

The Forager: Stag goes 'neo bistro', taking stock

MARY TAYLOR | 21 OCTOBER 2015



The interior of the front bar at The Stag hotel. Photo: Nat Rogers/InDaily

THE FORAGER | In this week's column: The Stag opens its doors with a new look and a very different menu, homemade stock you don't need to simmer for 12 hours, art that looks good enough to eat, what to do with cumquats, and a feast of food and wine events.

Zucchini flowers, champers and caviar

Yes, stuffed zucchini blossoms will be on the menu when The Stag is officially launched tonight after its \$2.5 million renovation.

Head chef Camillo Crugnale has designed a modern pub menu to match the The Stag's contemporary copper and monochrome look, but a few of the dishes for which he has become famous over his 35 years as one of Adelaide's best Italian chefs – such as vitello tonnato (veal slices with olive, tuna and caper sauce), crab pasta and stuffed zucchini blossoms – are part of the fare.



A place for a quiet drink before dinner at The Stag. Photo: Nat Rogers/InDaily

The Stag now has lots of options for non-meat eaters, says Crugnale.

"The menu is much more lady-like and fresh, with little bits and pieces from all over Europe - I would get murdered if I don't have zucchini flowers for the ladies.

"I like to describe The Stag as a 'neo bistro.'"

The charming Abdullah Daher (ex-Pranzo) is The Stag's front-of-house manager, welcoming guests to the new Vardon dining room with a menu including scallops with asparagus, pork jowl and hazelnut zabaglione (\$19.50); lacquered duck breast infused with cinnamon and star anise and served with an Arabica coffee glaze (\$35.50); and pork rib eye with summer fruits, chorizo and Cinzano jus (\$29.50).



The Vardon dining room at The Stag. Photo: Nat Rogers/InDaily

Upstairs, the Champagne bar will offer a caviar-inspired menu including Coffin Bay oysters with vodka and salmon caviar (five for \$19.50) to go with a selection of French Champagnes.

The new menu also includes bar snacks such as handmade popcorn with Gascony butter (duck fat mixed with crushed garlic) and speck (\$8), and casual bar items such as home-made beef pies and lamb sausage rolls (two for \$8), a fillet-steak sandwich with Barossa bacon, onion, beetroot relish and chips (\$18), and chicken parmigiana (\$20).

There's a simple but substantial weekend breakfast menu which can be enjoyed upstairs on the broad balcony looking east to the hills over Rymill Park and all the way up Rundle Street to the west.

New range of old-school stock



Adelaide cook Bree May. Photo: supplied

Local cook, good-food champion and 2014 *My Kitchen Rules* winner Bree May has released a range of natural chicken, beef and vegetable cooking stocks.

The stock is made from 100 per cent locally sourced free-range chicken, grass-fed beef and vegetables.