

Pantelis Vlachakis

espress
grill
Fresh & Wholesome Foods
that are Sure to Hit the Spot!



All of Life's Wisdoms

When dealing with shopkeepers, one of the most interesting aspects to their character is their wisdom. As they have dealt with hundreds and thousands of different customers over the years, these experiences naturally provide them with so many insights into human nature and life itself. It is fascinating coming across shopkeepers with such worldly views...

On August 6, 2017, Vasilis Vasilas interviewed Pantelis Vlachakis who runs the Espress Grill at Darling Harbour (food court); being in such a busy food hub, Pantelis and his sons, Manolis and Giorgos, witness hundreds- if not thousands- of people dining in their food court, or just passing by.

Having completed his National Service, Pantelis came to Australia, in 1970, to visit his siblings. What was meant to be holiday turned out to be forty-seven years! His first job in Australia was at the Carba factory, in Botany, which bottled carbon dioxide and he then moved on to a construction company, Dilligham, which was building the QANTAS building at the time.

Pantelis married Evangelia and they have four children: Manolis, Ekaterina, Giorgos and Emilia.

Pantelis always wanted to open up his own business; an opportunity arose to buy a fish and chips shop on Darling Street, Balmain. At the time, Balmain was a rough area and Pantelis has wonderful stories of how different the Australian way of life is.

For some time, he would run a sandwich shop on Elizabeth Street and his landlady- the owner of the building- was actually Queen Elizabeth II; Pantelis states he never had any problems with his royal landlady! From there, he went on to run the Red Lion Restaurant in Redfern; he has a great story of becoming a 'brother' to the local indigenous community as he was one of the first sponsors of their local radio station! As a journeyman, he ran shops in Marrickville, then Padstow and Newtown. In 1999, an opportunity came up to buy the Bistro and Grill Harbourside in Darling Harbour's food court. Having a shop in Darling Harbour during the Sydney Olympics (2000) was, as Pantelis says, 'incredible'. Pantelis has run the Espress Grill ever since; his sons, Manolis and Giorgos, are now an important part of the business.

From all those years of working various shops and gaining such invaluable insights into business, Pantelis offers great advice, 'I learnt for myself that you only get what you give... nothing more!' And Pantelis has given so much, and continues to do so...



1/4 BBQ Hot Special
Chicken Salad & Chips
\$5.00