

Gluttony it's a sin CAFE

278 Smith Street, Collingwood

Rodrigo Arellano

If gluttony is a sin, then every person who dines in this restaurant is a sinner - and the owner must be the Devil himself.

You enter a cosy, busy cafe - the wooden floor is painted green and the walls are decorated with blackboards glazed with carnival sounding dishes. The regal glass cabinet holding the cakes is crowned with oversized bottles stuffed with fruits in brandy liqueur. Yet it is the gigantic 30 centimetre high cakes making the loveliest sugary mountain range on earth which are the most poignant sign that this is no ordinary cafe.

I counted twenty different cakes, the Berry Bomb was the Everest, standing at 35 centimetres. Others included: Marie Antionette's Wedding Cake; the flourless pumpkin, pecan and almond cake; pear and white poppy seed baklava cake; and the seductive "Barbara in Jamaica" - a shapely blend of chocolate, liqueurs, almonds, hazelnuts and plenty of love - she is the one I ended up with that night.

The feast began with a selection of breads: olive, Indian

spice, corn, and cheese bread all made at the premises, full of taste and stocky, country spirit - you could hear the cows mooing as you bit into them.

As a main I had rosemary roasted veal served with warm spuds and tomato salsa resting inside a giant red roasted capsicum. This dish was also served with roasted cheese, rice balls and lemon - all delicious, soft, and calming. My friend asked for a "warm Viet chicken salad" - a numbingly impressive dish full of chicken, mangoes and salad - the mint relish resting on the pinnacle of the plate was some two metres above sea level - impressive for a dish.

We ate for three hours, listening to the warm tones of Miles Davis and watching our reflection on the shiny fat fruit jars become larger as night grew near. By the end, the blackboards and cakes had become blurry, but the joyful experience of being a glutton remained clear and continues to rest peacefully in my mind.

Price: \$35 - \$45 for two

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