



Perfect for all seasons

250 Canley Vale Rd, Canley Heights
 Phone: 9755 7099
 Cuisine: Vietnamese
 Bill for two: \$39

There used to be clear rules when it came to seasonal dining. Ice cream in summer and stews in winter. But these norms are being openly flouted.

Think of the ever-present queue crawling outside Gelato Messina, even on the greyest day

And now here we are — it's 36C and we're having soup.

Hot, bubbling, steaming soup that is making us sweat.

An interstate buddy had been hankering for months for Bau Truong's canh chua (\$22), a traditional Vietnamese sour soup with silver perch, so when she made a brief visit to Sydney recently, we made a date.

Pity it coincided with a heatwave, but luckily the restaurant has aircon.

The sweet, clear soup, with pineapple, okra, tomatoes and bitter herbs, is just as my mate remembers from her childhood, complete with picking out the perch's bones and scooping out the winter melon that soaks up the broth beautifully.

What has changed is the restaurant, so much so she almost walked straight past.



Gone are the red walls and fish tanks, replaced by a funky yellow corrugated iron wall and coloured stools. Even the pretty, pale-blue bowls are new.

The recent makeover gives it a sleek, Surry Hills vibe, but the clientele hasn't changed.

There are still old couples slurping over noodle soups, rowdy families rolling their own rice paper rolls and foodies who've travelled out west to try Marrickville's predecessor.

This Canley Heights location is the second restaurant in the chain; the original opened in Cabramatta in 1996 and the inner-west branch in 2011.

The menu is extensive, with six types of rice paper rolls (\$8-\$10), including school prawn and pork,

and pork, pig skin and ground rice. There are nine types of vermicelli noodle soup (\$12-\$14), from the popular spicy pork and beef to the more obscure goat curry soup.

The DIY rice paper plate is the way to go. It comes piled high with herbs, bean sprouts, vermicelli noodles and lettuce leaves, plus you can choose from one to three meat options (\$15-\$17), including grilled lemongrass pork, prawn cake on sugarcane and grilled pork ball.

Instead of dunking the dry rice paper in the water bowl and trying to stretch it out again, my more experienced mate gently dips an edge in and slowly rotates until the outside softens.

She then lays it out flat and sprinkles water onto the hard centre, so it's good to go.

I follow her lead and, surprisingly, instead of a gloopy, sticky mess, I have a soft, pliable circle of rice paper that can be loaded up with fillings. It's light, fresh and tasty — the perfect summer fare. But it would be just as delicious if it was cold out.

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Canh chua, a sweet, clear traditional Vietnamese sour soup with silver perch and served with melon.



wine with tony love

white

\$12

red

\$22

beer

\$14.99

MAGOR'S CREEK

GEORGE

PUNCH & JUDY'S

CO
 21
 food

Strawb
 heart b

Makes: 12 Pr
 Cook: 18 min

INGREDI

- 175g b
- 1¼ cups
- ¼ cup c
- ⅔ cup p
- 1 egg
- ⅔ cup
- 1 tbsp s
- 40g da

METHO

- 1 Place butt
Process ur
egg. Proc
- 2 Divide mi
wrap. Mix
- 3 Preheat o
trays with
sheets of
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rolling an
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biscuits o
little jam.
biscuits