

# Paesano brings variety

By Danielle Kutchel

Do you prefer your cheese platter with a side of Teppanyaki? Your lasagne with butter chicken? Or perhaps you're a pizza and sushi kind of person. Whatever tickles your tastebuds, you'll find it at Paesano International Buffet, newly opened in Springvale.

Don't be fooled by the Italian name: the latest entrant in the Paesano group offers much more than standard pizza and pasta, and sits well within the foodie heaven that is Springvale.

A stroll past the buffet stations reveals a smorgasbord of international cuisines: there are stir-fries, Indian curries complete with homemade naan, fresh rolls of sushi, a Teppanyaki grill, varieties of pasta and a wood-fired pizza oven. Sweet tooths catered for with cannolis, tiramisu, cream puffs and more.

Co-owner and manager Frank Capuzzi says it was an easy decision to launch an 'international' buffet.

"Today everybody wants variety; when you go out, you get one person that wants Italian, another wants Chinese and so on. So, you can come here and get the best of everything!"

"At a standard restaurant, it is difficult to know off a menu what the meal is going to be like, whereas with a buffet you see everything before you take it and therefore you are selecting with your eyes," he explains.

Each station is open, giving diners a glimpse into a lively kitchen. Mr Capuzzi explains it was important to find chefs who were proficient in their cuisine, so that the food is as authentic as possible.

Dietary requirements and preferences are fully catered for; if, for example, a customer wants a certain type of sushi and the ingredients are on hand, the sushi chef will roll it up. Pizzas and pastas are cooked to order and for the Friday seafood buffet uses fresh Australian seafood.

"We make our own desserts including our

## EAT LOCAL, DINE GLOBAL

famous tiramisu that we've been making for a long time, and we make our own pasta," Mr Capuzzi says.

A favourite dish is the pollo funghi gnocchi, which Mr Capuzzi, a self-taught chef, says is cooked in a specific way: the mushrooms are first sautéed to release the flavour, then added to the chicken and cream so that the flavour permeates the entire dish. When it arrives at the table, the colour of the sauce is noticeably different to other versions and the flavour is richer, with a more rustic feel - a testament to the cooking process.

Originally an electrician by trade, Mr Capuzzi says he fell into the restaurant business when helping a friend to set up another Italian food chain. He was energised by the restaurant business and began moving into cooking, before opening Michelangelo's in Burwood with his mother, Nonna Clara, and business partner Angelo LoMonaco in 1997.

Over 20 years later, the two have been brought together again at Paesano International Buffet.

Mr LoMonaco says the new Springvale restaurant is a rebirth of a concept they tried in Wheelers Hill several years ago.

"We've been looking for a site ever since to do the concept again. What it offers is a variety of cuisines, and value for money. You've got entrees, mains, desserts, as much as you want of it, for the two hour session."

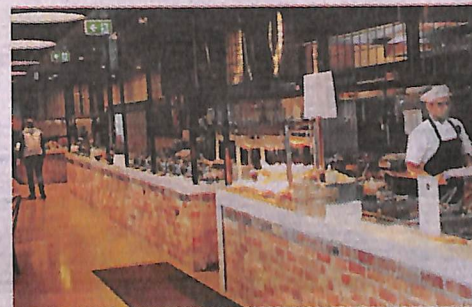
It's also an efficient way of dining, according to Mr Capuzzi - "people don't have to think 'what should I order'; as soon as they walk in



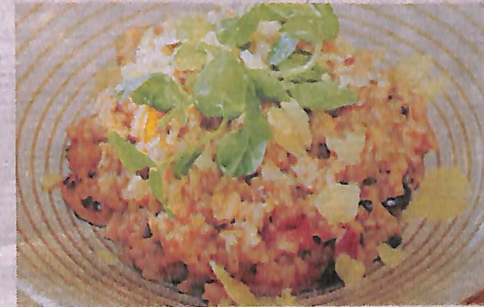
A selection of the sushi available at the buffet. 193884



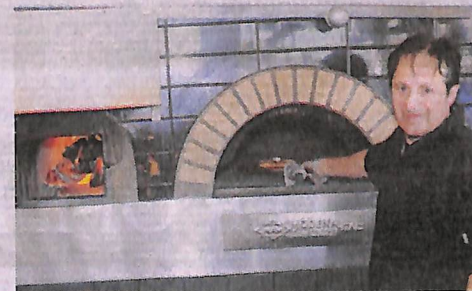
From left: Paul, Frank Capuzzi and Angelo LoMonaco. 193884



Diners get a glimpse into the kitchen at Paesano International Buffet. 193884



Dietary preferences are catered for, as with this vegetarian risotto. 193884



Angelo LoMonaco mans the pizza oven. 193884



Crowd-pleasing butter chicken. 193884

they can get up and go and eat. It's just easy. Freshness is what we deliver."

Paesano International Buffet is now open

at 754-768 Princes Highway, Springvale. For more information or to book, call 9540 8222 or visit [paesano.com.au](http://paesano.com.au).