



Turning up the heat

This year's MasterChef Australia is promising to be spicier than the 2009 version with a much tighter, faster-paced format. Judge Matt Preston, who has gone from respected food critic to one of the hottest new stars on television thanks to the show, said viewers would notice the high-pressured atmosphere from the minute the show started. "It's running at a much tighter pace," he said. "Hopefully, you'll see the contestants much more clearly and develop a relationship with them early on." Preston said this year the judges had chosen contestants who had a real true talent to cook, not just novelty acts. "What we had were quality cooks and then guys that were terrible cooks, but they were always very entertaining," he said. "I think that is gone. 'It's about the search for Australia's next master chef - it's not really about using food as a prop.'" In other MasterChef Australia secrets, the Sunday Herald Sun can reveal: THERE will be some high-quality female cooks in the finals. Producers and the judges are keen to maintain a female touch after last year's host Sarah Wilson left the show; the contestants will relaunch the menu for George Calombaris's popular City restaurant The Press Club, with preparing a high-powered celebrity-filled dinner as one of the challenges.

Sunday Herald Sun (Melbourne), April 18.

Pressure cooking with passion

Chef and restaurateur George Calombaris is full of passion not only for MasterChef, but also for the role of fresh food and good cooking in modern Australia. He sees that passion in his own restaurants, of course, and it's the foundation on which MasterChef contestants build their aspirations - and Calombaris has been delighted by what he's seen in the second series. "This year the food knowledge has been exceptional," says Calombaris, who has restaurants in Melbourne and on the Greek island of Mykonos. "But we've set them harder challenges - on one day we had them making 8500 canapes for 2000 people. "I'm making them cook food from the Press Club, things made by a chef with 18-20 years experience. We're just throwing things at them. Unfortunately it's like an apprenticeship on steroids but it's something they should do before they go out in the big bad world of egotistical chefs in professional kitchens.

Sunday Herald Sun (Melbourne), April 18.

Top-rating series plus biting news & commentary this week on UBI WORLD TV

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Polikatoikia - Mega Cosmos

Welcome to the condominium in Athens where gossip, intrigue, catfights, laughter, hatred and love inhabit the colorful lives of its tenants.

Every character you could imagine lives here: Manolis, whose "oh shit!!!" expression sets him apart; Argiris the crook; Jimmy the man on the go; Vasiliki the naive; Mary the bad mouthier; Panagiota the upper nose; Marcos the moody; Betty "another Christos"; Christos the logical; Thanasis the big mouth; Elpida the herbage; Natalie the cynical; Petros the teaser; Andreas another crook; George the frivolous; Nikos the shy; Lucia the dynamic; Takis the amateur; Eleni the angry... their misadventures continue on the series that makes Dante's Hell look like a children's playground! Watch the ongoing second season episodes of the wacky hit series Polikatoikia every Tuesday and Thursday at

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Al Tsantiri News - Alpha

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With a wide range of topics to explore, Lakis warms up the set once more and grabs us with his engaging presence, his well-aimed caustic comments and his subversive humor.

Watch Al Tsantiri News every Sunday at 21.00pm AEST on the channel where great Greek entertainment begins, Alpha, exclu-

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Balcano



Led by George Doukas, a favourite of the Australian Greek music scene, Balcano predominately features musicians with an East European background. Balcano offers an interesting fusion of Balkan music encompassing different genres: traditional, gypsy and contemporary. Balcano crosses cultural and political boundaries, blending brass and violin with bouzouki and baglama to deliver a big sound with exciting dance rhythms. Helene Doukas' vocals add a special flavour. Book early to avoid disappointment as George's concerts have sold out

in previous years and is sure to again! Cafe Carnivale website: www.cafecarnivale.com.au Date

Friday 23 April Time 8.15 pm - Venue Eastside Arts, 395 Oxford Street, Paddington

Cost Full \$28, Concession \$25, Caft Carnivale Members \$22

Contact Musica Viva Box Office 1800 688 482 (Mon - Fri 9.00 am - 5.00 pm)

www.cafecarnivale.com.au - please note web bookings close 24hrs prior to concert time. All seating is unreserved.

