

Setting Table to perfection

PERFECTION is the passion at Merewether eatery and dining destination Table 1 Espresso, located on City Road.

Be it the coffee, the food or the service, owner George James and his dedicated team are always focused on exceeding expectations.

Table 1 Espresso is this year nominated in the Cafe category of the 2016 Hunter Local Business Awards, fresh from taking out the Best New Business category in 2105.

"We went on to claim the National New Business of the Year last year, which was the proudest moment of my life, being seated there next to my parents and winning such a huge award," George said.

"This year we're back, and we're really proud that our customers have taken the time to nominate us. They are our number one focus and it means a lot to earn that recognition in the local restaurant awards."

George has grown up in hospitality, his parents well-known operators in the local industry and his brothers, Peter and Harry, owners of a number of local outlets.



SUCCESS ON THE MENU: Table 1 Espresso, located at 89-91 City Road Merewether, has raised the bar in terms of what a cafe can be in Newcastle.

Table 1 Espresso is George's first venture on his own, and although still single, he classes it akin to having a baby.

"You have to nurture and feed it, and if you don't, it

goes AWOL," George said.

"It's a 24/7 operation and even when I'm sleeping I'm dreaming about the business, but I love it and it's true what they say, 'If you make your obsession your profes-

sion, you'll never work a day in your life."

Key to the success of Table 1 Espresso, according to George, is his dynamic staff.

"I have five chefs working the kitchen and 14 floor staff

and baristas. They are the most amazing team; humble, hard workers who all get along and all love their job.

"We're like a close-knit family, inspiring and motivating each other, and we've

always got each others' back."

George reserves special mention for apprentice chef Avi Tanglao, who has been with the operation since Table 1's inception 2.5 years ago.

"He is the wizard behind our food and the styling of our products," George said. "He has been with us since day one, and has a huge future in the industry."

"We are very lucky to have him, and as a born-and-bred Novocastrian I'm proud to be helping young Novocastrians get a foothold in the industry."

Table 1 Espresso boasts a Modern Australian menu, featuring a tasty global mix of flavours ranging from South American, Mediterranean, Mexican, Moroccan, Turkish and, of course, Greek.

"It always comes back to flavour," said George, who has been overwhelmed by customer support and is looking forward to the awards night.

"We got a taste of the local awards last year and we're keen for success again this year as we continue to grow and expand."

TABLE 1

ESPRESSO

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