil portraits depicting Griffiths himself flanked by disgraced Police Commissioner Terry Lewis and "Minister for Everything" Russ Hinze. Let's not forget the menu, which is easily recalled by virtue of brevity – essentially the only savoury option is steak with green peppercorn and cognac sauce or bearnaise, preceded by a simple salad (although there are rotating specials for vegetarian/pescatarian diners). Just like the establishment's former employees, you'll find the star attraction generously portioned.

Pro tip Park in the nearby Chinatown Secure car park after 5pm and have your ticket validated for free

Open L Wed-Sun; D Daily
Price \$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef Norman Harvey
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, wheelchair access
www.lesbubbles.com.au

Libertine

BRISBANE
Shop 5, 61 Petrie Terrace
07 3367 3353

VIETNAMESE 14/20

First date with Miss Saigon

To live libertine is to surrender to life's more decadent moments. Housed in the historic Paddington Barracks, Libertine is divided between a black-on-red room dressed to the nines with antique chandeliers and flocked wallpaper, and a lantern-lit courtyard, which pales in comparison to the opulent interior. Pleasingly, the French-colonial Vietnam guise does not start and end with decor. 'Street food' sees hawker-style classics given an upmarket restyle, like a crunchy, sweet barbecue duck crepe, or eight-spiced Hanoi popcorn chicken. Libertine's moniker rings true when it comes to hedonistic-sized shared plates. Just a hint of parmesan is enough to keep your chopsticks clicking between a generous bowl of crispy baby squid and sriracha-ginger mayo. There's no need to fight over the pork belly crackling, but a side of green papaya salad or wok-seared greens is advised to restore balance to the plate. Next-level fusion comes into play with an apple cinnamon spring roll, though saving room for the dessert platter should be a priority for serious sweet fiends.

Pro tip Date night? Ask to be seated in the little alcove for two

Open L Wed-Sun; D Daily
Price \$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef Suwisa Phoosang
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, outdoor seating, wheelchair access
www.libertine.net.au



Montrachet

Montrachet

PADDINGTON
224 Given Terrace
07 3367 0030

GOOD WINE LIST

FRENCH **15/20**

A little Left Bank in the suburbs

The uninitiated should expect elbow-room only once burrowed into one of the soft red leather banquettes that frame paper-covered tables. A seat at the comptoir allows for more breathing space – but half the fun of Montrachet is in the theatrics of floor staff manoeuvring tables and diners in and out throughout service. The other half, of course, is in the eating – produce-driven cuisine, delicate plating, clean, uncomplicated flavours. Old favourites like steak frites, cheesy soufflé, and garlicky buttery snails still favour the Gallic bent menu (regulars would not should they be removed), while the addition of a few modern slants entice a new generation of diners without alienating any purist Francophile. Find fall-apart pork cheek resting on lardon-studded potato galette, a verdant vinegar-based sauce the perfect foil against the rich flesh; or confit of duck, perhaps, beautifully seasoned and resting on speck rendered to melting point, prettied up by onion curves, and a confetti of lentils.

Pro tip Shannon cuts loose on Friday nights, with a five-course degustation for just \$99

Open Open L D Mon-Fri
Price \$\$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef Shannon Kellam
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, degustation
www.montrachet.com.au



Nantucket Kitchen + Bar

Moo Moo Brisbane

BRISBANE
The Port Office, Stamford Plaza,
39 Edward Street
07 3236 4500

GOOD WINE LIST

STEAKHOUSE **14.5/20**

With a restrained elegance and a clubby feel, the mood is set for diehard steak lovers

In one of Brisbane's most beautiful old buildings, Moo Moo is a carnivore's delight, with an astonishing selection of grass-fed, grain-fed, organic and dry-aged beef in portion sizes of your choosing. You'll pay handsomely for the privilege, with prices from \$42 to \$86 earning you nothing more than a dollop of mustard with your beautifully cooked steak, served on a love-it-or-hate-it wooden board. Even the sauces (eight to choose from) will set you back a fistful of loose change. Particularly enjoyable from the selection of main courses is crisp-skinned duck with blackened pears, smoked bacon, raisins and goat's cheese, and seafood entrees such as prawns with fennel confit and romesco sauce. Chocolate lovers will be in heaven, with a special selection of five chocolate desserts, including a stunning pineapple, coconut and chocolate delice with pineapple ganache and macarons.

Pro tip Some of the tables are very close to each other – ask for one of the booth-style tables or, better still, a private space

Open L Mon-Sat; D Daily
Price \$\$\$
Cards DC AE MC V eftpos
Chef Trent Robson
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed
www.moomoorestaurant.com

Nantucket Kitchen & Bar

INDOOROOPILLY
Shop MM5, Indooroopilly Shopping
Centre, Station Road
07 3878 9697

CONTEMPORARY **14/20**

Relax in this luxe American dining room that has a focus on seafood

A rich New England clam chowder is comfort food epitomised. Salty bacon cuts through cream, the only thing missing is oyster crackers and sea air – but this is as close as the US east coast gets to Brisbane. A shift of focus to seafood has seen Nantucket drift nearer the shore of its namesake island. Plump crumbed prawns arrive piping hot with a rustic tartare. It's the same story for the generous serving (five half shells) of Moreton Bay bugs, sizzling from the charcoal oven-dripping garlic butter over rice. The 18-hour slow-braised beef ribs fall from the bones, a tart slaw balances the sweet barbecue sauce well. Servings are large – add a side and any main could feed two. White walls, marble tables, dark-wood chairs and green palm fabrics deliver sophistication belying Nantucket's shopping centre location. The spiced pumpkin French-style parfait underwhelms, but perhaps the cherry pie or chocolate and whisky tart will satisfy as a final taste of the States. Be warned, on quiet days the kitchen can shut by 8pm.

