

# FOOD \ MARY-JANE DAFFY REVIEWS THE SHED @ TERINDAH

Foraging. It's the buzzword in the restaurant game that has chefs worldwide donning gumboots on misty mornings and wading through shallow seas or scouring roadsides in pursuit of wild edibles such as sea lettuce, sorrel and flowers to grace their plates.

The chefs at one-year-old bistro The Shed @ Terindah need only walk across Terindah Estate's paddock of twisting manicured vines to reach their own wonderland on the Bellarine Peninsula. Here, in a dip between their private beach and the striking glass and steel restaurant, native grasses, edible herbs and delicate flowers are plucked for service.

The morning loot does more than just pretty up the dishes on the inherently Australian menu. On our sunny Sunday lunch, the amuse-bouche is a case in point. Two ramekins arrive at our table even before we've ordered. They contain a collision of vibrant colour only nature can provide. Chunks of house-smoked trout are topped with delicate tendrils of foraged seaweed and a scattering of black sesame. It's smoky and salty, moist and crunchy, and I feel immediately giddy at the prospect of what's ahead.

The pithy menu, designed daily by chefs Andy Pye and Lyndon Betts, is largely constructed around deliveries from local suppliers and neighbouring farmers. Upstairs in the events centre, where Pye caters for about 90 weddings each year, the food is highly worked for the brides and their beaus. Here in the bistro, the dishes are more rustic and left to stand alone. I like it that way and the prices echo the modest approach.

Duck might be cooked and served whole at the table, perhaps alongside heirloom vegetables that have been pickled at the height of their season.

For entrée the day I lunch, three thick chicken terrine triangles are served with a splash of sweet apricot relish and an attractive array of pea fronds alongside multicoloured flower petals. The relish is too sweet for my liking and the terrine a little dense – but it's beautifully presented.

The sweetness of stewed rhubarb alongside a luscious, fatty square of pork belly work harmoniously in the second entrée, however. Tangled in a mound alongside are strips of soft onion and chunks of chorizo. It might sound hectic but it works, particularly with a glass of Terindah Estate pinot gris.

That said, the wine list could do with a boost. As it stands there are seven Terindah Estate offerings by the bottle and the glass. I understand the desire to showcase the vineyard's wine but healthy competition and variety is important for any good list. Beer lovers will be disappointed, too. The choice is more befitting a function centre than restaurant: Carlton Draught, a light, and one boutique beer. Really.

It was training day for a raft of new staff the day we dined, and impossible not to notice service deteriorate as the imposing space filled with punters. It could have been disastrous had it not been for unflappable



PAN-SEARED OCEAN TROUT WITH CITRUS SALAD

(MAGGIE BUFE)

maître d' Dave Ellis, who quickly reconfigured his ship and steered it to smooth waters. "I'm here because of the food our chefs turn out," Ellis says once things settle. "That, and because it's a pretty beautiful part of the world," he says, nodding toward the sweeping bay and vineyard views.

I can't disagree with him.

The eye fillet is a delight. Perfectly pink slices of meat come splayed on a lick of creamy purée with golden chat potatoes and wonderfully fragrant Otway shiitake mushrooms alongside. It's impossible not to drive the meat, formula one-style, through the purée and rich jus before placing it in the mouth. Had there been bread, I would have mopped the plate clean.

More suited to the bright coastal day was a fillet of trout, pan seared for a lovely crisp skin. A lively salad of



EYE FILLET WITH OTWAY SHIITAKE MUSHROOMS



CRÈMA CATALANA WITH SORBET

orange, skate, edible flowers and herbs stacked beside it act as a palate cleanser against the oiliness of the fish.

As the couple beside us decide to reposition their chairs beneath a grand eucalypt on the lawn for dessert, our crêma catalana arrives beautifully blow-torched with a juicy halved fig and a quenelle of sensational apricot sorbet. The crêma catalana could have done with a little more depth, but I'd order it again just for the intensity of the sorbet.

It might be a baby of the Bellarine restaurant game, but The Shed @ Terindah is certainly one to watch. Remember, it has a wonderland in its backyard. \ [mjdaffy@theweeklyreview.com.au](mailto:mjdaffy@theweeklyreview.com.au)

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## EAT THIS

**THE SHED @ TERINDAH, 90 McADAMS LANE, BELLARINE**

**Cuisine** \ Contemporary

**Chef** \ Lyndon Betts and Andy Pye **Owner** \ Peter and Cate Slattery

**Prices** \ Entrées \$20-\$25; mains \$28-\$30; desserts \$12-\$16

**Open** \ Daily 10am-4pm **Phone** \ 5251 5536

**Score** \ Somewhere special

» [www.terindahestate.com](http://www.terindahestate.com)



## THE INTERIOR

It's impossible to believe the towering glass and steel structure, standing proudly on the peak of a rolling lush Bellarine Peninsula hill, was once a hay shed. Squeaky clean but with a rustic feel, the building sprawls down the hill with a reception centre and huge production kitchen on the upper level and a bistro below. Wood panelling, dim lighting and simply dressed tables offer ambience in the bistro, which shines on warm days when wait staff reconfigure things by opening floor-to-ceiling glass doors to merge the paved stone outdoor seating areas with the cool calm of inside. \