

Winter 2019 A Class Act: The Loubet's Are Back IN Noosa

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Helen Flanagan caught up with old friend Bruno Loubet to discover what he's been up to since leaving Noosa – and what brought him back!

The culinary pedigree of Bordeaux-born Bruno Loubet is without peer, but did you know he owned Bruno's Tables in Brisbane before moving to Noosa in 2005? He was the town's first Michelin-starred chef and while at Berardo's Restaurant & Bar as executive chef, he and his wife Catherine became Australian citizens.

After Noosa, they packed up and moved back to London, where he was a young chef in the 1980s but after eight years pursuing a passion for plant-based cooking at his 200-seat Kings Cross restaurant, the Grain Store, they're back.

The Loubets have bought a 125-year-old Queenslander on 8.5 hectares in the Gold Coast hinterland and the Willow Vale Cooking School is about to open. Apart from two dogs Millie and Fergus and a menagerie including chickens and horses, they've planted fruit trees and built large vegetable gardens – his pride and joy.

"I'd love to change the rigidness of cooking classes," explains Bruno. "I don't want people to come just to tick a box on French or Italian cuisine; instead we need to create an experience that begins with picking produce from the garden and finishes with a shared meal and lessons to take away from the class."

The Loubets were in town for Noosa Food & Wine Festival and still love the rich identity of Noosa.

"It has exceptional natural beauty with the National Park, beaches, Noosa River and so much more – including the passion of the local farmers and having a

festival that celebrates its local producers,” enthuses Catherine.

While in town and catching up with old friends, the cooking couple also hosted Masterclasses in the Festival Village. We grabbed the recipe for Bruno’s [Tarte Tatin with marinated Kingfish](#). Check it out!

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About the Author / [Helen Flanagan](#)
helen@innoosamagazine.com.au



Noosa’s sophisticated charm, vibrant food culture and the magnetism of a subtropical paradise surrounded by national parks, inveigled Helen’s manic world and flipped it on its side. She pursues the good life with gusto, instinctively understanding the joys of travel, the art of story-telling, a candid review and surviving another reno whilst thriving on the motto Live Laugh Love!

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