



ST KILDA FOOD AMAZING RACE

Words and photos by Peach Water



ABOUT PEACH WATER

Probably best described as a geek girl who is an avid and active video gamer, prone to carnivorous cravings and mad for macarons and cupcakes. When she is not sampling the menu of Melbourne and beyond, she takes delight in designing and progressing her design portfolio.

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A month ago, I was lucky to be invited to the inaugural St Kilda Food Focused Amazing Race. While St Kilda is known for its beaches, Luna Park, The Palais The Esplanade Hotel, Acland St and Fitzroy St, it also a hub of great cafes, restaurants and bars.

On the day of the St Kilda Amazing Race we covered a total of eight places - Miss Jackson, Monarch Cakes, Babu Ji, Ichi Ni, Il Fornaio, St Kilda Bowls Club, Milk The Cow and Di Stasio.

Prior to the event, I received an itinerary from Jess (Tyrell Publicity) outlining the locations that we were visiting and the point structure for the Amazing Race, as the blogger with the highest number of points wins a major prize!

The St Kilda Amazing Race started at Miss Jackson at 9.30AM, and the first person to order a coffee wins 10 points. I decided to catch the tram at Fed Square at 8.45ish to give myself ample time to reach there, however that day there was a major tram delays and there was no tram until 9.15am. Just as I was about to find an alternate route, Sarah from Sarah Cooks arrived at the tram stop. We decided to split a taxi fare as we wanted to arrive early enough to order the first coffee. In the end both Sarah and I were awarded the 10 points each! yay!

MISS JACKSON

2/19 Grey St, St Kilda (Enter via Jackson St.)

PH: 03 9534 8415

WWW.MISSJACKSON.COM.AU

TWITTER: @missjacksoncafe | FACEBOOK: missjacksoncafe

Miss Jackson is located on a lane way off Grey St. The moment you enter Miss Jackson you will notice a bunch of lovely baristas pouring coffee and also the homely yet relaxing vibe of the cafe. It's rather spacious and a small room with a large dining table were you can sit and enjoy your brunch.

To start off, we ordered our hot drinks. As always, I ordered my flat white to start the morning.

Once the majority of the bloggers arrived, we were offered an array of pastries to share with fresh croissants from Woodfrog bakery, homemade crumpets served with fresh jams, marmalades and a gorgeous pink raspberry butter.

THE ST KILDA RICKSHAWS

PH: 0421 196 737

WWW.STKILDARICKSHAWS.COM.AU

FACEBOOK: stkildarickshaws | TWITTER: @stkildarickshaw

INSTAGRAM: stkildarickshaw

That day we were lucky to be taken around St Kilda by The St Kilda Rickshaw which is an alternate transport to taking the tram, walking or driving the car - it's environmentally friendly, the operators are knowledgeable about St Kilda - so if you're a tourist or you want to get a tour of some of the popular places within St Kilda, this is a fun way to go.

My first experience of riding a rickshaw was when I was back in Malaysia where the operators were crazy in weaving around the crazy traffic. This time round, the St Kilda Rickshaw felt safe and they pretty much follow the normal Australian Traffic Laws. That day St Kilda Rickshaw took us to Monarch Cakes, Babu Ji and Ichi Ni. I sat on the same rickshaw as Delphine from Gastrology - where we were able to catch up.

We were dropped off at Monarch Cakes for our next foodie destination.

MONARCH CAKES

103 Acland St, St Kilda | PH: 03 9534 2972

WWW.MONARCHCAKES.COM.AU

Monarch is one of the oldest Acland Street Cafes. At Monarch Cakes, they have been baking the same recipes for over 75 years. Gideon, the owner of the café, told us that the original cafe started off in Carlton, later relocating to Acland Street.

Monarch cake range is impressive - ranging from Polish Cheesecake (Kugel) to a humble cupcake.

What I love about this cake shop is the antique feel to the shop - with old school scales, vintage posters and ornaments.

We were each very lucky to pack a cake to take home with us. I grabbed myself a lemon tart - a great lemony taste with a delicate eggy pastry.

