

Our Italian eateries must pasta the test

SHARNEE RAWSON

ITALY is declaring war on the rest of the world's restaurants, asking wannabe-authentic Italian eateries to prove themselves to the national chamber of commerce and tourism body.

To qualify for a seal of approval from the Italian Chamber of Commerce, restaurants must lodge an application proving they fulfil a strict set of requirements relating to everything from olive oil to table settings, to be assessed by a panel in Rome.

Beatrice Di Furia, secretary of the Queensland Italian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said the program would promote authentic Italian experiences.

"We try to raise awareness of original and authentic Italian [restaurants] ... if something is not from Italy, doesn't follow the right process or use the right ingredients, it should not be called Italian."



AUTHENTIC OR NOT: Stella Mureddu tucks into the pasta at Colle Rosso in Red Hill but whether it is Italian enough will be determined by the Italian Chamber of Commerce.

Only four Italian restaurants in Queensland have been recognised – Grappino's (Paddington), Viale Canova (Clayfield) and Dell'Ugo (New Farm and South Bank).

Certain criteria, such as not using Italian-imported

olive oil, or having at least one waitperson fluent in Italian, are an instant knock-out.

"It's important to follow the strict rules – we are very picky. The restaurants should be using Italian produce," Ms Di Furia said.

Tony Percuoco, owner and executive chef of Tartufo restaurant, Fortitude Valley, is about to start the labour-intensive application process.

The Naples-born chef said the program will support the Italian culture.

DOES YOUR LOCAL LINE-UP?

1 Reception: The restaurant must have at least one person who speaks Italian.

2 Mise en place: Tables to have decorative elements and plates are to be porcelain and of Italian design.

3 Kitchen & menu: Kitchen must be in view of the customer, and menu items to be listed in Italian.

4 Gourmet offer: Traditional Italian dishes must make up at least 50 per cent of the menu, and include Italian-made cheese, sausage and espresso.

5 Wine list: Must include at least five, or 30 per cent, Italian wines.

Depression linked to Parkinson's

DEPRESSION can triple the risk of a person developing Parkinson's disease, according to new research.

Scientists in Taiwan studied the medical records of 4634 people with depression and 18,544 depression-free individuals for 10 years.

During the follow-up, 1.42 per cent of depression sufferers were diagnosed with Parkinson's compared with 0.52 per cent of non-depressed participants.

People with depression were 3.24 times more likely to develop the disease than those without the mental health problem, said the researchers writing online in the journal *Neurology*.

However, scientists do not know whether depression is an early symptom of the neurodegenerative disease or a cause of it.

Depression has proven links to a range of life-threatening illnesses including cancer and stroke.

Authors of the study in Taiwan said the risks of being diagnosed with Parkinson's increased with age and having depression that did not respond to treatment.

Mental health charities say depression affects one in five older people.

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