

THE GOOD LIFE FOOD & WINE

FIVE OF A KIND

IRISH VENUES The grass won't be the only thing looking greener as today's salute to St Patrick evokes the colour and culture of the Emerald Isle, writes **Chris Canty**.



THE LAST JAR

OPENING its doors last month, this corner pub is the brainchild of Siobhan Dooley, the ever-friendly matriarch of The Drunken Poet around the corner. This spacious new venture has a food focus, evident in its St Patrick's Day breakfast. Western Plains pork will be transformed into bacon, sausages and black-and-white pudding, while the afternoon will bring live music and fresh lines of Guinness and Kilkenny. Be sure to visit the "snug room", in memory of a time in Ireland when women were not allowed in the main bar and ordered their drinks through a frosted-glass window.

614 Elizabeth Street, Carlton



THE QUIET MAN

DON'T be fooled by the name (derived from the 1952 film), there is nothing quiet about St Patrick's Day here. In fact, Irishman and events manager Michael Gillis says at least seven months' preparation goes into the big day. This includes closing down the adjoining street and putting up a stage, which is given over to traditional Irish bands and dancers. Undoubtedly the highlight is when up to 30 musicians take part in a jam, known in the old country as a "trad session". Kids will be entertained by St Patrick on stilts banishing snake lollies and for the early starters, a traditional Irish breakfast will be served from 8am.

271 Racecourse Road, Flemington, 9376 6232



THE CELTIC CLUB

THIS historic club celebrates 125 years in September but even that might not be as festive as its St Patrick's Day program. There will be two separate stages where performers such as Melbourne mainstay Pat McKernan entertain with Irish folk and pop. The Shamrock restaurant will also be keeping the crowds happy with traditionally hearty dishes such as St James gate beef n' Guinness pie and Armagh's Irish Gubbeen cheese and thyme potato cake. \$5 entry for non-members and be sure to wear green.

320 Queen Street, city, 9670 6472



THE BLACK ROSE

Still fairly new on the scene, it's very easy to miss this small bar on Sydney Road but that's just part of its charm. In fact, many agree that this is the most Irish-looking of all Melbourne's venues. "It's just like an Irish living room," manager Claire Sertori says. The tiny space has one big brown leather couch, a few stools at the window where musicians perform and a beer garden that resembles a backyard from a student share house. In the value stakes, it kicks above its weight on St Pat's Day with \$7 pints of Guinness all day, live Irish music and best-dressed "get your Irish on" prizes.

60 Sydney Road, Brunswick, 9388 8340



THE DAN O'CONNELL

During an average week, this much-loved 128-year-old pub is a place of subdued poetry readings, contemplative acoustic tunes and hearty Thursday night \$1 tacos. However, on St Pat's Day, the venue turns into a party monster as up to 5000 revellers descend on the adjoining park to create the biggest event in town. Breakfast starts at 7am in the pub but the real fun starts at 2pm outside, as stalwarts such as the Australian U2 Show and the Colonials hit the stage. Food is always available and bars are dotted around to avoid long lines but it's best to come early for a prime position. \$10 entry to park. Slainte!
225 Canning Street, Carlton, 9347 1502