

# real taste of home

Supporting local producers has multiple benefits, especially flavour, writes CRAIG SQUIRE.

In a few articles I wrote for *Home* magazine last year, I began discussion and promotion of local produce, providing recipes and supplier information to suit.

Being an advocate of regional cuisine and local product for many years, both within the menu content of my restaurant and guest chefs promotions around the world, I have recently come across even greater reasons to further this commitment.

There are many and growing reasons to nurture and enjoy our local food.

#### Local produce = local wealth

Consumption of produce at a local level provides a direct economy – benefiting both the grower and public. Using emerging produce creates a market for this new business to develop and stabilise while potentially gearing for growth.

#### Environmental stability

Local produce is usually grown and manufactured by small to medium businesses that have a stake in their community. They care for their environment. Consuming this product locally reduces carbon emissions normally incurred through long-distance transport.

#### Health and wellbeing

There are strong connections between consuming fresh local product with people's health.

This can be seen on a historical and global scale. Consider the health of our Aboriginal people in the context of what they use to and now eat. The white man's processed and sugared food has caused massive damage.

#### Tourism

Not only is local produce and cuisine an important tourism marketing tool, it has been identified that the tourist's overall holiday enjoyment is enhanced by consuming legitimate local produce. It's a feeling of both putting back into the local economy and identifying with the local culture. This part of the tourism experience will become more important as we provide ways to sate the enlightened traveler's guilt about their carbon footprint on the long haul flight.

Here are two recipes using local produce that suit the summer heat.



Craig Squire is the chef and director of the award-winning Red Ochre Grill in Shields St.



## Char sui pork belly with seared Queensland scallops and pineapple chilli jam

#### Serves 8 entrées

\* Make pineapple jam and start pork a day or two before  
800g pork belly  
Ask your butcher for Mareeba pork, get them to provide it boneless and skinless  
32 Queensland scallops – meat only

#### Marinade for pork

125ml ketchup manis  
60ml red vinegar  
60ml mirin  
25ml honey  
30ml hoi sin  
30ml sesame oil  
10g garlic  
10g ginger  
1/2 tsp cinnamon  
1/2 tsp five spice

Mix together and marinate pork overnight  
Roast at 160C for 100 minutes on a cake rack (with a tray under to catch the fat)  
Remove and chill

#### Pineapple chilli jam

100g fresh pineapple flesh  
2 hot red chillies  
15g fresh ginger  
100g castor sugar  
5g fresh mint

Place chopped pineapple, chilli, ginger and sugar into heavy based saucepan and bring to simmer  
Cook long and slow, stirring often until light jam consistency forms  
When cool blend in food processor with chopped mint  
Store in an airtight container. It will last for months in the fridge

#### To serve

Cut pork into cubes  
Warm in oven or on hot plate  
Place on to plates  
Sear scallops in hot pan with a little oil, do not overcook  
Place on pork cubes and spoon chilli jam on top

## Thai-style fish cake with green papaya salad

### Serves 8

Fish cakes are a great way to use fish of a lower quality. Mixed reef fillets, grey mackerel and queen fish are all local fish that would suit. To save time make nam jim a day or two before

### Fish cakes

800g fish fillet  
1 dessert spoon of tom yum paste or similar  
3 finely shredded lemon myrtle or kaffir lime leaves  
10g fresh ginger  
1 red chilli chopped  
10g chopped coriander  
2 chopped spring onion

Cut fish into rough cubes  
Mix with other ingredients and process all together in food processor until combined  
Form into patties

### Green Papaya Salad

1 small green papaya  
1 punnet cherry tomatoes  
200g green beans  
80g toasted unsalted peanuts or macadamia nuts

Skin and de seed papaya

Shred or large grate into bowl  
1/2 cherry toms and cut beans into 2.5cm lengths.  
Mix all ingredients.

