

# Food, glorious food

This cafe-cum-providore provides many taste sensations



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CUISINE TALK

In these days of economic downturn and general doom 'n' gloom, it's rare to hear of places that are going from strength to strength. But Eurodore – having just celebrated its first birthday – bucks the trend.

It seemed like a very grand plan: open a food store-cum-deli-cum-cafe in Port Melbourne that concentrated on displaying the best produce proprietors Sarah and Peter Reiter could find.

On one side of the wall in this large, two-roomed shop is the providore, filled with boutique wines, sausages, cheeses and deli produce. There are a few tables here and

outside on bustling Bay Street, but the main cafe action is next door, under the watchful eyes of a dramatic extract from Simon Vouet's 17th century painting *The Muses*. Muse of astronomy, Urania, peeks at you coolly over her shoulder.

I went in the early days. It all seemed a little grand and new, but on returning six months later, Eurodore has grown into the space. This is a function of the heavy wood tables and plump chairs being busy, rather than Urania's gaze lessening its intensity. Now, Eurodore has a comfortable, slightly lived-in feel, thanks to the patina given by time.

Those sitting at the tables are poring over chef Dan Melbourne's menu. Breakfast might be porridge with baked quince and cinnamon sugar or a build-your-own affair where pig lovers can combine black pudding and bacon from Andrew's Choice with baked beans made with smoked ham hock for \$11. Add a couple of eggs – scrambled, poached or fried



– and the price jumps to \$19, but these are very fine Green eggs. The ingredients can also be purchased at the deli for you to recreate the experience at home.

Lunch is a more ornate affair. You can snack on mushroom risotto balls served with Tetsuya Wakuda's truffle salt, or pick at prosciutto with pickled melon. Alternatively, move up to something more substantial. Prices for a main course, which range from \$19 to \$28.50, confirm Eurodore as more of a good local restaurant rather than cafe.

Melbourne (Dan, that is) captures the winter mood with a chicken and porcini mushroom pie with celeriac puree, or a loose "lasagne" with two satiny sheets of fresh pasta sandwiching a rich, gooey mix of braised mushrooms and melted taleggio cheese.

Cheese also plays a central role in another fine seasonal dish. Two fat tiles of fluffy goat's cheese that has been crumbed and pan-fried sits on a mound of salad comprising hunks of roast beetroot, crunchy nubs of toasted hazelnuts and straggly strands of watercress.

These strong, clean flavours are a classic combination even without the addition of a pomegranate dressing.

The only slightly disappointing dish was a large pork cutlet that had seams of stringiness through the meat hidden under its crisp, crumbed crust.

The wine list includes ever-changing drops by the glass on a large blackboard next to the shoulder-baring masterpiece. Perhaps choose a Konrad riesling from New Zealand, a glass of Don Lewis's Tar & Roses pinot grigio from Strathbogie, or a glass of the Te Kairanga pinot noir. All are \$8.

On the shelves in the providore section are products from Tetsuya, Christine Manfield, Stefano de Pieri and Simon Johnson. The deli is particularly strong, with sausages and ham from Andrew's Choice in Yarraville alongside French sausages and pates from La Parisienne. There's also a fine selection of European cheeses, supplied by Port Melbourne's own Will Studd. These range from standards like brie, roquefort and stilton, to Dutch gouda and Spanish manchego (both of which are made from raw milk). They can order in fresh buffalo mozzarella or even buffalo butter.

When Eurodore isn't open for dinner, it sometimes runs a series of well-priced workshops on cheese and on wine. [ehw](#)