
Fact Sheet

Q&A with Rene Redzepi

Why did you select Australia as the location for the Noma international residency?

Since my first visit to Australia many years ago, it has always drawn me in. Through its great cities and generous people I've cherished every moment. I have also always been attracted to the vast differences you find in Australia's landscapes and ingredients...because it is unlike any place I've ever seen. I'll finally have the time and opportunity to explore and taste them properly with Noma Australia.

When did you first come to Australia? What makes you come back?

I first came to Australia in 2008 for Melbourne Food & Wine Festival. Great people, new friends, and of course the sunshine keep bringing me back.

What is your most memorable food and wine experience in Australia?

Of course there are the world-class restaurants, but it was my experiences in the bush of Western Australia and South Australia that linger in my memory. It is there that I tasted many completely new ingredients that were so exotic to me. Wine-wise, some of my favourite memories have been driving around the Adelaide Hills, going from one tiny winery to the next.

What is it specifically about Australian produce and culture that has inspired you to come here?

Australia's culture is multi-faceted, with influences from Europe, Asia and beyond, all standing on a strong foundation from its Indigenous people. When you mix it all together, the result is something truly special. When it comes to ingredients, Australia is wildly different than back home - so exotic and unlike any place I've visited.

How did you select Sydney as the location for Noma Australia?

Sydney is one of the world's most iconic cities, and is also a gateway to the rest of Australia. It's exciting and vibrant, a place that our team wants to experience.

Why Barangaroo as the site? How are you integrating the feel of Noma into the site?

The obvious connection is water, with both Barangaroo and Noma (Copenhagen) being located on harbours. Despite being on the other side of the world, standing by the quay reminds me a lot of home. There is a lot of the same energy. We were also lucky enough to find a partner and new friends in Lendlease who offered us a temporary home, and the opportunity to move in and 'borrow' such an exciting space.

Will there be a theme or inspired concept for the restaurant?

There is no theme per se. Generally, we are exploring the entire country, but finding a lot of inspiration in Australia's coasts, and the ingredients from both the sea and from the shorelines.

How will other parts of Australia be featured in the restaurant?

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We have begun extensive research trips all over Australia with the help of our other great partner is this project Tourism Australia, to meet with local communities, farmers and producers and of course reaching out to old friends along the way. We will taste and explore the best of Australian produce, seafood, beach plants, etc. We will be back many times before January.

What are you hoping to get out of the research trips? What are you looking for?

We're looking to explore the diverse landscape and the best local produce around Australia. Our research trips will take us all over the country to meet with local communities, suppliers and farmers, and to taste everything from blood limes and marron to emu eggs and honey ants.

Why do you think Australia has such an affiliation with Noma?

I am not sure why, but we've been very lucky to attract a lot of great Australians to Noma, and for some time now there has been a very strong connection. We've been fortunate to work with some great Australians in our kitchen and front-of-house for many years, with the current team including Beau (Clugston, Coffs Harbour), James (Spreadbury, Adelaide), Katherine (Bont, Sydney), and Tamara (Archer, Brisbane). We've also been very lucky to welcome many Australian guests and friends to Noma in Copenhagen and Tokyo.

How does it feel seeing the restaurant site starting to come together?

It is only the early days of the project and there is so much more work to get it over the finish line, but it is very exciting.

In your opinion, what makes Australia's food and wine so different to the rest of the world?

The ingredients are really so different than what we have in Europe, so vastly different. The landscape is exotic to us and lush and full of incredible diversity and the vegetation is unique and exciting and unlike anywhere else on earth. Australia's culture combines strong influences from its indigenous people with new communities from around the world.

What are you most looking forward to doing in Australia during your time here?

Of course there's so much we're looking forward to from learning about and cooking with new ingredients to exploring a great city and culture with friends and family and finally getting a summer that lasts longer than 5 days.

What are the top things you would recommend people must see in Australia?

Smiths Beach (Margaret River) in Western Australia is a really stunning place, I just want to camp on it. Honestly the whole coffee culture is worth the trip alone - the cafe and coffee quality of Sydney and Melbourne blow everything else away.

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