

The West Australian

fresh

Rob Broadfield takes
on Hollywood. **P2**
Adriano Zumbo
in Perth. **P7**



Kitchen whiz

It processes, simmers, sautes and steams — are you ready to be Thermomix obsessed?

PLUS new recipes by top cooks

OLGA DE MOELLER

Rule of Thermo dynamics

The German wunder-widgit costs a lot but has risen to top with kitchenistas

It's expensive and not sold in stores. Most top chefs use one — Ferran Adria, from Spain's legendary El Bulli, reportedly had 15 in the restaurant before he closed it earlier this year — and it's gaining cult status in Australia as the ultimate benchtop appliance that processes, simmers, sautes and steams. It even cleans itself; well, sort of.

Thermomix devotees swear by its icing sugar, which it makes in a snap, and have no doubt the German wunder-widgit is worth every cent of its hefty \$1939 price. No, it can't bake a cake or roast a turkey but it can temper chocolate, shave ice, peel garlic, de-seed a pomegranate, whip mayonnaise and knead dough.

Melbourne freelance food journalist Dani Valent organised a home demonstration four years ago and was hooked, but knew there was more to it than just sensible design. Her cookbook, in the mix, is the first collection of Thermomix recipes that actually makes the machine look, er, sexy.

Some are from Michelin-star chefs around the world; others from big names in Australia and food bloggers. Fifteen are her own. Tetsuya Wakuda is there with his mojito cheesecakes, so is Greg Malouf with a green lentil soup and Philippe Mouchel with chocolate risotto.

"I wanted to create a cookbook along the lines of some of my favourite ones, the kind you can have on the coffee table or take to bed and page through lovingly before going to sleep," she says.

Think duck liver parfait with gingerbread crumbs and chocolate foam, pumpkin soup with virtual bacon dust and caramelised white chocolate mousse with passionfruit curd and coffee crumb. All starring the Thermomix. The oven puts in a cameo appearance.

Still not convinced? "It's the kind of machine you can't wrap your head around until you actually see it, then you can't stop thinking about it," Valent says. "After a few months of

obsessing, my husband told me to shut up and buy one.

"I'll use it at least three times a day and can leave the teenagers to make dinner because it's pretty hard to muck up stuff. There's a basic cake recipe in the book that's virtually foolproof — you just put in all the ingredients at once and the batter is ready to go in the oven in 60 seconds."

Then there's the health angle. Valent says a lot of people with allergies swear by the machine because it means they can mill their own rice flour and make everything from scratch.

Cooking is done at low temperatures (37-100C), unless using the steaming bowl, and soups are child's play.

She has a beef "stir-fry" recipe but concedes the flavour, while "pervasively delicious", is not the same as when using a wok because you don't get the intensity of heat.

'It's the kind of machine you can't wrap your head around until you see it.'

"But you can play around with low-temperatures and all the nutrients are locked in," she says. "We keep it on the bench and have done away with the food processor and mixer, though we still have a coffee machine, citrus juicer and pasta maker."

Australia-NewZealand importer Grace Witek first saw the Thermomix in action when she visited family in Poland in 2000 and had to bring one home to Perth. It's sold direct — there are about 300 consultants in WA — through home demonstrations, group parties and cooking classes, which are run every four to six weeks at various venues, including the Balcatta head office.

Mrs Witek says there has been an 80 per cent increase in sales in the past year, largely as a result of hands-on customer

care and word of mouth. "Customers are raving about it," she says. "A 12-year-old boy even took it for a show-and-tell."

"It's a product that speaks for itself and a lot of chefs are promoting it because they love the product. It replaces over 10 major appliances but if you include smaller things, like a yoghurt maker, it could be 20 appliances."

She says the no-frills design is intended to mark time: the machine is built to last so it can't afford to follow fashions and fads. "One customer had one for 40 years and loved it so much that she gave it a burial when it finally gave up the ghost," she says. "Mine, I use it for steaming and milling. I love the colours and textures of soups and purees, especially, and the health aspect because it makes it easy to go back to basics. My husband makes the butter, so we never have to buy it anymore."

Neisha Pirrit, who runs boutique caterer The Bay Gourmet (she lives in Watermans Bay, hence the name), got her Thermomix last Christmas and can't imagine cooking without it. Looking after two young children and running a business that specialises in parties with divine canapes is a juggling act in which every minute counts.

