



◀▼ **Princi M & M Butchers**
 Italians come from far and wide for the good old-fashioned service at this butchery. The sausages are always a great buy and are still made according to a family recipe held by Pasquale Princi (left, with his uncle, Michele). The almond-studded porchetta, spit-roasted and ready to eat, is the best in North Perth. 527 Fitzgerald St, (08) 9242 5442, princismallgoods.com.au.



In the neighbourhood

NORTH PERTH

The blocks around Angove and Fitzgerald streets in North Perth tend to hold a nostalgic place in the hearts of local Italians. From the 1950s to the 1970s, post-war Italian immigrants arrived in their thousands to this metropolitan area and before long bakeries, delicatessens, barber shops and churches had sprung up. Over the decades, the Italian generation has waxed and waned, but the pull of home is strong and a new generation of Italians are returning to continue the tradition of good food, generosity and, most of all, community.

Among them is Dolcetto Patisserie's Joe Magri. Joe's Sicilian parents emigrated to Australia for a better life and ended up settling in North Perth. "There wasn't much work in Catania, so they moved here," says Joe, who was born in Australia soon after. He caught the baking bug while on holiday in Sicily, working in a cousin's patisserie. "I was 14 years old, and here we are today," says Joe. Opening Dolcetto two years ago, Joe's specialties are handmade, delicate Sicilian biscuits, as well as Aussie favourites such as lemon meringue pie.

Just a stone's throw away is Pimlott & Strand, a new deli cafe. "We combine the best of a continental deli with a kitchen out the back," says Tony Armenti, who readily admits his wife, Lina, is the brains behind the *alimentari*-cum-cafe. Fancy pasta, soft *saporini* (a northern Italian white mould cheese) and various smallgoods line the shelves, while quality produce, including perfectly ripe Genoa figs, are sourced from Lina's father's farm. Although less than a year old, the cafe is already popular due to its Mediterranean-style brunches.

Of the many cafes that line Angove Street, Fiorentina's purple facade stands out. Inside is a stunning display overflowing with cakes and pastries. Owner Isidoro Messina's Sicilian father bought and ran the business from 1989 to 2001. Isidoro bought back the family business in 2009. "I still see some of my father's customers, but most

have passed away," he says. "But the next generation is now buying from us. We sell baptism cakes, birthday cakes and engagement cakes. Then they have kids and on it goes. It's an incredible business."

Vastese Bakery is one of the last remaining traditional Italian bakeries in Perth. Now managed by brothers Tony and Lou Saraceni, it opened in 1957 and was named after their father's hometown of Vasto. The bakery has been in its current location for 51 years, producing crusty Abruzzo-style bread. "We used to live above the bakery," says Tony. The bread is still made the old way, beneath the former home. "Long fermentation is what gives it flavour and texture," Tony says.

The iconic Princi M & M Butchers has occupied the same shop since Pasquale Princi's uncle opened its doors in the 1970s. The shop is still much the same, selling meat cut to order and seasonal sausages such as *cotechino*. "My uncle was like a dad. He gave us a chance. When you have a foundation like that, it's up to you to build your own destiny," explains Pasquale, who emigrated from Calabria in 1979 and, at the age of 13, followed the family tradition into butchery. "And I've loved every minute of it!" he adds.

Pasquale, his uncle Michele, brother Giuseppe and brother-in-law Frank are all butchers. They know every customer who comes into the store, some speaking the same southern dialect. There's a lot of backslapping and gossiping about cars, wine and food. "We've been in the game for so long. We run a family business, so we work hard for it. You do it with passion and you do it for love," says Pasquale. ☺



◀ Vastese Bakery
 This family-run commercial bakery supplies hundreds of Perth delis with crusty, Italian lunch rolls. Those in the know, who are willing to make an early morning pilgrimage, can also get their fresh bread direct from the factory. Try the ciabatta, a favourite of co-owner Tony Saraceni (left) or the pagnotta, sliced and toasted. 178 Alma Rd, (08) 9227 5105, vastese.com.au.



◀ Fiorentina Patisserie
 The cannoli from this shop was deemed the state's best in the 2012 Feast Food Awards, but for something a little different, take owner Isidoro Messina's advice and try their best-selling *sfogliatelle Napoletana*. This crisp, suet pastry has a baked-in ricotta stuffing that takes two days to make. Or choose something from their extensive selection of pastries and cakes. 44 Angove St, (08) 9328 7442, fiorentina.com.au.



▲ Dolcetto Patisserie and Cafe
 Make a beeline for the counter and be dazzled by the range of biscuits made from Joe Magri's Sicilian family recipes. Most of the biscuits are gluten-free. Try the soft, more-ish *belle buone* biscuit spiked with fragrant citrus peel, the *baci di San Remo*, a chocolate sandwiched cookie, or the Sicilian cannoli (above). 3-4/400 Fitzgerald St, (08) 9328 1557, dolcetto.net.au.



◀◀▶ Pimlott & Strand
 Pick up some *guanciale* (cured pig jowl) while you brunch at this new deli cafe. "What goes in the cabinet goes in the frying pan," says owner Tony Armenti (left, with wife Lina). Their bestseller, the breakfast insalata (above), makes the most of the deli's pancetta and farm fresh eggs. Long table dinners are held every month. 21/391 Fitzgerald St, (08) 9328 5002, pimlottandstrand.com.au.

