

waji's
BLACK MAGIC



'I would like to thank all the generous sponsors and in particular Jared Dickason, Tony Kilpatrick and also Paul County from Tasmanian Food and Drink Books for his enthusiasm and management skills.'

-Waji

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

'I would like to thank Jared Dickason, Kirsty Healey at Habitat, Nick Osborne, my patient photographic technician and mentor, Bernard Lloyd, Karina Gregory and Christina Dickason for their sharp eyes, Lionel Marz at Everbest Printing Co, Ros Hey, Julie-Anne and Henry Hopwood, Janifer Smith at The Mercury and Waji for just being Waji!'

- Paul County

Produced and managed by:



Major Suppliers and Sponsors:



LIPSCOMBE LARDER
Delicatessen & Patisserie



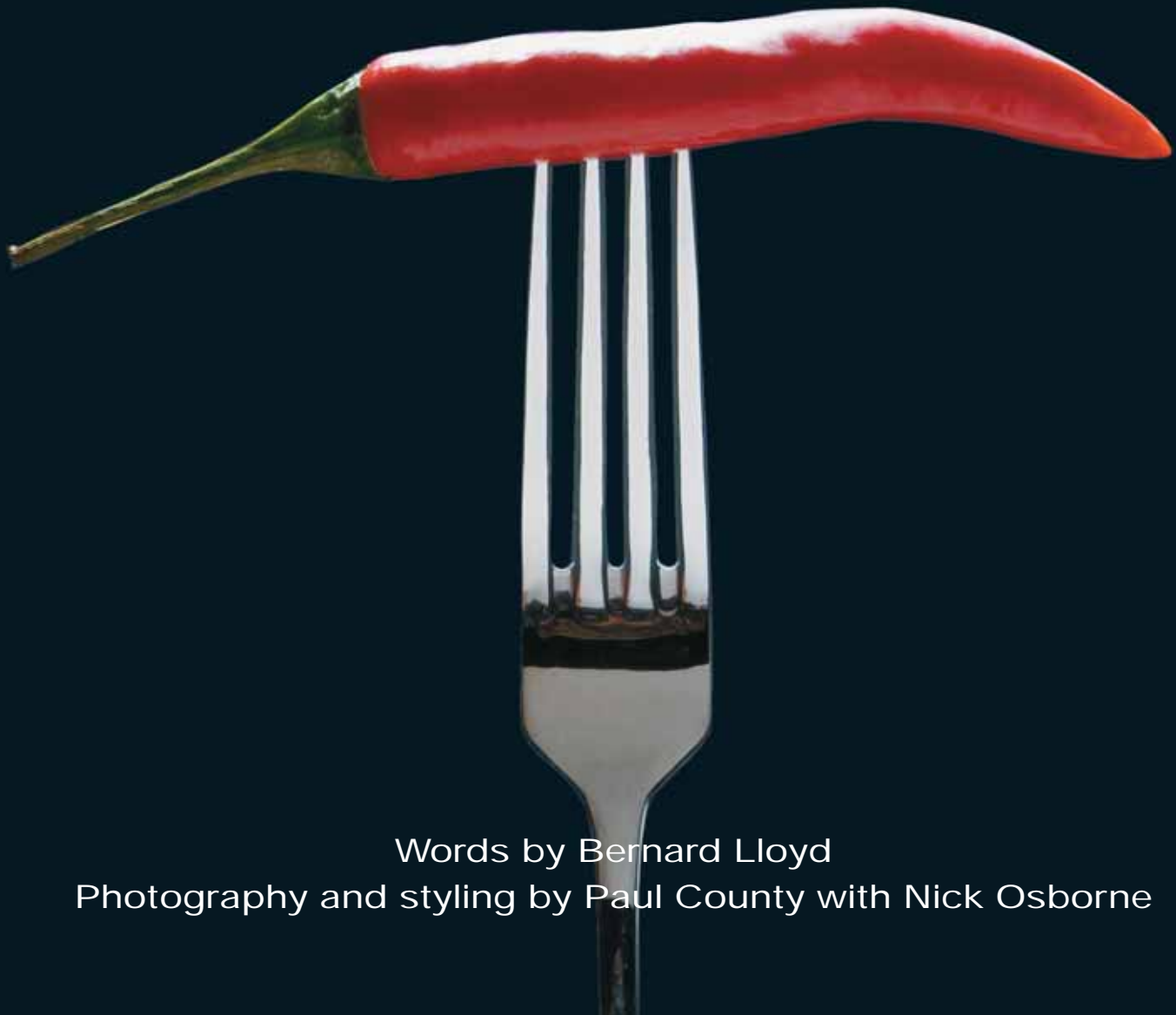
tassal
PURE TASMANIA



JOSEF CHROMY
TASMANIA

EF Exquisite
flavours

waji's
BLACK MAGIC



Words by Bernard Lloyd
Photography and styling by Paul County with Nick Osborne

<i>two</i>	Acknowledgements
<i>six</i>	About Waji
<i>ten</i>	Dinner with Waji

CONTENTS

Products

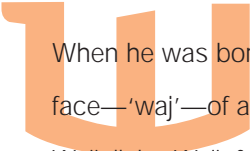
<i>twelve</i>	Chilli coriander pesto
<i>sixteen</i>	Thai green chilli paste
<i>twenty two</i>	Green chilli oil
<i>twenty six</i>	Palm sugar dressing
<i>thirty two</i>	Red chilli paste
<i>thirty eight</i>	Red chilli oil
<i>forty two</i>	Port wine onion jam
<i>forty six</i>	Cajun meat seasoning
<i>fifty</i>	Laksa paste
<i>fifty four</i>	Apricot chutney
<i>fifty eight</i>	Cajun seafood seasoning
<i>sixty four</i>	Green tomato chutney
<i>sixty eight</i>	Verjuice
<i>seventy two</i>	Apple paste
<i>seventy six</i>	Quince paste

'Explore, discover and enjoy.'

-Waji

Recipes

- fourteen* Scallop linguine with chilli coriander pesto
- eighteen* Wok fried mussels
- eighteen* Waji's rice recipes
- twenty* Thai chicken curry
- twenty four* Smoked cured salmon with potato roesti
- twenty eight* Crispy calamari with palm sugar dressing
- thirty* Char-grilled quail with palm sugar dressing
- thirty four* Seafood with red chilli paste and couscous
- thirty six* Hapuka with red chilli paste
- forty* Egg and red chilli curry
- forty four* Steak sandwich with port wine onion jam
- forty eight* Cajun beef with garden salad
- fifty two* Tasmanian rock lobster laksa
- fifty six* Chicken breast sandwich with apricot chutney
- sixty* Seafood gumbo
- sixty two* Blackened salmon
- sixty six* Ham and cheese sandwich with green tomato chutney
- seventy* Oysters with verjuice butter sauce
- seventy four* Glazed leg of ham
- seventy eight* Gourmet cheese board



When he was born his mother thought he had the face—'waj'—of a god 'Allah' and she named him Wajiullah. 'Waji' for short. When he was a toddler,

