



"The council has told event organisers we are so over music festivals in Flemington. They're not music to our ears"

## I love Ascot Vale

### GARY MEHIGAN \ 48

When it comes to food, Gary Mehigan knows his stuffings from his fillings. A serious foodie, he trained in Britain under two of London's great chefs before moving to Melbourne in 1991. Gary ran some of Melbourne's top restaurants before opening his own: Richmond's award-winning Fenix in 2000, which he sold, and The Boathouse, overlooking the Maribyrnong River, in 2005. The *MasterChef* judge films the TV hit at the Melbourne Showgrounds.

#### Where do you go for a great coffee?

The Reverend Café uses locally roasted coffee by Reverence Coffee Roasters. It's fruity, complex, and a dark, delicious drop. I have a strong, double-shot flat white to kickstart the day. [Fellow *MasterChef* judges] George [Calombaris], Matt [Preston] and I grab a coffee here on the way to the showgrounds.

#### For a big night out?

Stuart McVeigh from Union Fine Food and Wine is a brilliant chef – he worked with us at Fenix. The locals



(SDP MEDIA)

love his food. It's casual and charming by day but, come dinner, it's fine dining with sophisticated dishes.

#### For a sneaky indulgence?

The boys at the Ascot Food Store have created casual but cutting-edge dining. Their doughnuts come with syringes full of lots of different things, like chocolate, custard, jams and sauces. You squeeze the filling in. Mmmm.

#### When friends come from out of town?

The Maribyrnong River precinct is the Albert Park of the west; people from the east don't even know it exists. There's the Blackbird river cruise run by a bloke [Peter Somerville] who has been going up and down the river for 36 years.

#### A pick-me-up?

The Parisian Patisserie Boulangerie is worth a detour for its traditional croissants with flaky pastry – I'm a sucker for pastry made with lots of butter.

» Find out the best in the west by going to Discover Your Own Backyard, [www.dyob.com.au/mooneevalley](http://www.dyob.com.au/mooneevalley)

Reverend Café 155 Union Road, Ascot Vale. 9375 2170 ● Reverence Coffee Roasters 36 Stubbs Street, Kensington. 9372 2883 ● Union Food and Wine 169 Union Road, Ascot Vale. 9372 7566  
Ascot Food Store 320 Ascot Vale Road, Moonee Ponds. 9370 2649 ● Maribyrnong River Cruises 1 Maribyrnong Street, Footscray. 9689 6431 ● Parisian Patisserie Boulangerie 19 Keilor Road, Essendon. 9379 3815 ● The Boathouse 7 The Boulevard, Moonee Ponds. 9375 2456 ● Melbourne Showgrounds Epsom Road, Ascot Vale. 9281 7444



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