Pro tip Head in for breakfast Friday to Sunday

Open B Fri-Sun; L D Tue-Sun
Price \$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef Christopher Sell
Features Accepts bookings, licensed, wheelchair access
www.nantucket.com.au

Nickel Kitchen & Bar

FORTITUDE VALLEY
Ground floor, 757 Ann Street
07 3252 5100

GOOD WINE LIST

CONTEMPORARY **15/20**

Start spreading the news – this is retro New York-style dining that's a whole lot of fun

Now here's a nifty way to experience the Big Apple without booking a return ticket to JFK. Pull up a seat at the square jawed, dark timber bar of TJ and Kim Peabody's third venue (see also Nantucket Kitchen & Bar) and set yourself up with a brunch of waffles, boudin blanc and a textbook Bloody Mary. It's such a plush and handsome room, you might as well stick around for a tossed-at-the-table, right proper caesar salad and pudgy, buttery oysters Rockefeller. Another Manhattan please, Lloyd. Dinner sees a roulade riff on chicken Kiev teamed with heirloom root vegetables roasted soft and sticky or maybe a no-funny-business eye fillet of Great Southern grass-fed beef. It tastes of prehistoric prairies and a hardworking grill, engineered to match Nickel's red wine wallpapers and booths that turn long lunches into longer nights. This is big, fun, Cadillac-with-the-top-down dining (you can even surf your steak with lobster for an extra \$17) and there's nothing else like it in town.

Pro tip Bombe Alaska but don't blame Canada – celebrate it with veal jus-covered poutine and a Bloody Caesar.

Open B Sat-Sun; L D Wed-Sun
Price \$\$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef Christopher Sell
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, degustation, wheelchair access
www.nickelkitchenbar.com.au



Nickel Kitchen & Bar

BEST NEW RESTAURANT

Otto Ristorante

BRISBANE
Level 4, 480 Queen Street
07 3835 2888

GOOD WINE LIST

ITALIAN **15.5/20**

A glamorous, seamless, and highly professional experience ideal for long lunches and romantic dinners

The Sydney-based Fink Group (Quay, Bennelong) has ventured into Queensland and good golly the family business has delivered. You have Story Bridge views, finely tuned service, and a dining room bursting with blue, white and yellow (love the woven fans in endless piroquette). The open kitchen pumps out southern Italian-style deliciousness with no shortage of seafood. The oiliness of butterflied sardines is played against the sweetness of muscatels, fennel, pine-nuts and brioche crumb, and pippies in white wine couldn't be fatter and happier than with their 'nduja, garlic, white bean and basil plate-mates. Tajima wagyu short rib with pickled carrots seems engineered for the corporate lunch crowd (especially when paired a with lean Piedmont red), while a taste-of-grill Rangers Valley bisteccina topped with roasted tomatoes is perfect for sharing between couples. A window seat is the hottest date spot in town, but you can always grab a spot at the bar, a glass of rosé, a bowl of gnocchi with braised rabbit and be just as happy dining solo.

Pro tip Arrive early for sunset aperitivi at the atrium bar

Open L Mon-Fri; D Mon-Sat
Price \$\$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef Will Cowper
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, degustation, outdoor seating, private dining
www.ottoristorante.com.au/brisbane

Pearl Cafe

WOOLLOONGABBA
28 Logan Road
07 3392 3300

CONTEMPORARY **14/20**

A cafe that has evolved past the moniker

Handsome exposed brick, polished wood and dapper Art Deco logotype stencilled on glass set the tone for the kind of contemporary that hits the mark. It's unpretentious but impressive, prioritising basic materials over their processing through an emphasis on seasonal ingredients, organic produce and ethically raised meats (all treated with equal respect in the kitchen). Antiquing tourists and business types who pass by during the day could mistake it for just another cafe – they serve breakfast, lunch and coffee daily with distinction – yet the culinary nacre gleams well into the night. Locally sourced seafood complements the maritime theme, with a well-cast company of oysters, Kinkawooka mussels, plus the current crop of line-caught fish. It's not just molluscs et al: charcuterie is stabled for all the menu's seasons, oft mustered alongside grass-fed New England beef, dry aged for added flavour and tenderness. Wholesome touches like jacket potatoes and fresh-baked "sweeties" give a congenial glow (helped by familial service and excellent wine).

Pro tip Upstairs supper bar The Servery metes out drinks and charcuterie Thursday through Saturday nights

Open L Daily; D Tue-Sat
Price \$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef Eileen Horsnell
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, private dining, wheelchair access



Pony Dining

BRISBANE
Upper level, 45 Eagle Street
07 3181 3400

CONTEMPORARY 14/20

Day-to-night dining with enviable Story Bridge views

The constant turnover of tables and a cavernous too-cool vibe may mean it lacks some finesse, but Pony always puts in effort where it counts: on the plate. Burrata challenges traditional notions of sweet after savoury, but one pry into the creamy bubble of mozzarella and you'll happily throw out the rule book. Springy curls of scored squid with smoky undertones are an equally impressive first act, potentially rivalling the main event. Prime cuts of meat blackened over an Argentinian wood-fire grill is Pony's wheelhouse, and obliging staff are never far if you get stuck on the right complements for your wagyu, or would rather leave its "doneness" to the experts. While meat-eaters have a wide spectrum of flame-licked dishes to choose from, the non-carnivorous are left with soft gnocchi casually dressed with broadbeans and asparagus, or a selection of more exciting small plates. To finish, warm lemon ricotta cake dripping with golden honeycomb and tangy creme fraiche sorbet invites a quick-draw battle of who gets the last forkful.

