

# Can't beat the classics

There is a good reason that old recipes still delight modern palates, writes Carli Ratcliff.

Steaming bowls of Provencal fish soup have been served at Bistro Moncur from the day it opened. The staple contains seven types of fish and three types of shellfish, with onions, garlic, carrots, celery, tomatoes, thyme, bay leaves and saffron. "It is a comforting dish," says owner and chef Damien Pignolet. Served with rouille and croutons, the soup is as popular today as it was 18 years ago, as are many of the dishes that premiered beside it.

"There are certain dishes that stay on the menu because of demand," Pignolet says. "We'd be persecuted and hanged if we took them off."

These include classic offerings such as sirloin with cafe de paris butter, fillet steak with bearnaise and salmon fillet with lobster boudin blanc and shellfish sauce. Peter and Eleni Conistis feel the same way about their moussaka. Mother Eleni's classic lamb moussaka is the most requested lunch dish at her basement cafe, Eleni's at the Civic Hotel.

Eleni combines finely-diced lamb shoulder and lamb mince for the filling. "The shoulder gives body to the dish and the traditional mince gives the dish a silkiness," Peter says. Rather than bechamel, Eleni tops her moussaka with a cheese custard of ricotta, feta and kefalotiri (a hard sheep's cheese).

Peter has watched his mother make it since he was a child. "You need to have an understanding of the classic way of preparing a dish," he says. "From there you can begin to interpret and experiment, if you don't have an idea of where things come from there is a void."

Peter's long-standing signature dish is his inter-



Modern touch... chef Peter Conistis, with his moussaka dish. Photo: Lee Besford

pretation of moussaka. Using Hervey Bay scallops instead of lamb and taramasalata made from white cod roe, he has adapted the dish to canape size for functions at the Civic Hotel. Chef Alessandro Pavoni of Ormeeggio agrees that a thorough understanding of traditional techniques and recipes is required by all chefs. "You need to follow the rules before you can break them and there are some dishes where you simply can't break them, like risotto," he says.

Pavoni believes tradition is paramount when it comes to executing the most famous dish of his native Lombardy. "It takes 20 minutes to make a risotto and it has to be made to order every time," he says. He also believes less is more: "A risotto should have a maximum of three ingredients - like pizza, the fewer ingredients the better."

Article from SMH by Carli Ratcliff.

## Scientific Paper Claims Ancient Tomb Does Not Contain Alexander the Great's half Brother

A scientific paper published in the "International Journal of Medical Science" by prominent researchers of Bristol, Manchester and Oxford Universities has questioned claims that an ancient tomb found in Vergina in northern Greece contains the remains of Philip III Arrhidaios. He is the half brother of Alexander the Great.

According to the paper published on Sept. 8th, the skull of the male body in the tomb bears marks of injuries consistent with those known to have occurred to Alexander's father Phillip II. (ANA-MPA)

According to Dr. Jonathan Musgrave of Bristol University's Centre for Clinical and Comparative Anatomy, the findings in Tomb II at Vergina discovered in 1977, are not consistent with historical accounts of Arrhidaios' death and burial in a number of ways.

According to Musgrave Arrhidaios was buried with his wife Eurydice and her mother Kynna whereas the Vergina tomb contains only two individuals, a man and a woman. The remains of the woman show that she was between 20 and 30. Eurydice is believed to have been just 19 years old when she died.

The male skull appears to have a healed fracture on the right



cheekbone and a marked asymmetry in the wall of the right maxillary sinus. History records that Philip II lost his right eye at the siege of Methone in 355-4 BC ; an injury which would be consistent with this damage to the skeleton.

The claim believes the 4th century B.C. tomb was that of Arrhidaios has also weakened by evidence that the bones were cremated with flesh still around them.

Arrhidaios was murdered in the autumn of 317 B.C. and his remains were subsequently exhumed and reburied between 4 and 17 months later. There is also evidence of a funeral pyre near the tomb indicating that the bodies were cremated at Vergina. Musgrave considers that the beliefs of ancient Greeks would not have allowed contact

with a decomposing corpse and that Arrhidaios would not have been exhumed, moved and then cremated with the flesh still around the bones.

The paper lends greater support to the view that Tomb II was that of Philip and his wife Cleopatra; one shared by Prof. Manolis Andronikos who made the discovery in Vergina.

Dr. Musgrave notes however, that the aim of his paper is not to press the claims for Philip II and Cleopatra but to point out flaws in those for Philip III Arrhidaios and Eurydice.

"We do not believe that the condition of the bones and the circumstances of their interment are consistent with descriptions of the funeral of Arrhidaios, his wife and his mother-in-law" he said.

(source: ana-mpa)

### MR STEWART'S SPEECH IN PARLIAMENT

## TRIBUTE TO CONSTABLE WILLIAM CREWS

Mr TONY STEWART (Bankstown—Parliamentary Secretary) [Thursday 09 September 2010, 6.12 p.m.]: Today was a day with news that no-one in Bankstown wanted to hear. Unfortunately, the people of Bankstown and the wider community heard first thing this morning the tragic news of the death of a 26-year-old police officer shot in the line of duty. This tragedy has deeply affected the people of Bankstown, who dearly love and support their local police officers. Constable William Crews was made of everything sterling about the NSW Police Force. He was courageous and made the ultimate sacrifice, which reminds us that every day our brave police put themselves in danger on the front line to serve and protect our community. We are forever grateful to them.

Constable William Crews was a member of the Middle Eastern Crime Squad and, with a number of other officers, was involved in a special residential search task at Cairds Avenue, Bankstown. I place on record my heartfelt condolences and sincere prayers to Constable William Crews' family and his colleagues in the wider police family throughout New South Wales who are grieving today. The Critical Incident Investigation Team has been established to examine the circumstances surrounding the shooting, but clearly today the New South Wales and Australian communities and 16,000 police officers and their families are deeply grieving over this tragic occurrence. Words cannot express the shock and grief we are all feeling as we attempt to digest the reality of this news. Today an officer went down working to help and protect the Bankstown and wider community.

Unfortunately, nowadays these are the risks associated with being a police officer. That is why the community is totally indebted to the service he provided and others like him provide through the NSW Police Force. I take this moment also to recognise the bravery of other officers involved in this incident. A number of them attended to Constable William Crews at risk of losing their own life in an attempt to save him. Their actions displayed the heroism and courage we expect from our police officers. I recognise that every day when I am in Bankstown, which is a great place. This sort of tragic incident is not indicative of the Bankstown area, where crime trends have fallen significantly over the past two years because of the great work of our police officers in Bankstown under the command of a great police officer, Commander David Eardley, and with the support of a wonderful team of officers who work in partnership with the local community in the Bankstown electorate and surrounding areas.

Today is a day I wish forever had never happened, but it did. Through this experience we move forward to recognise the contribution police make, but we will never forget that Constable William Crews died providing key services to the community of Bankstown, New South Wales and Australia. I offer my prayers to his family and wish them all the best from the people of Bankstown. Today I have received dozens of e-mails and phone calls commiserating over this tragic occurrence and passing on condolences to the family of Constable William Crews. The people of Bankstown are forever grateful for the sacrifice this outstanding police officer made last night.

TONY STEWART MP  
Member for Bankstown