

# La Scala Anew

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By [Alecia Wood](#),  
7th April 2014

*La Scala on Jersey has been pared back to offer seasonal, produce-driven Italian dishes in relaxed surrounds.*

White tablecloths have been replaced with timber tops, staff now sport casual denim aprons, guests can bring their own wine on Mondays and there's antipasti aplenty for quick meals by the bar. At Paddington's refreshed La Scala on Jersey, head chef Massimo Mele has crafted a menu of straightforward Italian dishes to match the restaurant's new direction.

"The focus really is on getting back to grassroots Italian," says Mele, who originally hails from Naples and came to Australia aged six. A selection of seafood dishes – such as marinated octopus salad with chopped boiled potato, celery hearts, chilli and fennel, or a pasta dish of paccheri with Spencer Gulf prawns tossed through tomato, garlic, chilli and basil – reflects his coastal heritage. "Everything is nice and light. You need to make your way to dessert for the Nutella doughnuts."

[The Cooks Co-Op](#) supplies the kitchen with fresh produce from the city-fringe Hawkesbury region, making for seasonal dishes paired with fish and seafood caught along the east coast, lamb raised on saltbush in South Australia and beef from northern New South Wales. "The menu changes two or three times a week depending on what's available," Mele says.

"When people come here and try things, they'll say, 'that tastes like my mum makes it'. It reminds them of Italy," says Mele. His own mother's signature carrots feature among the antipasti, lightly pickled and served with a generous spoonful of tangy goat's curd with fresh oregano and mint. Above all, Mele is keen to create an inviting atmosphere for locals. "I want them to feel comfortable. I want you to get off the bus on the way home from work, and say, it's Tuesday, I feel like that pasta for dinner."

## La Scala on Jersey

Corner of Jersey Road and Melrose Lane (Above the Lightbrigade Hotel)

(02) 9357 0815

## Hours

Mon to Sat 6pm–11pm

[lascalaoonjersey.com.au](http://lascalaoonjersey.com.au)