GOOD CHEER
EAT, DRINK AND BE MERRY
AT BANYALLA AND BEYOND
With Christmas and New Year around the corner, it’s time to celebrate the festive season with friends and family. It’s been a tumultuous year, but our Club events team have delivered a wonderful mix of online and live events that have kept Members connected and entertained (page 4). The gradual reopening of the Club has seen many Members come back to enjoy simple things such as a drink with friends at Bourke Street Green, or the South American-inspired menu at Healesville’s new alfresco sports bar, Riddell’s Green (right). Le Petit Gâteau has delicious yule logs available to order before Christmas, and in this edition Chef de Cuisine Jelena Grujovic reveals how summer has inspired her new dish for the Members Dining Room (page 11). The Christmas period is an exciting time for families, with special activities in Melbourne’s CBD, and these can be combined with a meal back at the Club (page 17). I hope you get the chance to share many good times with your loved ones this season. All the best for the New Year.

ROB EVERETT RACV Club General Manager

It has been wonderful to welcome back Club Members and staff alike to both properties. I want to thank all Members for their additional support of the Club, especially over the past couple of months. Our Christmas Day dining events have sold out, and Members can see 2021 out in style with special events at City Club and Healesville Country Club & Resort. In this edition of Highlights, we reveal the next stage of our ongoing series of upgrades, with illustrations showing the refurbishments planned for the ground floor at City Club (page 6). It’s also an exciting time at Healesville. Members have been enjoying alfresco dining at the new sports bar, Riddell’s Green, and the new signature restaurant, Banyalla, is scheduled to open mid-December (see page 7). The Club is slowly and incrementally reopening in line with government guidelines, and everyone’s patience and support is much appreciated. Please check our website and email communications for updates, and visit racv.com.au/clubbookings for opening hours. Book early to avoid missing out. Booking online is a great option as our phone lines can get busy during peak periods. Thanks again for your support throughout the year. Wishing all our Members a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. I look forward to seeing you at the Club this summer.
The stage was set in January for the resumption of Club events and activities. Plans were set in train to celebrate much-loved traditions such as the Australian Open and Chinese New Year.

Little did we know that our lives would continue to be disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic, with one of our two lockdowns earning Melbourne the title of the world’s longest COVID-19 lockdown.

But through thick and thin, our Club Events team have pulled the strings behind the scenes and delivered a stellar line-up of live and online events.

Events such as Chinese New Year dinner with guest chef Leslie Chan (pictured right with City Club chefs Jason Camillo and Callum Nugent) and Gabriel Gaté’s Moulin Rouge dinner have brought Club Members together at City Club and Healesville Country Club & Resort. Michael Rowland and Mack Horton both delivered engaging talks in the City Club Library.

Snap lockdowns in March and July, which extended well beyond anyone’s expectations, required our staff to quickly pivot and make arrangements for events to go ahead online, wherever possible.

As we look forward to spending more time with family and friends at Christmas, we celebrate the online and live events that brought our Club community together this year.

We launched online Yoga and Morning Movement sessions, Cuppa and Conversations, and our Thursday afternoon lecture proved popular. Kenneth Park’s lectures took Club Members to Boston, the Italian lakes district and Dublin, all from the comfort of their own homes.

The disappointment of cancelling the Members Dining Room truffle dinner at the start of the second lockdown was offset by City Club Chef de Cuisine Jelena Grujovic’s educational presentation online.

We also managed to squeeze in children’s cooking classes, film nights and a social 8-ball pool night between lockdowns.

Club Events Manager Melissa McCallum says it was wonderful the way Club Members stayed connected to the Club throughout the disruptions.

"We’d like to thank all the Club Members who attended our online and in-house events for their support, and we look forward to presenting an exciting program in the New Year," she says.
It’s an exciting time for City Club with the continuation of upgrades that will ensure the Club remains one of Australia’s best for current and future Members.

In the November issue of *Highlights*, we revealed an artist’s impression of the new-look Gallery Lounge on Level 1, and we’re on track to reopen that space in January.

The new joinery, carpet and lighting have been installed, the freshly painted walls await artwork, and the new furniture is on its way. A sheer salmon pink curtain outside the Private Dining Room has created a secluded pre-dining area for future special occasions.

Next year, after Australia Day, attention will shift to the ground floor. The artist impressions (above and top right) show how the main entrance, reception area, and coffee lounge will be transformed. (In January *Highlights* we will reveal illustrations of the new-look Bistro).

Club management have worked closely with Technē Architecture + Interior Design to oversee and ensure the upgrades encapsulate modern design, Member feedback and the Club’s rich history.

