

weekender.



UNWIND TIME: Luke Tilse of Happy Wombat likes to catch a late beer at The Grain Store in Newcastle East (left). Neroli Foster of Underground Epicureans enjoys catching a coffee at Bank Corner (above) in Newcastle on a casual bike ride.

"The Hunter has a plethora of beautiful places to picnic, relax and connect with nature. I remember one occasion when I surprised my partner Beau with a picnic at the Washpools waterhole in Scone on New Years Day a few years back; 42° degree heat, cold vintage champagne, and a backpack full of oysters, charcuterie, cheese, an essential Greek salad, and good bread... Eat, drink, swim, and repeat!"

Suzie Vincent
Subo, Newcastle

Usher Tinkler's cellar door and salumi never misses a beat. It's so relaxed, easy and cool. You walk in to a beautifully restored old church with some hip-hop playing on vinyl and Ebony Tinkler manning the meat slicer, shaving off thin slices of all these amazingly delicious meats. Personally, I love to indulge in a generous selection of reypenaer [like a soft, creamy Gouda] with some Jamón ibérico cured ham. Pair this with a bottle of Usher's wine and their homegrown figs... It's so easy to sit back and lose a few hours to relaxation.

Troy Rhoades-Brown
Muse, Pokolbin

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Whenever we have friends visiting from England, we love to take them to Merewether Surfhouse. It's nice to sit out in the afternoon sun. The view really showcases Newcastle's beauty.

Nathan Brown, Newcastle Knights

Our preference to give inner city living a go has been a treasure hunt of health and fitness, increased social life and culinary delights. We start mornings with a walk to Newcastle baths stopping in for cranberry and nut bread with Black tahini and labna cheese spread and a fab coffee at Moor Café or the best Indian breakfast at Momo café. As nights off are rare our favourite lunch haunts range from visiting our good friend Chris at the Edwards or watching the

harbour action relaxing at Six Degrees. If we get an early night one of our favourite pit stops is a cocktail at the Basement.

Brian Lizotte
Lizotte's owner

Running my own place means I don't get out much, but when I do I think that escaping the city and heading out to the Valley is always a good option. I love to go to Muse for a special occasion... I think Troy's food is exceptional. It's more than just the detail on the plate; it's the produce and the philosophy too. Combine that with a well-polished service team and the whole experience is seamless.

Patrick Haddock
Reserve Wine Bar, Newcastle

"One of my favourite places to eat and drink in Newcastle is Nagisa Japanese Restaurant, on Honeysuckle. Sitting out next to the water with an ice cold bottle of Semillon, from the Hunter Valley of course, and eating their delicious sashimi is a perfect way to spend a sunny day. And when the days aren't sunny, you can't go past a bowl of their awesome, warming ramen and a bottle

of Hunter Shiraz. It doesn't get much better than that!"

Gwyn Olsen
Pepper Tree Wines/Briar Ridge, Pokolbin

One Friday night during the campaign I found myself sitting with family and friends outside a tiny café enjoying lamb shanks and mash with minted rosemary jus and listening to a duet perform Adele's *Hello*. I could have been anywhere in the world, but I was in Barton Street Kurri, at Happi Chicken, and proud of it. Rosa and Helena Grine do great healthy, homely food. I love their roasts and homemade cake.

Meryl Swanson
MP for Paterson

When my wife and I go out for dinner, we like going to The Edwards. It's a nice place to relax, the atmosphere is always easy going and the food is always delicious. Whenever we have friends visiting from England, we love to take them to Merewether Surfhouse. It's nice to sit out in the afternoon sun. The view really showcases Newcastle's beauty.

Nathan Brown
Newcastle Knights, Newcastle

