



FOOD HERO

KIM CURRIE

PHILOSOPHY

"The source of food is more important than the cooking technique or any trickery. I will never swirl, shape, deconstruct or foam. Never."

This restaurateur and regional powerhouse shares her passion for Australia's bounty of good food and wine.

We visit Kim Currie in the early morning at her home in Mudgee, NSW, tagging along as she plucks vegies from the garden and kneads dough. This is her favourite part of the day. Later, hard work will chew through long hours, but this is in Kim's DNA. She was born into a family with a love of food. Her mother is "an awesome cook", her Tongan grandmother a market gardener full of sage advice. ("You may walk to the garden," she would say, "but run back to the kitchen.") Kim could only resist the lure for so long, and much of her career has involved promoting the food of regional NSW. "I respect what it means to grow food and how hard every farmer I know works," she says. From Kim's work has sprung a crop of farmers' markets and food and wine festivals: Rylestone Streetfeast, Go Grazing and Bre&d on the Bridge, to name a few. Now she's behind the stove at The Zin House restaurant on the Lowe Wines property in Mudgee, where she lives with her husband, winemaker David Lowe. "I cook simply, from scratch," she says of the menu. "Baking, slow cooking and charcuterie are the mainstays of the six-course weekend menu." And does she enjoy a glass of David's wine at the end of the busy day? "Sitting here, looking at this land, this history, this soil, why would you drink anything else?" www.zinhouse.com.au.

H&G

KIM'S CV



1982

Moved to Australia from New Zealand. Landed work in hospitality and never looked back.



LATE 1990s

"I worked with a network of foodie friends to establish Central Ranges Food & Wine. We started farmers' markets in Cowra, Orange, Mudgee and Bathurst."



2001

Gourmet Traveller Jaguar Award for Excellence.



2002

Launch of the Rylstone Streetfeast, in which 300 people dined on local produce in the main street. "We had primary students capture and fatten snails for one of the courses!"



2005

Opened the acclaimed Rylstone Food Store restaurant.



2005

Maggie Beer Award for Outstanding Contribution to Australian Food.



2006

Executive officer of Taste Orange. "We started new events such Frost Fest, and a local branch of Slow Food."



2009

NSW Rural Woman of the Year Award.



2010

Chair, NSW Royal Agricultural Society Sydney Royal Fine Food Show Committee.



2011

Named in *The (Sydney) Magazine* Food Hall of Fame.



2012

Moved to Mudgee.



2014

Opened The Zin House restaurant in April.