The main entrance and reception area have been designed to improve the arrival experience for Club Members and guests. The welcome desk and maître d’ station will be on the right-hand side as you walk in, while the lobby shop entrance will be integrated with the main reception desk to the left.

Lighting above the Bistro will become more subtle and sophisticated, with an emphasis on natural light during the day. The windows next to Bourke Street Green will be sealed to reduce noise from that venue.

Technē Architecture + Interior Design director Steve McKeag says design choices have been inspired by functional and creative solutions that keep the primary emphasis on user experience, and include a palette of timeless materials that morph the new with the existing.

"The extended Bistro area will have a variety of seating typologies to create varied experiences for Club Members within the one space," Steve says.

"The integration of plant-scaping will add sensory and aesthetic detail. That includes 5m mature trees in a central planter that almost creates the sense of being in a park."

The central staircase will be transformed into a sculptural element that links the ground floor to the Gallery Lounge and Wine Bar upstairs. The coffee lounge will become clearly defined, delineated from the thoroughfare to the Fitness Centre by planter boxes and banquette seating arrangements.

It is anticipated the ground-floor works will be completed by the end of April 2022, adding to the suite of upgrades that have taken place since 2019.

A holistic approach has integrated the look and feel of different spaces across the two properties, including the Shared Workspace and Wine Bar, and Riddell’s Green and Banyalla at Healesville Country Club & Resort.

Club General Manager Rob Everett says the upgrades have rejuvenated the areas Club Members know and love, while respecting the Club’s proud history.

"These upgrades have not only modernised these areas, but also streamlined operations and enhanced the experience for Club Members, ensuring both properties endure for the benefit of current and future Members."

In late January 2022, after Australia Day, a significant refurbishment of the foyer, reception area and Bistro restaurant on the ground floor will begin.

Club Members will still have use of the City Club but there will be some changes to facilities while the works are underway. The Bourke Street entrance will be closed and entry will be via New Chancery Lane.

The main entrance to the gym will be temporarily closed, with signs redirecting Members along an alternate route from New Chancery Lane level.

The Bistro and the Coffee Lounge will be relocated to the Tarrant Room on Level 1, with signage to guide Members on how to access.

If you’re unsure or have any questions please ask a staff member; we are here to help.

Eat, drink and be merry at Banyalla with friends and family

There’s a buzz in the air at Healesville Country Club & Resort. The excitement in the kitchen is palpable as the chefs prepare the food for the new signature restaurant, Banyalla, under the watchful eye of Executive Chef Himanshu Sharda.

The pastas for the ‘Murray cod ravioli’ and the ‘Butternut squash and ricotta rotolo’ are being made from scratch. The flat bread for the ‘Banyalla salumi’, and the lavosh for the cheese platter are hand-made as well, along with the pickled vegetables and other condiments that add layers of flavour to the dishes on the new menu.

Sous Chef Lalit Kumar, who has worked at Healesville for six years, says you can taste the difference when you cook everything from scratch.

“When I made the rotolo (a type of pasta) for the first time it tasted so good; it just melted in my mouth. That’s the beauty of this restaurant,” Lalit says. “We are introducing modern touches, while maintaining the connection to the Yarra Valley and keeping in mind what Members would like.”

Executive Chef Himanshu Sharda says the philosophy for Banyalla is to keep the food simple, honest and local.

“As the name Banyalla (a native shrub) suggests, what we are doing with the menu is showcasing local suppliers and native ingredients, and almost 90 per cent of the food is made in-house using local produce,” he says.

Himanshu says Banyalla is an elegant, multifaceted space that offers Club Members a variety of dining options.

“‘Rotolo is a classic Italian pasta that’s not widely used. It is like cannoli but savoury.

“We tried to think outside the box and do something different for the vegetarian dish,” Himanshu says.

“We serve it with a sugo, a passata that’s been reduced to a pink gel, and an aromatic parmesan cream made with bay leaves, peppercorns and shallots. It also comes with a rustic parmesan chip delicately balanced on top.”

Himanshu says Banyalla is modern, comfortable and affordable, with the idea that Members, guests and families will return on a regular basis.

Food & Beverage Duty Manager Martin Rendek says the wine list for Banyalla will introduce Club Members to up-and-coming winemakers who are embracing the trend towards minimal intervention winemaking.

“Some of these winemakers don’t even have their own cellar doors. For example, Jayden Ong, who is regarded as one of Victoria’s most exciting winemakers, has opened a small wine bar in Healesville rather than a cellar door, and we’ll have one of his wines on the wine list.”

