



13 NOV, 2022

GOOD TIMES ON TAP

Sunday Herald Sun, Melbourne

EAT OUT



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Amphetlett House

8692 0777  
19 Little Bourke St  
Melbourne VIC 3000  
ovolohotels.com/ovolo/  
laneways/amphetlett-house/

Opens November 17  
Mon - Sat 11:30am - late  
Sun 11:30am - 6:30pm

Expect to see more than beer pouring from the taps at Ovolo's latest venue, writes Renata Gortan

Amphetlett House is turning the idea of a taphouse on its head.

The soon-to-open venue in the CBD isn't just for beer, the 20 taps will have 14 different drinks on offer including cider, seltzer, wine and cocktails.

Ovolo's creative beverage director, Andrea Gualdi, is taking his high-end cocktail experience running Sydney's Maybe Sammy (named Best Bar in Australasia 2021 by The World's 50 Best Bars) and applying it at a more casual venue.

"With my background, this is a very fun challenge. I wanted to see how much you can push the boundaries between something perceived as a humble taphouse and bring in high-level cocktails," he says.

"A taphouse is a refined type of pub. You can get your pots and schooners; we have a very good selection of wine, predominantly from Australia, and our first cocktail on tap is the coffee and orange americano."

Cocktails on tap tend to be viewed as an inferior product, but Gualdi believes they're the next big thing.

"I've always been a fan of cocktails on tap. I believe they create a beautiful, consistent product regardless of which bartender makes it. The team members can focus on the guests rather than on the shaker," he says.

"Some of the world's best bars are doing cocktails on tap. There is a bit of a bad reputation about it, same as it used to be for non-alcoholic cocktails - it used to be a bunch of juices and now they're super creative, cocktails on tap are next."

Not only has Gualdi put an Australian spin on popular cocktails, such as the wattle seed negroni, finger lime daiquiri and eucalyptus smoked margarita, he also collaborated on them with a food scientist.

"I am passionate about cocktails, I know my drinks and how to serve them but it's good to surround yourself with people who know more than you," he says.

"I send this guy my recipes, we try them together and they recreate these cocktails with sustainable technology."

"In our margarita we use finger lime and lime to give a bit of body, but instead of juicing the lime and throwing away the skin, we freeze dry the limes and infuse it in alcohol to give the same feeling and acidity of a fresh product."

Gualdi designed the drinks menu to complement the food of Ovolo's director of kitchen operations, chef Ian Curley, with both following the brief of "classic, but with a twist".

Dishes include smoked bone marrow on toast with parsley and shallot salad; oysters with mignonette dressing and shaved horseradish; breaded chicken breast with Italian coleslaw; and fish and hand-cut chips with peas, zucchini and yoghurt tartare.

"It is refined, classic pub food. The cocktails will not overpower the food, they're pretty light in flavour, but there is complexity. You can have three or four drinks and not feel overwhelmed," Gualdi says.

"Every city needs a venue like Amphetlett House. I'm a big fan of traditional types of venues and this is our interpretation of it."