

### On the menu

Make sure to buy winter beetroot. This vitamin-packed vegetable contains magnesium, potassium, iron, folic acid and vitamins A, B6 and C. Roast it, grate it through salads, or boil, peel, dice and pickle it. Look out for broad beans, Jerusalem artichoke and okra now too. [lovebeetroot.co.uk](http://lovebeetroot.co.uk)

### MINAMISHIMA 4 Lord Street, Richmond 9429 5180

My paper placemat is crooked. The waitress aligns it as she serves my wine. It slides again on the polished timber table and she repeats the process as she presents us with dark, shield-shaped pottery dishes bearing pairs of grilled Otway shiitake mushrooms scattered with a golden dust of fungus, seaweed and sesame seeds.

Melbourne's newest high-end Japanese restaurant seats 40 diners within its hushed stone and timber interior. It's concealed behind a heavy glass door at the base of an apartment complex in a Richmond laneway.

And it's all about perfection.

From the formal placemat-straightening elements of the service, to the precision with which the two sushi chefs prepare the 15-course \$150-a-head sushi omakase banquet, nothing here is ill-considered.

Sushi master Koichi Minamishima (ex Kenzan) opened his first restaurant earlier this year. Bookings are taken and arrival times are expected to be prompt.

Mimamishima and his sous chef Hajime Horiguchi (ex Wasabi, Noosa) work in tandem. Horiguchi moulds mounds of sushi rice as Minamishima slices, trims and compresses sea perch, king dory, blue fin tuna belly, geoduck, eel and scallop offerings that are proudly presented on serious-looking serving platters of various shapes.

Some proteins are lightly charred, others unadulterated. A golden needle mushroom and spanner crab chawanmushi (egg custard)



DON'T MISS \ A SEAT AT THE BAR

BEST FOR \ JAPANOPHILES

GOLDEN NEEDLE MUSHROOM & SPANNER CRAB CHAWANMUSHI

broth is extraordinary for its light texture and subtle flavour. The custard pools at the bottom of the bowl and the noodles of mushroom float in the broth beneath a cottony cloud of shellfish.

There's a mound of cherry blossom-smoked beef cheek in an "oh wow" wedge of sticky sauce and a golden persimmon sorbet to cleanse the palate. Lightly charred sea eel is

partnered with a pretty basket of glistening, seaweed-wrapped salmon roe. An oleaginous fish broth bears a parcel of layered tofu.

For dessert, gelatinous cubes of Okinawa black sugar warabi mocha rest inside a halved walnut shell on a bed of tea leaves, scattered with precision. ●

LEANNE TOLRA

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(CHRIS HOPKINS)

### Let's do lunch

#### HAWK & HUNTER 8/10 Glen Eira Avenue, Ripponlea. 9528 2719

**THE VIBE** \ Cool and contemporary. Situated opposite Ripponlea station, and among several other excellent cafés, this joint has been instrumental in lifting the suburb's reputation as a place to lunch and brunch.

**THE DÉCOR** \ Bright, modern and spacious, with a quirky wooden feature wall.

**THE CROWD** \ Mixed. Mums and dads to teens and their grandparents, and everyone in between.

**THE FOOD** \ There's an all-day breakfast menu – including corn and zucchini fritters and fancy winter mushrooms – as well as a balanced range of lunch offerings: from a wagyu burger all the way to an almond and chickpea falafel salad.

**THE DRINK** \ Filter and cold-drip coffee is available, as are a selection of teas, juices, wines and beers.

#### THE VERDICT

Combining a sharp setting, honest menu and staff who are eager to please, Hawk & Hunter is everything you want from your neighbourhood café. ●

LUKE HENRIQUES-GOMES



(TRUDY SCHURINGA)

AÇAÍ BOWL

### Cellar Notes

#### CRICKET

Cricketers' love of a drink is well known. Over the years the game has influenced a few winemakers, too, with wines named cricket pitch, second innings and cover drive. With The Ashes getting under way this week and games on TV starting at 8.30pm, there's a good chance there will be a drink in your hand.

What's it going to be? For me, it depends on where the game is.

Sophia Gardens, Cardiff. It's all about grain rather than grape in Wales. Wales' biggest beer, Brains, can be found on the shelves of better beer shops and Dan Murphy's stocks Penderyn whisky.

London, Lord's. Lord's is the only cricket ground in the world where you can take in a bottle of wine.

Birmingham, Edgbaston. This is the nation's curry capital. Semillon-sauvignon blanc blends and rich shiraz pair perfectly with spicy dishes.

Trent Bridge, Nottinghamshire. This county is more famous for the legend of Robin Hood than its drinks, so why not put the two together with cider and



FINE

VERSUS

FUN



#### FINE

**Cattetier Brut Premier Cru** (\$40 at Liquorland). With smoky stonefruit, zesty citrus and Saltine biscuit aromas, this is a gentle, elegant champagne rather than one of intensity and drive.

There's much to like about the structure of chalky acid, grip and a driving finish of grilled peaches and lemon.

#### FUN

**Club Armada Dark Rum**, available from First Choice, is quite the bargain for \$30. Perfect for cocktails and smooth enough to sip straight, it smells of caramel, vanilla and white chocolate and has a smoky brown sugar flavour on the finish.

mead? Thanks to *Game of Thrones*, mead is undergoing a renaissance and there's never been a better range. Try warming up Maxwell Spiced Mead on a cold night.

London, The Oval. The Oval was once named Foster's Oval in a sponsorship deal, but rum or Red Stripe beer are the tipples for this Test. ●

BEN THOMAS

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#### ANOTHER DROP?

- BEN THOMAS' HAPPY HOUR
- ONLINE EVERY FRIDAY



#### THE FIND

Known for their stocks, Moredough Kitchens has released a quality range of soups: lamb, pearl barley and rosemary, cherry tomato and smoked paprika, ham hock and red lentil, and Thai pumpkin. Ingredients are locally sourced and include Western District lamb, Victorian sebago potatoes and Riverina pumpkin. ●

(SUPPLIED)

» [moredoughkitchens.com.au](http://moredoughkitchens.com.au)