

RECIPES FROM THE FLAVOUR LAB

FEAST*ival*

2026

**A collection of recipes from chefs Nornie Bero,
Dominique Rizzo and Simon Toohey**



TOOWOOMBA
CARNIVAL
of FLOWERS



Crocodile Schnitzel with Pepperberry Pickled Slaw & Karkalla Tartare

Serves 4

A crisp golden crocodile schnitzel served with a vibrant pepperberry pickled cabbage slaw and a creamy native tartare featuring karkalla, sea blite and lemon.

INGREDIENTS:

CROCODILE SCHNITZEL

2 crocodile tail fillets (250–300g each)
140g ghee

Flour Mix

1 cup plain flour
1 tablespoon ground saltbush
1 tablespoon ground pepperberry

Egg Wash

2 eggs
1 teaspoon ground aniseed myrtle
1 tablespoon ground fennel seeds
2 tablespoons milk

Crumb Mix

3 cups panko breadcrumbs
1 teaspoon ground aniseed myrtle
1 tablespoon ground fennel seeds

PEPPERBERRY PICKLED SLAW

½ red cabbage, finely shredded
2 cups white vinegar
2 tablespoons caster sugar
1 tablespoon sea salt
½ teaspoon ground pepperberry

KARKALLA TARTARE

¼ cup karkalla, finely diced
3 sprigs sea blite, finely chopped
3 tablespoons labneh
3 tablespoons whole egg mayonnaise
2 pickled cucumbers finely diced
1 shallot, finely diced
1 tablespoon chopped chives
Zest of 1 lemon
Pinch sea salt
Pinch ground pepperberry

METHOD:

Place each crocodile tail fillet between two sheets of baking paper or plastic wrap. Using a meat mallet, gently flatten each fillet until approximately 1 cm thick.

Next, prepare crumbing station. Combine the flour mix, egg wash and crumb mix ingredients in their own trays (and a bowl for the egg wash), whisking each to combine.

Coat each crocodile fillet in the flour mixture, shaking off any excess. Dip into the egg wash, ensuring it is evenly coated, and press firmly into the breadcrumb mixture until completely coated. Place onto a tray and refrigerate for 15 minutes to help the coating set.

To make the pepperberry pickled slaw, whisk together white vinegar, sugar, sea salt and ground pepperberry; continue whisking until the sugar and salt have dissolved. Taste and adjust if required—the dressing should be balanced between sweet, sour and savoury. Add the finely shredded cabbage and toss well. Allow the slaw to pickle while cooking the schnitzels.

Make your karkalla tartare by combining the tartare ingredients in a small bowl and season with sea salt and pepperberry. Mix well and refrigerate until serving.

Heat the ghee in a large cast iron pan or non-stick frying pan over medium-high heat until melted. Reduce the heat to medium-low and carefully add the chilled schnitzels. Cook for 3–4 minutes per side, or until beautifully golden brown and crisp. The crocodile should be just cooked through while remaining tender and juicy. Transfer to paper towel to drain briefly.

Place a generous spoonful of pepperberry pickled slaw onto each plate and top with a golden crocodile schnitzel. Serve alongside a generous dollop of karkalla tartare.

Finish with extra pepperberry, fresh sea blite or karkalla, and lemon wedges if desired.

CHEF'S TIPS

- Refrigerating the crumbed schnitzels before cooking helps prevent the coating from lifting during frying.
- Ghee gives the schnitzel a rich, nutty flavour and produces an exceptionally crisp crust.
- The tart, crunchy slaw balances the richness of the schnitzel, while the creamy native tartare brings freshness and coastal flavours to the dish.

Kingfish Namas with Crispy Purple Yam a Torres Strait Island Snack

Serves 4 as an entrée or 12 as a tasting plate

Fresh kingfish cured in creamy coconut and zesty citrus, served with crisp purple yam for a vibrant island-inspired dish.

INGREDIENTS:

KINGFISH NAMAS

400g sashimi-grade kingfish,
thinly sliced
½ cup thick coconut cream (kara
brand)
3 sprigs fresh coriander, leaves
picked and finely sliced
½ long red chilli, deseeded and
finely diced
1 tablespoon soy sauce
2 tablespoons white vinegar
Juice of 1 lime
Juice of 1 lemon
Pearls from 1 finger lime
Good pinch sea salt
Pinch of ground hibiscus

CRISPY PURPLE YAM

1 small purple yam (or white sweet
potato), peeled and thinly sliced
into rounds
Vegetable oil, for deep frying

METHOD:

Peel the purple yam and slice into very thin rounds using a sharp knife or mandoline. Heat approximately 5 cm of vegetable oil in a small saucepan to 170°C. Fry the yam slices in small batches for 2–3 minutes, or until golden and crisp. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towel. Season lightly with sea salt while still warm.