She says the machine has replaced at least six kitchen appliances and she always uses it to make dough. "Bread, brioche, pizza, fruit scrolls, you name it, it's excellent," she says. "It's also invaluable for sauces because you don't have to worry about sieving — the blades are so powerful they pulverise everything."

"Cream of celeriac soup, in particular, comes out beautifully in a Thermomix — there are no fibres — and I wouldn't make it any other way now."

In the mix (\$60, hardback) by Dani Valent, published by Slattery Media Group. Available from Thermomix consultants and the head office, Balcatta.

in the mix
Great Thermomix Recipes



DANI VALENT

WIN

Thermomix is giving readers the chance to win their very own Thermomix, valued at \$1999. PLUS five other lucky readers will win its latest cookbook, in the mix, each valued at \$60.

To enter, put your name, address and phone number on the back of an envelope and send to Fresh Thermomix Competition, CPO Box 2921, Perth 6800. Entries close Friday, November 4 and drawn on November 8, with the winner notified by mail. Employees of *The West Australian* and their immediate family are ineligible to enter. Entrants' details will be used for marketing. See WAN privacy policy at thewest.com.au/privacypolicy.

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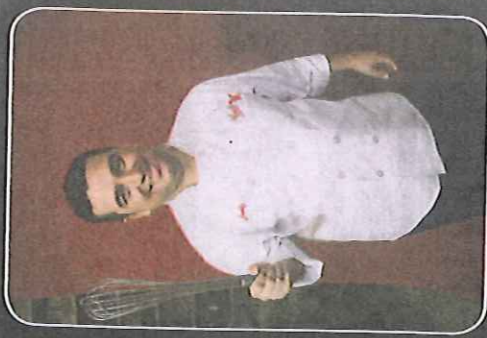
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Full steam ahead: The Thermomix processes, simmers, sautes and steams.

Engineered to do all the hard work

More than 120 engineers worked on the current Thermomix TM 31, nicknamed Bimby and launched in 2005 in Europe with black-box technology that logs hours used, errors, functions and speeds.

It has a gearless motor, Solingen steel blades, a stainless-steel mixing bowl, steamer attachment, built-in scales and 21 patents on design, materials and technology that mills, grinds, minces, kneads, crushes, whips, steams and cooks — all in one benchtop unit that evolved from a blender for baby food made by Semco, in France, in the 60s.

