



McLAREN Vale continues to raise the bar when it comes to the number and quality of its restaurants, lifting its culinary offering - not to mention its wine - to become among the best in any Australian wine region.

Most notably, and expensively - both in the cost of its construction and the price of a meal - there's the extraordinary d'Arenberg Cube, but hot on its heels has come **Bocca di Lupo** (Mouth of the Wolf), the latest venture by Mitolo Wines.

Although built around several jet-black former shipping containers, this is a superbly styled \$3.5m restaurant with food, wine and service to match. Heading the team on the floor is **Patrick White**, one of Australia's most highly credentialed sommeliers and now restaurant manager. A desire not to impose the development on the surrounding landscape drove the idea of the impermanent, shipping-container design, a pop-up structure reminiscent of the Italia Sagra, a festival designed to showcase local food and wine.

With its spare, elegant design featuring polished wormy chestnut wooden floors and an expansive spotted gum deck, and views on two sides over surrounding vineyards, this is a very stylish restaurant setting.

While head chef **Tom Jack's** dishes are complex, bringing in many flavours and textures, they are at all times coherent and delicious. Baby beetroots, on a base of acidulated chocolate with liquorice sponge, candied walnuts and citrus and cumin-flavoured yoghurt, or slow-cooked Angas short rib pulled and shaped into a brick with coriander emulsion, cauliflower foam and a smoked cauliflower wafer are exemplary. And you must have the truffle mashed potato - the Mitolos are also the largest packer and exporter of potatoes in



the southern hemisphere. Bocca di Lupo, 141 McMurtrie Rd, McLaren Vale. Open for lunch Thursday to Monday, dinner Friday-Saturday; phone (08) 8323 9304.

Serial restaurateur **Walter Ventura** has been responsible for close to a dozen Adelaide restaurants over the years, never afraid to close one and reopen it wearing a new and equally colourful suit of clothes, always fun and visually interesting, and always surprisingly accomplished in the kitchen.

**Hispanic Mechanic** took over from his former Italian restaurant, Osteria de Mesa, which was given a new Latin American direction in 2015 with help from chef and co-owner **Greggory Hill**. It's a sprawling place, entering through a large courtyard complete with wood oven leading to bars and the restaurant proper, clad in white tiles and a semi-industrial feel fitting its "mechanic" title.

As head mechanic, the American-born Hill has worked in kitchens in Mexico, Spain, Argentina and Peru, giving him all the experience he needs to deliver a broad range of Latin American dishes, with a particular focus on Mexican cuisine with a dash of Korean tossed in, stemming apparently from the large Korean population in Mexico. Now Hill has decided that of all the cuisines he knows, Mexican is the one most suited to vegan cooking, given the richness and vibrancy of its flavours and its gluten-free, corn-based dishes.

So although he's continuing with the traditional Mexican cooking that he's perfected, his all-new vegan menu, from a dedicated vegan kitchen, features dishes such as pantacones - crisp slices of deep-fried green banana with guacamole, bola sin carne - soy protein, rice and quinoa balls with a blistering hot chipotle sauce, and artichoke cakes with potato and cauliflower rissoles.

Enjoy them with a vegan Mexican beer such as Ocho Reales Pilsner and you won't miss the animal protein at all. Hispanic Mechanic, 205 Glen Osmond

Rd, Frewville. Open for lunch Friday and Sunday, dinner Wednesday to Sunday; phone (08) 8338 6435.

Everyone will have their own opinion as to where you find the best pizza in Adelaide, but **Sunny's Pizza** has to be up there among the frontrunners, with a friendly style as sunny as its name and just half a dozen pizzas on its menu.

Tucked in a back alley this semi-industrial space tells you where Adelaide's fast evolving food scene is at and where it's going. A '70s retro casual makeover provides booths and bench seating overlooking a wood-panelled bar, pizza oven and kitchen.

And while Sunny's claims to be just a bar that sells pizza it's so much more than that. The pizzas include toppings such as pepperoni with squid ink cacciatore, onion confit and San Marzano tomato, and, yes, there's pineapple, too, as in chargrilled pineapple with gabagool (a slang term for a dried Italian meat), green chilli sauce and the usual San Marzano tomato base. There's also a "non pizza" menu that can't be missed, including dishes such as fried squid with nduja romesco and burnt lemon, or burnt cauliflower with walnuts and pickled garlic. It goes very late, the music is trashy '80s pop and there are wines you've never heard of. Sunny's Pizza, 17 Solomon St, Adelaide. Open for dinner Wednesday to Saturday; phone 0404 280 522.

Top left: Bola sin carne from Hispanic Mechanic.  
Top right: Interior of Hispanic Mechanic restaurant.  
Below: Baby beetroots & licorice sponge from Mitolo Bocca di Lupo.

