

Holiday KIDS

Hungry for fun

Children who spend time in the kitchen can also learn about healthy lifestyles, writes SCOTT BOLLES.

THE hottest new phenomenon in the food world isn't an exotic dish, cutting-edge restaurant or the next potty-mouthed chef. No, it's David Fishman - a 12-year-old restaurant critic with an enviable international profile.

"There's a change going on. Kids are shrewd about food. They know what olive oil is. We had a school group of seven-year-olds in here yesterday and out of 30 kids, 28 of them ate olives. I found that amazing," Klausen says.

PARAMOUNT Pictures snapped up the rights to the newspaper article that unearthed Fishman's story and extracts of his restaurant reviews have run in high-circulation glossy magazines in the US.

Experts say the healthy food message should be delivered in a non-confronting way. Ideally you should start them young; a four-year-old can help tear up lettuce in the kitchen.

"You wouldn't believe some of the questions we get asked," says Michael Klausen, who runs free cooking classes on Saturdays at the award-winning Brasserie Bread in Banksmeadow.

It's a message gaining traction in our schools. Cookbook author Stephanie Alexander's Kitchen Garden Foundation started in Victoria, setting up edible gardens in schools and giving students cooking skills to handle the produce.



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Little chef... youngsters can enjoy themselves learning about food.

catching up. Even Nintendo is in on the act. You don't race cars or avoid missiles with its Personal Trainer: Cooking game. The company has recognised a growing niche for kid's cooking, offering a "private cooking instructor" that talks gamers through nearly 250 recipes.

whisks and children's recipe kits. "Children are more likely to try something if they've cooked it themselves," Collins maintains.

Small fries start young

DANKS Street Depot chef Jared Ingersoll says the secret to nurturing young cooks is simple: get them involved early.

"I believe all kids have an interest in food. It's just about getting them involved in the preparation. Charlie can already cook pancakes and egg bread," he says.

SCOTT BOLLES



Earning their first chef's hat

CHILDREN'S cooking classes have evolved over the past decade and are just the tonic for school holidays. It used to all be about brownies and lasagne but kids today can polish their Japanese technique, bake bread or learn to make pasta.

When Saturdays 10-11am and noon-1pm (bookings essential)
Ages Five to 12
Cost Free

Bambini in Cucina

CIRA Cooking School, 4 Annandale Street, Annandale. Phone 0405 296 067.
When July 14, 10-11.15am, 11.30am-12.45pm and 1-2.15pm
Ages Four and up
Cost \$30 a person
Menu Italian classics, including gnocchi and fresh pasta.

Greek and delicious

Greekalicious, 1st floor, 70 Bronte Road, Bondi Junction. Phone 9331 0734
When July 22, 10.30am-1.30pm
Ages Seven to 12
Cost \$60
Menu Dishes include filo pies, keftedes (Greek meat fritters), salad and Greek doughnuts. Dishes will be prepared and consumed.

Sushi rolling course

Zushi Restaurant, 239 Victoria Street, Darlinghurst. Phone 9357 3533.
When Saturday, July 18, 10-11am
Ages Six to 12
Cost \$60 a person
Menu Learn to roll maki zushi (sushi rolls) and temaki zushi (hand rolls). Eat what you make. Gift bag includes instruction booklet and bamboo sushi rolling mat.



Yum... let's cook. Photo: iStockphoto

Home cooking

Classes held at your place or the home of Sheridan Rogers in North Sydney. Phone 0400 741 951.
When July 21, 23 and 24, 10.30am-1.30pm
Ages Eight to 16
Cost \$60 a person
Menu Children prepare, then eat, a wholesome, nutritious meal they can reproduce at home.

Bread-baking

Brasserie Bread, 1737 Botany Road, Banksmeadow. Phone 1300 966 845.

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Discover Mr Darwin Sun 12 - Sun 26 Hourly sessions 10am - 4pm	Sydney Treasure Hunt on the Mowbray

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For more information and other great school holiday activities visit darlingharbour.com



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