After ooh-ing and ah-ing over the cakes, we hopped back onto the rickshaw and was taken to our next destination - Babu Ji, an exciting contemporary Indian eatery that offers Indian street food...



BABU JI

4-9 Grey St, St Kilda (Enter via Jackson St.) | PH: 03 9534 2447

www.babuji.com.au

TWITTER: @babujistkilda | **FACEBOOK:** babujistkilda

INSTAGRAM: @babujistkilda

Babu Ji is a new contemporary Indian restaurant located on Grey St. The restaurant is very refined, simple and clean with Hindu Disco music playing in the background.

We sat on the chef's table where we were able to sample a variety of Indian dishes. The dishes were definitely eye opening and nothing like the typical Indian dishes you would find at an Indian takeaway joint or your nearby Indian restaurant.

The first dish to arrive was the Papdi Chaat, an Indian styled 'nacho' made out of chickpea crisps, coriander salsa, potato and chickpeas, drizzled with tamarind and yoghurt and topped with pomegranate seeds. A very moreish dish that makes you go back for more and definitely a great start to our lunch at Babu Ji - quite possibly my favourite dish for the afternoon.

Next up is the oh-so-pretty and colourful yoghurt kebab. I was instantly attracted to this dish due to its vibrant magenta colour. This yoghurt kebab is made out of hung yoghurt, with a mint, scallion and chilli chutney centre. This yoghurt kebab is served on a bed of beetroot, ginger and chilli sauce. A very interesting dish with a combination of sweet and savoury flavours.

The next dish to arrive is a popular Indian street snack. These Gol Gappa are to be eaten by the mouthful - and when these instructions are followed correctly, one should have an explosion of tangy, spicy, and sweet flavour explosion in their mouth.

Since I wasn't listening, I ended up having the sauces dripping all over. These are definitely very addictive, and I can understand why the head chef can eat these by the dozen and even more!

Our challenge this round was to name the 13 ingredients in the dish presented to us. The dish that was presented to us was the fish curry with flathead and premium aged basmati stella rice. I can't remember exactly how well I went but I did remember being 'smart' about it and listing salt and pepper as the ingredients - watching too much Masterchef can do that to you!

We finished our lunch at Babu Ji with a delicious yet refreshing kulfi which is made out of condensed milk. After our lunch at Babu Ji, we were richshawed away to our second lunch location - Ichi Ni.

ICHI NI

12 The Esplanade, St Kilda | PH: 03 9534 1212

www.ichini.com.au

TWITTER: @ichiniizakaya | **FACEBOOK:** Ichi-Ni-Izakaya

INSTAGRAM: @ichiniizakaya

Ichi Ni is located on The Esplanade, which overlooks the bay.

When we arrived the restaurant manager Sarah, brought us over to their alfresco dining area, where we introduced to the sushi chef who went on to teach us how to how to roll an inside out sushi roll.

The ingredients were presented to us for our next challenge - sushi rolling competition.

After finishing our rolls, we then ate a few pieces of our sushi rolls before heading to our next location - Il Fornaio.



IL FORNAIO

2 Acland St, St Kilda | PH: 03 9534 2922

www.ilfornaio.com.au

TWITTER: @ilfornaio1 | **FACEBOOK:** ilfornaiostkilda

INSTAGRAM: @ilfornaio1

After our two lunches at Babu Ji and Ichi Ni Izakaya, we walked over (with a very full belly) to our second coffee for the day at Il Fornaio.

After we arrived, barista Matt gave us an insight into official coffee competitions and what it is all about. It's not just a matter of extracting coffee and making our beloved golden liquid, but it also requires attention to detail; flavour; symmetrical patterns when making coffee art, and the colour of the espresso.

We also learned that Ilfornaio takes their coffee seriously - they use St. Ali coffee beans and St David Dairy for their milk to ensure there is consistency with the coffee served. Did you know that each bottle of St David Dairy milk is hand bottled?

