

HEAT OF THE MOMENT

Need to be seen?

Elizabeth Meryment
nominates the
nation's latest crop of
hot restaurants

EVERYBODY has a favourite place to eat out, usually somewhere they have visited 20-odd times through the years. But it's always exciting to try somewhere new, and the fresher it is the better.

And while openings have slowed this year, there is still a great range of just-launched places across Australia that dedicated foodies should try. From chic inner-Sydney establishments to Top End steak houses, the options are tantalising. Here's our list of Australia's 10 hippest venues.

ROCK RESTAURANT, HUNTER VALLEY, NSW

Australia's best wine regions are awash with excellent places to dine and now the Hunter Valley — home of some of the world's best semillon — has a new food destination to rave about. Run out of Pooles Rock Winery, the restaurant has views of shiraz vines and a top mod-Oz menu designed by chef Andrew Clarke. Sample dish: duck breast stuffed with apple, raisin and hazelnuts on buttered zucchini and liquorice sauce (it even comes in three sizes: \$14, \$28 or \$42).
576 Debeyers Rd, Pokolbin.
(02) 4998 6968;
www.rockrestaurant.com.au.