Pro tip Avoid your dinner reservation clashing with the cocktail crowd, unless you're up for a party too

Open L-D Daily
Price \$\$\$
Cards DC AE MC V eftpos
Chef Chris Mann
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, outdoor seating
www.ponydiningbrisbane.com

Prive 249

BRISBANE
Sofitel Brisbane, 249 Turbot Street
07 3835 3535



FRENCH 14/20

Elegant candle-lit setting with a grand view

Chandeliers, candles and a close-up view of the historic Grand Central clock lend elegant style to Prive 249, as does a menu mixing French and modern Australian. Entrees might include goat's milk curd with roasted beetroot or pork belly with eggplant, dates and sherry caramel. Best is a dish of delicate sweet marron teamed with fine ribbons of roasted Jerusalem artichoke. Milk-fed veal loin is plated with leek and black cabbage and at the sweet end of proceedings a warm chocolate dessert with vanilla bean ice-cream is pleasant if a little predictable. Service is friendly but at times comes across as inexperienced (a waitperson arriving with the drinks list and disappearing for 20 minutes, say). Nevertheless, Prive 249 sets a striking ambience appealing to those seeking a special destination for romance or celebrations. The kind of celebrations that start with champagne and finish with petit fours and a life-affirming digestif many hours later.

Pro tip Feeling peckish? Go for the "experience magnifique" - your choice of two entrees, a main and dessert for \$99

Open D Tue-Sat
Price \$\$\$
Cards DC AE MC V eftpos
Chef James Gallagher
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, degustation, wheelchair access
www.sofitelbrisbane.com.au/prive

Public

BRISBANE
400 George Street
07 3210 2288



GOOD WINE LIST

CONTEMPORARY 15.5/20

Quality foundations and appropriate playfulness

Connected to a bustling city corner via a dedicated escalator, this chic modern eatery has forged a solid reputation for sophisticated share-plate riffs that add finesse to fast-food favourites, as well as utilising unique ingredients and techniques. The amalgamation of quality ingredients and curiosity in the culinary focus mirrors in the decor. Raw hardwood, ceramic tiles and polished concrete foundations are overlaid with eclectic curios like taxidermied birds, vintage suitcases and vibrant turquoise leather bar stools, with added organics provided by verdant indoor foliage. If the stuffed peacock doesn't make you double take, the unabashed inclusion of worms in the menu probably will. Served in their own cute can (true to idiom), the fried mealworms have a pleasant nutty crispness. The less adventurous can make safe bets on Kentucky Fried Duck (KFD), packaged in a humble brown paper bag alongside equally finger-licking lime and coconut corn cobs. More conventionally, whole river trout with Nordic pickles and a succulent lamb shoulder survive multiple laps of the table.

Pro tip A chef's private dining menu is available Wednesday nights, offering four courses with optional matched wines

Open L Mon-Fri; D Mon-Sat
Price \$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef Michael Klemmt
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, wheelchair access
www.lovepublic.com.au

Restaurant II

BRISBANE
2 Edward Street
07 3210 0600



CONTEMPORARY 15/20

A grand old dame who knows how to woo

With Brisbane River and the Botanic Gardens sitting at its doorstep, weddings and working lunches are common at Restaurant II by day. After dark, the space is a blank canvas, dimly lit with minimal din. White-gloved waitstaff have an exceptional tableside manner and their recommendations and service are always considered. Smoky white gazpacho is a celebration of minimalism, where blood orange jelly adds both texture and balance, while a crispy cube of pork belly is a heartier start yet still leaves ample room for more. Mains are hard to fault. Lamb on the bone and perfect portions of duck breast are both cooked to blushing precision, with just enough trimmings on the plate to snub extra sides. Deciding between Valrhona hot chocolate fondue and fondant is near impossible. The latter's viscous centre and garnish of freeze-dried and fresh raspberry affirms your choice, though barely caramelised pears detract from an otherwise flawless finish.

Pro tip Consider a mid-week degustation of five courses for \$80

Open L-D Tue-Fri; D Tue-Sun
Price \$\$\$
Cards DC AE MC V eftpos
Chefs David Pugh, Mat Fury
Features Accepts bookings, licensed, degustation, wheelchair access
www.restaurant2.com.au



Top: Restaurant II
Right: Prive 249



Public

Rhubarb Rhubarb

WOOLLOOWIN
Shop 5, 85 Kent Road
07 3857 5118

FRENCH 14/20

A neighbourhood bistro standing the test of time

Rhubarb Rhubarb unashamedly takes us into traditional – some might say retro – French terrain with a menu that reminds us of a golden era in dining. This is familiar food, not overly challenging but done well and delivered with deft and friendly style to candle-lit tables. Ruby red walls add to the inviting ambience. Twice-baked blue cheese soufflé, the tanned rise encasing a creamy centre, comes with a waldorf salad. If you can bypass the classic duck l'orange – not something you're likely to see on many Brisbane menus these days – the barramundi with 'pommes noisettes' is satisfying and generous with a stack of steamed asparagus, house-made butter, and a delicate celeriac remoulade. Still more classics beckon from the dessert list, including a creme brulee sans trickery, just straight up silken and toffee-topped with berry compote on the side and a crisp biscotti. So what if we've seen it all before? Such simple honesty is well worth revisiting.

