

**ALF's guide
to what's on,
where to
see it,
where
to eat,
where to
buy it ...**

June is film festival month in Sydney.

And, as might be suspected, some of the most interesting offerings this year are from post-*glasnost* **USSR** and **Hungary**, where the artistic thaw is becoming something of a spring torrent. A highlight in the documentary section is **Is It Easy To Be Young?** (USSR), the film about alienated Latvian youth which had Soviet audiences queuing for hours. Another *glasnost* gem is **The Commissar**, an indictment of 'chauvinism' in the USSR banned for twenty years. A **Hungarian Fairytale** is a comic comment on bureaucracy where a boy is assigned a non-existent father through an absurd and archaic law. Also on eastern Europe, but from Britain, is Tony Palmer's **Testimony**, on Dimitri Shostakovich's struggle for survival with Stalin. And other offerings from Britain include Glenda Jackson and Cathy Tyson in **Business As Usual**, and the opening night film, **Wish You Were Here**, from the director of **Mona Lisa**. In other highlights Juzo Atami (**Tampopo**) returns with **A Taxing Woman**, and Zhang Yimou (**Yellow Earth**) directs **Red Sorghum**. **DB**

The best value-for-money Japanese food in Melbourne is around the corner from the Australian Railways Union in King Street. The **Tori Matsu** is a large bustling restaurant which developed a devoted clientele in its earlier and much smaller incarnation in Bourke Street. The crowd at lunch time testifies to its first-rate food and quick

service. Its **sashimi** (raw fish) and **sushi** (rice cakes topped with seafood) are in great demand, but be there early for lunch. It also makes the best **gyoza** (a sort of Japanese dim sum, but much superior) in town. Its pork and chicken dishes are excellent, too. Each meal is accompanied by pickles, rice, **miso soup** and invigorating grilled rice tea. Lunch will set you back \$8. For dinner the menu is a bit wider, and includes a few dishes cooked at the table, such as **sukiyaki**. I particularly recommend the **nanban** (a kind of pickled fish), the **spinach** and **baby okra**. Dinner usually costs \$10-12, depending on the appetite. The **Tori Matsu** is run by a terrific Japanese woman, and the success of her restaurant has apparently not pleased the other (male) Japanese restaurant proprietors.

At the other end of town, the Italian Waiters' Club is a great standby. In a dingy lane near Parliament House, it's pretty hard to find unless you're with someone in the know. There's no sign, but if you try the door next to the hairdressers, and venture up the stairs, you'll find it. (Honest.) Originally opened in the fifties as a place for Italian waiters to go after work, it still opens till the wee small hours — and it probably hasn't changed its decor since, either. Don't be put off by the laminex tables and daggy curtains: the food is terrific, and the atmosphere exciting. Labor polities and cultural workers love the place. Pastas are around \$5-7; the main courses a little more. The **saltimbocca** (veal with ham, herbs and a wine sauce), **scallopini** and **tortellini alla crema** are favourites of mine. With wine you'll probably pay \$12-13 for two courses. I've had some of my best nights out there. **CS**

Tori Matsu. 179 King St, Melbourne.
Ph 670 1167. BYO. Cards: b/c m/c
Visa.

Italian Waiters Club
20 Meyers Place (off Bourke St) City.
Ph 650 1508. No cards.

For the best chocolate mousse in the world (or Sydney, at any rate), try **L'Aubergade Restaurant Francais** (I know, I know, the dreaded **French!**) It's at 353 Cleveland St, Surry Hills — right next to the ex-State Liberal MP **Michael Yabsley's** old electoral office. But don't let that turn your appetite: the chocolate mousse will overcome all misgivings. **JL**

If you're sick of sneaking furtively in and out of **MacDonald's** for your hamburger hit — sneak no more. The **Cafe Troppo**, in Glebe Pt Rd, Glebe, in Sydney, offers one of the best, albeit the most unfortunately named. Their '**proppie burger**' (ugh!) is a huge meal, and comes with the cafe's own secret sauce (with dozens of secret ingredients). **JL**

It's just about time for the winter woollies to be dusted off, the chimneys swept and hip flasks secured in back pockets. So it's also just about time to make a careful note of favourite **winter drinks**. The time when everyone runs around at work saying 'Now, how does that rum toddy go again? Was it sugar or honey you throw in?' The sort everyone likes when the wind is scooting along outside and the safest place is home. Here's a quick list of populars that'll make winter a bit more pleasurable:

Whiskey Toddie. Warm a glass under hot water. Add two shots of scotch. Dissolve one teaspoon of white or brown sugar. Top up with hot water and a squeeze of lemon if you wish. You'll soon be sweating. (The same recipe can be used for rum or brandy — just substitute the appropriate spirit.)

Scotch Toddie. Warm a glass under hot water. Add a puddle of lemonade. Throw in two squares of chocolate, preferably plain dark. Pour in one teaspoon of warmed honey. Add scotch whisky to taste.

Rusty Nail. A drink used by trekkers in the south west of the south island of New Zealand. Drop three ice blocks into a tumbler. Add three shots of scotch whisky. Add three shots of Drambuie. Drink slowly. The name refers to the rugged nature of the brew. **JG**

Sydney now has its own City Limits/Time Out — well, sort of. **City Life**, a monthly starting from June, features listings, short reviews, and columns and features on **films, music, nightlife, theatre, art and sport**. The look is earnestly arty, the tone not-quite clever. And the politics (unlike **City Limits**) are plague on both your houses stuff. Still, it fills a hole. It sells in newsagents for \$3.50. **DB**

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