

Community life

ROAD TEST

Magnificent macaro(o)ns

As MasterChef has reminded us, no matter how you spell it, there's nothing lovelier than a macroon/macron.

As I set off on my macaroon challenge, one question kept bothering me: is it 'macaroon' or 'macaron'? Eventually I discovered that macaroon is the English spelling of the French word 'macar-o-n' and they are the same thing. However, complications arise once you discover that 'macaroon' (with the double 'o') is also the name of a small cake-like almond biscuit – this is where you have to be careful not to confuse the two. But moving on... I'm more interested in the taste of macaroons than in their pronunciation, and here are how a few Inner West variations measured up against my ridiculously high standards, as set by the first macaroon I ever tried in a gourmet food hall in Paris.

Locantro Fine Foods Even though these macaroons are quite small and cute compared with others, they are very rich and you'll find the bite-sized portion is quite big enough. I tried the salted caramel flavour (\$2.60 each) and found that the saltiness stood out so the sweetness of the meringue balanced things out nicely. The tiramisu flavour only had a very subtle coffee taste and was very creamy with a hint of chocolate from the light dusting of chocolate powder. **Appearance:** 4.5/5 **Taste:** 3.5/5.

Rino Saffioti's Chocolate Shop

These skilfully made macaroons appear perfectly sized and shaped with just enough filling between the fluffy outer shells. They are \$3.30 each but



worth the extra buck – I tried both the orange flavour and strawberries and cream variety and they were fresh, delicious, flavoursome and looked amazing. I like that the meringue has just enough crunch and crumble when you bite into it and aren't too chewy. **Appearance:** 5/5 **Taste:** 5/5

Trovatino Cafe Once I caught a glimpse of the yoghurt gelato macaroons (\$4.50) from Trovatino's, I had to try one, and they didn't disappoint. Imagine a macaroon and an ice-cream sandwich had a baby and you will have an idea of

what this brilliant creation tastes like. They are more expensive than the rest but they are bigger with more filling – and that deliciously smooth yoghurt gelato filling was a champion at the Australian Grand Dairy Awards 2012. Finished with a spot of sweet berry sauce on top and two pink slightly chewy bits of meringue, it's the perfect summer macaroon.

Appearance: 5/5 **Taste:** 4/5

Pasticceria Cavallaro While these brightly coloured macaroons look a little messy and flat, the flavours pack a punch. The cherry chocolate (\$2.50) tastes like a maraschino cherry with a hint of chocolate flavour in a crumbly white meringue, and the passionfruit (\$2.50) has an extra fruity soft gooey centre with a strong passionfruit flavour. It's all about taste here, not the look.

Appearance: 2.5/5 **Taste:** 4/5

Adriano Zumbo People across the Inner West argue over whether Adriano's 'Zumbarons' are in fact the best in Sydney. Many say they are overrated, and sadly I have to agree somewhat. He certainly offers the most creative, exciting flavours and they all look great but it depends on which flavour you choose whether you'll be impressed or not. The malted milkshake and custard crunch were a let down but the peach ice tea – sprinkled in tea leaves and with a jelly surprise in the centre – was delightful, and the chocolate doughnut (it tastes more like a cinnamon doughnut) won me back. **Appearance:** 5/5 **Taste:** 3/5

■ NM

Party Euro-style

Foodies, music and motor buffs rejoice! The fourth annual Euro Festa is coming to the Waterfront on Sunday 26th August and bringing bags of fun for the whole family.

Live entertainment from Spanish Flamenco dancers, live music, hair-styling tips, competitions and cooking demonstrations, is just half of what you can expect from Euro Festa 2012. There will also be plenty going on to keep the kids busy throughout the day, including a jumping castle, petting zoo and face painting. Plus, puppeteer Dennis Murphy will be roaming the Piazza putting on his comical puppet show from 10am to 4pm. This Italian-themed festa has become a "must do" on family calendars throughout the Inner West, drawing a crowd of thousands. Foodies can wander through market stalls overflowing with mouthwatering European flavours or join a pizza-making comp while car lovers can browse displays from Lamborghini, Maserati and Ferrari. Don't miss out on all the competitions happening on the day either, brilliant grand prizes will be announced at the end of the festa.

■ **The Waterfront: 21 Bennelong Parkway, Wentworth Point (five minutes from Sydney Olympic Park)**



Community events listings are **FREE**

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What's on

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Sunday 19th August

Sydney Style Markets

This Sunday marks the launch of Sydney Style Markets – a day of fun activities and face painting for the kids and great shopping for mums, with heaps of fashion, accessory and homeware stalls, setting up in the Italian Forum, Leichhardt, from 10am to 4pm.

