

brisbane grapevine

LIZZIE LOEL

THE **River Quay** development at the southern end of Brisbane's iconic Southbank Parklands is easily the most attractive outdoor space with an award-winning riverfront outdoor space that frames the arch of high-end restaurants and eateries such as The Jetty, Aquitaine, Popolo and Stokehouse Brisbane.

Until recently it also included The Cove, a bar-cum-eatery with a prime position overlooking lush green lawns, a wide reach of the river and striking CBD backdrop.

The venue remains in the same hands as before but this incarnation has a more defined offer. Owner **Adam Barton** says South Bank lacks a restaurant that focuses on quality, local seafood dishes done with style. "**River Quay Fish** will bring this to River Quay along with an experimental cocktail list and selection of craft beers - perfect for relaxed long lunches," he said.

The menu highlights are whiting tacos with red cabbage slaw and jalapenos, twice cooked octopus with lemongrass chilli and bread crumbs sitting over a tangy smoked romesco sauce and blue swimmer crab done Singapore style with coconut rice with Asian salad.

Fish of the day comes beer battered with chips and aioli, fried capers and watercress but you can also add a side or two - think house-made onion rings, grilled broccolini with citrus crumbs, Asian greens



or smoked marrow butter with bread. River Quay, Sidon St, Southbank; phone (07) 3844 3993.

Barton has been a busy boy not just at the River Quay but also in the CBD. He owns the Americana-style bar Brooklyn Standard in Eagle Lane and, along with business partner **Manny Sakalarakis** (who co-owns 1889 Enoteca at Woolloongabba as well as wine company Addley Clark), they've headed south crossing the border into the gritty streets of Mexico. **Chingon** (Mexican slang for badass) serves ultra-casual street food on sustainable, disposable flatware alongside a better-than-you'd-expect list of craft beers and "badass" tequilas.

The owners take a swipe at the "chain store drudgery that has saturated the market over the past decade" referring to the ho-hum Mexican offering Brisbane has seen courtesy of the recent proliferation of taco franchises to open of late. They've thrown down the sombrero-shaped gauntlet claiming to be the "renegade antidote" who are set to "redefine Brisbane's understanding of Mexican cuisine".

Spoken like true "Chingons". Recipes are authentic and home spun with every tortilla and taco made on the premises, flavours are smoky and charred with refreshing salsas like pineapple and capsicum over char grilled achiote pork, pico de gallo over honey and orange scented charcoal chicken and de pescado - flame grilled fish with fresh lime red cabbage salsa and chipotle crema queso. Eagle Lane, Brisbane City; phone 0405 414 131.

And while our streets might be awash with cookie-cutter cantinas, we've also experienced a locust-like plague of burger bars claiming to emulate the authentic American versions slick with charry beef patties, technicolour mustard and those ubiquitous slices of pickles.

Ben's Burgers and **Chur Burger** are both popular Fortitude Valley haunts and **The Bleachers** takes care of West End dwellers' Yankee cravings, and **Miss Kay's** in the CBD and also **Mitchelton**, west of Brisbane, offers a wide range of flavours, including the poutine burger with beef patty, bacon and halloumi as well as the porky pig, an over-the-top pulled pork, house slaw and sweet BBQ



sauce concoction. **Hank's** burst on to the Caxton St scene recently and you can also get your fill of burgers and a vast array of street food at **Eat Street Markets** located on the Northshore at Hamilton in Brisbane's north every Friday and Saturday from 4pm-10pm. Eat Street Markets, 99 MacArthur Tce, Hamilton; phone (07) 3358 2500.

Greenhill Bar opened in Petrie Tce in September to an appreciative audience hungry for colourful cocktails and a hybrid mix of traditional bar snacks all featuring experimental twists.

Take the twice cooked lamb ribs for example. Where just any bar would plonk them down doused in sticky glaze, the Greenhill version comes with a balsamic reduction and potato emulsion. Charred corn on the cob is sprinkled with crispy pork crumb and served with spicy buttermilk remoulade, and brie is baked until runny with orange, sage and cranberry molasses.

Artisan and craft beers abound at the bar and the wine list concentrates on young, emerging producers and will feature a seasonal rotation of around 13 different varietals, some with French and Italian passports.

The new venue takes its name from history - the site is formally Greenhill Gaol, constructed in 1860 by brothers and early developers Andrew and John Petrie (after which the suburb is named). It later became a police barracks and home to our defence forces until the '80s when it became an entertainment precinct. 48 Petrie Tce, Brisbane City; phone 0418 751 926.

Above and Left: Interior wall artwork and food from Chingon restaurant.