



## SNIPPETS

Congratulations to **Foundry Chocolate** which has won several prestigious awards from the **Academy of Chocolate in London**. From more than 1,600 entries Foundry snatched silver medals for their **Kilombero Valley, Tanzania 70%** and their self-designed packaging. To top it off they won one of only seven grand winner trophies for **Best Overall Brand Experience** – and all this in their first year of business. [foundrychocolate.co.nz](http://foundrychocolate.co.nz)

**Pescatore in Christchurch** has earned a **Best of Award of Excellence** by the respected *US Wine Spectator* magazine, recognising its quality wine list and wine service.

We love a good garden party and a gin garden party, well, you're ringing our bells! **Lighthouse Gin** is kicking off **Toast Martinborough 2019** on **16 November** in a cottage garden setting at **Te Kairanga Estate** with Lighthouse Gin and tonics, cocktails and a bespoke menu from Beat Kitchen, and Te Kairanga wines, too. [toastmartinborough.co.nz](http://toastmartinborough.co.nz)

**Tino Passano**, head chef of **Tantalus Estate Vineyard** on **Waiheke Island** has been named the **Australasian Tapas Champion** for 2019.

Head to the west coast for New Zealand's best toastie. **The Hokitika Sandwich Company** took top place in the inaugural **Great New Zealand Toastie Takeover** competition, with owner **Joseph Walker's** creation, the **'Detroit'**: corned beef, McClure's Sweet & Spicy Pickles, havarti and cream cheeses, red onion, and Walker's own in-house sauce toasted on a locally sourced loaf.



**W**hile tradition brings with it a sense of comfort and belonging, come the festive season it's easy to quickly run out of love for the tinsel and baubles of yesteryear. Thankfully, when it comes to setting the scene for a celebration, there are some simple ways to refresh your aesthetic. And it doesn't mean starting from scratch. The stylist team at Citta are experts when it comes to injecting some fresh, contemporary charm.

Citta's national visual merchandiser, Federica Contardi, says traditional tree alternatives are high on the trend radar this year, which is great news if vacuuming up pine needles isn't high on your wishlist. "Our pared-back birch trees are very popular and are perfectly suited to minimalist and Scandi interiors," she says, suggesting being selective with ornaments to really make a statement on these simplistic style 'trees'.

When it comes to setting that all-important

## DESIGN FILES / CITTA DESIGN FEDERICA CONTARDI /

festive table, the Citta team says the trick is to create a theme and the rest will flow. Some contemporary thematic options could include: white Christmas, gold glamour, rustic vintage or natural woodland. But the options are limitless. "You don't need to adhere to the traditional Christmas colours of red, green and white. To try something new choose two or three 'hero' colours that go well together, such as gold, yellow and white. Collect festive ornaments and baubles in these colours and complement with twinkling string lights and candles," Federica suggests. And if you only buy one item to zhuzh up the table, the Citta team recommend a statement centrepiece. "This should encompass your theme and be the focus of the table," says Federica. "It could be a vase filled with pinecones or a large candle surrounded by a festive wreath." While a few scented candles waround the home create a welcoming ambience if you're hosting a soiree, when it comes to the table Federica says, "Opt for unscented, to avoid interfering with the flavours of the food."

To create a sense of occasion, the Citta team know it's the little things that make a big difference. "Welcome guests with a glass of bubbles or a seasonal cocktail, and place a handwritten name tag at a table setting. To makes guests feel spoilt, you can also add a little present on each seat, such as some handmade chocolate to take home," says Federica.

While it is impossible to pick just one favourite item for the festive table, the team did agree that linen napkins add a touch of relaxed luxury. "And they can be used again and again," says Federica. "Our linen napkins and patterned tea towels can also be used as an alternative to gift wrap for encasing presents. Not only does it look beautiful and feel special, but it also reduces paper waste and doubles as a gift." A very 2019 idea. **NIKKI BIRRELL**

## RELEASE WANAKA

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