

FfC FREEDOM *from* CHOICE



FfC was a collective that ran a raw, vegan, organic food stall on Saturdays at The Sustainability Market at Taylor Square in Darlinghurst, Sydney between September and December 2012. The mission was “about health, taste and wellbeing. We’re committed to serving food that nourishes the body, mind and may even touch the soul. All the produce we use is sourced ethically and prepared with love, care and knowledge. Where possible, we choose local organic suppliers and farmers from which to create our nutritionally abundant meals. We are also committed to no waste; everything is composted or reused. FfC hopes people will find our space one they can come to unwind in, and to connect and share in what this beautiful world has to offer.”



The menu. Almost everything on the menu was raw or live or prepped in a dehydrator or solar oven at or below 47°C, the point beyond which food begins to lose its nutritional quality. It was also organic and/or biodynamic, with as much produce sourced locally; seasonal, prepared using food combining principles and suited to the prevailing climate. All dishes were gluten-free, refined sugar-free, refined salt-free and prepared using Wellness filtered water. As required, all nuts and seeds used were activated. In line with yogic practices, no garlic or onions were used.

– Oliver Boudib, Jann French and Stevie Bee

THE WEEKLY NEWS

October 13. Our all-day stall during the Sydney Rides Festival 2012 today was popular with visitors, with many first-timers enjoying the fare, particularly our love potion, The Refresher.

October 20. We met more new people brought to the stall by word-of-mouth. And today we trialed The Goop, a basic mix of 15 nutrient-dense foods that we brought together to “get you going and keep you going”; it’s based on Stevie’s breakfast and it sold out, which was a pleasant surprise. We keep playing with the recipes and mixes, particularly as the seasons change. While much of the menu is sweet, we’ll be adding a savoury crepe soon.

October 27. The word continues to spread and more people visited us today. After last week’s debut by The Goop, we did a little refining to boost its potency even more. Reports from those back for more was that it hit the spot and gave them plenty of energy for hours after. Also up for a bit of play was the Fritter of the Moment, which this week was based on a pumpkin-chia seed-activated buckwheat-spiced pancake topped with

beetroot and red sauerkraut, drizzled with a macadamia butter-umeboshi dressing. Also popular was the Love Potion, a refreshing, slightly enchanting mix of damiana, echinacea, gotu kola, wild lettuce, celandine, ginger, mint, lemon and stevia.

November 3. One of the fun-est things about the stall is the taste-testing, especially for those new to or curious about raw food. And why not? Try before you potentially buy, especially when you've never had such treats before. We love having people try the menu and we certainly had some fun this week, particularly at the end. And as for the menu, it keeps being added to and being tweaked. New this week, a Savoury Crepe, based on broccoli, silverbeet, chia and flax topped with red sauerkraut and beetroot, herbs and greens and a cashew dressing — similar to last week, but more of a crepe than a pancake. To keep Rootart in good company, we debuted Pumptart, a fudgy cake made from solar-infused,* grated butternut pumpkin, raw carob powder, cacao, mesquite, macadamias, vanilla powder, cinnamon, coconut butter and coconut nectar. Both tarts were popular. And, last but by no means least, Jann's longstanding favourite, the Cacao Brownie, a delightfully dense hit of cacao and really raw cashews, made a welcome appearance. It was our biggest morning so far.

* solar-infused at low temperature in a solar oven

November 10. We've long felt there's something special about The Goop and it's heartening to hear others are noticing the difference it makes to their days. It's a perfect way to get into whatever's on your plate. One fellow was moving house today and he knew exactly what would get him through it. In other news, the rivalry between the two tarts raised its sumptuous head this week: New kid on the block Pumptart and Old Faithful



Rootart went a few rounds in friendly banter and the new kid just edged ahead, but don't be surprised if Rootart makes a comeback next week. We noticed one young boy giving his mum a run for her money making short work of a shared Pumptart. The Savoury Crepe underwent a makeover and emerged almost as a wrap — the crepe itself can be folded as you would a taco shell. It was topped with a red sauerkraut and green salad and drizzled with an avocado-beetroot-miso sauce and almost walked out of the marquee — perfect for an early lunch or savoury breakfast. And new for FfC: Oliver brought along his massage chair and offered ten-minute massages for \$10 — and there were a few takers, especially when the sun popped out in the late morning.

