

Ladies OF LUNCHALOT

A LOVE OF FOOD, WINE AND CONVERSATION BRINGS
A GROUP OF YARRA VALLEY WOMEN TO THE TABLE



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One woman will bring honey from her own bees, another a new cake she's just trialled...we even created a new drink.



Sharing a meal has always been a way of gathering people together, but a group of women from Warburton have made their lunches a regular focus for not only feasting on the delights of their gardens, but also for enjoying a sense of community and connection that has at its heart the celebration of life in the Yarra Valley.

"As we've had more gatherings, we've recognised how important it is to create beautiful moments together, and when you get a group of women all being thoughtful about each other, everything from the table decorations to the food itself becomes an honouring of your friendships," says Gillian Farrow.

"When we put the food we've prepared on the table we always marvel at the abundance and delicious fare co-operative lunches such as this provide. We'll have a bit of everything with not a pinch of menu planning! One woman will bring honey from her own bees, another a new cake she's just trialled. There will always be an amazing salad handpicked from the garden and a few bottles of sparkling wine. And this summer we've created a new drink – homemade kombucha and gin!"

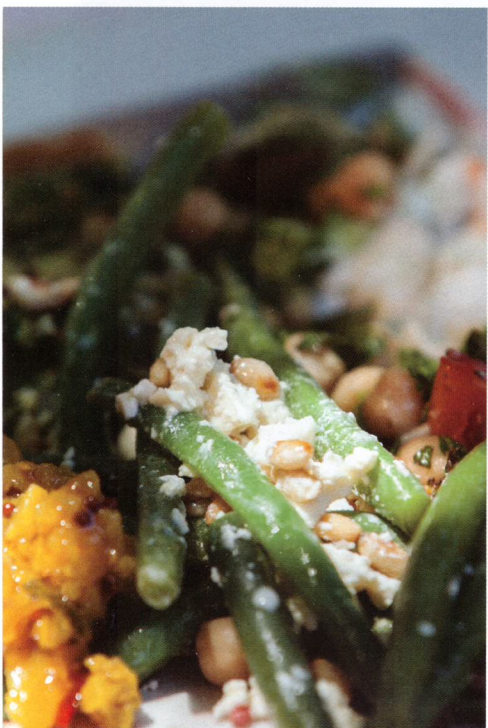
Although the Ladies of Lunchalot is primarily a social gathering, the sharing at the table has also enabled stronger bonds to be formed between the women in everyday life. As they've got to know one another, supportive friendships have blossomed and the real reason the lunch has become such a well-attended event is that it serves a deeper purpose of sharing stories.

"Everyone's lives are so busy, and not always easy – so lunch is a



LOVE You can find our editor's thoughts on the kombucha Tea and Gin combination on p. 117.





place to share what's happening and let the women around you support you. It's often a chance to ask for help," says Nicole Fox. "We've laughed a lot and we've cried too. We've celebrated birthdays and book launches, and we've also held space for the story of chemotherapy, of relationship breakdowns, of children's challenges and our hopes and fears."

"Ultimately it's not important what we eat or where we go. It's about making space to gather women together and just be. Whoever shows up is there because the need for connection and joy is as necessary for life as food and shelter. We have simply created our own way of making that happen."

"We realised the Ladies of Lunchalot acronym is 'LOL' and depending on your preference this can mean 'Laugh Out Loud' or 'Lots Of Love'—for us, both are equally true!" says Nicole. "There is really only one prerequisite – it seems a common interest we all have is bubbles, so it's important you have something to be grateful for or someone you want to thank in a toast at lunch!"



THIS PAGE: Host, Jane Eden, waves goodbye to her guests, while daughter Rosie enjoys the delights of the table.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Our new editor, Pip, one of the founding members of the Ladies, shares the laughter.