he returned to Asia, flashing those big white smiling teeth of his, children called him the 'Smiling Buddha' but here in Australia ... Maaate! Waji's an Aussie.

ABOUT WAJI

the most powerful cyclone in living memory hit his country, Bangladesh, and tidal waves swept nearly half a million people to their death, among them Waji's father. Unable to provide for her son, Waji's mother had to give him to an orphanage. At eight he was given a new home and life in Australia where he joined a family in Melbourne. He was the youngest, the only boy, and everyone doted on him.

Waji Spiby has grown up out of this Indian sub-continental heritage, with a Moslem name but an English foster-family and an Australian culture. When

But it is people like Waji who have changed the face of today's Australia.

It was nothing fancy or flash in his Australian suburban home, but Waji loved helping his mum with home

cooking. He didn't feel at all the same about homework, so as soon as he could get an apprenticeship he did, in cooking. After his apprenticeship Waji was lucky enough to work with a Chinese banquet chef. He worked hard, he took

Waji is Australian,
his main lessons he
taught himself, and
his teaching method
was quite unusual.

no holidays, and he worked his way up from hotel to hotel at the top end of town—the Sheratons and Hyatts. Eventually he was enticed to leave Australia to work in Europe. He stopped off in Fiji before arriving in

Germany, then Austria, Switzerland, and Italy. To know yourself, to see the opposite is not a bad thing.

Europe astounded Waji. He ate both the best and the worst food he had ever tasted. The best coffee, the best bread, the most delicately spiced vegetables, but also the most terrible Asian dishes. He returned to Australia and chefing and it was not until he was nearly thirty that he returned to his roots in Asia to taste the genuine article. In

Vietnam, Cambodia, Singapore, and Hong Kong he found new flavours that spoke to him at another level. Finally, Waji went home to his village in Bangladesh. It was not how he had remembered it. His romanticised



childhood memory was confronted by a smaller, drier landscape but he discovered also the rustic charm of village life. It would be surprising if this Asian heritage

did not strongly influence Waji.

Be surprised.

Waji did not train in any traditional cuisine nor did his travels somehow lead to a rediscovery of his roots, and it was not recipes or traditions that inspired him. Waji is Australian, his main lessons he taught himself, and his teaching method was quite unusual.

