



THE second coming of the first floor Electra House restaurant, now renamed **Level One**, should turn out to be much more successful than its predecessor, Olea. Olea looked great and had a highly credentialed Spanish chef who was, inexplicably, required to produce upmarket Greek cooking. Despite all the skills in the kitchen it wasn't convincing and it soon failed. Now the place has been redesigned, again with an interesting contemporary fit out, and the kitchen is being run by Japanese chef **Satoshi (Sato) Kikuchu**, with a menu described as "Asian fusion". That's probably a misleading term. Asian fusion often leads to confusion; few chefs have really pulled that off. The reality here is that Sato is a Japanese chef trained in the European tradition who now brings multiple influences to his cooking - Japanese, certainly, but also French, Middle Eastern and Mediterranean styles can be seen in various dishes, fortunately not all at the same time. The result is a menu that challenges in all the right ways, provides enormous flexibility and variety for the diner, and is sufficiently innovative to please culinary thrill seekers. Descriptions are cryptic and fall under broad headings such as "land", "sea" and "raw", so interrogation of the wait staff might be called for, but you'll be rewarded with dishes such as a mound of raw scampi piled on to a halved whole lime, with a hint of chilli and crunchy puffed wild rice, the idea being that as you munch into the whole thing the resulting lime juice will instantly pickle the scampi. Fun and delicious. Dishes are designed either as

individual small treats, like the scampi, or to share - such as the "feast" dishes. In one, a whole chicken is brine marinated for 24 hours, slow cooked sous vide for six hours, dried then quickly deep fried to crisp the skin. Served with roti bread, compressed and cut in triangles flat bread style, served with punchy harissa, lemon segments and a feta and mint salad, it has distinctly Middle Eastern leanings. Level 1, 131 King William St, Adelaide; phone (08) 7123 4055. Open for lunch Tuesday-Friday, dinner Tuesday-Saturday.

Another chef to make a welcome reappearance on Adelaide stoves is **Salvatore Pepe**, who was an integral part of the great success of the former Cibo restaurant in North Adelaide, which closed its doors a decade ago.

Since then Pepe has been largely involved in other Cibo coffee chain activities, but the lure of the stoves has proven too strong and he's back, again in a revamped former restaurant, now renamed **Pepe Cucina**, located in Burnside Village. It fills a deep gap in an area where good dining opportunities are few and the good news for former Cibo fans is that they'll find several of his more popular dishes back on the menu. It's a big, open space well lit through north-facing windows, with a huge outside deck lined with potted olive trees. Central to the open kitchen is a large charcoal grill, which gives grill maestro Pepe a chance to shine with classic dishes such as chargrilled aged Angus steak with rocket leaves and shards of parmigiano reggiano on top, or chargrilled local octopus, tender



and beautifully caramelised, with a potato salad whose ingredients, like most of the vegetables, are sourced from his close friend and vegetable grower, **Francesco Virgara**. Chargrilled Spencer Gulf prawns served with smoky eggplant "caviar" make a fine entree, while pasta lovers won't go past the blue swimmer crab with taglierini in a chilli cream sauce, one of the dishes that Pepe perfected at Cibo. Although Calabrian by birth, Pepe cooked in Florence and knows exactly how a bistecca alla Fiorentina should be - in this case it clocks in at around 1kg, so unless one is very hungry it does the job for two diners. Daily specials might include braised rabbit with white wine and herbs served with tagliatelle, or grilled swordfish with roasted capsicum, and breakfast - eggs baked in tomato sauce, or frittata with wood oven toast and all the trimmings - is available daily. Shop 105, Burnside Village, 447 Portrush Rd, Glenside; phone (08) 8379 8991. Open for breakfast and lunch daily, dinner Thursday-Saturday.

Meanwhile, **Chloe's Restaurant** this year clocks up its 30th anniversary - just as its highly respected **Nick Papazahariakis** is turning 70. But there's no slowing down as chef **Johnny Triscari's** cooking continues to evolve, and although the prices are getting up there a little, this place is a lesson in what constitutes good value for money. Chloe's 140-year-old bluestone mansion features fine antiques and paintings, a 12,500 bottle wine cellar filled with well-aged treasures, the appropriate Riedel glasses for even the cheapest drop and exemplary old-school service. Signature dishes include Kangaroo Island marron with a crisp duck skin salad or smoked duck breast with chargrilled eggplant and sauteed mushrooms, as well as an eight-course degustation menu. 36 College Rd, Kent Town; phone (08) 8362 2574. Open for dinner Monday-Saturday.

*Top left:* Level One restaurant interior.  
*Top right:* Pepe restaurant interior.