



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

**14 April 2021**

# **SOUTH YARRA'S ONLY VEGAN RESTAURANT & BAR SET TO OPEN**

**- A MENU REBELLIOUS RENAISSANCE FROM ROOT TO STEM -**

Lona Misa Bar & Kitchen will officially open its doors from Friday April 16 within the new designer hotel Ovolo South Yarra as South Yarra's only true plant-based restaurant and bar offering. A lively Latin dining experience boasting a heavily vegan menu with vegetarian options, the bar and restaurant is a collaboration between Creative Culinary Partners and Melbourne hospitality legends Shannon Martinez (Smith & Daughters) and Ian Curley (French Saloon and Kirk's Wine Bar), and Ovolo Hotels.

Lona Misa moves from a daytime café to restaurant and wine bar, welcoming diners at all times of the day with a full restaurant dining experience initially from Thursday to Saturday. Home to 90 seats, the venue on all fronts is artfully combined, rich in history, uncharted in territory and designed by award-winning agency, Luchetti Krelle. The many elements of Lona Misa are nostalgic and familiar in form, delivered with a twist. From the post-modern characters in the surrounding renaissance inspired art, and quintessential chequered diner flooring reimaged in terrazzo.

With a strong focus on local produce and the freshest ingredients, the menus have been created to showcase a zero waste and sustainable approach. Leveraging both Ian & Shannon's farm-to-table experience whilst paying homage to Shannon's Latin roots through vegan and vegetarian dishes. Shannon will be displaying her years of dedication to vegan dining by displaying the use of personally developed techniques. Turning flour into chicharrones, soy into chicken and seaweed into fish.

Shannon says, "Lona Misa is bougie vegan dining. Whilst the menu might be vegan and vegetarian, the dishes are still delicious as ever, replicating meat-based flavour profiles through texture and taste."

I was based south side over eight years ago when I worked at Sweetwater and since I've left, there hasn't been anything that took its place so we wanted to bring a strong offering for all to enjoy, and bring vegan dining back to the south"

The all-day menu is made up of snacks and small plates; big plates; and sides. With an entire section dedicated to The Josper - an innovative Spanish oven that grills over charcoal at a very high heat. Lona Misa is the only plant-based restaurant to be using such a technique.



Snacks include char grilled whole baby corn with ancho chilli and coffee mayonnaise; oyster mushroom ceviche; fire roasted padron croquettas; or queso con chorizo (using a soy-based meat as the chorizo). Big plates feature Chile Relleno En Nogada (sweet roasted poblano pepper stuffed with spiced ground meat and topped with walnut cream sauce and pomegranate seeds); as well as Moqueca, a Brazilian seafood stew cooked in a spicy coconut, tomato and lime broth, served on rice). From The Josper, try the peri peri cauliflower roasted over fire and basted in peri peri sauce; or the mushroom pinchos morunos (spiced local oyster mushrooms grilled over fire); as well as slow roasted sweet potato served on mole negro, topped with spiced mince in a cast iron pot.

Inviting you to break your fast before the all-day menu, Lona Misa's breakfast menu features a selection of Spanish favourites such as The Full Spanish (wedge of tortilla, sofrito braised with beans, eggs your way, greens, marinated goats curd and served with pan con tomate); Huevos Rancheros (crispy corn tortillas, refried beans, fried eggs salsa roja, queso fresca) and the Breakfast Burrito.

From kombucha on tap, to Latin inspired cocktails, the drinks program will celebrate the liveliness of La Bamba, pouring liberating libations from day to night, from garden to glass. On offer is a selection of seasonal cocktails, native G&Ts, forgotten Latin classics, cold pressed juices, and bespoke sodas. Meticulously mixed and creatively crafted using the freshest locally and sustainable sourced ingredients, inspired by the lush green gardens and vibrant botanical wonders.

On the local area inspired seasonal South Yarra Cocktail List, you will find the likes of The Pedro with Pineapple Tio Pepe Sherry, Pedro Ximenez Sherry, Fresh OJ, Fresh Pineapple, sugar, fresh mint and seasonal berries. The Classics however serve a more paired back slice of paradise with options including the Hemingway Daiquiri with Pampero Blanco, Luxardo Maraschino, Fresh Lime and Pink Grapefruit, along with Martinez; a simple and impactful mix of Tanqueray Gin, Cinzano 1757 Rosso Vermouth and Luxardo Maraschino Liqueur served with a lemon twist.

