



two teams and each is handed a clue sheet that guides the teams to local producers of wine, trout, organic vegies, free range eggs, rare breed pigs and the like.

The teams race against each other to gather all the ingredients before returning to the Lake House. Once the "forage" part of the day is over, the two teams come together in the Lake House demonstration kitchen where they, with the help of one of the restaurant's chefs, prepare lunch with the produce that has been gathered. It is a great way to experience the beautiful countryside and to learn at first hand the true meaning of the phrase "from paddock to plate".

It is also in keeping with Lake House owner Alla Wolf-Tasker's philosophy (best seen in her restaurant) about creating a truly regional cuisine.

The fun does not stop there because Forage and Feast also includes a degustation dinner at night where the Lake House chefs prepare a menu featuring local produce matched with wine from the Lake House's famed cellar. It is a truly innovative food experience, one where you can really learn about the taste of a beautiful region. The cost of this experience starts at \$1110 per person based on groups of six or more.

*Lake House, King Street, Daylesford.*  
(03) 5348 3329. [lakehouse.com.au](http://lakehouse.com.au).

### **A healthy indulgence**

Gowings Food & Health is a unique business that incorporates, among other things, nutritional counselling, Pilates and yoga and an organic cooking school.

Run by Sam Gowing, the daughter of famed Melbourne restaurateur Kevin Gowing, the Food & Health cooking school is unique in that it uses various venues around Melbourne to hold classes that are all about eating healthily and maximising flavour. There is an impressive array of classes that all focus on one aspect of healthy eating or another.

The Yum Cha Cha class, for example, looks at aspects of Chinese medicine and the healing properties of tea, while teaching participants how to make delicious dumplings.

The Gluten Solution looks at enhancing digestive health by showing ways of incorporating alternatives to glutinous grains into your cooking.

There are trips to farmers markets followed by cooking classes that show you how to cook with the produce that you've purchased and classes that teach the knife skills needed for preparing sashimi.

Sam is a funny, intelligent and engaging teacher and avoids the po-faced preachiness that is sometimes associated with whole and health foods.

She is a woman who can make cooking with beetroot (The Beauty of the Beets class) seem like

*The Yum Cha Cha class looks at aspects of Chinese medicine and the healing properties of tea, while teaching participants how to make delicious dumplings.*

the most fun you've ever had. Best of all, there is plenty of good food to be eaten along the way and you emerge from the classes with the wonderfully virtuous feeling you get from treating your body with respect. Classes start from \$95 per person. *Gowings Food & Health. 0411 852 387. [foodandhealth.com.au](http://foodandhealth.com.au).*

### **For the kids**

Operating out of a light-filled shop front in Malvern, Gourmet Kids is Melbourne's only cooking school targeted solely at children.

The school has classes for children as young as two (mainly to do with making play dough and spaghetti chains) as well as older kids, up to about 15. There are after-school classes and weekend sessions, most running between one and two hours.

The hands-on classes are centred on a large table in the middle of the room and there is a bank of stoves running down one wall. Dishes are kept simple with the idea in mind that kids can cook these at home themselves and so become responsible for an evening meal one or two times a week.

The dishes at Gourmet Kids include simple, tasty dishes like vegie lasagne, speedy moussaka, Hungarian fish goulash, sushi and minestrone.

There is, of course, plenty of sweet dishes to make as well including a surprisingly effective chocolate self-saucing pudding and an interesting mango freeze cake. The cooking school supplies all the necessary equipment, including aprons and cute chefs' hats. The kids get to take home their dishes so the whole family can enjoy the fruits of their labour. Gourmet Kids also holds very popular cooking parties where the kids get to cook something and then gorge themselves on classic sausage roll/fairy bread-type party food. Classes start from \$15 per child. *Gourmet Kids, 1397 Malvern Road, Malvern. (03) 9824 5979. [gourmet-kids.com.au](http://gourmet-kids.com.au).* 56