After our little education on coffee, one of the baristas, Oscar gave us a demonstration on how to make our own coffee art. After making my own coffee art, it has made me more appreciative towards coffee art. You can see my coffee art here.

Between the six of us, we shared a plate of delicious coffee and juice bircher made out of blood orange juice, St Ali coffee yoghurt, hazelnut, coffee crumb, date confit and blood orange crackers.

Although we were quite full, the head chef - Simon Turner insisted that we try a plate of ethical bacon - pigs that have been hand fed, and cured in house. He also discussed about the use of Australian sourced produce and ensuring as much ethical measures as possible.

Following coffee and "brunch" at Il Fornaio, we went off to St Kilda Sports Club for a friendly game of lawn bowls and cider before our final lot of activities.

ST KILDA SPORTS CLUB

66 Fitzroy Street, St Kilda | PH: 03 9534 5229

www.stkildasportsclub.com

FACEBOOK: StKildaSportsClub

St Kilda Sports Club has a rich history in the Melbourne social and sports scene. It's been operating since 1865.

They are currently undergoing renovations to restore the club to its former glory, but also adapting to the ever changing needs of Melbourne, which now offers its club for parties, functions and events.

When we arrived we all grabbed a glass of cider each before heading out to the lawn bowl area for a friendly game of lawn balls.

I've never played lawn bowling my whole life, but I did find it exciting and fun! There were a group of men playing lawn bowls that afternoon and I kept through my lawn ball into their field.

Following our game, the venue manager took us around the St Kilda Bowling club. It was very interesting to see the history of the club.

After our little tour, we went off to our second last destination - Milk The Cow.



MILK THE COW

157 Fitzroy St, St Kilda | PH: 03 9537 2225

www.milkthecow.com.au

FACEBOOK: milkthecowstkilda | TWITTER: @milkthecowmelb

Being an avid cheese lover and the occasional wine drinker (a lot more recently due to food blogging), I was all smiles when I arrived at Milk The Cow.

We were each offered a Cheese and Wine Flight pairing, where each wine was paired with a cheese.

The flight was started from left to right, as it the flight became heavier.

#1: Six month old manchego paired with Madame Coco Blanc de Blanc.

#2: Six month old blue milk cheese paired with Peter Lehmann Riesling

#3: Gouda paired with Chardonnay.

#4: Bella Vitano Merlot Cheese paired with Kelly Brook Pinot Noir.

After our cheese and wine tasting we were given a pop quiz and Ashley from Im So Hungree won it!

Milk The Cow has a serious amount of cheese and wine offerings that I will definitely need to visit when I have the chance. Now that they are opening a second store in the North, I just might have to visit.

Following our cheese and wine, we went off to our final destination.



BAR DI STASIO

31 Fitzroy St, St Kilda 3182

PH: 03 9525 3999

www.distasio.com.au

FACEBOOK: CafeDiStasio | TWITTER: @CafeDiStasio

Bar Di Stasio is a brand new addition to Di Stasio, where one can meet and drink in sophistication. The moment you step into the bar, you will notice the stylish and sophisticated interiors.

When we arrived we were offered a refreshing yet slightly bitter Ramazzotti Cocktail. It's a cocktail made out of Italian bitter - Ramazzotti. I don't actually know the name of this cocktail, so I named it Ramazzotti Cocktail. I love how they served it in a stainless steel cup with retro straws. Although we were SOOOO full, we still managed to stomach: chicken pate on toasts, potato skin crisps and eggplant chips! True foodies we are!



ICHI NI Sushi Making Class



Restaurateur Mallory was kind enough to give us the opportunity to try out this herbaceous Italian alcohol called Zucca. Interesting in taste but quite strong!

Following our drinks and snacks, Jessica announced the winner of the Amazing Race, which was Ashley from Im So Hungree!

It was definitely a fun and food filled day at St Kilda. This is just a brief encounter of the food places that St Kilda has to offer. There are always new businesses opening in St Kilda, and I'm very sure that I will be returning back to St Kilda to try out their other foodie places.



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