Martin, who has worked at Domaine Chandon, Innocent Bystander and Stones of the Yarra Valley, says the list will include traditional wines that showcase the area.

For the cocktail bar, Martin has curated a list of classic cocktails with a couple of surprises.

“We have a twist on the Old-Fashioned cocktail with mescal rather than whisky. It was created at Death & Co in New York, and we thought we’d include it to add that dash of drama,” he says. “We also have a summer cocktail that’s a lovely alternative to the Aperol Spritz. We are using Italicus to make a lovely white citrus spritz. As for the café area, the bar has been raised with a beautiful new La Marzocco machine.

“The coffee will still be Lavazza, but we are using their organic range, so Members can expect a great experience in that part of Banyalla as well.”

Club Members get 15% discount off their final bill at Banyalla when they charge it directly to their Club account. T&Cs at racv.com.au/Club-member-offers

For opening hours and bookings, visit racv.com.au/racv-club/bookings

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Enjoy a sun-soaked afternoon at Riddell’s Green at Healesville, watch the world go by at Sojourn in the city, or savour a seafood dish in the Members Dining Room – this is what summer dining is all about, and there’s no better place to experience it than the Club.

Summer brings fresh ingredients to menus, and our chefs are making the most of the new seasonal produce. Chef de Cuisine Jelena Grujovic says summer food is fresh, light and colourful.

“When I think of summer food, I think of stone fruits, berries, cherries, figs, grapes, melons and my favourite – tomatoes!” she says.

“We have to respect what each season brings, and summer is the best time to buy tomatoes. They are bursting with flavour and natural sweetness.”

Jelena has devised new dishes for diners to enjoy in the Members Dining Room.

“This year I have created this simple, elegant and flavoursome dish – burrata cheese and fresh figs served with watercress and candied hazelnuts,” she says. “This is something really different and fresh to start your dining experience.

“The solid curd, with its milky and buttery flavour, goes so well with the figs and offers a great balance of sweetness and moisture. Figs are unique for being the only fruit that is actually an inward-blooming flower.”

The abundance of sweet Victorian strawberries at this time of year has inspired Jelena to include Eton mess on the menu. This traditional English dessert is made with strawberries, crushed meringue and whipped cream.

For seafood lovers, the Club has two variants on the famous Latin America ceviche, which is a dish of fresh fish or other seafood “cooked” in lime juice.

Jelena has created scallop ceviche, served with melon, chilli, mint and citrus, as a refreshing starter in the Members Dining Room.

At Healesville Country Club & Resort, Executive Chef Himanshu Sharda’s fresh and zesty kingfish ceviche tostada is available at Riddell’s Green and comes with avocado, cucumber, radish, chilli and coriander.

Pair the kingfish ceviche with an elegant Warramunda Estate ‘Liv Zak’ Chardonnay from the Yarra Valley, and the scene is set for a lazy summer afternoon.
If there’s one thing the pandemic has taught us, it’s never to take our health and wellbeing for granted. Exercise, mindfulness and healthy eating are all important ways to look after yourself.

City Club One Spa Manager Marnie Bennett says there is renewed interest in spa treatments as people emerge from months of being stuck at home. “People are taking their wellbeing more seriously and seeking a restorative break after such a stressful year,” she says. “One Spa offers them an affordable luxury for regular self-care, and a treatment can help people feel good about doing something for themselves.”

SENSE OF COMMUNITY

Marnie says coming to the Club gives people a sense of community and a deeper connection, which is so important after being cut off from family and friends for months on end. In addition, One Spa offers a relaxing and tranquil environment that’s hard to recreate at home. “Even though spa businesses were not considered essential during the lockdown, for many people it’s the best way for them to de-stress and look after their wellbeing,” she says. “Members have been so grateful and appreciative about having treatments at One Spa. It’s been really lovely.”

LONG AND LUXURIOUS

Club Members who are looking forward to more “me-time” will find much to love about One Spa’s signature treatments. These include the Sacred City, a natural organic ritual that includes water therapy, body scrub and hydration massage, and an herbal tea to conclude the blissful two-and-half hour session. It helps reduce muscle tension and improve skin tone.

If you’re rediscovering Melbourne CBD after many months at home, the Urban Getaway is a fitting experience, and includes a detox back scrub and mud mask, hot towel compress, back massage and foot massage. You’ll feel the stress melting away.

Another important way to get the best out of your spa treatment is to arrive early and sit quietly. “Try to spend 15 minutes or so beforehand relaxing and quieting your mind,” Marnie says. “By doing this groundwork, you’ll be able to switch-off during the treatment and get the maximum benefit.”

