

# OPEN TABLE

BYRON BAY

MY FOOD ODYSSEY

Ronit Robbaz-Franco

Melbourne Books is proud to add OPEN TABLE: BYRON BAY to its' range of cookbooks that includes bestselling titles such as MOROCCAN SOUP BAR by Hana Assafiri, SWEET GREEK, SWEET GREEK LIFE by Kathy Tsaples, HUNGRY & FUSSY by Helen Tzouganatos, TULUM by Coskun Uysal and SICILANO by Joe Vargetto.

Ronit Robbaz-Franco and her popular Open Table cooking school and catering business embody the essence of Byron Bay and surrounds ... healthy food that is tasty and tantalising using fresh seasonal ingredients.

The Byron Bay area is renowned for attracting free spirited people and Ronit landed there in 1997 after travelling the world with her passion for exploring food culture. She brought with her new ways of combining spices, flavours and ingredients that are all beautifully presented as easy, delicious, nutritious recipes.

Open Table Catering is now in its 17th successful year of creating fabulous settings and sumptuous fine food for private events and celebrations. The cooking classes vary from Middle Eastern Hafla, Moorish feast, vegan and vegetarian delights to Ayurvedic cuisine.



The book is the culmination of Ronit's food odyssey and is divided into five parts, the Middle East, India, the Mediterranean, Latin America, and the Moorish region. These are places Ronit lived, worked and explored. Rather than sections divided into entrée, mains, and desserts this cookbook is a journey through the eyes and taste buds, of a new age, nomadic gypsy who just so happens to cook damn good food!

KINGFISH CEVICHE  
WITH CITRUS SALAD & SALMON ROE

SERVES 4-6

This popular Peruvian dish is low carb, low fat and gluten-free. Traditionally the fish is cured in lime juice and tossed together with avocado, cucumber and coriander, resulting in a lively, fresh and light salad, the epitome of healthy! Here I'll show you how to make ceviche using different embellishing elements. It's easy and surprisingly very fast and simple, being whipped up in as little as 1 hour. The acidity from the citrus 'cooks' the fish, turning it opaque and giving it a slightly firmer texture whilst retaining moist and tender. This dish makes for a tasty, fun appetizer for parties and gatherings.

80 ml (2 fl oz) freshly squeezed orange juice  
2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lime juice  
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
2 teaspoons sesame oil  
1½ teaspoon pure maple syrup  
400 g (14 oz) sustainably sourced kingfish, thinly sliced  
1 ruby grapefruit, segmented & each segment sliced in half lengthways  
4 radishes, thinly sliced  
2 tablespoons salmon roe (optional)  
1 long red chili, seeded & finely chopped  
1 tablespoon coriander (cilantro) leaves, torn

Whisk the orange juice, lime juice, olive oil, sesame oil and maple syrup together in a medium bowl. Add the kingfish and gently stir to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour, to marinate, until fish turns opaque.  
To serve, arrange the kingfish, grapefruit and radish alternately on a large serving platter. Scatter with salmon roe (if using), chili and coriander. Drizzle with any remaining marinade just before serving.



218 LATIN AMERICAN

GF / DF

SALMON WITH  
MASHED BROAD BEANS  
& PASSION FRUIT SAUCE

SERVES 6

This recipe was developed for an Ayurvedic workshop I ran in Melbourne a few years ago for the gorgeous ladies of the Caulfield Jewish Club who loved the acidic sound of salmon (which is used extensively on Friday night Shabbat dinners) and passion fruit. This dish is fresh and healthy. The combination of marinated salmon with passion fruit is well known in South America. The brown sugar in the spice mix combines well with the acidity of the passion fruit, and the broad beans mash adds a velvety texture to the dish.

6 x 150 g (5 oz) salmon fillets  
400 g (14 oz) frozen broad bean beans  
30 g (1 oz) ghee, plus a little extra for cooking  
steamed basmati rice or naan, to serve

## SPICY GARNISH

2 tablespoons coconut sugar  
2 tablespoons water  
2 tablespoons coriander (cilantro) seeds  
2 tablespoons fennel seeds

## MASALA TANDOORI

4 tablespoons sweet paprika  
1 tablespoon garam masala  
1 tablespoon coriander seeds  
1 tablespoon ground ginger  
1½ teaspoon fenugreek  
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper  
1 teaspoon turmeric  
2 tablespoons ghee

## PASSION FRUIT SAUCE

6 passion fruit, pulp  
250 ml (8½ fl oz) thickened (whipping) cream\*  
2 tablespoons coconut sugar  
150 g (5 oz) natural yoghurt

see salt & freshly ground black pepper, to taste

\* For a dairy-free option, use coconut cream, coconut yoghurt and coconut oil instead of cream, yoghurt and ghee.

