



MEDIA RELEASE

WEDNESDAY 19 OCTOBER 2016

Biltong, small batch spirits and cold brew coffee - three bright sparks doing their bit for the culinary good of the Canberra region

It seems a few switched on folk in the Canberra region are really showing their culinary skills and making a very good go of three new excellent food and beverage businesses. The products and technique used are pretty interesting too.

These next generation foodies are proving what they can do by creating delicious biltong, handcrafted small batch spirits, and cold brew coffee, which they all sell at Canberra's [Old Bus Depot Markets](#).

What do two young, fit, strong and healthy Canberra men do with their spare time? Well, in the case of Rory and Luke Rathbone...they make biltong.

"Quite simply put, biltong is grass fed beef which is marinated in vinegar, spiced, hung to air dry, then cut into strips. It originated in South Africa," says Luke Rathbone from [Barbell Biltong](#).

The brothers make their biltong from their Canberra-based commercial kitchen in Lyneham. No heat is used to cook the meat during the curing and air drying process, so the finished product contains all the natural health benefits of raw beef.

"Unlike jerky, biltong is not heavily processed. Nor does it contain preservatives, sugars and other nasties," Luke continues.

The Rathbone brothers have been making biltong for quite some time for their friends and family, and it also became popular amongst many local athletes they connected with through their other brother, Clyde Rathbone, and his association with the Brumbies.

Barbell Biltong is enjoyed as a tasty, low carb, protein-rich food – and is a great inclusion in a paleo/protein/real food diet. There are two very tasty varieties available – the original 'Benchmark' and 'The Burn' which, as the name suggests, is loaded with chilli.

Tim Reardon is another Canberra man proving his worth in the foodie– well, technically beverage – world. This economist by trade had been helping his friend to set up a distillery when he decided to make a go of it himself. Starting out producing vodka and gin, he now creates a range of seasonal gins using native botanicals, as well as liqueurs and schnapps from his small batch distillery in Kaleen, aptly named [The Canberra Distillery](#).

"I love the intellectual challenge of distilling – the scientific side of making it all work – but also the artistic challenges it brings: being able to play with flavours to create different blends," said Tim Reardon from The Canberra Distillery.

Using his 500 litre and 50 litre stills, Tim has been experimenting with gin liqueur and flavoured schnapps. He also has whisky in the pipeline long term.

But perhaps one of his best creations is his 'Canberra fog', the recipe for which came from a Yugoslav family who came to Australia after the Second World War to build the Snowy Mountains Hydro-Power Scheme. Tim says he takes the base of a Murrumbateman shiraz and blends it with other herbs and botanicals, finishing it off with a burnt toffee flavour.

"It's a 'foggy' mix at room temperature, and our Canberra fog blends the tradition of yesteryear with today's distilling techniques," Tim said.

On the theme of blending, local woman Fiona Chong, has been working to make the perfect cold coffee brew. Imagine a coffee made with twice the grounds and a much longer extraction method. That's cold brew coffee.

As the owner and head brewer, this Canberra local had been missing cold brew coffee, and, after years of experimenting and hundreds of batches for her friends and family, created her own, known as [We Cold Brew Coffee](#). She's now sharing the most popular brews each week at the markets.

"Cold brew coffee is coffee made with high quality Arabica beans (with a focus on premium and some certified organic and fair trade beans) that are ground and steeped to create the perfect brew," said Fiona from We Cold Brew Coffee.

Bespoke equipment allows Fiona to triple filter each brew, and then it's infused with premium natural ingredients to create amazing coffee flavour profiles that will have you wanting more. Fiona sells two brews - the 'Daft Cow Original' with no infusion, and the 'Daft Cow Signature' blend which is infused with toasted coconut. To serve you can just add ice or Fiona's personal recommendation – almond milk. You can also heat it up on a conventional stovetop or microwave for a hot treat. All brews have no preservatives, added sugar or dilutants.

You can find [Barbell Biltong](#), [The Canberra Distillery](#) and [We Cold Brew Coffee](#) at Canberra's Old Bus Depot Markets each Sunday. The markets are open 10am to 4pm and entry is free. More information at www.obdm.com.au

For more information, images or to arrange an interview, please contact Lauren Griffiths at Threesides on 0417 409 264 or lauren.griffiths@threesides.com.au