

# History repeats itself

A couple of days ago the 'Herald Sun' published the article below with the title "George Calombari's Big Mac attack". A very similar article was published on the 3rd of October

1971. Back then, it was Mr Stavros Vlahos, a very well-known Greek businessman who did exactly the same thing as George Calombaris! He challenged Mr Wilson, who had a

"Bachelor of hambergerology" to step in his take away and try a "real Aussie" hamburger.

When Mr Vlahos heard that Mr Wilson thought that the Australian burgers were the

worse, he called the Sun Herald to complain about the "unfair attack". Below is a scan of the article and Mr Vlahos is pictured eating one of his great Australian hamburgers. It is worth a read!

## George Calombaris's Big Mac attack

**MASTERCHEF judge George Calombaris has panned the show's biggest advertiser, McDonald's, describing the burger chain as "the devil".**

The outspoken chef forbids his nieces and nephews from eating "foul processed food" from Macca's. If they are invited to children's birthday parties at the chain, they take lunch boxes filled with fresh food.

"McDonald's is the devil," Calombaris said.

"My nieces and nephews don't know what a burger tastes like at McDonald's because we don't let them eat there."

The burger giant spent hundreds of thousands of dollars each week on advertising during Channel 10's Celebrity MasterChef, won by Olympic swimmer Eamon Sullivan last week.

But advertising dollars for his show meant nothing to the candid Calombaris, who has started filming next year's MasterChef series.

"I despise all of those fast-food chains," he said.

"Why would you eat that stuff when it's so easy to make good hamburgers at home?"

"My family won't eat there and we won't let the kids eat there."

"If they're invited to birthday parties at McDonald's, my sister packs the kids a little lunch box with fresh stuff. The kids know they're not allowed to eat the food."

McDonald's spokeswoman Amy Lawrence said the company was proud of its food and would continue advertising on MasterChef, regardless of Calombaris's outburst.

"MasterChef is a great property for us," she said.

"Like our brand, the popular show is about food bringing families together.



"In the main, the produce used in our restaurants is the same as what people can purchase at the supermarket to cook a meal at home."

But none of this impressed Calombaris.

"McDonald's is an American chain that has plagued ... the world and will hopefully die one day," he said.

"They sell foul processed food with no origin. It's not nice, it's not healthy and I can't stand it."

### GEORGE'S REAL CHEESEBURGER

Serves 4.

Ingredients:  
500g beef mince  
4 slices of cheddar cheese  
4 burger buns  
1 x 400g can crushed tomatoes  
1 brown onion, chopped  
2 tbs tomato paste  
1 tsp vinegar  
1 tsp cornflour  
500ml water  
1 clove garlic, chopped  
100ml olive oil

To make the tomato sauce:

Cook onion and garlic in medium-sized saucepan with olive oil for 5min until onion is translucent. Add tomato paste and cook for a further minute. Add crushed tomatoes and vinegar and cook on low heat for 30min.

In a bowl, mix cornflour and

water together and mix into tomatoes and cook for 5min,

stirring constantly. Blend mixture in blender until smooth. Place in fridge to cool.

### For the burgers:

Season beef mince and divide into four portions. Roll into balls and, using your hand, flatten into circles about 8cm in diameter and 2cm thick.

Heat a medium-sized frypan with oil and cook patties for 10min or until golden brown, turning after about 5min.

Lightly toast buns, place patties on bottom, then a slice of cheese and spoon over tomato sauce. Place the lid on and serve.

### CHRISTMAS PUDDING ICE CREAM POPS

Serves 4.

Ingredients:  
300g Christmas pudding  
1 litre of vanilla ice cream

### METHOD

Mix ingredients and place in ice cream moulds. Freeze at least three hours.

caption: *George Calombaris cooks his own burgers with nephew Michael and niece Anthea Guerra. Picture: JON HARGEST Source: Herald Sun Below: article published in the Sun Herald on the 3rd of October 1971.*

## Sydney's hamburger kings hit back

By CHRIS ANDERSON

Sydney's food-bar owners this week hit back at a stinging overseas attack on the humble Australian hamburger.

"Our hamburgers are the best in the world," said Mr Steve Vlahos, who owns two takeaway hamburger shops in the inner-city.

"We don't want anybody from overseas telling us how to cook hamburgers."

"Anyway, American hamburgers must be about the worst in the world."

His views were supported by many other Sydney food bar owners, who all defended the local product.

Scores of other readers also wrote or telephoned "The Sun-Herald" to complain about last week's attack on the Australian hamburger by US millionaire, Mr Donn Wilson.

Mr Wilson, 36, is in Sydney to open six takeaway food bars for the mammoth McDonald Corporation of America.

The company — which will also open Australia's first "Hamburger University" — will open its Sydney operations at Yagoona in December.

Mr Wilson, who has a

"Bachelor of Hamburgerology" degree, claimed he taste-tested anything between 20 and 30 Australian hamburgers a day.

Laughingly, he added: "Usually I take one bite and throw them away. Mostly they're pretty bad."

But this week the owners of many Sydney hamburger shops and food bars bit back.

### Challenge

Many challenged Mr Wilson to come into their shops to taste a "real Aussie" hamburger.

Mr Steve Vlahos, who has been in the Sydney hamburger business for the past 10 years, said he sold 3,000 hamburgers a week.

Slicing up onions in his Carlton Arcade shop, he added: "Mr Wilson may have a point — some hamburgers are pretty bad."

"But mine — they're exquisite! We have connoisseurs from all over



Mr Vlahos with one of his great Australian hamburgers.

Sydney crowding in here during the week.

"I would like Mr Wilson to come down and try my hamburgers. I'm sure he would approve."

Challenges also came from Brisbane, Melbourne and the NSW South Coast.

The manager of the Ampol Service at Woomargama, near Albury, Mr Warren Edgerton, said he made the best hamburgers between Perth and Surfers Paradise.

He added: "Nobody makes a better hamburger than my wife, Betty. Mr Wilson should come down here and try them."

But in Sydney, Mr Wilson was unrepentant about his attack on the Australian hamburger.

At his Crows Nest office, he said: "Sure, there's some good 'burgers made out

here. But generally the Australian ones are awful.

"Australians don't really know what a good hamburger tastes like."

"We will sell the traditional McDonald hamburger — with a soft bun and real beef pattie."

"There's nothing like that anywhere in Australia."

### Miss them

And at least one "Sun-Herald" reader agrees with Mr Wilson.

Mrs Roy Spence, formerly of Fresno, California, said she had missed the traditional American hamburgers during her time in Australia.

She added: "We have been living in Manly for the past 18 months and the only thing we miss about home is the hamburgers."