■ www.sydneystylemarkets.com.au.

Sunday 19th August

Big Air School

Head down to Five Dock Skate Park this weekend and join the fun as Big Air School comes to town bringing tonnes of action sports and entertainment. You can join the



Off to Five Dock!

professional or amateur groups competing in the scooter, skate or BMX category on the day plus enjoy live entertainment from hip hop and beatbox performers, Morganics. There will also be freebies, art comps, stalls and great prizes to be won. Entry costs \$15 and includes show bag, from 11.30am.

■ **First Ave and Ingham Rd, Five Dock.**

Sunday 19th August

Sizzling tunes

'Sizzle' makes a much-anticipated return to Petersham Bowl on this month warming up your winter with some fiery tunes, a sizzling smorgasbord and cheap drinks. Providing an afternoon of truly unique music, Ensemble Offspring and their musical friends will bring

contemporary classical music to the people and mash it up with pop, old and new music – plus visually surprising theatrical wonders – all dished up in a casual Sunday arvo at your local bowl. The fun starts at 3pm, entry costs \$20/\$15 at the door.

■ **Petersham Bowling Club: 77 Brighton St, Petersham.**

Wednesday 22nd Aug to 12th Sept

Couples workshop

Drummoyne Community Centre is holding a four-week program titled 'Building better relationships for couples' every Wednesday from 7pm to 9.30pm. Facilitated by experts from Relationships Australia, the workshops are designed to help couples (with or without children) find ways to manage conflict constructively, covering topics such as good communication, support skills, valuing difference, managing gridlock and planning ongoing change. The Community Centre: 10 Cometrowe St, Drummoyne, cost is \$40.

■ **Info and bookings call 9719 8102.**



Rant

Life inside the bubble

A new American book examining the IQ-based social stratification happening in the US explains a lot about the Inner West and its residents.

American political scientist Charles Murray is most famous for his 1994 book *The Bell Curve*, which argued that IQ is destiny and that different races have different average levels of intelligence. In that book he identified the emergence of 'cognitive elite', a new social strata made up of the highly intelligent, a group who were becoming increasingly separated occupationally, culturally, geographically and politically from the remaining 90-95 per cent of the population.

In his latest book, *Coming Apart: The State of White America 1960-2010*, Murray explores the deepening fissure that's developed between the "over-educated snobs" and "Joe Sixpack" (latte-sipping, inner city elitists and VB-drinking, outer suburban bogans in the Australian vernacular).

Briefly, Murray argues that, with the expansion of higher education over the last four decades, smart kids from all social classes have been hoovered up into the 'cognitive elite'. They go to uni together, work together, marry each other and congregate in what he calls "super zipcodes" (i.e. postcodes). They then produce offspring who have the genetic blessing of high IQ parents topped off with the advantage of accessing the best educational facilities (either expensive private schools or the pick of the crop of state schools). Once they come of age, those kids repeat the process and, *voila*, pretty soon you've got a hereditary Brahmin caste.

"Almost everyone living in the [Inner West] bubble has a university degree, a prestigious job and a (small l) liberal political outlook."

Inner Westies may find Murray's description of life in a super zipcode eerily familiar. Apparently, the streets of these enclaves are full of gourmet coffeehouses, art house cinemas and high-priced retail shops. Almost everyone living there has a university degree, a more or less prestigious job and a (small l) liberal political outlook. The people of this strange land are a lot thinner and healthier than their non-super zipcode compatriots and watch a lot less television (and then mainly cult shows such as *The West Wing* that reflect back to them their upper middle class lifestyle). They also tend not to be involved in long-term *de facto* relationships or have children out of wedlock.

As Murray observes, life inside the super zipcode bubble is very civilised. The only problem is that life inside that bubble is becoming ever more disconnected from life outside it. If you're a member of the cognitive elite who wants to know what kind of a malfunctioning society that kind of apartheid creates, you'd best read the book. If you really are a super zipcoder, you should live within easy walking distance of a good bookstore.

■ **Nigel Bowen**



From Weds 23rd August

Study Without Stress

With HSC trials about to start, local psychologist Janice Killey will be running courses called Study Without Stress, to help students manage stress during terms three and four. As a former teacher, school counsellor and mother of three children who all went through the rigors of final exams over the past few years, Janice understands the issue from all sides. The first course