Pro tip Newly licensed with a small considered wine list, Rhubarb Rhubarb also continues to offer BYO

Open L Fri; D Tue-Sat

Price \$\$

Cards MC V eftpos

Chef Josh Gamble

Features Accepts bookings, BYO, licensed

www.rhubarbrhubarb.com.au

Rogue Bar & Bistro

NEWSTEAD
14 Austin Street
07 3257 0227

CONTEMPORARY 14/20

Dining should be fun, and here it is

Playful yet classic, the food here shines. Buried in Newstead's industrial area (or what's left of it), Rogue is a diamond in the rough despite being three kilometres from the CBD. The styling is sleek and minimal with tables spaciouly placed under twinkling fairy lights outside, and inside where an open kitchen creates theatrics. Take your pick from a short, sharp menu of bird, cow, fish, and vegetable. Enjoy one or go the whole ark. Set like a small Japanese rock garden, the snapper comes complete with edible stones (clay covered potatoes) and each mouthful presents a new texture as scallop foam, wakame noodles, Japanese mayo and edamame beans enter the mix. Meanwhile, kaffir lime proves a noteworthy twist in a bowl of mussels and sesame consomme. The kitchen's take on fairy bread creates quite a display with liquid nitrogen and colourful house-made "dippin' dots" arriving atop pieces of toasted coconut cheesecake, balanced by tarty fruit gels. Unexpected twists lift this hidden bistro far above its surrounds.

Pro tip Return for weekend brunch. Order a half pancake stack to pair with any savoury

Open B Sat-Sun; D Tue-Sat

Price \$\$

Cards AE MC V eftpos

Chef Daniel Myers

Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, outdoor seating

www.roguebistro.com



Rogue Bar & Bistro

Sake

BRISBANE
Level 1, 45 Eagle Street
07 3015 0557

 **GOOD WINE LIST**

JAPANESE 15/20

A vibrant riverside restaurant serving polished modern Japanese as impressive as the view

A luxe riverside location and associated price tags position Sake at the ritzier end of Brisbane's Japanese dining spectrum, with the expansive space encompassing private dining, sunken tables and a sushi bar. A feature wall showcasing traditional sake barrels sits comfortably within an aesthetic and culinary approach that overlay modern elements onto classical foundations. The imperative for quality produce – pertinent given the minimalism of many Japanese dishes – is well observed, with impeccable sashimi and Australian wagyu featuring prominently. The latter's fusion into an upscale version of the humble gyoza is almost overkill, with the marbled Darling Downs beef perhaps better showcased in tataki and tartare versions that leave little lost in translation. Patagonian toothfish, sometimes described as a piscatorial wagyu for its high fat content and delicate flavour, is lovingly prepared with a caramelised miso glaze and crisp lettuce cups for starters.

Pro tip Lovers of the restaurant's namesake will appreciate the rotating selection of artisanal Nihon-shu

Open L D Daily

Price \$\$

Cards DC AE MC V eftpos

Chefs Daisuke Sakai, Perry Fuller

Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, degustation, private dining, wheelchair access

www.sakerestaurant.com.au/eagle-street-pier

Sono Portside

HAMILTON
Level 1, Portside Wharf,
39 Hercules Street
07 3268 6655

JAPANESE 14.5/20

Special occasion dining that ping-pongs between old and new Japanese cuisine

The Portside Wharf precinct can be a bit of a revolving door of dining but one mainstay has been Sono and it is easy to understand why. This is elegant Japanese dining with a menu that can be a little daunting at first glance if you're not entirely familiar with Japanese cuisine (or even if you are). An excellent way to sample what's on offer is the tasting course which offers a selection of the best appetisers (think fresh oysters with lime sauce or perhaps soft-shell crab karaage) plus a choice of a main including the divine wagyu striploin with garlic soy jus. You'll have to allow an extra 20 minutes for black cod saikyo yaki to reach the table, but the sweet and giving fish, marinated in a miso for 48 hours is totally worth the wait. And while it's not the most traditional Japanese dessert, gâteau au chocolat with vanilla bean ice-cream is a positively decadent way to end your evening.

Pro tip Book in advance for a table with river views – they are surprisingly intimate for a romantic date

Open L Wed-Sun; D Tue-Sun

Price \$\$\$

Cards DC AE MC V eftpos

Chef Masayuki Naka

Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, degustation, private dining

www.sonorestaurant.com.au



Sake

The Spaghetti House Trattoria

SOUTH BRISBANE
164 Grey Street
07 3844 4844

ITALIAN 14/20

The bubbling fast-paced atmosphere makes this South Bank trattoria hard to miss

Positioned in the heart of the bustling Grey Street entertainment precinct that borders South Bank Parklands, Spaghetti House is a happy combination of Italo-Queensland culture. Incandescent letters spelling out "CIAO" sit as bold as brass against the back wall of the wood and wrought-iron themed dining room. The dining space comes into its own of an evening with flickering candles and pots of herbs at each table. There is a sweep of tables for al fresco dining and people watching, an Italian cultural pastime. The concise menu offers few surprises and as the name suggests pasta is the star ingredient. Choose one of five different varieties or four gluten-free options including gnocchi, and match it with one of the 13 sauce and style alternatives from pomodoro (simple tomato) to vongole (clams, chilli, garlic, wine and parsley). Daily specials, such as Moreton Bay bug with gnocchi are tempting, and there are a few thin-crust pizzas and some meatier selections.

