



THINGS are certainly good at the top end of town. **Treasury Casino** which is housed across two beautiful heritage listed buildings at the top end of the Brisbane CBD and just a stone's throw from the river, has a new restaurant and this one is sporting a seriously striking fit out. Utilising the heritage features - think cedar arched windows and doors, ornate cornices and panelling and working fireplaces - the room also features long banquettes and marble-topped tables, impressive glassed-in wine walls, and a design aesthetic that marries the elements and materials found on a typical Australian cattle station such as timber, wrought iron, hand-stitched leather plus the odd cattle skull, with the rich textures of a luxury dining experience.

And luxurious it is, with a private dining room housing 10 high rollers that features a dry-ageing display fridge, velvet armchairs and an impressive array of carving knives.

The menu is as meat-centric as you'd expect, with a heavy emphasis on Australian wagyu cuts with marble scores of three, five and nine, the highest by Australian standards.

The **Gambaro** name is synonymous with seafood going back several generations in a family that established its roots in Caxton St with a fish and chipper in the '30's. Now run by the present generation, brothers **John, Don and Frank**, Gambaro's seafood restaurant is part of the Gambaro boutique



hotel, which is across the road from the original Black Hide in famous Caxton St. Alongside glamorous cuts of well-aged meats are lobster tails, moreton bay bugs, oodles of oysters and that benchmark of luxe living - caviar.

So if you strike it lucky on a night out at the blackjack tables, head in to **Blackhide** and order some inky Italian oscietra or splash out on some beluga, which will only set you back \$1000 for 50g. And if the wins are modest there's always Sterling Caviar which is farmed from American white sturgeons and is a fraction of the cost at just \$550 a pop. Black Hide, Treasury Casino, 130 William St, Brisbane; phone (07) 3306 8888.

Across the river from the casino the institution that is **The Greek Club** has had a \$3.5 million dollar makeover and the results are striking. At the front of the complex, which looks over Musgrave Park in West End, is **Nostimo**, the all-new signature restaurant and the jewel in the iconic club's crown. The 75-seater boasts a thatched roof, cool whites and a naturally neutral colour palette as well as a breezy terrace out the front that seats a further 85 guests. The food breaks out of the usual taverna-style mode under the stewardship of Sydney-based chef **David Tsirekas** who also owns the acclaimed 1821. Tsirekas will visit monthly and implement a contemporary take on regional Greek favourites. Think saganaki with caramelised figs and crushed almonds, horta with broccoli, lemon and dill and slow cooked beef cheek stifado with baby onions and celeriac puree. 29 Edmondstone Rd, South Brisbane; phone (07) 3844 1166.

Another Greek to dance on to the culinary stage with a burst from the bouzouki

is **Stavros the Greek** at Kenmore, in Brisbane's west. It's the brainchild of **Renate Roberts** whose knack of nailing cuisines that are not her own is something to behold. First came Sichuan Bang Bang, now in three suburbs and serving authentic, contemporary Sichuan fare, then Pizza Violetta where the toppings are authentic and the charry bases would make an Italian break out an aria, and now she's taking on casual Greek and locals are giving it a resounding Opa! 4 Wongabel St, Kenmore; phone 0412 347 325.

Also opened recently is the much anticipated new offering from the talented team from **Rick Shores**, the multi-awarded pan Asian diner that sits bang on the beach at Burleigh. Gently tiered seating means there are no bad seats but the ones at the front make you feel as though you might, at any minute, be swept into the mythical green room, so close is the shore line and fresh is the seafood. The melting pot of Fortitude Valley has seen its share of Chinese restaurant openings (being home to Chinatown) but now is set to get it's first neo-Chinese restaurant, whatever that might mean. **Little Valley** has a black and white tiled bar, wishbone-style seating and a pijui garden (beer garden) out the back. Serving traditional dishes from the many and varied provinces of China, the "neo" part comes in with the modern takes on such dishes which hail from Guangdong, Shandong, Hunan and Yunnan that have been cherry-picked to suit our balmy climes. 6 Warner St, Fortitude Valley.

Top left: Shucked oysters with red wine and eschalot vinegar from Blackhide by Gambaro in the Treasury Casino.

Top right: Angus rib on bone from Blackhide by Gambaro in the Treasury Casino.

Left: Wine storage display from Blackhide by Gambaro in the Treasury Casino.