

Nestled in the foothills of Dromana one finds Stillwater Restaurant at Crittenden Estate. The restaurant is warm and welcoming with a modern fit out and menu that sings of Zac's skill and passion.

Zac Poulter is a local boy, having grown up and started his career on the Peninsula, he travelled the world before coming home to roost and start a family of his own. Zac began his career with food at eighteen when he got a job doing dishes at the Grand in Frankston. An apprenticeship followed at the Moorooduc Coolstores under Max Paganoni, now of Max's at Red Hill fame, before Zac headed to Melbourne to expand his opportunities and finish his apprenticeship. Zac worked in a few places in town including Rockman's Regency, which is now the Marriot, where he met future wife and fellow foodie Jacqui.

Adventure soon followed. Zac headed to Europe where he worked in some large restaurants, as well as taking a job as personal chef to the actor Russell Crowe during the making of the blockbuster 'Gladiator', a job that saw him work in not only London but in Malta & Morocco.

Coincidentally Jacqui was in London working and before long their paths had crossed again. Romance blossomed so Zac quit his job and followed his heart to the Greek Islands where Jacqui had moved on to work.

After an idyllic season on Santorini the world beckoned and the couple travelled to Greece and Egypt before going back to London. In time Jacqui's limited tourist visa forced a decision for the future. Zac refers to these days as like the old Cusson's Imperial Leather advert with the couple in the spa saying "Where to next James?"



The Cayman Islands sounded good, also offering Jacqui a chance to pursue her other passion of scuba diving and instructing, so off they went.

Not long after they had settled 9/11 happened, the world changed and the tourism industry became very, very quiet. The choice was made – it was time to come home. Luckily an old connection resurfaced. Zac explains, "We came home and went to work for Russell Crowe again, this time in Coffs Harbour to help him get ready for the Peter Weir film 'Master and Commander'. The film also took us to Mexico for just over six months."

Finally Jacqui and Zac made their way back to Melbourne, after a long absence the city was not what they had left and they set about making a new plan.

Nearly six years on and the couple's vision for a quality restaurant, cellar door and special events venue has become a reality. Not only have they created an inviting and well run establishment they have had two children along the way.

Zac feels the highlight of the past five or so years, aside from having his two beautiful girls, has been building great relationships with their customers. Stillwater Restaurant has grown from strength to strength, in both 2007 and 2008 it was awarded 'Overall Winner Best Restaurant Reception Venue' at the Australian Bridal Industry Awards. In 2007 the restaurant was named 'Business of the year' at the Frankston & Mornington Peninsula Business Awards.

The restaurant and cellar door showcases wines made by Rollo and Garry Crittenden as well as estate olive oil and vincotto. Margaret Crittenden's homemade produce is also available at Cellar Door.

The range of wines at cellar door is probably one of the most extensive on the Peninsula incorporating Burgundian, Italian and now even Spanish styles and grape varieties.

So what do the Poulters do when they have a chance to get out of the restaurant?

"We enjoy the lifestyle on the Peninsula. We go to Heronswood quite a bit. It's great to get outside, have lunch - they do a great job up there. Usually we go mid week and it is not very crowded, the food's wonderful and the garden is gorgeous. We live in Dromana, the beach is beautiful, though unfortunately I only got there about three times over summer but we hope to change that. Jacqui's at home more these days – she has the most important job with the children."

As for the future Zac assures me they plan to be at Stillwater for a long time, and I can't help but think we are lucky to have them.

- Emily Davenport

Visit crittenden estate & indulge your senses **at stillwater...**

spring @ stillwater...



Mid week lunch indulgence - Wine tasting, 2 course lunch and a glass of Wine for \$39

Experience the delights of a lunch at Stillwater for only \$39. Come and enjoy a detailed wine tasting in our cellar door before enjoying 2 courses in the restaurant (set menu) matched to a glass of wine. (Wednesday to Friday)

BBQ & Bocce at Stillwater-

From mid-November through to the end of January, Stillwater will be open on Thursday evenings for a fun evening BBQ with bocce on the grass, back yard cricket, live music and our famous BBQ buffet on the terrace. \$35pp/\$15 kids U/14. Bookings essential, (weather dependant).

Melbourne Cup Day - Tuesday 3rd November

Book now for our annual Cup day extravaganza!!

Our famous Gourmet BBQ will be served by the lake for \$40pp or a 3 course a la carte menu in the restaurant for \$70pp

Live music, cup sweeps, 2 big screens to watch all the action, fashions in the vines and fabulous prizes such as wine, dining and accommodation vouchers this is one day not to be missed!!



Stillwater Restaurant and Crittenden Cellar Door open 7 days.
Dinner Friday & Saturday evenings. Functions anytime.
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