Place the thinly sliced kingfish into a medium bowl. Add the lime juice, lemon juice and white vinegar. Gently toss to coat and allow to stand for 2–3 minutes to lightly cure the fish. Add the coconut cream and soy sauce, stirring gently to combine. Fold through the diced chilli, sliced coriander and finger lime pearls. Season with sea salt and a pinch of ground hibiscus. Mix gently until evenly combined.

Spoon the kingfish namas into chilled serving bowls or onto plates. Garnish with extra finger lime pearls, coriander leaves and a light sprinkle of ground hibiscus if desired.

Serve immediately with the crispy purple yam on the side for scooping, adding a crunchy contrast to the creamy, citrus-cured kingfish.

CHEF'S TIP: For the best flavour and texture, prepare the crispy yam just before serving and assemble the namas at the last minute to keep the kingfish fresh and vibrant.



Wattleseed Fried Scones with Golden Syrup Butter

Makes 30 scones

Warm, golden fried scones infused with aromatic wattleseed and served with rich, creamy whipped golden syrup butter.

INGREDIENTS:

WATTLESEED FRIED SCONES

4 tablespoons caster sugar
7½ teaspoons dried yeast (3 × 7g sachets)
825ml milk
4 tablespoons vegetable oil, plus extra for shallow frying
7½ cups (approximately 1.1kg) plain (all-purpose) flour, plus extra for dusting
7½ teaspoons ground wattleseed
2 teaspoons sea salt
1 cup lukewarm water

GOLDEN SYRUP BUTTER

1kg unsalted butter, softened
4 teaspoons ground wattleseed
½ cup icing (confectioners') sugar
1 cup golden syrup

METHOD:

Place the lukewarm water into a bowl. Stir in the caster sugar and dried yeast. Leave for 5-10 minutes until frothy.

Heat the milk in a saucepan until just below simmering. Remove from the heat and allow to cool slightly. Stir the vegetable oil into the warm milk, then add the activated yeast mixture.

In a large mixing bowl combine plain flour, ground wattleseed and sea salt. Pour the milk mixture into the flour and mix until a soft dough forms. Turn onto a lightly floured bench and knead for 8-10 minutes until smooth and elastic. Place into a lightly oiled bowl, cover with a clean tea towel and allow to prove for 45-60 minutes, or until doubled in size.

Meanwhile, make the golden syrup butter. Place the softened butter, ground wattleseed, icing sugar and golden syrup into a stand mixer. Whisk on medium-high speed for 5 minutes until light, fluffy and well combined. Refrigerate until required.

Punch down the dough and divide into 30 equal portions (approximately 60-65g each). Shape into rounds or gently flatten into rustic discs approximately 1 cm thick. Rest for another 10 minutes.

Heat approximately 1 cm of vegetable oil in a large frying pan over medium-low heat. Cook the scones in batches for 2-3 minutes per side, until golden brown and cooked through. Drain on paper towel.

Serve each warm wattleseed fried scone with a generous quenelle or dollop of golden syrup butter.



Grilled Lettuce with Creamy Almond Sauce & Green Olive Herb Salsa

Serves 4-6

A fresh Mediterranean-style dish of smoky, charred lettuce with creamy almond sauce, a punchy green olive and herb salsa, and toasted almonds.

INGREDIENTS:

GRILLED LETTUCE

2 baby cos lettuces
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Sea salt
Freshly ground black pepper
1 lemon, halved

CREAMY ALMOND SAUCE

100g blanched almonds
1 small garlic clove
80ml extra virgin olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon sherry vinegar
80-100ml cold water
Sea salt, to taste

GREEN OLIVE & HERB SALSA

120g pitted green olives,
roughly chopped
1 tablespoon capers, rinsed
and chopped
½ bunch flat-leaf parsley,
roughly chopped
½ bunch mint, roughly chopped
½ bunch basil, leaves torn
1 small shallot, finely diced
Finely grated zest of 1 lemon
2 tablespoons lemon juice
60ml extra virgin olive oil
Pinch chilli flakes
Freshly ground black pepper

TO FINISH

40g almonds, toasted and
roughly chopped
Fresh mint, basil and parsley leaves
Edible flowers, optional
Extra virgin olive oil

METHOD:

For the almond sauce, place the almonds in a bowl, cover with boiling water and leave for 15 minutes to soften. Drain and blend with the garlic, olive oil, lemon juice, sherry vinegar and 80ml cold water until smooth and creamy, adding a little more water if needed. Season with salt. The sauce should be soft enough to spoon generously across a platter.