Pro tip Aperitivo is on offer Saturday, Sunday and public holidays from 3 to 5pm

Open L D Daily

Price \$\$

Cards AE MC V eftpos

Chef Andrew Michael

Features Accepts bookings, licensed, wheelchair access

www.spaghetthouse.com.au

St James Crabhouse & Kitchen

KANGAROO POINT
Shop 5, 22 Baidon Street
No phone

SEAFOOD 14/20

A small urban crab shack serving quality crustaceans with international sauces

If a restaurant's potential was proportionate to the length of its queue, then this newbie on the scene is destined for great things. Of course, novelty has a habit of wearing off, but the concept is solid as the namesake's shell. Crowd-pleasing crustaceans – from perennial Australian blue swimmers and Alaskan kings, to occasionally featured red claws and Moreton Bay bugs – are served unpretentiously in clear plastic bags (with matching bibs and gloves), swimming in your choice of five sauces. The owner and his chef (formerly of Singapore's Fullerton hotel) have done their homework and fieldwork, curating a melting pot of flavours from Baltimore favourite Old Bay seasoning, to Cajun, a French-influenced beurre blanc and a Singapore chilli. Extracting the meat can be onerous, but there's plenty of crusty bread and fried sides for sustenance, and easier options like South Australian mussels, burgers and American char-grill offerings simplify proceedings. Besides, Stone and Wood on tap is the perfect prescription for all that thirsty work.

Pro tip Bookings are unavailable so steer clear of the worst queues by avoiding peak hours

Open L D Daily

Price \$

Cards AE MC V eftpos

Chef Anton Agnal

Features Licensed, wheelchair access



Stokehouse Q

SOUTH BANK
Sidon Street
07 3020 0600

GOOD WINE LIST

CONTEMPORARY **16/20**

Excellent views, booze and a standout 'roo

The river is so close it's an arm stretch away and the view is a kaleidoscope of city skyscrapers, mirrored in the water. Stokehouse captures the essence of Queensland: casual, but not too relaxed. Sleek, but without pomp. The trademark service of old has returned and with wine service of exceptional standard – take the time to peruse the rare and aged list. Seared Paroo kangaroo hops with clean and gamey flavour. The salty, zesty tang from a ricotta salata the perfect foil against paper-thin slices of deep red flesh. Slow-roasted goat shoulder wins on two levels. First, the goat is local, from the hills of Mt Tamborine, and second, it's paired with the house-made black pudding, the recipe of which draws inspiration from a former teammate's Stormoway Island ties. It's a dish that's robust, substantial and pleasing. A dish of gently poached, ruby-red stonefruit topped with sauterne granita and creamy almond sable finishes the night on a very high note.

Pro tip Take a stroll along South Bank's foreshore before a pre-dinner cocktail in the Stoke Bar

Open L D Daily
Price \$\$
Cards DC AE MC V eftpos
Chef Richard Dusby
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, private dining, wheelchair access
www.stokehousebrisbane.com.au

The Survey Co.

BRISBANE
32 Burnett Lane
07 3012 8725

GOOD WINE LIST

CONTEMPORARY **15/20**

Industrial-chic laneway eatery

More than five years into Burnett Lane's rejuvenation, Survey may have not yet achieved landmark status, but potential flows from the pores of its cork-lined floors and seating. After entering through an inconspicuous facade, diners are greeted by self-conscious shabby chic such as rough brick, exposed beams, and visible wires and pipes. It's sophisticated food without stuffiness here, and the menu contains more than one Simpsons reference (kudos to a "Mr Plough" cheese and pickles board). Sea fresh scallops luxuriate in salsa verde, enlivened by fennel, artichoke, and tarragon while calzone filled with mozzarella and bolognese have been deep-fried and disguised as empanadas. Perfect with a pilsner. Rosy pink lamb rack has the right meat-to-fat ratio, supported by smoked eggplant puree and pomegranate seeds and the sweet stakes a pleasant mille-feuille riff eschews puff pastry for banana slices rolled in chocolate and nuts.

Pro tip Ask your waiter about the death row meal, a rotating special featuring seasonal ingredients

Open L Mon-Fri; D Mon-Sat
Price \$\$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef Michael Conlon
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, wheelchair access
www.surveyco.com.au

VICTORIA COFFEE LEGEND

Tartufo

FORTITUDE VALLEY
1000 Ann Street
07 3852 1500

GOOD WINE LIST

ITALIAN **15/20**

Contemporary twist on Rome's glamorous heyday

Reminiscent of a 1940s film set, carefully orchestrated, disciplined production extends well beyond decor here. Italian waiters work the room with panache and skill, even as the buzz of more arrivals threatens to intrude. Chef Percuoco ups the ante, some dishes steeped in tradition and others given no more than a passing nod to it, but there's plenty for the diehard aficionado, like the linguine ai battibatti, a tangle of house-made, al dente pasta with bugs and leek, its rich coating of butter, mascarpone, saffron and chives never overwhelming the delicate meat. Try the vitello tonnato, tissue-thin veal drizzled with a perfectly balanced tuna, caper and anchovy mayonnaise, topped with cornichons. While main courses tend towards the modern, the osso buco is the real deal – minus bones. This deconstructed delight is served in prosciutto with king oyster mushroom, and served with gremolata on a broad bean and parmesan risotto. Wrap up with mascarpone al cacao, Tartufo's elegant take on tiramisu.

Pro tip There's also a pizzeria with classic wood-fired pizza

Open L D Daily
Price \$\$\$
Cards DC AE MC V eftpos
Chef Tony Percuoco
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, wheelchair access
www.tartufo.com.au

Tempest

SCARBOROUGH
Boat Harbour, Bird O'Passage Parade
07 3203 5744

SEAFOOD **14/20**

Watch the fishing boats as you eat at this popular neighbourhood restaurant

Despite new owners and a new name for the former Morgan's, the decor and menu choices are familiar, with teppanyaki in one section and a predominantly seafood menu in the other. Renamed Tempest after the sand dune on Moreton Island, the name is somewhat ill-chosen, for the sheltered deck looks out over the calm waters of a marina, creating a peaceful and pretty setting. Despite the cafe-style chairs, there's an air of formality in the crisp white linen tablecloths and in the menu, which draws on fresh seafood – most of it sourced locally. Dishes such as linguine with Moreton Bay bug in tomato sauce delight seafood lovers with their generosity, but the presentation of many dishes is a little retro. Perfectly cooked snapper struggles to stand up to a robust Basque-style mix of olives, spinach and tomatoes, while the sweet, succulent Tasmanian scallops with macadamia herb would be more attractive in their shells. Feather-light pina colada meringue piped over pineapple curd provides an outstanding finale.