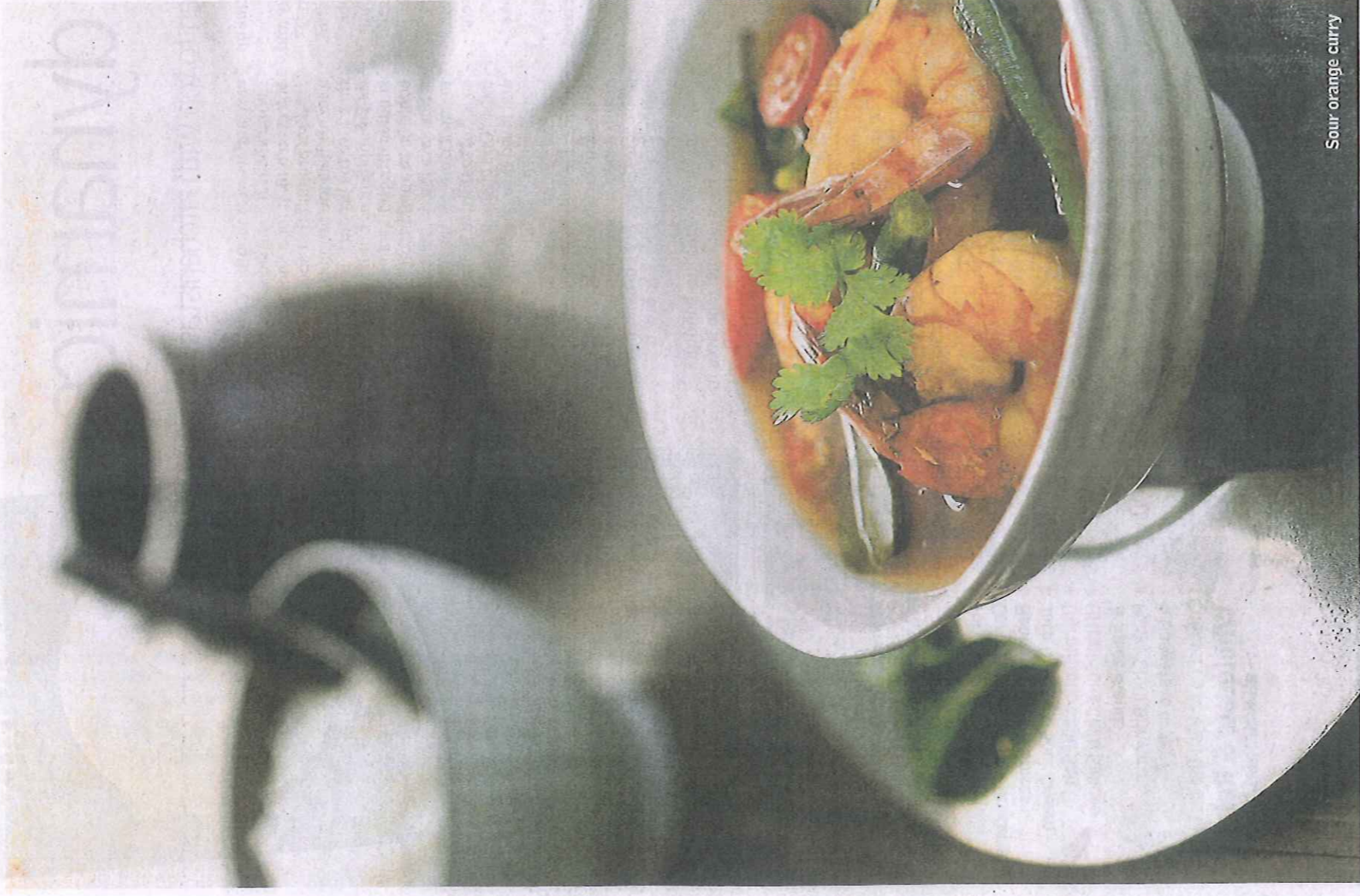
In 1970 there was a prototype unit that could puree and simmer soups. German-based manufacturer Vorwerk was impressed enough to develop the idea, first with the

VM 2000, called the "soup mixer", then adding new features, including scales, a beating attachment and intermittent operation for heavy dough, in the 90s with the TM 21.

The appliance is still made by Vorwerk Semco in France, and is the second-biggest earner for Vorwerk — it also manufactures the Kobold vacuum cleaner, Jafra cosmetics, Lux water purifiers and the Feolina ironing system — with \$684 million in Thermomix sales worldwide last year.

It was introduced to Australia-New Zealand by WA-based importers Grace and Witek Mazur in 2001 and 50,000 units have been sold over the past 10 years, nearly half of those — 23,000 — in the past 12 months.

Dining In Thermomix



Sour orange curry

Master the

Fresh out of Thermomix's latest cool

SOUR ORANGE CURRY

By Mark Newman (Citron Restaurant, Brisbane)

Serves 6

Sour orange curry paste

- 30g shrimp paste
- 40g dried, long red chillies
- 30g galangal, peeled and roughly chopped
- 15g fresh turmeric, peeled and roughly chopped
- 6 cloves garlic, peeled
- 60g red shallots, peeled
- salt to taste

Wrap the shrimp paste in foil and roast in a heavy-based dry pan, with the lid on, over medium heat for about 20 minutes or until fragrant. Soak the chillies in cold water for 20 minutes, then drain and place in the TM bowl. Chop for 2 seconds/speed 10. Add the galangal and turmeric and pulse on turbo a few times. When a paste has formed, add the roasted shrimp paste, garlic cloves, shallots and salt, and blend for 20 seconds/speed 6. Scrape down and repeat, continuing until a textured curry paste has formed. Set the curry paste aside. It's not necessary to wash the TM bowl, if continuing with the curry straight away.