November 17. It was one of those cool, cloudy starts to the day — we've had our fair share of them over the past few weeks — and it does affect when people come out to play on a Saturday morn, especially around Oxford Street. Nevertheless, it's always a pleasure to see our regulars, who seem to front up no matter the weather. And we keep meeting new faces and introducing them to our fare. And speaking of fare, we debuted Apple Chia Cake (apples, ground



flaxseeds, chia seeds, cacao nibs, mesquite meal, coconut butter, cinnamon and vanilla beans), a robust and substantial cake in the true sense of the word. It sold out, just eclipsing Pumpbart. As the seasons change expect new creations and variations — we saw early season nectarines and peaches at the market today — as well as new solar-infused treats, using the solar oven at low temperature. We're also selling hemp seeds, ahead of — fingers crossed — the Australian government accepting the approval of low-THC hemp as a food for humans. (Australia and New Zealand are the only countries still not up to speed on this. Fortunately, Food Standards Australia-NZ has given the all-clear and COAG has until Jan. 5, 2013 to seek a review — which means hemp for human consumption may be legal in the new year.)

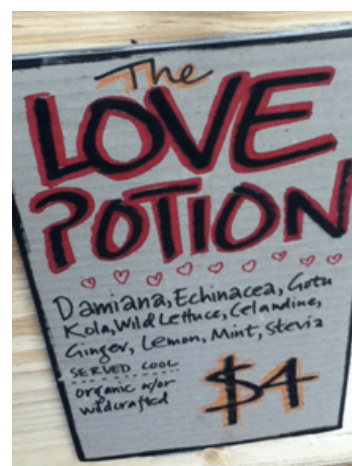


Chumball (mesquite meal, lucuma, spirulina, raw carob powder, bee pollen, raw macadamia nut butter and coconut butter with a hint of vanilla and cinnamon) and it came very close to selling out as well. It's similar to your classic bliss ball or your mum's Christmas Rum Ball, but quite different in taste and more substantial nutritionally. The other newbie was Sweetart, based on purple sweet potato. While not entirely raw — the sweet potato was gently simmered — it was nonetheless a tasty addition. Next week, we're planning to solar-infuse grated sweet

potatoes at low temperature and use them in a raw fudge tart. It's all experimentation, one of the numerous joys of the raw/live food challenge: how to mimic everyday treats, make them tasty and sugar- and gluten-free as well as well-combined for good absorption.

November 24. A picture-perfect day at the market ended a string of below-average Saturdays, weather-wise and brought the people out to stroll. Plenty of new faces, some passing through, including one mum and daughter from New Zealand, who were pleased they'd stumbled upon us. In fact, quite a few of our menu items sold out. First to go was The Goop, our true brekkie pick-me-up that does wonders — it was all gone by 11am. One regular was visibly disappointed when told; rest assured we'll make even more for next week. The Cacao Fingers and Brownies also sold out, along with Pumpbart and Savoury Crepe, which is a meal in itself. New this week was

December 1. The official start to summer drowned Sydney in a torrent of humidity and heat and we were hard-pressed to keep our display menu items from melting helplessly into a 'goop' of various colours. Had we been there any longer we would've melted in sympathy. The heat did keep people away — probably lured to the beach and sorbets to cool down — but our regulars braved it; they'd probably stare down a cyclone, such is, it would seem, their passion for our ever-changing menu. And we are ever grateful and always enjoy the conversations, which is part of what keeps us inspired. Fortunately, quite a few take their time with breakfast and so the talk flows effortlessly —



from 'what's mesquite?' to 'how can I ensure I get enough zinc in my diet?'. We're not fonts of all nutritional knowledge, of course, but we offer what we can, and the internet fills in the gaps. As for the menu, this week we brought out a couple of newbies: Avacreampie (a lemon-avocado-maple syrup-based filling with a macadamia crust), a lime-coloured treat that went down perfectly in the heat; Tatertart, a companion to Pumptart, only swapping pumpkin for purple sweet potato — quite thick and fudgy; and three refreshing drinks, two based on lemon and ginger — ideal for the day, especially when sipped slowly — and the other, a cool cacao with a little dark agave to take the edge off the bitterness of the cacao, something agave does very well. Apparently, it's supposed to be milder next Saturday, fingers-crossed.