Very early in his apprenticeship Waji

decided to eat everything—every single ingredient he could lay his hands on—and to eat each ingredient pure and alone. He would go into a delicatessen and, starting at one end, search the shelves for pure



Image credit: The Mercury (Taste of Tasmania Festival)

ingredients: sturgeon, truffles, an oil or a new vinegar, and he would take them home and eat them, alone, one by one, mouthful by mouthful, pure and raw. He ate every fruit, every vegetable, every spice; he ate

mouthfuls of pure cinnamon, he chewed an entire star anise: he wanted to know the pure and unadulterated taste of everything. He wanted to know their essence.

And by this he taught his mouth unforgettable lessons. Waji taught his mouth to taste; now his mouth tells him how to cook.

Today, when Waji talks about an ingredient he points to the parts of his mouth where he remembers it. He can create a recipe in his mouth, add more of one and less of another ingredient, and taste the difference. And he continues to

try, try and try new tastes. A dish to Waji is its flavour combinations; flavours are like tubes of colour, like musical notes.

Tasmania is a long way from the Spice Islands.

Waji went to Tasmania to join his cousin; a fellow-chef and eventually he settled there and worked his way through some of Hobart's best eateries. He enjoyed creating Asian-style dishes but according to his own taste. He made his own version of everything and it seemed natural to make his own accompaniments as well. His first 'product' was red chilli oil. He made it for himself because he couldn't find a commercial version he liked. When friends and fellow-chefs asked him to make them some too, he had labels made and... a new business 'Waji's' just started from there. Soon, he was making his own curry pastes, chutneys and other accompaniments. It was what his mouth told him to do, together with fortuitous gifts or purchases of raw ingredients.

Tasmanian thinking was a strong influence.

The thinking on that small and remote island tends to favour things local, small-scale, pure and organic: no artificial flavours, colours, or preservatives. As his

range grew and moved beyond commercial chefs toward home cooks, the bottles became smaller but Waji production remains homemade in style, small in scale, and dominated by fresh ingredients. And being ready to use now.

New customers have allowed Waji to develop more sophisticated products. A Waji product is always the fusion of three or four taste-textures into one, a

Waji taught his mouth to taste; now his mouth tells him how to cook.

combination of ingredients, and Waji suggests you use his creations like single ingredients. They may be subtle and complex but they are ready to go. Waji does the slow and the gentle, the reduction and

the concentration; you do the quick and the easy, the last addition. Just a dash, a few drops, a teaspoonful, three or four dip-bowls at the barbeque—that kind of thing. The products featured here are not authentic copies of exotic specialties. They are unique to Australia but they are everyday products.

They are 'Austrasian'

Tasmania boasts some of Australia's most desolate and beautiful locations, from alpine plateaus to perfectly deserted wilderness beaches.

DINNER WITH WAJI

And all are within reach of Waji.

Whether it's a board-room lunch for 20, dinner for 900 or a wedding on a beach, or a party in the snow. Waji has done and can do it.

Its all starts with his 8 metre self-powered state of the art mobile commercial kitchen, then add his professional team of caterers and chopper, if needed.

Throw him a challenge, no matter where you live in Australia - it will be Magic.





CHILLI CORIANDER PESTO

It's a last minute thing, y



'I decided to make an Asian pesto. Instead of basil, I used coriander. Instead of pine nuts, almonds.

ou don't have to cook it.

It's a last minute thing, you don't have to cook it, and it's a table condiment too.'

—Waji

Dress any

grilled fish, shellfish or chicken, especially scallops.

Dollop on

top of a bowl of sweet potato soup.

Mix it

through Asian egg noodles.

Spread it

over the meat or the tomato in a sandwich.

My chilli coriander pesto is

green chillies

fresh garlic

fresh ginger

almond meal

fresh coriander

vegetable oil

sea salt

blended, heated (not boiled)

and hot-bottled.

Refrigerate.

One of my friends, Tony Kilpatrick, religiously has this quick to prepare dish every friday for dinner. It takes only 5-10 minutes to prepare. Not washing the pasta retains the starch which helps all the ingredients bind.

SCALLOP LINGUINE WITH CHILLI CORIANDER PESTO

500 g linguine egg pasta	Cook pasta in boiling salted water. When cooked to el dente strain, but do not wash, and keep aside.
1 tbsp vegetable oil	
4 tbsp Waji's chilli coriander pesto	
400 g fresh Tasmanian scallops	Heat oil in pan then add the pesto. Soon after add the scallops and cook for 1-2 minutes. Do not overcook. Add drained pasta and mix through.
¼ bunch coriander leaves	
<i>Serves 4 main courses</i>	Serve in warmed bowls and garnish with ripped coriander leaves.

