



# Culinary Adventures

Travel, learn, cook and eat your way around Australia. **Anna Peters** reports.



ABOVE: Tonya Jennings.  
LEFT: Steamed Salmon Broccolini served with basmati rice and slithers of fresh ginger.

It's all about local produce, aromas that indulge your senses and flavours new and old, stimulating conversations with fellow adventurers who are there for the same reason to travel, learn, cook and eat their way around Australia; what more can you wish for when attending a cooking school?

Cooking School hosts eager to share their knowledge and skills are unquestionably skilled in all that is food, wine, and tourism. I have selected five cooking schools from around Australia, from NSW, Victoria, Tasmania, South Australia and Western Australia and each have a special personality and sense of adventure. (The advice I would give is to take your time searching for a good cooking school that you can incorporate into your travels.)

Attending a cooking school is a great way to learn about a region as most cooking schools are run by locals or families, 4-5th generation with their own stories to share. Once you visit one of the cooking schools I have chosen, I hope you will walk away with a satisfied appetite.

## NSW

The Lovedale Region of NSW is host to the glorious Sandalyn Wilderness Estate that is family owned, surrounded by vineyards and olive groves with views of the ruggedly beautiful Watalgan, Brokenback and Molly Morgan ranges.

Nestled among the captivating scenery is a cooking school that specialises in the art of pasta making and sushi. Tel: Sandra (one of the family) on (02) 4930 7611 or visit [\[@\] www.sandalyn.com.au](http://www.sandalyn.com.au).

## VICTORIA

Tonya Jennings is the founder of Cooking on the Bay Cooking School located at St Kilda on Port Phillip Bay. Her philosophy is to teach the art of all that is food using fresh, local and seasonal produce. Tonya encourages you to leap into the unknown so you can develop new and exciting skills.

On arrival you are greeted with a glass of local wine to enjoy with fellow cooking class companions before you start the hands on class. Tonya's classes are filled with a sense of celebration and range from French,

Italian, Mediterranean and a Feast at the Brighton Bathing Box.

Tel: (03) 9537 3701 or visit [\[@\] www.cookingonthebay.com.au](http://www.cookingonthebay.com.au)

## TASMANIA

Visiting Tasmania? Make sure you include The Wild Side Kitchen Cooking School that is huddled in the heritage village of Tarraleah and is managed by a group of locals that produce food and wine.

This is a unique opportunity to catch and cook your own trout or wild salmon. There is a potpourri of hands on cooking classes filled with a sense of adventure and history.

Tel: (03) 6289 0111 or visit [\[@\] www.wildsidekitchen.com.au](http://www.wildsidekitchen.com.au)

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

McLaren Vale is home of the Chapel Hill Winery. Rebecca Stubbs is the Executive Chef and her spirited personality translates her cooking classes into a sensational experience.

The hands on cooking classes include sausage making with a local butcher, Asian street food through to authentic Mexican. There is a B&B,



French Onion soup and torn baguette.



Thai squid with lychees.



Carlo Valdini from Wild Wood Valley

which is ideal, as you do not have to walk too far after a long cooking class.  
 Tel: (08) 8323 9128 or visit  
 [ @ ] [www.chapelhillwine.com.au](http://www.chapelhillwine.com.au)

### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Mad about Food Cooking School, Yallingup sits amongst a 120 acre property – Wild Wood Valley that overlooks Smiths beach in the beautiful and serene Margaret River Region.

Owned and run by Sioban Valdini who worked at Longrain Sydney and Carlo Valdini who is from Tuscany, the cooking school menu consists of Thai and Italian with a focus on the authentic recipes from Tuscany using Aussie produce. There is accommodation and you are welcome to stay for two days, one week or one month the choice is yours.

Sioban and Carlo visit Tuscany every year and return to Australia with a bag filled with new ideas and recipes. Call on (08) 9755 2120 or visit [ @ ] [www.wildwoodvalley.com.au](http://www.wildwoodvalley.com.au)

Enjoy and good eating •  
 Anna Peters is a Gastronomist & food writer. Visit: [ @ ] [www.cookingwithanna.com.au](http://www.cookingwithanna.com.au)



Hand made tortellini filled with steamed duck and chives.