

Bellissima

An Australian—Italian Affair

COLLETTA
D'INIZIO

Australia

The Great Southern Land

Port Stephens



My love for Broughton Island, which lies 14 kilometres off Port Stephens, exists in tandem with my love for my dear, generous, ocean-loving friends, Ian Puckeridge and his daughter, Lara. For many years we have spent time together on Australia's coastline, whether fishing or diving for lobster and abalone. No matter where we are, I feel compelled to make a beautiful space for us to share a meal. So with us comes everything from copper pots to baskets and linens for our makeshift camp kitchen. Broughton Island is a true adventureland – it's wild, windswept and everything I adore about Australia's rugged beauty.

Broughton Island

Opposite: Ian's daughter, Lara, has followed in his footsteps to become a champion spearfisher, along with her brother, Aaron.







Southern Highlands



My home in the Southern Highlands is an enchanting and happy place. I immediately fell in love with this old, rabbit warren of a homestead, which was built in the 1890s and had been gifted to the governor general. It took nearly four years to renovate, during which time I was often in Europe sourcing materials and special pieces that would feel at home within the walls of this historic house. It's usually full of people and life and is absolutely brimming with art I've collected over the years. It's inviting, friendly and private, and feels secure and cloistered from the world beyond. There's a magical cottage garden with all manner of fruit trees, vegetables and blossoms, where I spend much of my time, and my studio is also on site.

It's a true sanctuary, where I can escape and create.

Bowral



Roast Chicken

- 1 x 1.8 kg Chicken
- 6 potatoes, peeled and cut in half
- 4 tbsp of soft butter
- Half preserved lemon pulp set aside & skin finely chopped
- 1 Clove garlic, chopped finely
- 2 tbsp of chopped herbs - a mix of thyme, rosemary or parsley
- 1 lemon sliced in half
- 2 leeks chopped into 1cm slices, 3 spring onions
- 1 Loaf of Sour Dough Bread
- 1 Lemon, Extra Virgin Olive Oil, Salt & Pepper

Preheat the oven to 220°C. Parboil the potatoes and mix together. In the cavity of the chicken sprinkle some salt and add the lemon halves. Loosen the skin of the chicken & put the herb butter under the skin. Rub the skin with olive oil and pepper and then smear the preserved lemon on top.

Spread a layer of olive oil on the base of a large Baking Dish. Arrange large thick pieces of bread to support the chicken on top. Around the edge put the potatoes, leeks, spring onions and drizzle on more olive oil.



Sydney



Neil and I have been friends for nearly 40 years. He cooked at some of my first shows in Paris and we had an enormous amount of attention because of it. As Australians, we're so optimistic and we go into everything with our eyes and arms wide open. We embrace the moment and we deliver. I love Neil's ethos when it comes to the kitchen. He's so passionate about food, his suppliers and the environment. He has such an enormous generosity of spirit and uses the best ingredients to cook beautifully considered dishes. And while he is one of Australia's most revered chefs, not everything he cooks is complicated. He also loves simple dishes, such as this frittata recipe he calls 'Collette's eggs', which are from my hens in the Highlands.

Neil Perry



Margaret frittata

5 eggs

1 Tbspn Butter

2 Tbsp of extra Virgin Olive
oil

3 Tbsp soft goat cheese
broken up

Herbs of your choice to put on top eg:

Chives, Dill, Parsley... Salt & Pepper

Crack the eggs into a bowl & whisk together with three half eggshells of cold water
Heat the butter and oil in a medium sized non stick pan until foaming but not brown.
Pour in the eggs & let them set for a minute
Add the goat cheese then gently drag the liquid eggs from the edge back into the centre until the frittata is done and the eggs are set.

With a spatula loosen and slide out onto a serving plate season with salt & pepper

Top with the herbs as many as you like
Finally drizzle over some more Olive Oil
Serve at once with sour dough bread and butter



Following spread: I can't imagine life without my kitchen full of friends and family, who perch by the bench as we laugh, talk and cook.

Eurobodalla



I always wanted a place by the ocean. Watching the storms roll in from the balcony of our Rosedale home, you can feel the energy in the air - it's like a portal to another world. The whales travel up and down the coast and you can see dolphins surfing the waves. Each day brings a new narrative of oceanic wonder. After our original and wonderfully laidback surf shack here burnt down, we had to rebuild to a BAL 40 fire rating, which presented many challenges. But the result was a much more modern aesthetic and a house that is also 98 per cent off-grid.

Rosedale



Italy

La Dolce Vita

Piedmonte



I've been going to Torino (Turin) for about 20 years and, in my opinion, it's the greatest undiscovered city of Italy. Surrounded by the Alps, this grand city is in the Langhe area of Piedmont. Here, autumn is a gastronomic delight with the alba white truffle, porcini mushrooms and chestnuts all in season and wholly embraced. Paired with some of the finest nebbiolo, barolo and barbaresco wines that are produced in the region and plenty of great restaurants, Torino is a true food-lover's paradise. There's also an enormous amount of culture to discover in this city, from the beautiful Royal Palace with its elegant display of the finest royal china, to Torino's industrial importance as the home of Fiat, and its beloved football team, Juventus. I find it more sophisticated than Rome. While Rome has a frenetic energy, Torino is refined and gentle.

Torino

Opposite: Caffè Torino has been the meeting spot for politicians, poets and everyone else since 1903. They do an incredible Americano here.



Torino local and my wonderful friend, Mimi Thorisson, knows the best places to eat in the city.

Piedmonte



I met Mimi and her husband, Oddur, many years ago, we became very close friends and spent a lot of time together after lockdown in Italy. We're creative and adventurous, each with our own artistic bents. Mimi is an incredible cook and Oddur is a talented writer and photographer, who has an innate ability to capture moments that are both beautiful yet artfully dishevelled. We all seem to live in the moment and are passionate about similar things – family, friends, food, wine, art, music and dogs! It's why we all share a love for Italy and live with very few regrets.

Mimi & Oddur Thorisson





Whenever Mimi and I are together, talk always turns to food. This time, it's her wild borage ravioli, which she's making with her daughter, Gaia.



Salento



When we first went to Puglia, it felt so undiscovered and wild. It captivated me immediately. The roads wind through a countryside that can feel barren and remote, then suddenly, you're in a valley surrounded by ancient olive trees and hillsides dotted with trullis. Each little town seems to sing its own melodic song. You can feel and taste the proximity to Greece and North

Africa – once we even experienced a sand storm blowing across from Africa. The regional cuisine, which is referred to as 'cucina povera', meaning peasant cooking, is all about seasonal, local produce, such as sweet tomatoes, cima di rappa, artichokes, eggplants, garlic, anchovies, olives and, of course, olive oil. In summer, ancient fig trees are festooned with baubles of sweet, plump fruit just waiting to be picked. When here, make sure to visit the local antique markets and explore the naturally stunning grottos tucked into the coastline.

Puglia



Ostuni



This rustic, old farmhouse was one of the first we looked at in Puglia and, although we traipsed through countless more, we couldn't shake the belonging we felt to this charmingly rundown property. It took four years to nurse her back to her original beauty. I'd go down once a week from Rome to tussle with local tradesmen and plant vegetables. I had so much fun travelling to various art and antique markets around Italy sourcing old materials and furniture.

The craftsmen were truly inspirational and it was such a great experience to work with them.

Every effort was worth it to see this historic, 500-year-old home reclaim life anew.

Casa Olivetta





This pool is unconventional for Puglia with its raised sides. Locals thought I was crazy planting guara so close, but I don't mind a few petals.

