



OUR FAVOURITE PLATES OF THE MONTH

ALL THE CHOCOLATE

Some people kicked off the year with a cleanse; I ate chocolate. We've sourced chocolate from more than 40 producers around the country for our tasting on page 76 so GT HQ has been flooded with the small-batch, the hand-tempered, the single-origins and all manner of variations. My favourites? Sue Lewis, Wawa and Bibelot for their beautiful packaging, Fortunato No 4 dark for the 3pm fix and Winnow's Cherry Ripe-esque raspberry and coconut just because. MAGGIE SCARDIFIELD

THE BAYTIME

When is a chocolate dessert not a chocolate dessert? When the chocolate isn't chocolate, but rather the grain freekeh, toasted to a nutty, chocolatey brown, and used to enrobe peanut-milk ice-cream and caramel on a twig of lemon myrtle. Team Noma likens it to a Gaytime; the look is way more Magnum, the taste sublime. *Noma Australia*, 43 Barangaroo Rd, Sydney, NSW, (02) 9188 4100 PAT NOURSE

CHOCOLATE NEMESIS

Bucci's take on The River Cafe's famed chocolate cake is an oldie but a goodie. It looks like a brownie but the texture is surprisingly lush and mousse-like so it's light yet rich. And better still, you don't need to book a ticket to London to enjoy it. *Bucci*, 15 James St, Fortitude Valley, Qld, (07) 3252 7484 FIONA DONNELLY

I like chocolate but I don't swoon over it like some people do and I certainly don't identify as a *chocaholic*. But (and this is a big but) after

working with the team on this chocolate special, I have a new appreciation for this confectionery which brings so much joy to so many. My chocolate dessert game has certainly received a kick thanks to inspiration from Emma Knowles and Lisa Featherby in their choctacular food feature, which begins on page 100 – chocolate honeycomb, semifreddo and, of course, the ultimate brownie are now part of my repertoire (just in time for Easter). In other chocolate-related news, we wrap up the country's best desserts (page 92), chocolate shops (page 80) and bars (page 76), Annabel Crabb makes an argument for much-maligned white chocolate (page 99) and Fergus Henderson tells of his quest for perfect chocolate ice-cream (page 90).

Also in the issue, *Gourmet Traveller's* chief critic Pat Nourse reviews Noma Australia. Has there been a more highly anticipated restaurant opening in Sydney? I certainly can't recall one. Chef René Redzepi and his talented army have brought all the hallmarks of their celebrated Copenhagen restaurant, overlaid them with a warm and convincing Australian accent (native tamarind, magpie goose, crocodile fat and wattleseed are just some of the indigenous ingredients on the carte) and opened on the Barangaroo waterfront for a 10-week pop-up in collaboration with Tourism Australia and Lendlease.

It's been 18 months in the making, tickets sold out in four minutes and there's 27,000 people on the wait-list (yes, you read correctly) so it's fair to say there's some interest in the project. Does it make the grade? Read all about it on page 63.

Happy March,



Anthea Loucas Boshia



ON THE COVER *Choc-malt and almond brownie (recipe page 102)*
 Recipe and styling *Emma Knowles* Photography *Ben Dearnley*
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CONTRIBUTORS



JESSICA REFTEL EVANS AND MARTIN REFTEL

Jess Reftel Evans and Martin Reftel met while studying photography at RMIT and the couple now work as a team. "This way we get to see each other at work every

day," says Jess. After eight years living in London they returned to Melbourne three years ago, lured by "friends, family and lifestyle". In this issue they shot the city's best chocolate shops. "Bibelot was visually stunning, and I loved the guys at Monsieur Truffe," says Jess. See page 80.



GERALD DIFFEY

A player on the Melbourne hospitality scene for more than 25 years, British-born Gerald Diffey has been ahead of the curve on everything from craft coffee and laneway dives to baking and wine bars. Exporting

a version of his eponymous hit Carlton North bar (GT's 2010 Bar of the Year) to San Sebastián, however, might be his boldest move yet. Falling in love with the town, he "just wanted to be part of it". Get the inside word on the Basque city's tastiest addresses in his feature on page 148.



ELIZA O'HARE

On her springtime trip from Vancouver to Banff aboard the *Rocky Mountaineer*, Eliza O'Hare acquired a new appreciation of pioneers, poutine and pickles. "Experiencing this extraordinary wilderness

on the *Mountaineer* almost feels a bit like cheating," says the associate editor of *Harper's Bazaar*. "But it's really the ultimate armchair adventure: drinking Canadian chardonnay under a cashmere blanket while gliding past rapids and sheer rock faces." See page 158.