



A class learns to make tasty tapas at the Redgate Beach Escape.

# Top class

## Chef teaches tapas tradition to guests

Story and pictures by **SARAH JOHNSTON**

**M**ANY would argue that with our stunning southwest beaches and wineries there would be no need to venture to a far-flung Mediterranean country.

Those people could never be more correct now that Nico Moretti has brought Tapas Passion Cooking classes to Margaret River.

Nico – an Italian-born Canadian who settled here in WA – runs the Tapas Passion Cooking classes from the Redgate Beach Escape and his Spanish-inspired menu is just as tasty as anything on offer in Spain.

“The Spanish menu is relaxed and conducive to having a few wines and also one that is good for a group to do just a little preparation. We don’t want people to have to do a lot of cooking,” Nico said.

Nico uses enough ingredients to give his tapas fragrance and flavour, but not so many that the spices confuse the palate.

An old Italian once told me that in good cooking you should be able to taste every ingredient.

I can only imagine this motto is instilled in the minds of all Italian cooks as Nico’s tapas have a very clean taste.

However, there are not just tapas on the menu. After demonstrating how to cook the first course, Nico whips up a paella de pollo with chorizo with a pear, rocket and parmesan salad, followed by a banana tarte tatin.

The three-course meal should tide you over until the following morning, when you have time for a swim in the waters or stroll along the sand of nearby Redgate Beach before the brunch classes start at 10am.

Nico has a love of people and an obvious love of food, which make the classes easy to follow and very entertaining.

“I just have a real passion for food

because of my upbringing.

My father owned an Italian restaurant in the city where I grew up in Canada,” he said.

Although Nico never worked in the kitchen there, he was surrounded by great chefs, grandparents and parents cooking constantly.

He studied and worked as an engineer, but fond childhood memories soon drew him back to the kitchen.

Nico is close friends with the brother of Mim Budd, who is one

of the proprietors of Redgate

Beach Escape.

Mim’s brother had cooking classes in mind as a way of promoting the resort.

The weekend’s relaxed itinerary is also reminiscent of a Mediterranean holiday.

Check-in is any time after 2pm on Friday and the cooking classes don’t start until 4pm on Saturday. The brunch class finishes at 12pm on Sunday, which leaves the afternoon free for a comfortable drive home.



Nico Moretti with a guest.