

Baker brothers enjoy their family tradition

**EAT LOCAL,
DINE GLOBAL**

By CAM LUCADOU-WELLS

SERVING Lebanese bread is the bones of Elias Abdallah and his two brothers Sami and Azar.

In some ways, their A1 Bakery on Dandenong's main street has emulated the efforts of their baker grandparents.

But over the past 12 years it has expanded like a good yeasty dough into a bakery, cafe and supermarket.

The shelves are filled with an exotic potpourri of zaatar (a dried herb blend), rose water, extra-virgin olive oil, hoo-kahs, petal-coated nougats, baklavas and \$2.50 serves of premium Italian coffee.

Not to mention tins and jars of hommus, fava beans, eggplant dip, haloumi cheese, tahini, pomegranate molasses and pickled cucumbers, all in the main



Elias Abdallah removes a zaatar bread from his oven. 130174

Pictures: GARY SISSONS

imported from the Middle East.

A notable exception was a leather-wood honey from Mole Creek, Tasmania.

Mr Abdallah points to bottles of blossom waters – flavoured with tamerind, mulberries, pomegranate or dates – which are used as an essence in cakes.



Breads almost ready to come out of the oven. 130174

What brings people through the door at lunchtime is the bread, produced on high rotation from the chasmic oven.

One of the favourite items came by accident, Mr Abdallah said. His brother Azar just "came out with something one day", slapping on a blend of cheeses and vegetables.

The resultant 'A1 Special' has only just been added to the official menu,

but it had been asked for by customers for many years, Mr Abdallah said.

It was the same for many years for their chicken pesto-topped special.

The bakery also caters for birthdays, weddings and christenings.

A1 Bakery is open seven days a week, 7am to 7pm at 201-203 Lonsdale Street, Dandenong.

Phone 9794 9500 or visit a1bakery-dandenong.com.au.

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A1 BAKERY
201 LONSDALE ST
DANDENONG

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SUPER MARKET