Pro tip Specify if you want teppanyaki as it's offered in a separate section

Open L D Daily
Price \$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef Jonathan Merry
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed
www.tempestrrestaurant.com.au



The Spaghetti House Trattoria



Thomson's Reserve

SPRING HILL
73 Wickham Terrace
07 3226 8888

GOOD WINE LIST

CONTEMPORARY **15/20**

Old world elegance meets modern cuisine – date night sorted

In the early 1920s, Dr John Thomson chose the prestigious Wickham Terrace hilltop for Inchcolm, so named for his Scottish island home. The innovative, multi-roomed medical suite avowed a "modern" cage elevator, grand staircases and detailed timberwork. Thomson's Reserve, nestled in the former reception space, boasts a 21-seat dining room that's both elegant and refined without ostentation. The historic features remain, restored by a careful and attentive eye for detail, and this penchant for quality extends to both menu and plating. Brown butter dressed spanner crab makes for a picturesque starter, the snowy scattering of Jerusalem artichoke and toasted macadamia almost too pretty to crack. Local lamb gets triple attention with one medallion of loin roasted to still-pink tenderness, another charred and rolled in hay ash, and a crisp-skinned slice of oleaginous belly – pickled butternut a perfect, piquant foil. With a well-considered wine list and a simple but enticing arrangement of desserts, this is a venue of which the good doctor would be well proud.

Pro tip Make sure you take a trip in the lift – we won't spoil the surprise

Open B L D Daily
Price \$\$\$
Cards DC AE MC V eftpos
Chef Michael Crosbie
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, wheelchair access
www.inchcolm.com.au

Tinderbox Kitchen

FORTITUDE VALLEY
Shop 7, 31 James Street
07 3852 3744

CONTEMPORARY **14.5/20**

The perfect mid-week date-night venue

Tucked away behind its forebear Harvey's Bar & Bistro, Tinderbox Kitchen is James Street at its most casual. This is not your average pizza parlor, as a glance of the bar menu soon attests. A try-before-you-buy wine policy is a simple but welcome courtesy and sets the tone for friendly and attentive service. As you wait for your pizza crust to reach flame-ticked perfection, gooey, moreish pork croquettes and salty-sweet roast figs are equally tempting starters. While dishes like slow-cooked lamb adjust to the season, wood-fired pizzas remain a constant, as does the smell of bubbling mozzarella. Such is the emphasis on 'real' pizza, the organic flour even gets its own footnote. Purists will approve of the classic margherita and while the combination of prawn and zucchini may seem a little non-traditional, rest assured there is nary a chunk of pineapple to be seen. Sweets are simple and refined, from buttery, crumbly shortcrust pastry to a blizzard of meringue chips.

Pro tip Request a table inside for intimate dining or outside for a more casual affair

Open L Wed-Sun; D Tue-Sun
Price \$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef PJ McMillan
Features Accepts bookings, licensed, outdoor seating, wheelchair access
www.thetinderbox.com.au

Tukka

WEST END
145B Boundary Street
07 3846 6333

CONTEMPORARY **14.5/20**

A longstanding tourist favourite showcasing native Australian flora and fauna, prepared with finesse

Apart from the artworks dotting the front window and rustic hardwood maitre d's station, this long-standing West Ender's fitout is humble. Perhaps this expresses an Australian repudiation of showiness, perhaps a deliberate concession to the real show – the constant flow of life circulating the suburb's main artery metres away. This vibrant view combines with warm and knowledgeable service, whetting the appetite for their brand of bush tucker, delighting tourists without devolving into some cringe-worthy culinary equivalent of the koala pencil ornament. Characteristic Aussie fauna – emu, crocodile and kangaroo – are guaranteed sightings. The menu is strong on flora too (think lemon myrtle, lilly pilly and bunya nuts among others). Tasmanian possum meat combines beautifully with a pork fat in a boudin sausage, its savoury gaminess wonderfully offset by piquant muntrie berries, tart shavings of pickled carrot plus dots of Davidson's plum gel. Barramundi is given star treatment, expertly cooked along with roasted peaches and a beurre blanc subtly flavoured with native anisata.

Pro tip There's a native garden and beehive out the back with monthly tour and tastings

Open L Sat-Sun; D Tue-Sun
Price \$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef Bryant Wells
Features Accepts bookings, licensed, degustation
www.tukkarestaurant.com.au



Tukka

CITY SERVICE EXCELLENCE

Urbane

BRISBANE
181 Mary Street
07 3229 2271

GOOD WINE LIST

CONTEMPORARY **18/20**

Exquisitely a cut above

Without fanfare, Urbane has continued to carve an exciting presence in the local progressive food scene under Argentinian-born chef Alejandro Cancino, now a partner in The Urbane Group. Omnivore and herbivore degustations offering nuanced dishes with a focus on the white-hot trend of vegetables as superstars. Transcending both menus are pickled onion boats with a delicate cargo of tapioca pearls and macadamias, floating in dill oil and smoked beurre blanc. Coal-grilled barramundi has flavour for days, largely thanks to its teriyaki seasoning, while lean and clean-tasting Jack's Creek wagyu oyster blade is served with juniper-spiked red wine jus and celeriac puree. Poached plums are a knockout, with cardamom "snow" (parfait given the liquid nitrogen treatment) and a sweet-and-tart sauce with ginger and lemongrass notes. With Cancino in the kitchen and Andy Buchanan maintaining an excellent level of service, the good ship Urbane is firmly on course, spinnaker hoisted, keel slicing through the water.

