

SCIOUS WAY OF LEARNING ITALIAN!

Workshops include:
 e from beginners to intermediate
 cuisine and wine appreciation
 s and espresso
ria D'Amico (02) 9953 0388
ery class starts and ends with a bacio!

Sydney Italian Festival

At Vanilla Room
 153 Norton Street, Leichhardt
 May; Tuesday 12th June; and Thursday 15th June
 10 course degustation menu \$85 with wine \$130
Bookings Essential - (02) 9569 9411
www.vanillaroom.com.au



STOCK

ent wine wholesalers is looking for an
 Sales Representative.
 Package is on offer.
www.office@winestock.com.au
 GEMTREE ☐ GLAETZER ☐ HEARTLAND ☐ HOLYMAN
 DONRAD & CO
 MOUNT VERNON ☐ PARINGA ESTATE ☐ PIZZINI
 NSWORTH
 Y RISE ☐ TE KAIRANGA ☐ TIM ADAMS

WINTER DRINKING

Winter Drinking' special edition
 Gilroy on 9282 1943 or

The Sydney Morning Herald

made.
 les
 order

tables and chairs, or choose to have
 beautifully crafted in fine and rare antique
 Oak, vintage Dutch pine 'cheeseboard'
 with their original patina. See our range
 105 Wilson Street, Tuesday to Friday
2 9550 2365.



an Appliances
HOUSE
LE

nd brand new superseded lines
ON 27 MAY
m - 4pm
smeg
& SAVE ON DELIVERY
ARDS ONLY - NO PHONE ORDERS
ny / Banksmeadow
orth Ave)



Photo: George Fetting

THREE OF A KIND Vietnamese chilli soup (bun bo Hue)

Dong Ba

Vietnam's former imperial capital, Hue, is known for its royal tombs and pagodas. It's also known for the breakfast-onwards quick-fix meal of fat rice vermicelli (bun) and beef (bo) in broth. In the best tradition of Sydney souperies, Dong Ba is named for a landmark – in this case, Hue's central market – and boasts a couple of outlets serving its advertised specialty of bun bo Hue. The new baby sister of the Cabramatta stalwart, Dong Ba's Bankstown shop is gleaming clean with an alarming green fluoro light feature, bubble-ball perspex chandelier and basins of steaming soup on every table. An in-and-out stream of customers conducts a mostly silent ritual: dump lettuce, sprouts, salad herbs and purple cabbage shreds into the strong, spicy, lemongrassy broth, season with lemon and slurp. Lift a bunch of noodle strands to the mouth and slurp again. Dip a beef or pork loaf slice into the house hoi sin sauce, dolloped into a side saucer. Lift, slurp and dip until your bowl is empty and early winter chills are banished. 296 Chapel Road South, Bankstown, 9708 0327; 40 Park Road, Cabramatta, 9755 0727.

Bau Truong

Another big name in Sydney Vietnamese snacking, Bac Truong's real shtick is chargrilled meats, served on big white plates with steamed "broken rice" (a softer, second-quality grain), salad and soup. But it also does a pretty mean version of the old bun bo Hue, as well as other, lesser known liquid snacks such as bun rieu (a tomato, snail and seafood soup) and bun moc (with pork loaf slices). Their bun bo Hue has a good chilli kick, a strong waft of shrimp paste and lots of meaty bits, including firm rectangles of blood jelly (more about texture than taste, I

Need to know

- WHAT IS IT?**
A spicy noodle soup from central Vietnam.
- HOW'S IT MADE?**
With a broth of pork and beef, shrimp paste, lemongrass and chilli.
- WHAT GOES IN AND WITH IT?**
Round rice noodles, pork and beef slices, chilli jam and table salad.

suppose). The shrimp-lemongrassy-chilli jam on the side is excellent for dipping and the table salad comes threaded with mint, basil, rau ram (Vietnamese coriander) and baby coriander. In Vietnam, bun bo Hue often includes banana blossom shreds. Here they substitute red cabbage to equally colourful effect. 250 Canley Vale Road, Canley Heights, 9755 7099; 70 John Street, Cabramatta, 9727 4492.

Naughty Chef

Bun bo Hue by any other name, the "007 Spicy Soup" here comes via counter order only, numbered tickets and serve-yourself cutlery and condiments. Smoky, sweet, star-anise-fragrant pho is the broth of choice for most regulars but its take on bun bo Hue (in beef or chicken options) is a tasty alternative. Salad is included and the broth is light and clean. Heat-fiends may wish to add fresh chilli rings but the chilli jam is good and the broth is swimming with tender, sliced beef. And not a skerrick of blood jelly. 242 Albion Street (corner Elizabeth), Surry Hills, 9280 4333.

HISTORY OF A DISH

Rice paper rolls (goi cuon)

The Chinese use wheat flour sheets for spring rolls, which were originally filled with spring vegetables to celebrate the new season crops, eminent food historian Alan Davidson writes. But neighbour Vietnam has had a rice-based food culture for millennia. Rice paper wrappers (banh trang) are made from a thin batter of ground, soaked rice starch and water, steamed on a muslin cloth. Each handmade round is left to dry on flat, woven baskets, producing the characteristic crisscross pattern. They need only a little wetting to soften into an instant wrapper. Goi cuon (literally "salad roll") can contain fresh herbs, spring onions, halved prawns, diced pork and a little heap of blanched vermicelli. Don't forget a peanut-based dipping sauce.



Photo: Marina Oliphant