

ITALY'S FIRST THREE MICHELIN STAR CHEF RETURNS TO CROWN FOR STARS OF STARS



Luisa Valazza

Luisa Valazza, the first Italian woman to win three Michelin stars at her restaurant, Al Sorriso, is one of Crown's exceptional guests. From 14 to 18 March Valazza will swap her kitchen at the foot of the Alps for the one at Crown's JJ's Bar and Grill where she will preside as guest chef-in-residence.

North of Milan, in the Alpine foothills, Al Sorriso is a small restaurant and boutique hotel renowned for its high standards and welcoming atmosphere as overseen by Valazza's husband, Angelo, who comes from an international restaurant management background.

Valazza grew up in beautiful, cobble-stoned Sorriso, surrounded by majestic mountains and lakes and studied Arts, not cooking, at university. Her first foray into the professional kitchen came when the then chef of Al Sorriso resigned unexpectedly. Armed with cook books and recipes and a love of the local produce and culinary traditions, she went on to become one of the few female chefs in the world to achieve three Michelin stars.

Known for her fresh, delicious and captivating interpretations of regional favourites, Valazza is associated in particular with a certain type of ricotta cheese, her use of violets, berries and nuts from the forest, plus the aromatic herbs that grow wild in the area. Her signature dish is ricotta and wild spinach ravioli; she credits this pasta with making her famous.

Much is made of her love of combining the bounty of the mountains and the sea so it will be fascinating to see how this chef embraces local Australian and international produce for her inspirational seasonal dishes here in Melbourne.

Valazza describes her style as "a combination of Piedmont, Mediterranean and international influences, brought together as a tribute to the mountains where I love to walk". High-altitude ingredients such as white truffle, Porcini mushrooms and wild herbs are the heroes of her celebrated menus. Luisa Valazza is set to be a hero of the 2012 Melbourne Food and Wine Festival, following on from her success in 2009 as a guest of Crown's 'Stars of Europe' programme.

The 'Stars of Stars' is the fourth instalment in Crown's innovative Michelin Star focused 'Stars' series, following on from 'Stars of Europe' (2009), 'Stars of America' (2010) and 2011's 'Stars of Spice'. The other seven guest chefs for 2012 are Belgium's Sang-Hoon Degeimbre, France's Thierry Marx, Serge Vieira, Stephane Bour and Jacques Marcon, Tokyo's Jun Yukimura and Hong Kong's Mok Kit Keung.

For further information or to obtain high resolution images, please contact:

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CROWN PRESENTS 

STARS OF STARS 2012

6-18 MARCH

MEDIA RELEASE

Dinner with Luisa Valazza

Venue: JJ's Bar and Grill

Date: Thursday 15 March 2012

Cost: \$280.00 set menu with matched wines

Bookings: Reservations are essential and can be made by contacting +613 9292 6891

Luisa Valazza feature menu

Venue: JJ's Bar and Grill

Dates: Tuesday 13 – Sunday 18 March 2012*

Bookings: Reservations can be made by contacting +613 9292 5777

Star cooking class – SOLD OUT

Venue: Culinarium Training Kitchen

Date: Wednesday 14 March 2012

Cost: \$295.00 (includes dinner at JJ's Bar and Grill)

Bookings: Reservations are essential and can be made by contacting +613 9292 5731

*JJ's Bar and Grill is open for dinner only.



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