To prepare the spicy garnish, heat the sugar and water together in a small saucepan over medium-low heat, until the sugar dissolves. Add the spices and cook, stirring constantly, for 3 minutes, or until sugar starts to caramelize. Pour onto a tray and separate into small clusters. Cook then refrigerate for 15 minutes, or until set.

To prepare the masala tandoori, grind the spices together using a mortar and pestle or electric spice grinder. Mix ghee and ghee together to form a paste. Rub over the salmon and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Meanwhile, to make the passion fruit sauce, combine the passion fruit pulp, cream and sugar in a small saucepan and bring to a boil over medium heat. Decant the heat to low, add the yoghurt and simmer for 7 minutes, or until a thick sauce forms. Strain through a fine mesh sieve. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Drain the broad beans in boiling water for 5 minutes. Drain, reserving a little of the boiling water. Peel the beans and place in a food processor. Blitz the beans and ghee together, adding a little of the reserved cooking water as required, to make a smooth and creamy purée.

Melt the ghee in a large frying pan over high heat. Sear the salmon, skin-side down first, for 3 minutes on each side, or until cooked most of the way through, leaving the centre still pink. Simultaneously, warm the broad bean cream and the passion fruit sauce.

Serve the fish on top of the hot broad bean cream. Pour the passion fruit sauce over the fish and scatter with the spicy garnish. Serve with steamed basmati rice or naan.



32 INDIA

GF / DF-OPTION

VEGAN CHOCOLATE  
& MANDARIN MOUSSE

SERVES 4

I love the combination of mandarin or orange and dark chocolate. It takes me back to Jaffa in Israel, with its cobblestoned streets, vibrant markets and colourful stalls filled with citrus fruit. My sisters and I were always eyeing the chocolate stall at the market, adorned with a plethora of chocolate in different sizes and flavours—it was a childhood dream. Mind you it wasn't the best quality chocolate, but for us kids it was the ideal 'lolly shop'. Little did we know that years later, the flavours of our childhood adventures, dark chocolate with a tringe of orange essence, would be combined to make the 'Jaffa cake', not that dark chocolate would be consumed religiously by us all.

This mousse is the perfect dessert to impress your vegan guests plus it's refined sugar-free, using only dates! But if you haven't lost sugar just yet, you may like to add a little bit of extra sweetness using date syrup or coconut nectar. I opted to use coconut (yoghurt) in addition to coconut cream to create more of an airy and fluffy mousse texture, which is traditionally done using egg whites. If olive oil is not your thing in a dessert you can replace it with coconut oil or melted butter, if not strictly vegan. This is the perfect recipe to melt your lover's heart on Valentine's Day!

200 g (7 oz) vegan dark chocolate with 70% cocoa solids, broken into pieces, plus extra shaved, to serve  
400 ml (13½ fl oz) coconut cream  
2 tablespoons mandarin zest. See steps 5 method dates, pitted  
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil  
pinch of sea salt (optional)  
120 g (4¼ oz) thick coconut yoghurt  
60 g (2 oz) flaked almonds, coarsely chopped (optional)  
mandarin slices, for garnish  
Orange Blossom Syrup (p. 238), to serve

Place the chocolate in a medium heatproof bowl and set over a saucepan of just simmering water. Remove from the heat and set aside for 10 minutes, or until chocolate has a glossy sheen, indicating it has melted.

Pour 100 ml (3½ fl oz) of the coconut cream into a small saucepan, add the mandarin zest and bring to the boil over medium heat. Remove from the heat and allow to infuse for 10 minutes. Strain the cream, gradually pouring it into the melted chocolate, gently whisking together to combine. Stir in the remaining coconut cream. Set aside to cool.

Pour the chocolate cream into a high-speed blender. Add the dates and oil and blend on high, until creamy and smooth. Taste and adjust flavour as needed, adding more dates for sweetness or sea salt for saltiness, as desired. Transfer the mixture back into the glass bowl and gently fold in the coconut yoghurt and ground almonds, until well combined. Pour the mousse into a big serving bowl or four individual serving glasses and tap firmly on the bench, to remove any air bubbles. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours, or until set. Remove mousse from the fridge 10 minutes before serving, so it softens slightly.

To serve, garnish with mandarin slices, drizzle with orange blossom syrup and sprinkle with chocolate shavings.

Mousse can be stored in the fridge for up to 5 days.



190 MOROCCO

VG / GF / DF

Open Table sample pages

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