

Q le Baker

I'm so pleased to discover yet another great baker in Melbourne. [Q le Baker](#) as the name suggests is the brainchild of French baker, Quentin Berthonneau, who started honing his baking skills back home at the tender age of 15. The slick Q le Baker premises is located on a corner of the courtyard of the Prahran Market where you can see work by pastry chefs in progress as well as the fine fare on offer in the shop. His wonderful fruity Danishes, croissants and pain au chocolate are also sold at the [Slow Food Farmers' Market, Abbotsford Convent](#). In Q le Baker in Prahran expect artisan sourdough breads, brioche and crispy pastries but also some unique and amazingly crafted pastries.

Shop 709 Prahran Market

Tue 7am–5pm

Thu to Sat 7am–5pm

Sun 10am–3pm





Cultured Butter A Cut Above The Rest

Cultured butter has been produced in Europe for centuries. Born out of farmhouse traditions of collecting cream over several milkings before churning to make butter, cultured butter was essentially made from soured cream. It still is made from sour cream today but live cultures are directly added much like in yoghurt making. Unsalted cultured butter is loved in Europe for eating as it has a pleasant very slightly sweet, slightly tangy taste as well as pro-biotics to aid digestion. It is the preferred butter for baking because of

its higher fat content and lack of salt. Cultured butter has really taken off in Australia in the last few years with more and more small dairy producers trying their hand at making it. Great cream is where it all starts and [Schulz Organic Dairy](#) in Timboon have plenty of Gold Medal Award-winning cream, so it is not surprising that Schulz has just added cultured butter (salted and unsalted) to their list of products. Making small scale cultured butter is not a cheap process, so these butters tend to be double or a third more pricey than your industrial widespread stuff (sorry about the pun). For a similar price to fancy French imports you can now buy local versions. Look for Schulz cultured butters at [Farmers Markets around Melbourne and regional centres](#).

Blue Ribbon For Baker Bleu

It has to be the best bread in town; a blue ribbon for [Baker Bleu](#) for baking a loaf with a thin crispy crust and flavour to die for. This bread reminds me of the world renown bread from Poilâne in Paris, so it is not surprising then that Baker Bleu supplies Attica, one of the top 50 restaurants of the world, located just down the road in Ripponlea. Lucky Melbourne; we don't have to fly to Paris, just take a short trip over to 260 Glen Eira Road, Elsternwick to secure one of Baker Bleu's mega sourdough loaves (you can buy half or a quarter) or an exceptional sesame seed rolled baguette with its characteristic pointy ends. The light caraway rye bread, also with pointy ends, is a beautiful moist and aromatic loaf and worth adding to your shopping bag as it will keep for a few days, i.e., if you can stop eating it. Baker Bleu is not so much a retail shop as a retail doorway into the bakery where staff are busy mixing, shaping and moving loaves from racks to oven in what seems to be a seamless operation. Make sure you

go in the morning because this great bread sells as soon as it hits the shelves. Closing time is when they run out. [MeatSmith](#) in Collingwood sells the baguettes on weekends but they run out fast too.



The Fishmonger's Son

After the closure of much loved Canals fish shop in North Carlton, another business supplying fresh fish has opened on the same site. The aptly named [The Fishmonger's Son](#) is the son of a long time trader at the wholesale fish market. He will be personally bringing in the catch from the wholesale market to his new retail business at 703 Nicholson Street each morning, so you can be assured of the quality and freshness.

The space has had a new fit out and the smartly uniformed ladies serving behind the counter are only too happy to help you with all things piscatorial. Still only a couple of weeks after opening, they are slowly building up the variety of fish and grocery items with the aim of creating a one stop shop for your seafood dinner. So far I have very much enjoyed the John Dory, morwong, salmon and green prawns. The fishmonger's son is eager to please, don't hesitate to have a chat with him about your favorite fish or put in an order.

Tuesday – Friday 10 am – 6pm / Saturday 8am – 1pm



Lavezzi Gelati – From Italy With Love

[Lavezzi Gelati](#) has come to Melbourne from the town of Formia, North of Naples, bringing with it all the love that goes into making top quality gelati from premium fruits, nuts, coffee and dairy ingredients. I enjoyed wonderfully flavoured ricotta and pear gelati and, by way of comparison, also tried the ricotta and citrus. Both were exceptional in texture, freshness and flavour. I could really taste fresh ricotta but with the creamy, smooth texture of gelati. I guess this is not surprising given they are all prepared fresh daily by a qualified gelato maker. You can watch him preparing the gelati at the back of the stylish new store in Lygon street but it is hard to tear your eyes away the long list on the wooden menu board as you agonise over which flavour to choose. Rather than mountains of gelati with eye catching decorative fruit or nuts as flavour credentials, these luscious delights are hidden inside metal pots with lids to retain their freshness. There are a couple of tables inside where you can finish off your gelati indulgence with a coffee.

Lavezzi Gelati has two stores in Melbourne: 334 Lygon Street, Carlton and Eastland Shopping Centre, Ringwood.

