



ITALIAN ACCENT

Paola Lenti's new alfresco furniture collection was feted by interior designers and cognoscenti at a stylish lunch in Sydney.

PHOTOGRAPHS NICHOLAS WATT WORDS TANYA BUCHANAN RECIPES MARTA SANROMA RECIPE EDITOR CHRISSEY FREER



THIS PAGE, ABOVE Pieces from the Paola Lenti collection. BELOW The lunch setting had a greenhouse theme conceived by Richard Unsworth. OPPOSITE Paola Lenti crocheted rug in Silver-Grigio on rope yarn rug in Notte by Patricia Urquiola for Paola Lenti.

Design hub De De Ce had an injection of serious Italian style when the team from Paola Lenti jetted in to Sydney from Milan to launch its stunning new outdoor furniture collection at an exclusive lunch hosted by De De Ce managing director Tim Engelen and *Belle's* editor-in-chief Neale Whitaker.

The upstairs of De De Ce's Darlinghurst atelier was transformed into a chic greenhouse by *Belle's* garden design editor and owner of Sydney's Garden Life, Richard Unsworth. It was an appropriate backdrop to showcase the Paola Lenti collection. "The pieces fit well with Australians' love of outdoor living, and the collection's elegant simplicity and generous proportions invite you to entertain or lounge around talking," said Richard. "The super-swish swing is a great example of the collection's appeal. Everyone could picture themselves in it – a glass or book in hand," he added.

A select group of architects and interior designers, including Melbourne design doyenne Margie Bromilow, glam meister David Hicks and design stars Paul Hecker and Hamish Guthrie, were treated to a wonderful behind-the-scenes look at the Paola Lenti enterprise by the designer's sister, Anna. The hand-craftsmanship (think nonna's crocheting pieces that get worked into the designs), Paola's sublime use of colour and her innovative outdoor fabrics are trademarks of her style.

A delicious Italian-inspired menu was created by Marta Sanroma of Pica Pica Catering. "I wanted to prepare the kind of food that can be shared and is relaxed – like the Paola Lenti pieces – stylish but not too stitched up," said Marta. While guests caught up on the latest industry news and tried out the furniture, Marta's delightful bite-size morsels were served. Oysters with mignonette sauce, mushroom risotto balls, crostini and mini rotoli slices were teamed with Peronis and Asti Martini cocktails.

A ricotta and thyme tortellini in brodo began the seated part of the meal, accompanied by Peppoli Chianti Classico 2007 and Campogrande Orvieto Classico 2008 wines. Veal osso buco with pearl barley topped with gremolata and served with winter vegetables was a reminder of delicious old-school comfort food. A tasty and not-too-sweet tiramisu completed the lunch. Guests settled in to the superb furniture to while away the afternoon, relaxed and comfortable and, of course, super-stylish.





“EVERYONE COULD PICTURE THEMSELVES IN THE SWING – A GLASS OR BOOK IN HAND.”

ABOVE Guests included, from centre left, Margie Bromilow, Paul Hecker and Neale Whitaker, and RIGHT Tim Engelen, Robert Backhouse, John Bechini, and Stephen Cassidy. TOP and BOTTOM Pieces from Paola Lenti's outdoor furniture collection.



MINI ROTOLI SLICES

SERVES 8

Pasta

'00' flour, as much as needed (about 300g)
Salt
3 eggs

Filling

600g English spinach, trimmed
200g ricotta
100g mascarpone
100g parmesan, finely grated
1 egg, lightly beaten
Salt and pepper to taste

To serve

50g unsalted butter
¼ cup sage leaves
¼ cup finely grated parmesan

1 Place flour and a pinch of salt in a large mixing bowl and make a well in the centre. Break eggs into the well and beat lightly with a fork. With clean hands, mix flour and eggs to form a dough, then knead with your hands on a lightly floured workbench until smooth. Place in a clean bowl, cover with a tea towel and set aside while you make the filling.

2 For the filling, place the the spinach in a large heatproof bowl, cover with boiling water, then set aside for 30 seconds. Rinse under cold running water, drain well, squeezing out as much excess water as possible. Finely chop spinach, place in a large bowl, add remaining filling ingredients, season to taste with salt and pepper and mix well.

3 Roll the pasta through a pasta machine until it is 5mm thick. Place 2 clean tea towels on a workbench. Cut 2 pasta rectangles (about 25cm x 15cm) and place each on a tea towel. Spread half the filling down the centre of each pasta rectangle and, using the tea towel, roll it up, then roll the rotoli firmly in the tea towel. Tie both ends of the tea towel with kitchen string. Carefully place rotoli in a large saucepan of gently boiling salted water for 30 minutes, then remove and set aside to cool slightly.

4 When cool enough to handle, untie tea towels, remove rotoli and slice to desired thickness, then place on a baking tray.

5 Preheat oven to 120°C. Melt butter in a frying pan and, when it starts to brown, add sage leaves. Pour brown butter and sage over rotoli, sprinkle with parmesan and warm in oven. Serve immediately.