Pro tip Start upstairs with a cocktail at Laneway Bar

Open D Thu-Sat
Price \$\$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef Alejandro Cancino
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, degustation, wheelchair access
www.urbanerestaurant.com

Vine Restaurant

NEW FARM
Shop 5, 158 Moray Street
07 3358 6658

GOOD WINE LIST

ITALIAN **14/20**

An old faithful punching above its weight

Vine is a much-loved neighbourhood favourite that is anything but pedestrian. From warm greetings to prompt drink service and unrushed explanation of the day's specials, there's abundant care with the brothers Rotolone presiding over the dining areas, although there's no disguising the noise of happy patrons. The menu reflects the passion of both chef and owners, and in the re-imagined traditional menu you'll find clever twists on old favourites like zucchini flowers stuffed with burrata and salt cod brandade, sprinkled with walnut crumble. Creamy, salty and comforting, it's hard to go past. Main courses feature handcrafted pasta and the daily special is a generous serve of golden pumpkin gnocchi dotted with spinach and blue cheese, dressed in brown butter and sage. Rich, but with the crunch of walnuts and the crackle of crisp pancetta, it's beautifully balanced. Familiar sounding desserts are handled skilfully including a perfect honey yoghurt panna cotta partnered with a gooey hazelnut of bacio semifreddo.

Pro tip Try long lunches on Saturday and Sunday at \$65 per head

Open B Sat-Sun; L Tue-Fri; D Tue-Sat
Price \$\$
Cards AE MC V eftpos
Chef Carlos Ortega
Features Accepts bookings, bar, BYO, licensed, wheelchair access
www.vinerestaurant.com.au

Vintaged

BRISBANE
Hilton Hotel, 190 Elizabeth Street
07 3231 3265

GOOD WINE LIST

STEAKHOUSE **14.5/20**

An elegant old-timer that retains its youthfulness in a modern menu

One of the city's best lunchtime secrets, Vintaged is a quiet and elegant den – albeit a cavernous one thanks to architect Harry Seidler's spectacular atrium – in which to enjoy a peaceful dining experience away from the Queen Street Mall crowds. Shoppers can take the elevator entrance directly off Queensland's best known retail precinct and head up to Vintaged, perhaps to refuel for round two. By night the elegant space is equally as dazzling. There's a focus on steaks on the menu, with the restaurant sourcing exceptional beef. Dry ageing fridges form a backdrop near the kitchen. Those without a red meat penchant will not go hungry though. Scallops lightly seared are paired with a sweet corn puree amid a garden of petals, popcorn and a dust of powdered corn that has little flavour but adds visual interest. Pork belly has a delicate apple and mint sauce and a little jar of rice pudding with coconut and mango is a great finishing note.

Pro tip Lunch specials are known and loved here

Open B Daily; L D Mon-Sat
Price \$\$\$
Cards DC AE MC V eftpos
Chef Dario Fiorino
Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed
www.vintagedbarandgrill.com



Wild Canary

BROOKFIELD
2371 Moggill Road
07 3378 2805

CONTEMPORARY 14/20

Local produce served in a relaxed outdoor setting – the quintessential Queensland eating experience

The paddock to plate theme rings true at Wild Canary where herbs, leafy greens and edible flowers are harvested just a few steps from the kitchen. Other produce is supplied by local farmers, the menu reading like a who's who of Queensland producers. Brookfield Garden Centre provides a tranquil setting for Glen Barratt's innovative and skilful cooking – evident in finely tuned dishes such as grilled figs with Mount Zero black lentils, straw-smoked beetroot, candied pecans and Witches Chase goat's cheese. Many of the dishes could be shared, such as the lamb shoulder, gently braised and served with miso eggplant, red pepper hummus and blistered cherry tomatoes. From a menu that is perfectly in tune with the Queensland climate, Mooloolaba prawns rest on a salad of baby cos, herbs and grilled peach, while Coral Coast barramundi has an intriguing twist with its fresh light salad of charred apple, watercress and orange vinaigrette.

Pro tip It's wise to book at this very popular venue

Open B L Wed–Mon

Price \$\$

Cards AE MC V eftpos

Chef Glen Barratt

Features Accepts bookings, licensed, outdoor seating, wheelchair access

www.wildcanary.com.au

Top: The Wolfe

Bottom: Vintaged

The Wolfe

EAST BRISBANE
989 Stanley Street
07 3891 7772

 **GOOD WINE LIST**

CONTEMPORARY 15.5/20

A contemporary fine diner with elegant classic food

There's been a parade of plates as lovely as beauty queens coming from restaurant kitchens lately. Artfully but artificially composed, undeniably pretty but really, not much going on under the petal garlands. Cue the applause, then, for this elegant bistro where the food is both stylish and intelligent. More Coco Chanel than Kim Kardashian. A deceptively simple European-led menu is underpinned by classic technique and partnered by a thoughtful wine list. A pristine fillet of john dory is served with a saffron-tinted beurre blanc, buffalo curd-stuffed zucchini flowers and young asparagus, while two fat surf clams are islands in a pool of light prawn bisque, neither flavour overwhelming the other. Pork belly with a thin layer of brittle glazed crackle has its richness held in check by little bursts of acidity thanks to lump muscatels soaked in aged apple cider vinegar. Warm hospitality, comfortable seating and 26 by-the-glass wines make the idea of lingering at this lovely local highly appealing.

