

SOAPBOX

AMANDA BLAIR HAS A RIGHT ROYAL COOK-OFF



DID YOU KNOW?
Amanda has raised more than \$1m for charity.

'Oblong'. There's a word you don't see anymore. The mere sight of it had me on my knees, clattering through the cake tin drawer trying to find an oblong-shaped tin. It was to be greased, floured and papered for the first of many practice runs in anticipation of the 2010 Royal Show Cookery Competition, specifically Class 63. Banana Cake, Iced, Oblong. It's not the first time I've entered this section. I remember the heady days back in '03 when I submitted my first entry in a rounded tin. They were good times. My icing was even, my cake was moist yet firm, and my edges had no hint of scorch. And as for my bottom, well, who could say no? The judges could, actually – hardened women with steely eyes, pursed lips and sensible cardigans. No, they said. No, no, no. In '04 I went the log. A daring move for one so young, but I thought boldness would be looked upon favourably by adjudicators confronted with a log-jammed

field. But again – no. Like Gandalf in *Lord of the Rings* they bestrode the hallowed path to glory and bellowed "You shall not pass!" In '05, my soggy middle provoked derisory sneers. I thought my time had come in '06 when Cyclone Larry pushed the banana prices way beyond the budget of most pensioners. But I wasn't the only one boxing clever: Class 63 saw its greatest number of entries. I didn't stand a chance. In the ensuing years, my confidence went through the Mixmaster – not once but thrice I baked banana cakes only to disqualify myself from entry on the grounds of PTBD (Post Traumatic Baking Disorder). But ladies, bring a plate because this is my year. My bananas are locked and loaded, my bicarb is carefully measured and, best of all, my oblong tin is buttered and gleaming. It's the shape of things to come.

Hear Amanda weekdays from 1-4pm on FIVEAA.

3 OF THE BEST... RETAIL SPACES

In retail, the store tells the story of the brand. Here's our pick of the finest commercial spaces in the city



Alannah Hill
The interiors by designer David Hicks teeter between the Mad Hatter's tea party and Marie Antoinette's closet, with a riot of plush pink and white offset by wild green chandeliers. 269 Rundle St, city, 8215 0477, alannahill.com.au.



Hugo Boss
The sharp space under powerhouse law firm Minter Ellison is perfect for this cool German brand. Clean lines, green glass and slate complement the minimalist clothes. 25 Greenfell St, city, 8212 1072, hugoboss.com.



Aesop
This branch of the innovative cosmetic store features an undulating roof made from recycled brown glass bottles and was nominated for a London Design Museum award. Shop 7b, 100 Rundle Mall, city, 8232 5957, aesop.net.au.

HEART OF THE CITY: Rundle Mall, opened in September 1976, was Australia's first street pedestrian mall

TOP OF THE POPS



Classic books
With 75 new titles added to the collection, these popular Penguins are living up to their name. Just \$9.95 at all good bookstores.

The Sorcerer's Apprentice
It's pure Disney hokum, but we will all go see it because Adelaide girl Teresa Palmer plays the love interest.

Royal Adelaide Show
A must for farmers, foodies, kids and kids at heart.

Father's Day
You'll be in the good books if you give Dad this deluxe four-burner BBQ for Father's Day on September 5. Bunnings, \$1299, 8152 6500, bunnings.com.au.



Finals footy
Whether your team is playing or not, it's impossible not to get caught up in finals fever as the best teams in the country raise their game a notch.

Not having tickets for Powderfinger's last gig
Sadly, their special farewell gig on September 16 is beyond sold out. Sit by the Torrens and see if you can hear a few bars.

Hay fever
When spring has sprung – the pollen is never far behind.



Adelaide drivers
Such easy roads... why make it so difficult?

DOWN THE TUBE