ABOVE Mini rotoli slices. BELOW Library of Paola Lenti fabrics at De De Ce's showroom makes a colourful feature.





VEAL OSSO BUCO

SERVES 4

8 pieces veal osso buco
Seasoned plain flour, to dust
2 tablespoons olive oil, plus
1 tablespoon extra
60g butter
2 large brown onions, finely diced
4 cloves garlic, finely chopped
6 stalks celery, finely chopped
80g pancetta, finely diced
5cm piece parmesan rind
500ml (2 cups) dry white wine
1.5 litres (6 cups) veal stock
1 bunch Dutch carrots, peeled
250g broad beans, blanched, peeled
¼ Savoy cabbage, trimmed, shredded
1½ cups cooked pearl barley, to serve

Gremolata

Zest of 1 lemon, finely grated
½ bunch flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped

1 Preheat oven to 160°C or 140°C for fan forced. Dust osso buco with seasoned plain flour, shaking off any excess flour. Heat olive oil in a large pan over high heat. Brown the osso buco for 2 minutes each side or until golden. Remove from heat and transfer to a large, deep roasting tray.

2 Meanwhile, heat 1 tablespoon oil and butter in a large stockpot over medium-high heat. Add onion and cook, stirring occasionally, for 5-6 minutes or until soft. Add garlic, celery, pancetta and parmesan rind and cook, stirring occasionally, for a further 5 minutes.
3 Add wine and simmer until almost evaporated. Add veal stock, bring to the boil and simmer for 30 minutes or until reduced by about half. Pour stock over osso buco, ensuring all meat is covered, cover tray with foil and place in the oven for 2 hours or until meat is tender and almost falling off the bone. Remove tray and, when cool enough to handle, remove meat from stock and set aside. Keep warm. Strain stock and reserve.
4 Just before serving, bring reserved stock to the boil, add carrots, broad beans and cabbage and simmer until vegetables are tender but crisp.
5 For the gremolata, mix all ingredients in a bowl and set aside. Toss gremolata through the cooked pearl barley and mix well. Place a large spoonful of pearl barley in the bottom of each serving dish, top with two pieces of osso buco, ladle over some of the vegetables and the cooking liquid. Serve immediately.



RICOTTA AND THYME TORTELLINI IN BRODO

SERVES 8

Brodo

2 kg chicken bones
2 sticks celery, chopped
1 carrot, peeled and chopped
1 onion, chopped
4 litres water

Pasta

'00' flour, as much as needed (about 300g)
Salt
3 eggs
1 egg, lightly beaten (for egg wash)

Filling

200g ricotta
100g mascarpone
2 teaspoons finely chopped thyme

1 For the brodo, place all ingredients in a stockpot and bring to the boil. Skim the surface, turn down heat and simmer for 2-3 hours. Pass through a sieve lined with muslin cloth and set aside. Season to taste with salt. Place in the fridge to cool

for 2 hours. Before using, remove any fat that has solidified on the top.
2 Place flour and a pinch of salt in a large mixing bowl and make a well in the centre. Break eggs into the well and beat lightly with a fork. With clean hands, mix flour and eggs to form a dough. Place the dough on a lightly floured work surface and knead with your hands until smooth. Place in a clean bowl, cover with a tea towel and set aside to rest while you make the filling, by combining all the ingredients together in a bowl.
3 For the tortellini, roll pasta through the pasta machine to the desired thickness, cut the pasta sheets into approximately 7cm-diameter circles. Place a scant teaspoon of filling into the centre of each circle, brush edges with egg wash and fold into a semicircle. Then, placing your thumb in the centre of the base, overlap the corners and lightly press where the pasta meets to form tortellini shapes.
4 Bring brodo to the boil, add the tortellini and cook for 2 minutes or until tortellini float to the surface. To serve, ladle brodo and tortellini into serving bowls. Serve immediately.



TIRAMISU

SERVES 8

400ml espresso coffee, cooled
175ml marsala
100ml Kahlua
1 tablespoon Trablit coffee essence
3 eggs, separated
70g caster sugar
350g mascarpone
300g savoiardi biscuits
Dutch cocoa, to dust

1 In a large bowl, combine coffee, marsala, Kahlua, coffee essence and 250ml water. Set aside.
2 In a separate bowl, beat egg yolks and sugar until pale and fluffy, then fold in the mascarpone until well combined. In a separate clean bowl, beat eggwhites until soft peaks form, then gently fold through the mascarpone mixture, trying to keep as much volume as possible.
3 To assemble, soak the savoiardi biscuits one at a time in the coffee mixture and place in a single layer in the base of a 2-litre (8 cup) dish or 8 individual glasses. Top with a layer of mascarpone mixture and dust generously with cocoa. Repeat this process until all biscuits and all mascarpone mixture have been used. Cover and place in the fridge to chill for at least 3 hours before serving.



CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT Guests included Paul Hecker and Melissa Chen. Scott Walker, Aaron Nicholls, Anna Lenti and John Engelen. David Goss and Eve Sayer. Aaron Nicholls.

