

## FOOD TWEETS

Chefs tell me they're looking forward to using our Wagyu tails in autumn... the cattle actually grow tails all year 'round!

SherWagyu

You know you are desperate for chocolate when you are eating the cherry ripens that are the last ones left out of the mixed box of favourites.

mariaacrews

Just saw Jamie Oliver drizzle manchego cheese with honey and sprinkle it with crushed coffee beans. We doubted. We tried it. We LOVED it.

FoodieDownUnder

### TWITTER NEWS

Keep up with all the *Herald Sun's* food news and gossip on Twitter with regular posts from food editor Zoe Skewes. [www.twitter.com/HeraldSunFood](http://www.twitter.com/HeraldSunFood)

### JAMIE'S TOP TIP

If you can't get hold of ciabatta, any country-style bread will do

## FAVOURITES

BOB HART REVEALS HIS KITCHEN SECRETS  
hartbeat@me.com



## A magnificent mussel man

If you had to choose a Melbourne chef to cook for your life, who would it be? Shannon Bennett, perhaps, whose *Vue de Monde* is our most celebrated establishment? Or Jacques Reymond, regarded by many as a kitchen genius?

Or perhaps the brilliant Ben Shewry from *Attica*, or *MasterChef's* George Calombaris of *Press Club* fame?

Actually, I would choose none of these. I would put my life in the hands of that affable Frenchman Philippe Mouchel, perhaps the highest-credentialed chef to have settled in Australia.

Mouchel, who grew up in Normandy, was a protege of French genius Paul Bocuse for whom he opened restaurants in various parts of the world — including, fortuitously, Melbourne. He then cooked in Langton's, moved to Sydney for a time, returned briefly to Japan (he has a Japanese wife, Tomoko) and finally returned to Melbourne to join *Crown*.

Now, Mouchel has a new restaurant which, for me at least, ticks all the important boxes, and one or two I hadn't thought of.

PM 24 in Russell St is a true reflection of Mouchel's brilliance. In it, he delivers gloriously simple but exquisitely executed food.

He has also released a cookbook — *More Than French* (Slattery Media Group, available from Tuesday) — through which he shares some priceless recipes.

Of these, one of my favourites — a recipe that has already changed my approach to preparing a favourite dish — is one from his childhood, cooked by his father for the family during seaside holidays. It is steamed mussels with apple cider. Try this:

Scrub and debeard 2kg of mussels. Melt 20g of unsalted butter in a large pot and soften a finely chopped onion. Add 200ml of good quality cider with a bouquet garni and, when the cider is hot, add the mussels and a grind or two of pepper.

Cover the pot, increase the heat and cook for five minutes. Stir with a spatula and cook for another five minutes before turning off the heat and leaving to rest, covered, for a few more minutes.

Remove the opened mussels to a warm dish in a just-warm oven. If some remain closed, cover the pot and give them another blast of heat. Discard any that remain closed.

Strain the juices through a fine sieve into a clean pot and reduce for a couple of minutes over high heat. Cut 45g of unsalted butter into 4 pieces and add, a piece at a time, whisking, to the juices. Finish with 2tbs chopped parsley and more pepper.

Divide the mussels between warmed, shallow bowls and pour over the juices. Serve with crusty bread.

“He (Mouchel) delivers gloriously simple but exquisitely executed food”

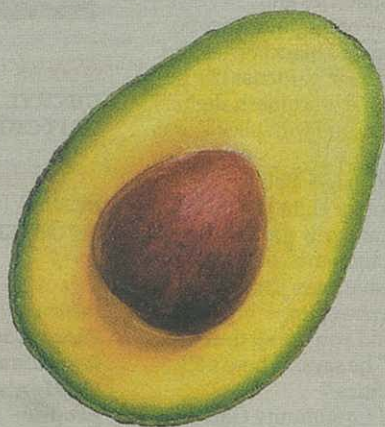
## JAMIE

the best fish for cue? Is there one that won't fall apart?

cook whole the barbie, or lets (sourced with lity in mind) that really thin on the The most important member is to oil it ore cooking, and grill well before on the bars. Lift the h a spatula when it's with a pair of tongs, t to overcook it.

Q What do I add to mashed avocado to make an authentic guacamole?

A I like to chop a little red onion, cherry tomatoes, fresh red chilli and fresh coriander leaves. Then I mix that with some lime juice, ground cumin and smoked paprika.



Q What's the difference between barn eggs and free-range? And which taste best?

A The hens that lay barn eggs stay indoors all day, whereas the hens that lay free-range eggs can go outside and have more room to move about in. I think the best eggs come from the happiest hens — free-range ones. They cost a little more, but once you realise how much better their lives have been, it makes sense.

## MY FAVOURITE

### Hernan Palacio

ARGENTINE BARBECUE CATERING

Favourite dish from the past year

Dutch meatballs with pear sauce.

Restaurant for a casual family dinner Cica Chinese Restaurant on Carlisle St, Balaclava. It has the best laksa in Melbourne.

Late-night dining haunt

I get my late-night "emergency fix" at Mirage kebabs on the corner of St Kilda Rd and Carlisle St in St Kilda.

Gourmet product

Fresh chorizos from North Carlton Quality Meats on Nicholson St.

Supermarket product Indian pickled limes.

Restaurant table

Claypots Seafood Tavern on Barkly St, St Kilda. It's great for group banquets.

Melbourne's best-kept secret

Cruzao Arepas, a new Venezuelan restaurant on Brunswick St, Fitzroy. Great cocktails and contemporary Latin grooves.

\* Hernan Palacio will be cooking at the SBS Food Journey Festival from Friday to March 6 at the Royal Exhibition Building, Carlton Gardens. [www.foodjourney.com.au](http://www.foodjourney.com.au)