Pro tip On Tuesday and Wednesday nights you can BYO (corkage \$10 per bottle)

Open L Wed–Fri; D Tue–Sat

Price \$\$\$

Cards AE MC V eftpos

Chef Paul McGivern

Features Accepts bookings, bar, licensed, wheelchair access

www.thewolfeeastbrisbane.com.au

The Foraging Quail



The Foraging Quail

148 Merthyr Road, New Farm 07 3358 6414
theforagingquail.com.au

Its 10-course herbivore degustation may have gone the way of dodo (the Quail is now all about share plates), however chef Minh Le's colourful vegetarian creations are still worth seeking out such as Asian-inspired Thai eggplant with fried green beans and fermented bean curd.

Fundies Wholefood Cafe

219 Given Terrace, Paddington 07 3368 1855
fundies.com.au

Adjoining an organic mini market, this enduringly popular cafe provides a predominantly vegetarian selection of breakfast and lunch options. Signature scrambled tofu is pleasant in texture and taste thanks to an astringent balsamic infusion and the gado gado Byron Bay pie is a real winner too.

Kitchen Sanitarium

145 Eagle Street, Brisbane 07 3221 7988
kitchensanitarium.com.au

The flagship cafe of the titular food brand enjoys enviable views of the Story Bridge. From this vantage point, workers enjoy a delicious array of soups, salads, curries and a veggie burger with sweet potato fries they assure us is healthy.

Top 10 Vegetarian

Vegetarianism is no longer the realm of rubbery tofu, soggy chickpeas and that obligatory restaurant staple, veggie lasagne. From rainbow salads and tofu spring rolls to highfalutin 10-course tasting menus, this is the best vegetable-based eating to be had in Brisbane.



Urbane

The Lost Boys

694 Ann Street, Fortitude Valley 07 3172 8073 lostboysfortitudevalley.com

With its indoor fibreglass tree, woodwork and secondhand book menus, the dominant narrative is more J.M. Barrie than the eponymous '80s schlock horror film. Regardless, the carbon neutral hangout serves great organic daytime fare that would make a believer of any skeptic.

Loving Hut

Shop 2, 1420 Logan Road, Mount Gravatt 07 3219 4118 lovinghutbrisbane.com.au

This south side institution embraces animal-friendly altruism along with an eclectic menu encompassing a pan-Asian influence and riffs on Italian. Faux meat features in assemble-your-own mock Peking duck pancakes, while its signature laksa – eschewing seafood for vegetables and spongy fried tofu puffs – doesn't risk imitation.

Mirchh Masala Impex

Shop 3, 110 Logan Road, Woolloongabba 07 3162 8194

Given its cafeteria-style fitout the ever-present crowds bear testament to the quality of the authentic Indian vegetarian cuisine. The menu packs a variety of fragrant curries, ghee-fried samosas, bhaji, and Indian sweets. First-timers can simplify matters with the thali platter.

Miss Bliss Wholefoods Kitchen

85 Vulture Street, West End 07 3137 1415 missblisswholefoodskitchen.com.au

The nutritionist and health blogger owner who converted the former West End greengrocer into a vibrant whole foods haunt has done local health nuts a service. Enjoy their low-meat menu, heavy on fermented food, wholegrain crispbread and super-foods amid the pleasant surrounds (including an outdoor hanging garden).



Mirchh Masala Impex

Tea Master Vegetarian Cafe Restaurant

Shop 8, 115 Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley 07 3257 0038

Expect plenty of interesting faux-meat creations served in simple surroundings by friendly staff. Gluten, mushroom and tofu are artfully contrived into facsimiles of steak, duck and fish that look (and sometimes tastes) eerily realistic.

Tibetan Kitchen

9 Sherwood Road, Toowong 0410 484 242 tibetankitchen.com.au

West End vegetarians lamenting the closure of the Hardgrave Road institution take heart – the new Toowong location is but a ferry ride away. Nepalese momo dumplings and a fragrant coriander and ginger-infused tofu curry are particular standouts.

Urbane

181 Mary Street, Brisbane 07 3229 2271 urbanerestaurant.com

At the helm of this highly awarded eatery, Buenos Aires native and Urbane head chef Alejandro Cancino's passion for plant-based cuisine shines through a vegetarian degustation menu that celebrates seasonal ingredients.



Bloodhound

Brisbane's best BARS

Bar lines are becoming blurred. Not the lines at the bar, mind. We're talking about the line that separates bar and restaurant, boozier and brunch spot, dive and diner. These difficult-to-define venues keep opening, with punters keen to explore the new worlds of Australian spirits, small batch brewing and artisan wines. Here's Brisbane's best new watering holes and old favourites.

1889 Enoteca

12 Logan Road, Woolloongabba 07 3392 4315, 1889enoteca.com.au

Few things go better together than marble bars and Italian wine. Perhaps an Aperol spritz on a lazy afternoon or pecorino grated over rich ragu. This bar, restaurant and Italian wine shop has all this and more, including the warmest of warm hospitality. Order a grappa, take a load off and sit back and listen to bartenders tales from The Boot and discuss the best dry white wine to use in a bicicletta.

Alfred & Constance

130 Constance Street, Fortitude Valley 07 3251 6500 alfredandconstance.com.au

Once the hipsters, uni students and locks found somewhere else to play, these two repurposed heritage homes became a very cool place to hang. Operated by Mr Hospitality himself, Damian Griffiths, this bares all his signature ingredients of great atmosphere, killer selection of food and drinks, and excellent service. The pina colada comes in an actual pineapple. You know you want it.