



FINDING a good steak isn't a difficult thing to do in Adelaide, especially given many of the local steakhouse owners' familiarity with star South Australian waygu beef producer Mayura Station, along with other local producers of black angas and Hereford cattle.

One of the most spectacular offerings comes from the Hilton Adelaide's **Coal Cellar + Grill**, whose signature dish is a 1.2kg angas tomahawk steak resting on a tumble of roast heritage vegetables, served with bearnaise sauce and a highly-reduced red wine jus. Although well suited to corporate dining, Coal has a comfortable, informal style to it. A massive coal-fired grill glows on one side of its elegant dining space, while a glass-encased 3000-bottle cellar with one of the best shiraz lists in Adelaide beckons on the other. It's also a great place to sample South Australian wines - of its 520 labels, 85 per cent are from SA. Most, but not all customers, consider the giant tomahawk steak a meal for two, especially if teamed with crisp duck fat chips and a salad of coal-grilled peach with prosciutto and dolce gorgonzola, or perhaps roasted heirloom tomatoes with Persian fetta, sorrell and baby beetroots. Less formidable steaks include Mayura Station waygu rump or Clare Valley Gold beef fillet, which come with roasted vine-trussed tomatoes and a choice of sauces. Hilton Adelaide, 233 Victoria Squ, Adelaide. Open for lunch Monday to Friday, dinner daily; phone (08) 8237 0697.

After nearly 30 years, **Gaicho's** remains not only Adelaide's meat Mecca, but also one of its most successful restaurants, and as Argentinian in style as its famed chimichurri sauce.

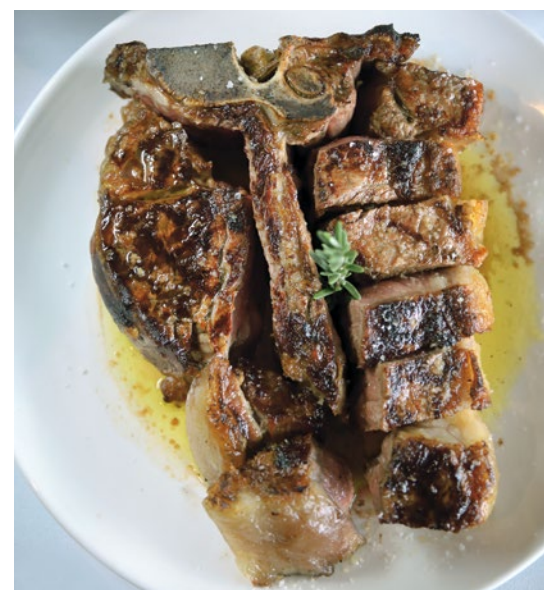
The beef is hand selected and butchered on the premises by hugely experienced meat

master and head chef **Chris Robinson**, whose secret is to first glaze and seal each steak with chimichurri before it hits the charcoal grill, then turning it only once before meeting the coals. Gaicho's is essentially a grill restaurant so it's not just about steak. You can start with traditional Argentinian meat-filled empanadas and follow that with a first-rate paella packed with fresh seafood, but for the carnivores it's all about meat - such as the parrillada mixta, or mixed grill, a feast of chargrilled chorizo sausage, pork belly, morcilla, smoked chicken beef and lamb. But the hero steak is the costilla de bife, a 600g scotch fillet on the bone, closely followed in popularity by a 500g ojo de bife, porterhouse off the bone. Can they do something bigger to order? You bet. The current record is a 3kg T-bone that a Serbian concreter demolished solo in 20 minutes. He was no doubt helped by an excellent list of Argentinian wines. Gaicho's, 91 Gouger St, Adelaide. Open for lunch Monday to Friday, dinner daily; phone (08) 8231 2299.

Since reappearing on Adelaide stoves, and now with his own restaurant **Pepe Cucina** in Burnside Village, Calabrian-born **Salvatore Pepe** has become well recognised for his ultra-authentic style of Italian cooking. Pepe was an integral part of the great success of the former Cibo restaurant in North Adelaide, which closed its doors a decade ago. Now, with a kitchen staffed by chefs as passionately traditional as he, Pepe is turning the culinary clock back to dishes that are as authentic as he can make them. While dishes such as an exemplary vitello tonnato or char-grilled Spencer Gulf prawns with cannellini bean puree and crisp pancetta make good starters, and you might be tempted by a herb-crusting salmon fillet, it's at his charcoal grill that Pepe really shines. 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. Here it's a giant black angas T-bone, carefully cut by hand to avoid bandsaw burn, and aged for six weeks. He also insists that the animal be at least 18 months old, not the usual 12 months: "The difference in flavour is enormous," Pepe says. It's then gently seared over very hot South African

charcoal for 20 minutes, salted and served rare and sliced, as per tradition, and best served with side dishes of Calabrese stir-fried vegetables and some rosemary potatoes. Shop 105, Burnside Village, 447 Portrush Rd, Glenside; phone (08) 8379 8991. Open for breakfast and lunch daily, dinner Thursday-Saturday.

As an artisan food producer, cook and food educator, **Saskia Beer** has followed in her famed mother Maggie's footsteps and is making a major impact on Barossa Valley cuisine, including a collaboration with the Novotel Barossa Valley Resort's **The Cellar Kitchen Restaurant and Bar**. Saskia Beer Farm Produce has successfully engaged local proveedores, growers and farmers as produce partners, enabling **The Cellar Kitchen** to provide an authentic regional experience that draws on the long-standing food traditions of the region. With Novotel's kitchen team, Saskia has developed a new seasonal menu that includes her own free range chicken with blood orange, juniper and polenta, and a can't miss lamb hot pot with roast carrots from produce partner Hutton Vale Lamb. Naturally you finish things off with Maggie Beer's famous quince paste - and enjoy a wine list that provides an instant comprehensive tour of Barossa cellar doors. Novotel Barossa Valley, 42 Pioneer Ave, Rowland Flat. Open for breakfast, lunch and dinner daily; phone (08) 8524 0000. 



Top left: Tomahawk steak from the Hilton. Above right: Bistecca alla Fiorentina from Pepe Cucina restaurant.