

## support our local growers

Stimulate your tastebuds - and the local economy - with these delicious meals

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**T**he term “food miles” has been in use for about 10 years, but only widely noticed in the last couple. It refers to the distance that food has travelled from paddock to plate and its relationship to the environmental impact of its processing and transportation.

It is generally accepted that the further food travels the more carbon emissions produced. However, studies also show that some products are more environmentally damaging even though they travel less, due to more processing or energy use. An example of this would be products grown in a heated greenhouse, such as tomatoes in Britain, or products that require lots of feed that travel large distances, such as wagyu beef.

A tropical example of this excessive transport is when a potato from Tolga arrives in Cairns via Brisbane. This is one of many examples of why we need a wholesale food market right here in Far North Queensland, a hub for seafood, tropical fruit and all produce of quantity.

This market will then drive export and value-adding by being able to collate, amass and distribute. Maybe one day! Something that is definitely happening is the Cairns Local Food Market, a farmers’ market to open in April 2009, steered by the Local Food Network at a venue to be announced.

The brainchild of some forward thinking chefs and restaurateurs, the concept hopes to source as much product as possible within 160km. It is an inspiring concept and as I have discussed before local produce is not only good for environmental sustainability, it is also good for our local economy.

To take this step further we need to enjoy food more in season that is not only locally grown, but food that grows naturally in the area without excessive additives and watering.



Craig Squire is the chef and director of Ochre Restaurant and Catering. View his recipes at [www.ochrerestaurant.com.au/recipe.html](http://www.ochrerestaurant.com.au/recipe.html)



### Crispy skin sea farmed ‘Wonga’ baby barramundi with sunrise lime, shallot and ginger sauce

Gluten free  
Serves 4

#### Ingredients

4 plate-sized fresh baby barra (have your fishmonger gut, scale and score Chinese style)

Potato starch

Oil for deep frying

6 shallots, sliced

30g ginger, julienne

30ml sesame oil

60g sunrise limes, sliced

50g sugar

50ml rice vinegar

500ml chicken stock

Salt and pepper for seasoning

#### Method for lime, shallot and ginger sauce

Sweat shallots and ginger in sesame oil in a wok or pot. Retain ¼ of shallots for garnish. Add sugar and vinegar. Add stock and limes. Bring to boil, season and thicken lightly with potato starch.

#### To serve

Pre-heat oven to 180°C. Heat oil in wok or deep fryer, coat fish with potato starch and fry to golden brown. Place on paper towel on oven tray, repeat for each fish, then bake for 5 minutes. Check fish is cooked through and serve as shown.

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**Gluten Free  
Serves 4**

4 chicken breasts (check where the chicken comes from)  
400g Vanella buffalo mozzarella  
4 tomatoes  
Salad leaves and herbs – basil, rocket and dill are suitable  
100g roasted unsalted macadamia nuts, cracked

80ml white vinegar, from cane spirit  
150ml macadamia oil  
1tbs dijon mustard  
1 egg  
Australian sea salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Pre-heat oven to 180°C. Coat chicken with some macadamia oil and season with salt and pepper. Roast for 15 minutes. Slice and assemble tomatoes and mozzarella as shown. Arrange salad, herbs and macadamias. Slice chicken on to salad. Dress and serve.



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