

# Greek

**AUTHOR: GEORGE CALOMBARIS**

## Extract

I love listening to Greek music. It evokes an emotion in me like nothing else can, a feeling that I can't really put into words. Music draws me into the heart of Greece and gives me a sense of pride and belonging.

Food does the same thing. Traditional recipes tell the stories of those who went before us and bring us together in the spirit of generosity and love. And I'm so grateful that I grew up in a family that takes such pleasure from cooking for the people they love.

Of course I'm not a traditional cook. Far from it. People say to me 'oh, you're that Greek chef' but I'm not. I'm an Aussie and I cook Australian food. That's a can of worms right there: what is Australian food? Really, it's an amalgamation of all the food traditions that came to this country with the families who settled here. But because we're a young country and not locked into long-standing food traditions of our own we are able to play with it a bit, blur the lines and see what happens.

This is my kind of cooking. While I respect the recipes that have been handed down over the generations, I love to break the mould. Take Greek salad: yes, it should taste like Greek salad, with the fruity extra virgin olive oil, salty feta, ripe tomatoes, but why can't we push it in another direction? There's no reason why not, if you still respect where it came from.

And that's what this book is all about. It's a snapshot of my mind and my heart, the people and the memories that have influenced me and the food they have inspired me to create.