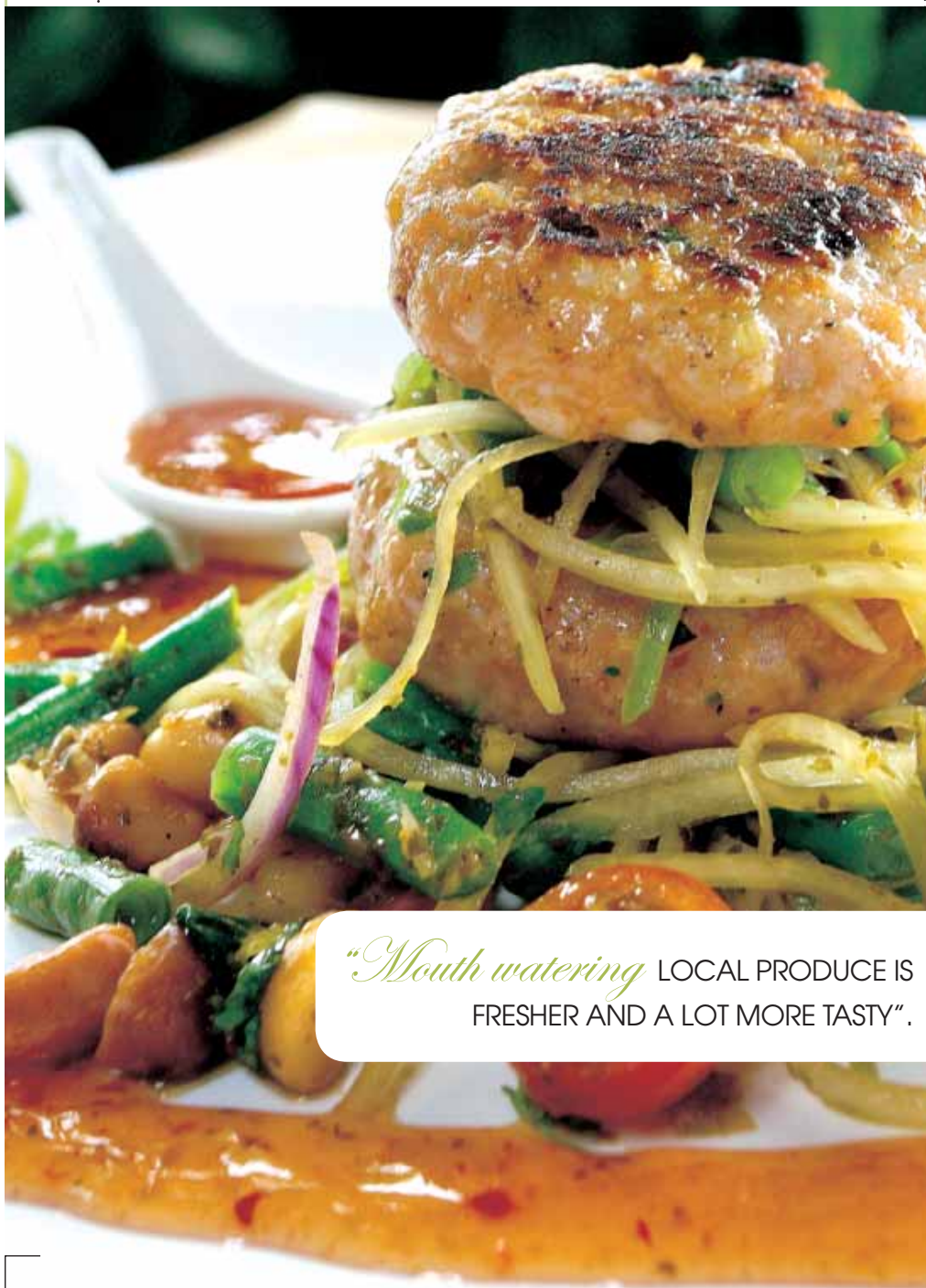
### Nam Jim – Thai dressing for green papaya salad

2 cloves garlic  
4 coriander roots and stalks – chop  
2 tsp sea salt  
2 hot chillies – chop  
50g palm sugar  
80ml fish sauce  
80ml fresh lime juice  
2 spring onions

Melt palm sugar in microwave  
Process all ingredients in a food processor, adding liquid palm sugar while processing  
Store in a jar with lime skins in refrigerator

### To serve

Mix nam jim with papaya salad to taste  
Grill fish cakes on barbecue or fry pan, assemble salad on plates and top with fish cakes, drizzle with sweet chilli sauce (Australian of course!)



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