

Minds of Chefs: Casa Carboni's Matteo Carboni

JANUARY 5, 2018 by DAVID KNIGHT



In this four-part series, *Minds of Chefs*, we explore what inspires some of South Australia's most exciting cooking identities. This time, it's Matteo Carboni from Casa Carboni.

Taught to make pasta by his Nonna Pia, it wasn't until Matteo Carboni discovered that the perfect match for wine, his first passion, is food that the Italian fell in love with gastronomy.

"I don't have classic chef training," Carboni says. "I have a Master's degree in Food Science and Technology from University of Bologna. My passion started with wine thanks to a dear friend from uni. Wine came first, then I realised that it is necessary to eat well to better appreciate the wine and not become an alcoholic. So I started cooking".

Carboni owns Casa Carboni with his wife Fiona. They moved here from Parma in northern Italy. Based in Angaston, the duo runs a cooking school, restaurant and wine bar and imports Italian and French wines and other products for a slice of Italy in the Barossa Valley.

"With my cuisine I try to respect my country's traditions," he says. "I also like playing with ingredients. In my cooking classes I showcase regional and traditional Italian cuisine. The restaurant's menu can still be considered traditional but with a local twist."



After Carboni finished university, he took his first job as a kitchen-hand before moving on to gain experience in restaurants in Italy such as the Michelin-starred Le Case in Macerata, and then to Academia Barilla in Parma.

"It is a cooking school and centre for promoting Italian gastronomy. I experienced Italian gastronomy at every level, not just Romagna where I am from or Parma where I was based. We had chefs from all over Italy, from all over Europe, so it was a great opportunity for me to work with all of them.

"I consider myself lucky because I also had the chance to dine in top restaurants and meet people with the same passion for wine and food. It was a way, from my point of view, to train my palate and exchange information. Here in the Barossa the main inspiration is the farmers' market; the first time I went there I could not believe the freshness, the variety and the flavours of the produce. I always tell people that the farmers' market makes my life a lot easier in the kitchen!"



Carboni sources fresh produce from the Barossa Farmers Market as well as products from Italy, such as balsamic vinegar, Parmigiano Reggiano, rice and, of course, wine. Making fresh pasta is the focus of his classes as that is what his grandmother taught him as a youngster.

"The menu of the cooking school is always a four course menu: entrée, fresh pasta, risotto or gnocchi (depending on the season) and dessert. Every menu is seasonal and has been designed to be easily replicated at home."

casacarboni.com.au

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Photography: Josh Geelen

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Such a wonderful experience, beautiful fresh food cooked with love and passion, makes it taste soo much better! Thankyou. 🍕👍👏

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