Sour orange curry

- 20g tamarind pulp
- 80ml warm water
- 600g chicken stock
- 100g sour orange curry paste
- 40g fish sauce, or to taste
- 100g snake beans, cut into 4cm lengths
- 125g Chinese broccoli, cut into bite-sized pieces
- 600g raw prawns, or thinly sliced chicken
- 6 cherry tomatoes, halved
- 5-10 birdseye chillies, bruised
- 10 Kaffir lime leaves
- 30g ginger, finely sliced
- handful of coriander leaves, to serve

Soak the tamarind pulp in the water for 10 minutes, then strain over a bowl. Discard the pulp, reserving the tamarind-flavoured water. Pour the chicken stock into the TM bowl and heat for 5 minutes/100 degrees/speed 1. Add the curry paste and cook for 1 minute/100 degrees/speed 1. Add the fish sauce and the tamarind water to the TM bowl, then add the snake beans and Chinese broccoli and chicken (if using). Cook for 1 minute/100C/reverse/speed 1. Add the prawns (if using), cherry tomatoes, chillies, Kaffir lime leaves and ginger, and cook for 1 minute/100C/reverse/speed 1. Transfer to a serving dish and top with the coriander leaves.

Chilli: lime cr



BEETRI AND PI

By Troy Pay

- 3 big beet
- 35g olive
- 80g pome
- 10g rosew
- juice of 1
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- 10g mint l
- 10g parsle
- 10g dill
- 80g pista
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TOMATO SHOTS

By Lynette Macdonald (Thermomix consultant, Sydney)

Makes 20 serves

Tomato sorbet

- 300g ripe tomatoes
- ½ dried red chilli, or a dash of
- Tabasco sauce to taste
- salt and pepper to taste
- peeled zest of 1 lemon or lime
- 1 egg white

Cut the tomatoes into rough 2cm cubes. Place in a plastic bag or container and freeze for 8 hours or overnight. Place the frozen tomatoes, chilli, salt, pepper and lemon or lime zest into the TM bowl. Blend for 1 minute/speed 10, stirring with the spatula to keep the contents moving. Once the mixture is smooth, insert the butterfly. Add the egg white and whisk for 30 seconds/speed 4. It's now ready to use. If you put it back in the freezer for more than an hour or so, you'll need to chop it into large chunks and churn it again for 1 minute/speed 10.

Olive tapenade

- 20g parsley leaves
- 1 clove garlic, peeled
- 150g olives, black, green or a mix of both, pitted
- 2 anchovies
- 20g capers, rinsed and drained



Tomato shots

Perfect mix

Look, these recipes are sure to please

CHILLI LIME CRUMB

By Sam Massari (Tuileries Rutherglen, Melbourne)

Makes about 3 cups

- 500g rice
- 2 cinnamon sticks, roughly broken
- 200g salt flakes, such as Murray River salt or Maldon sea salt
- 10g Szechuan peppercorns
- 15g coriander seeds
- 6 star anise
- 10g chilli flakes, or dried chillies
- 6 cardamom pods
- zest of 6 limes
- 20 Kaffir lime leaves

Turn the rice into rice flour by tipping it into the TM bowl and blitzing for 1 minute/speed 10. Set aside in another bowl. Place all remaining ingredients in the TM bowl and toast for 7 minutes/100C/speed 2 until fragrant. Blitz for 1 minute/speed 10 until the spices become a fine powder. Add the rice flour to the TM bowl. Turn the Thermomix dial to the closed lid position and press turbo three times for 3 seconds each time to combine.

Variations: If you leave the rice flour out, and reduce the salt quantity to 20g, the flavoured salt is an incredibly versatile condiment. The salt can also be tossed with nuts and a drizzle of olive oil, then roasted in the oven at 180C for 10 minutes, or until the nuts are toasted. It is also great tossed with popcorn and roast vegetables, such as sweet potato wedges, or you can stir roughly 10g of the salt through mayonnaise for an added kick.