December 8. It was a long day for us: the usual market stall till 1pm and then onto a little catering gig at an end-of-year yoga 'class' in a converted bar complete with DJ. More on that later. We introduced a new Sweet Crepe — very simple: an activated buckwheat and chia crepe topped with an apple-rhubarb-agave-vanilla compote; deceptively moist, as one punter described it. Also new: Berryball, similar to Chumball, but simpler and big on antioxidants (maqui berry, acai berry, mesquite meal, lucuma, coconut butter, vanilla and cinnamon). The Macanib Cookie, our take on the classic anzac bickie, made a welcome return. A slightly tweaked Goop — adding raw carob powder to take the ingredients tally to 19 — continues to be popular, with some now ordering it in powder form so they can make their own at home by 'just adding water'. As we do with the ready-to-eat Goop, we package the powder in clean reused jam jars. Speaking of reusing, it's pleasing to see a growing number of our regulars bringing their own containers to take away their treats.



Now to the yoga gig. We began by serving a cold cacao-agave-peppermint shot at the start of the yoga session and were then almost run off our feet serving 'starved' yoga enthusiasts, keen on some treats at the end of an at-times energetic two-hour session. It wasn't your regular yoga session either: in a bar on Oxford Street Darlinghurst, modified for the occasion, complete with DJ/performer Jack Man Friday, who provided a range of moods to accompany the different parts of the session. In half an hour at the end, we sold half of what we normally do at the morning stall! We think they were famished, not seeming to be bothered that some of our delicacies were not looking exactly their best, despite our every effort to keep them cool in our eskys. One day we'll have a café . . .

December 15. Although a little on the quiet side today — must be the festive season shop-a-thon — we had plenty on offer. The Goop sold out yet again. While it's not your regular brekkie and looks anything but appetising — an olive-coloured blancmange-type porridge — once a skeptical punter has a taste, they're usually sold. Reportbacks suggest it hits the spot; one man who's been ordering two servings for his Saturday



breakfast now wants a week's worth in powder form. We trialled it a couple of months ago not really expecting much, mainly because of how it looks and tastes — it's not everyone's cuppa — although after adding raw carob powder, which is naturally sweet, we think we might have the taste to please just about any palate. It's been our biggest seller for the past few weeks and with 19 superfoods on board it's probably not that surprising. Which brings us to the rest of the menu and how people see it. We do try to make

keen to challenge that and share what and how we do what we do. It's true: there really are no stupid questions, especially when it comes to some of those more esoteric ingredients.

December 20 and 22. First, Thursday the 20th and we joined the pop-up night market in the leadup to Christmas and almost got blown away — and not in a good way — by the southerly that arrived that afternoon after a hot start to the day. And Taylor Square doesn't do southerlies all that



each item mimic their everyday counterpart, that is, a crepe look like a crepe, a truffle a truffle. We think it's the ingredients list, some of which may require some explaining. After all, mesquite, lucuma and gubinge are not household names. However, if regular feedback is any guide, once people sample a tart or a ball or a brownie, they're back for a takeaway. As one man proffered whilst handing back his scraped-clean plate for washup, "That Avacreampie was delicious. As good as any top restaurant in Sydney. We don't know if he was simply being polite, but his enthusiasm appeared genuine. It was one of those aw-shucks moments. So we feel we're doing something right. Which is why we endeavour to entice the more stand-offish, but nonetheless curious marketeers to come closer and check out the displays and to ask questions about them. Perhaps it's the traditional nature of the customer-seller divide, but we're

well! So, not the best for trading. Still, it brought in plenty of new people, quite a different crowd to Saturday. Which meant more curiosity and, of course, more explaining.

The regular Saturday stall was our last at Taylor Square for the year and the time being. We know our regulars are disappointed . . . While we've enjoyed each week, all the chats and the sharing of stories and info, especially with our regulars, this market is a bit small for us — which is not to say it isn't a good market; there are some excellent vendors and it has a friendly vibe to it. We just feel we might be better off at another market or markets. So, we're 'in hiatus for retooling', as they say in TV-land. We'll be looking at other markets as well as collaborating with other like-minded vendors, which could mean we'll be back at Taylor Square at some point, perhaps fortnightly.