



Good flavour: Market on Malvern is a cafe-cum-holistic health centre.

Photo: Pat Scala

A toast to good health

Market on Malvern

Where 388 Malvern Road, Prahran, 03 9529 7701, momcafe.com.au

Open Mon-Fri 7am-4pm, Sat-Sun 8am-4pm

Prices Breakfast and lunch dishes \$12-\$24

Cards MC V eftpos

‘What do you want to order?” I ask my dairy-intolerant, coeliac plus-one (it’s a trick question; he knows I’m going to tell him what to order). “I want everything ... because I can have everything!” he says with the glee usually reserved for grand cru burgundy.

We’re at Market on Malvern, a cafe-cum-holistic health centre that caters to every perceivable allergy, dietary requirement and lifestyle choice. The schtick here is that it’s medically sound, says founder Dr Anthony Yeuong, who owns Prahran’s Beingwell Healthcare where MoM is located.

“We’re not just another trendy health cafe,” Yeuong says. “This is about really understanding what food does for you, about eating with a purpose.”

The result is an all-in-one deal: a shop with take-home meals and supplements, a cafe with a Scandi-inspired fitout (exposed bricks, indoor plants, minimalist white chairs) and a medical centre offering holistic options from acupuncture to allergy testing.

Consulting chef David Selex spent a year as sous chef at London’s Nobu in the mid-1990s. Yeuong enlisted him to work with in-house nutritionists on a menu that’s gluten-free – there’s no wheat in the building – and has dairy-free, nut-free, fructose-free, vego and paleo options.

But the menu isn’t taste-free. We eat caramelised sweet potato, steamed chicken breast and cabbage slaw dressed in almond milk, cashew and sumac with hemp seeds for an omega-3 boost. If this is clean eating, sign

me up.

An immunity-boosting dish of spot-on medium-rare roast salmon is accompanied by a disappointing, dull salad of shredded carrot, cos, cherry tomatoes and sprouts. But a fat dollop of coconut yoghurt tricked up with lemon juice, parsley and garlic is lick-the-spoon good.

For breakfast there are on-trend bowls such as tapioca coconut pudding with sesame and almond crisps or a splendidly violet acai number topped with dates, almonds and granola. If you want eggs, get a bagel (from Pure Gluten Free Bakery) filled with smashed avocado, confit mushrooms or sherry-roasted beetroot.

The drinks list is a round-up of fads du jour: four types of water (filtered, sparkling, coconut and charcoal alkaline), espresso from Allpress, 12 organic teas, and vegetable-based “lattes” in beetroot, blue, matcha or turmeric, the latter fortified with turmeric liquid for extra anti-inflammatory action, which doesn’t change the fact that it tastes like warm curried milk.

A better option is a FODMAP-friendly smoothie of frozen pitaya (purple dragon fruit), banana, young coconut flesh and coconut water, like a glass of frosty banana cake batter.

Maybe I’ve been drinking the (fructose-free) KoolAid, but I think I’ve been converted.

Go-to dish Caramelised sweet potato with avocado and hemp protein hummus, sprouted bean and cabbage slaw with nut milk dressing.

Pro-tip Don’t be scared off by the health claims; MoM is a delicious way to tackle prevention and cure.