For the green olive salsa, combine the olives, capers, parsley, mint, basil, shallot, lemon zest, lemon juice, olive oil and chilli. Season with black pepper and taste before adding salt, as the olives and capers will already provide plenty of seasoning.

Cut the baby cos lettuces in half lengthways, keeping the base intact so the leaves hold together. Brush the cut sides lightly with olive oil and season.

Heat a barbecue, grill plate or heavy frying pan until very hot. Place the lettuce cut-side down and cook without moving for 2-3 minutes until deeply charred while the centre remains crisp and fresh. Turn briefly for another 30 seconds, then remove.

Place the lemon halves cut-side down on the hot grill and cook until caramelised and lightly charred.

Spoon the almond sauce generously across a serving platter. Arrange the warm grilled lettuce over the sauce and spoon over the green olive salsa. Scatter with toasted almonds, fresh herbs and edible flowers, if using. Finish with extra virgin olive oil and serve with the charred lemon alongside.



Sicilian-Style Charred Chicken with Burnt Lemon, Tomato, Caper & Herb Salsa & Almond Pangrattato

Serves 4-6

Inspired by the bright flavours of Sicily and southern Italy—charred meat, citrus, olives, herbs, almonds and tomatoes.

INGREDIENTS:

CHARRED CHICKEN

600g chicken tenderloins
2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
Finely grated zest 1 lemon
1 teaspoon dried oregano
1 garlic clove, finely grated
½ teaspoon sea salt
Freshly ground black pepper

ALMOND PANGRATTATO

60g fresh breadcrumbs
40g almonds, roughly chopped
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
1 small garlic clove, finely grated
Finely grated zest ½ lemon

CHARRED LEMON, TOMATO, CAPER & HERB SALSA

200g cherry tomatoes, quartered
1 lemon
2 tablespoons capers, rinsed and roughly chopped
1 small shallot, finely diced
½ bunch flat-leaf parsley, roughly chopped
½ bunch basil, leaves torn
2 tablespoons fresh mint, roughly chopped
½ teaspoon dried chilli flakes
60ml extra virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

METHOD:

Combine the chicken with olive oil, lemon zest, oregano, garlic, salt and pepper. Heat a heavy frying pan until very hot and sear the chicken for 2-3 minutes each side, depending on thickness, until golden and cooked through. Rest before serving.

For the salsa, cut the lemon in half and place cut-side down in a very hot, dry frying pan. Cook for 3-4 minutes until deeply caramelised and lightly charred. Remove and allow to cool slightly.

Combine the tomatoes, capers, shallot, parsley, basil, mint and chilli in a bowl. Squeeze in the juice from one charred lemon half, add the olive oil and red wine vinegar and toss gently. Season with salt and black pepper.

For an extra burst of flavour, finely chop a small amount of the charred lemon flesh and rind and fold it through the salsa. Taste before adding more—the charred rind brings a wonderful bittersweet complexity.

For the pangrattato, heat the olive oil in a frying pan, add the breadcrumbs and almonds and cook until golden and crisp. Add the garlic towards the end so it doesn't burn, then remove from the heat and stir through the lemon zest.

Arrange the chicken on a platter, spoon generously with the burnt lemon salsa and finish with the almond pangrattato, fresh herbs and a final drizzle of olive oil.



Buttery Leeks & Butter Bean Chilli with Vibrant Salsa Verde

Serves 4

This recipe celebrates seasonal leeks, local vegetables, fresh herbs and chilli.

INGREDIENTS:

BUTTER BEANS AND LEEKS

4 leeks
1 red chilli, finely diced
50ml olive oil
Salt and pepper, to taste
1 x 400g can high-quality butter beans,
liquid reserved
50ml cream, optional
½ lemon, zest and juice
Sliced mushrooms, optional

SALSA VERDE

Green tops from the leeks, thoroughly
washed and roughly chopped
1 bunch parsley
1 bunch mint
1 tablespoon dried oregano
100ml red wine vinegar
200ml olive oil
1 teaspoon caster sugar
Salt, to taste

TO FINISH

Fried onions

METHOD:

Wash everything thoroughly, then finely slice the leek whites and reserve the green tops for the salsa Verde.