An approachable wine list features a full spectrum of classics as well as lesser-known regions and varieties has been carefully tailored to compliment the chefs' root to stem philosophy. Highlighting small growers who protect their land with minimal impact, whether through minimal intervention, organic or biodynamic practices.

Continuing Lona Misa's zero waste and sustainable approach beyond the farm and table all the way to the back of house, the venue utilises the ORCA technology which mimics the natural digestion process. It works using the same principles that our body and other living organisms are governed by, creating the perfect thermophilic biological environment for the microorganisms to digest food waste into a liquid.



Anna Roberts, one of Australia's most formidable and leading interior stylists, has brought the theme and design narrative of Lona Misa to life. Styling the café, bar and restaurant spaces with art pieces, artifacts and curiosities that further enhance the diner's visual experience. Additionally, Music Curator Andrew Lewis has further heightened the experience. Curating a juxtaposed score, offering chic-disco vibe within public spaces whilst the restaurant and bar leans towards a Latin vibe.

"Take what you know about vegan and vegetarian dining, and think vibrant, loud, and unapologetic – that's Lona Misa," said Vince Lombino, Creative F&B Director Ovolo Hotels.

- ENDS -

**Address:** 234 Toorak Road, South Yarra, Melbourne

**Phone number:** 03 9116 2000

**Website:** [www.lonamisa.com.au](http://www.lonamisa.com.au)

**Instagram:** @\_lonamisa\_ or [https://www.instagram.com/\\_lonamisa/](https://www.instagram.com/_lonamisa/)

#### **Operating Hours:**

- Breakfast (Café); Monday – Sunday 6.30am – 10.30am
- All-day Dining Café: Monday – Sunday 11am-11pm
- Dinner Restaurant: Thursday – Saturday 5.30pm-11pm
- Bar: Monday – Sunday 11am-11pm

**Images of Lona Misa and the menu items can be access by the link below:**

- [https://hindgroup-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/ovaus\\_ovolohotels\\_com/EnziGRcn3JNEIF275qCiMa8Bsmou0CWnmf1Uy-0vY2STw?e=TrRznP](https://hindgroup-my.sharepoint.com/:f/g/personal/ovaus_ovolohotels_com/EnziGRcn3JNEIF275qCiMa8Bsmou0CWnmf1Uy-0vY2STw?e=TrRznP)

#### **About Ovolo Hotels**

The Ovolo Group was founded by entrepreneur Girish Jhunjhnuwala and first entered the real estate market in 2002; then further expanded into the hotel industry in 2010. Ovolo Hotels quickly became one of Hong Kong and Australia's most dynamic independent owner operated hospitality firms by providing guests with the best in effortless living across hotels and food and beverage outlets.



### **About Shannon Martinez**

Shannon is well and truly underway in her mission to change the way the world perceives plant-based dining and changing the way people eat. Shannon has been cooking in kitchens for the past 22 years in Melbourne and is the Owner of Australia's two most prolific plant-based businesses, Smith & Daughters and Smith & Deli. Being a meat eater gives this talented chef the capability to create unique tastes and textures unlike anything on the market today; ones that truly replicate meats, cheeses, and good old family recipes. Armed with a strong hospitality network, and proven tenure in her industry with great success in plant-based dining, Shannon has a foundation for veg food to be taken seriously in some of Australia's most meat-driven kitchens, with some of Australia's most unconvinced carnivorous chefs.

### **About Ian Curley**

Ian Curley is a British-born and Australian-based chef, with an enduring 25-year tenure in Melbourne that has seen him at the helm of some of the city's most iconic restaurants, including nine years at The Point Albert Park and more than a decade with the European Group. Currently, Ian is co-owner and chef at French Saloon and Kirk's Wine Bar, and Director of restaurant consultancy group, Exec Chef. Ian's food is much-loved for its accessible approach and simple philosophy – he cooks the food he loves to eat, across all cuisines. His signature style, however, is European fare of the highest quality, with classic French underpinnings – a legacy from the rigorous training he received early in his career in the kitchens of London.