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Seven new places to eat and drink in Daylesford and the Macedon Ranges

JO STEWART September 27 2018



Cosy: Chai and crumpets at Trentham General. *Photo: Danny Wootton*

Home to a dynamic food and wine scene nurtured by lauded chefs, talented winemakers and hardworking producers, a trip to the Daylesford-Macedon Ranges region is a journey to Flavour Town. While there's no shortage of places to eat and drink in Daylesford, Trentham, Kyneton, Woodend and surrounds, here are seven new spots to put on your food radar.

Kuzu Izakaya

It didn't take long for word to spread that Woodend's newest Japanese restaurant was a dead-set winner. Hidden down a garden path, Kuzu Izakaya has been booked solidly since opening in April, with a month-long wait for tables on weekends. Previously working together at New Gisborne's Baringo Food & Wine Co., chef Eriko Pannam and restaurateur Gareth Rowlands have hit on a winning combination of reinvented Japanese standards complemented by sincere service. Standout dishes include wagyu beef tataki, scallops with miso cream and oyster shooters served with sake, tobiko and apple-wasabi granita. Sher Wagyu from Ballan, Mountain Yuzu from the northwest and small batch gin from local maker Big Tree Distillery feature on a supplier list packed with Victorian growers and producers.

42d Anslow Street, Woodend, 03 4417 7804, kuzu.com.au



Social enterprise cafe Social Foundry in Kyneton. *Photo: Supplied*

Social Foundry

Opening in March, this family-friendly cafe and community hub in the heart of Kyneton trains and mentors unemployed young people keen to gain hospitality skills. A not-for-profit run by volunteers and paid staff, the Social Foundry is a welcoming space that serves shakes, cakes, cheese-laden toasties and more in a revamped car showroom. Coffee beans from local roaster Motobean are brought in from the neighbouring town of Malmsbury, while the social enterprise's own mineral water brand can be purchased in glass bottles to drink in the cafe or take home. A loyalty card with a difference lets regulars collect stamps for each coffee purchased, then donate their free coffee to a local in need.

86 Mollison Street, Kyneton, socialfoundry.org.au

Dr Abalone

Piper Street is the popular foodie strip, but Kyneton's High Street is in the process of getting its groove back, with new wine bar Dr Abalone adding a dash of European flair to the busy thoroughfare. Opening in May in one of Kyneton's oldest buildings, the former apothecary is now a low-key wine bar serving tapas, cheese and charcuterie alongside wine, beer and classic cocktails. The wine list namechecks many of the region's renowned winemakers including

Mount Towrong Vineyard, Glenwillow Wines and Granite Hills. Open from Thursday to Sunday, Dr Abalone is an unpretentious spot to get acquainted with the Macedon Ranges wine scene.

19 High Street, Kyneton, 03 5422 7306, drabalone.com.au



Fossick for vintage treasure in the back room of Trentham General cafe. *Photo: Danny Wootton*

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Trentham General

Things have been very busy for the Trentham General team since opening in May. Co-owners Lynda Gardener and Mark Smith added the cafe and vintage interiors store to their business portfolio which includes accommodation in Trentham and Daylesford. Housed in a former bank, Trentham General's all-day menu features comforting classics such as housemade oat porridge, crumpets with whipped ricotta and honey, and a bacon and egg ciabatta. There's also a cabinet loaded with brownies, bomboloni and other sweet treats. Don't forget to have a post-brunch fossick through the vintage curios out the back.

37a High Street, Trentham, 0416 032 111



Char-grilled broccoli, sauteed greens, miso eggplant, wakame, sesame, poached egg and house togarashi at Pancho. *Photo: Supplied*

Pancho

Filling the gap left by local favourite Awkward Jeffrey, newcomer Pancho is a cosy spot for a slow-paced breakfast at the quieter end of Daylesford's main drag. Serving coffee by Wide Open Road and inventive dishes such as golden syrup cinnamon porridge with roast pear, quince yoghurt, linseed and Anzac biscuit crumb, Pancho is a welcome addition to the town's cafe scene.

117 Vincent Street, Daylesford, 03 5373 4230, panchocafe.com.au



Clockwise from top right: seafood dumplings, salmon with pickled fennel and radish, crumbed prawns and house-made kimchi at Sakana.
 Photo: Peter Tarasiuk

Sakana

With fine dining favourite Kazuki's moving from Daylesford to Carlton, the musical chairs session is complete with Sakana filling the Camp Street space. A [more casual offering](#) than its upmarket predecessor, Sakana's Japanese and pan-Asian fare is accompanied by a drinks list peppered with locals Passing Clouds (see below), Domaine Epis, Rill House and Animus Distillery.

1 Camp Street, Daylesford, 03 5348 1218, sakanarestaurant.com.au

Passing Clouds

Trainspotters and wine lovers have a new reason to head to Daylesford. A new train platform at [Passing Clouds](#) allows visitors to catch a heritage train from Daylesford's Sunday market to the winery in nearby Musk. Whether heading straight for the cellar door to sample a few wines or going all-in with the Train, Wine & Dine package (four-course set lunch with matched wines and a glass of sparkling on arrival, \$290 per couple) this addition to the Spa Country Railway route is a novel Sunday wine session.

30 Roddas Lane, Musk, 03 5348 5550, dscr.com.au

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