BEETROOT, POMEGRANATE AND PISTACHIO SALAD

The Post Office Hotel, Melbourne)

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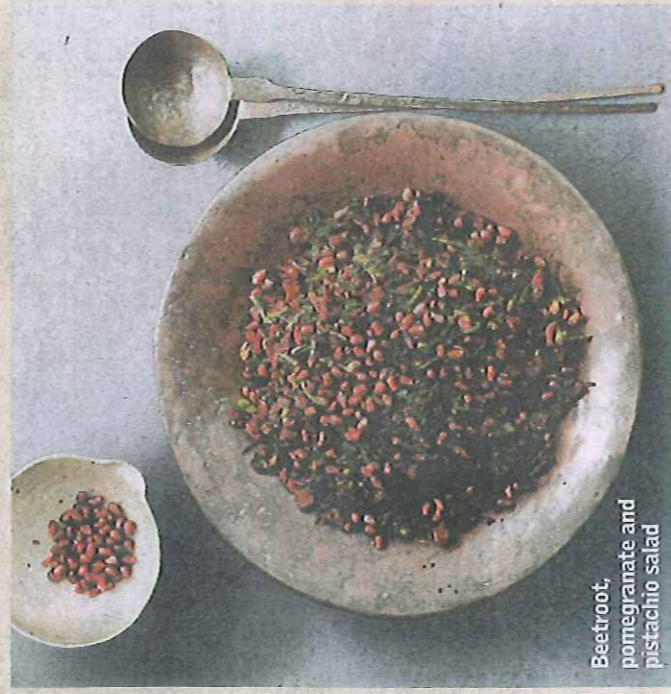
ients, except pistachios and

ds, into the TM bowl. Chop for 2

Scrape down. Chop for another 2

Tip into a salad bowl and scatter

s and pomegranate seeds.



Beetroot,
pomegranate and
pistachio salad

CHOCOLATE HONEY TRUFFLES

By Kirsten Tibbals (Savour Chocolate & Patisserie School, Melbourne)

Makes about 100

- 250g 35 per cent fat thickened cream
- 30g honey
- 1 vanilla bean
- 600g milk chocolate buttons, or chopped to button size, plus 500g milk chocolate for dipping
- 100g flaked almonds, lightly toasted

Place the cream, honey and the seeds from the split and scraped vanilla bean into the TM bowl. Heat for 5 minutes/100 degrees/speed 1. Add the milk chocolate and mix on speed 1/MC off until the ganache mixture has cooled to 37 degrees. Transfer to a container and cover with cling wrap touching the surface. Set aside at room temperature or place in the fridge for a couple of hours until the mixture holds a ball shape when spooned. To make the tempered chocolate, weigh the 500g of chocolate into the TM bowl. Blitz for 10 seconds/speed 8. Melt for 3 minutes/50 degrees/speed 2, or until melted. Scrape down and mix for 1 minute/speed 2/no heat. The chocolate is now tempered and ready to use. Transfer it to a plastic or glass bowl for dipping. Use a spoon, a tiny ice-cream scoop or wet hands to make balls from the set chocolate ganache. Dip the balls in the tempered chocolate, set them on baking paper and sprinkle with toasted almonds. If the tempered chocolate starts to set, gently melt it with a hairdryer.



Chocolate honey truffles

Chefs can't get enough

It's no secret chefs love gadgets and the Thermomix is a kitchen standby for sauces and purees. We asked three to spill the beans on the wonder-widget.

STEPHEN CLARKE, CLARKES OF NORTH BEACH:

The machine has so many uses — we make heaps of purees, savoury mousses and even chestnut espuma. We love it so much we even bought it a little carry case and took it to Sydney for the Culinary Challenge as hand luggage (minus the blade, mind) and used it to make the mousse there. Keep it scrupulously clean, make sure you never overfill the bowl (2 litres, max) and don't let anyone else near it at home or they will start making everything under the sun.



Stephen Clarke

GIAMPAOLO MAFFINI, MODO MIO:

It's a quiet achiever. We use it to make various sauces, including the pumpkin puree used in the butternut pumpkin flan served as part of the baked lamb rack; the artichoke sauce served with pan-fried snapper and the beetroot and spinach sauces served with cannelloni. What's notable is that the colour and integrity of the produce isn't lost in the cooking and that's something I am very committed to.



Giampaolo Maffini

RUSSELL BLAIKIE, MUST WINEBAR:

OK, I'll admit I was a sceptic. When I heard my wife, Tamara, was having a Thermomix party I thought it was a bit naff. But after about five minutes I was pretty much sold. I don't think a day goes by without the family using it at least two or three times. It makes the best sauces — super smooth (dare I say, better than a human hand can make) — great custards, awesome Asian spice pastes, great soups, sorbets and (seriously light) scones dough. Oh, it's easy to wash, too.



Russell Blaikie

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