Heat the olive oil in a large, heavy based frying pan over medium low heat. Add the sliced leek whites, chilli and a good pinch of salt and pepper. If using mushrooms, add them at this stage.

Cook gently for approximately 15 minutes, stirring regularly, until the leeks are soft and sweet. Try not to add too much colour.

Add the butter beans and their reserved liquid, followed by the lemon zest and juice. Continue cooking over medium low heat until the beans are soft and the mixture has thickened slightly.

Stir through the cream, if using, for a richer finish. Check the seasoning and adjust if required.

To make the salsa Verde, place the leek tops, parsley, mint, oregano, red wine vinegar, olive oil, caster sugar and a pinch of salt into a blender. Blend until vibrant green and relatively smooth.

Spoon the butter bean and leek mixture into a serving dish. Drizzle over the salsa Verde and finish with fried onions.



Ancient Grain Risotto with Asparagus, Mushrooms & Local Cheese

Serves 4

A hearty pearl barley risotto celebrating local ingredients.

INGREDIENTS:

BARLEY RISOTTO

50ml extra virgin olive oil
1 brown onion, diced
3 large garlic cloves, sliced
1 bunch asparagus, trimmed and chopped
1 head oyster mushrooms, roughly torn
2 bay leaves
1 cup pearl barley
Approximately 2 litres vegetable stock
Parmesan, finely grated, to taste
Salt and pepper, to taste

TO SERVE

1 small bunch parsley, finely chopped
1 lemon, zest only
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
Additional grated parmesan
Salt and pepper, to taste

METHOD:

Pour the vegetable stock into a saucepan and bring it to a gentle simmer.

Heat the extra virgin olive oil in a separate large saucepan over medium low heat. Add the onion, garlic and a pinch of salt. Cook gently for approximately 5 minutes, or until soft and translucent.

Add the oyster mushrooms and cook for a further 3 to 4 minutes, until softened.

Add the bay leaves and dry pearl barley. Stir continuously for a few minutes, until the barley is lightly toasted and begins to make a soft popping sound.

Add the hot stock one ladle at a time, stirring regularly. Allow each ladle of stock to be absorbed before adding the next.

Continue cooking and adding stock until the barley is plump and tender. Add a little extra stock or water if the barley requires more cooking time.

Add the chopped asparagus during the final 5 minutes of cooking, allowing it to soften while still retaining some freshness and texture.

Stir through the grated parmesan until melted and creamy. Remove the risotto from the heat, then season with salt and pepper.

Finish with chopped parsley, lemon zest, additional grated parmesan and a drizzle of extra virgin olive oil.



Crispy Local Potato Rosti with Smashed Minted Peas & Whipped Feta

Serves 4

This recipe celebrates local potatoes, seasonal greens, citrus, herbs and cheese.

INGREDIENTS:

POTATO ROSTI

2 local potatoes, coarsely grated
30ml olive oil
Salt and pepper, to taste

SMASHED MINTED PEAS

1 cup fresh or frozen peas
¼ cup mint leaves, roughly chopped
½ lemon, zest only
20ml extra virgin olive oil
Salt and pepper, to taste

WHIPPED FETA

1 block Greek style feta or plant-based feta
30ml lemon juice
30ml water
Pinch of black pepper

METHOD:

Place a small saucepan of water over high heat and bring it to the boil. Add 1 tablespoon of salt.

Place the grated potatoes into a clean tea towel and squeeze firmly to remove as much excess liquid as possible. Transfer to a bowl and season with salt and pepper.

Heat the olive oil in a frying pan over medium high heat. Add the grated potato, spreading and pressing it into an even layer. Cook until the underside is crisp and golden brown. Using a wide spatula, carefully flip the rosti and cook the other side until golden and crisp.

Remove the rosti from the pan and place it onto absorbent paper to drain any excess oil.

Add the peas to the boiling salted water and blanch for 30 seconds. Drain and immediately refresh in cold water.

Place the drained peas into a bowl with the mint, lemon zest and extra virgin olive oil.

Season with salt and pepper, then mash until combined while retaining some texture.

To make the whipped feta, place the feta, lemon juice, water and black pepper into a blender or food processor. Blend until smooth and creamy.

Place the crispy potato rosti onto a serving plate. Spoon over the whipped feta, followed by the smashed minted peas. Finish with fresh herbs, additional lemon zest or seasonal greens if desired