SUNNY SIDE UP

Now that summer is here, it’s also important to protect your skin from the harsh summer rays, especially to prevent premature ageing. Sunscreen should be applied after moisturiser and before makeup. One Spa sells ISSADA Sheer Defence SPF 50+ Sunscreen, which is designed to sit beautifully beneath makeup. “It also aids in the prevention of premature ageing and defends against fine lines, wrinkles and pigmentation,” Marnie says. She advises that staying well hydrated is another way to look after your skin, particularly on warmer days. “And don’t forget to wear a hat outside. This is one of your best defences against the sun.”
Sam and Haydn’s friendship reflects the qualities that unify our two properties, ensuring you get the same warm welcome whether you’re in the city or at Healesville.

Sam Patrick and Haydn Jones have been friends for more than a decade. Their friendly rivalry spurs them on to succeed, whether it’s on the golf course or at work.

The duo discovered their complementary skill sets when working together at Healesville Country Club & Resort, about seven years ago. Sam is more outgoing and loves to multi-task, while Haydn is a quiet achiever and more methodical.

“We ran the team together for about two years and became really close,” Sam says. “We drew on each other’s strengths, and we both enjoyed a game of golf after work. It was like Yin and Yang.”

Haydn adds: “I think we’re both really competitive too, which lends itself to our roles within RACV.”

Haydn is what is affectionally known as a multi-generational staff member. “Both my mother and one of my sisters worked at Healesville across multiple areas of the business, and I have fond memories of running around the property as a child,” Haydn says. “It always felt like a second home. I’ve seen it change through the years and I am excited for those to still to come.”

Sam and Haydn have both risen through the ranks to become Front Office Managers, at City Club and Healesville respectively.

“I still reach out to Haydn regularly, whether it’s about work or sending him a personal message, as I did recently, to congratulate him on the arrival of his first child,” says Sam, who has a three-year-old son and another child due in February.

He says the front desk is a one-stop shop. “We are here for Club Members, whether they are on their way to the gym; their Member card isn’t working, or they want to book accommodation. Whatever the question, we will either have the answer or get the answer in a timely fashion.”

Sam’s team uses a Member feedback system to improve service, but he has another way of measuring his success. “Hospitality is what I love doing and it’s just a feeling. You’ll do something to improve someone’s day and they come back and thank you for it.”

His favourite spot at the Club is Bourke Street Green. “A lot of people get there as the sun is setting and that’s great, but on a nice day, lunch in there with a couple of wood-fired pizzas, you can’t beat it.”

City Club Operations Manager Amanda Rottmann says it has been a tough couple of years and some familiar faces have left the Club, but Club Members can expect the same warm welcome from new staff.

“We have new staff waiting to meet you, who would love to be part of your Club journey,” she says.
What have you missed most about Melbourne’s CBD? The trams rattling along Swanston St? The arty laneways and iconic arcades? Cultural gems such as the National Art Gallery of Victoria? Melbourne’s art and cultural attractions, sporting events and music performances are back on the agenda, and there’s enough action to keep you busy for days.

ROOM WITH A VIEW
One of the best places to watch the city come alive is from the comfort of your own hotel room. At City Club, depending on the location of your room, you can hear the ding of trams along Bourke Street or see the towers light up around Southbank. City Club is the perfect place to retreat between shopping, dining and sightseeing.

COCKTAILS AND PEOPLE WATCHING
Melbourne’s laneways are full of surprises, whether it’s discovering new artwork in Hosier Lane or stumbling on a new(ish) restaurant such as Sojourn in New Chancery Lane. Dine at Sojourn and settle in with a refreshing cocktail in the rooftop bar. Try a summer sensation such as the citrus-cured trout with strawberries and beetroot. Watch the activity below in Little Collins St and admire the adjacent Stalbridge Chambers, which is a fine example of Melbourne’s pre-federation land boom.

HEALING WITH HEAT
The spa, steam room and sauna are open again. Have a relaxing swim in the 25m lap pool, then alleviate any stress or niggly pains in the spa, steam room and/or sauna. The temperature of the sauna is usually higher than the steam room, while its humidity level is much lower and only rises temporarily if someone puts water on the hot rocks. You’ll leave feeling invigorated.

CHRISTMAS ATTRACTIONS
The Myer Christmas Windows have been enchanting families for 66 years, and this year’s theme is The Tale of Peter Rabbit. At Fed Square, a towering tree glows next to Santa’s Workshop. In Chapter Lane, off Flinders Lane, a 270-degree animated projection paints the facade of St Paul’s Cathedral. Wander along the Yarra River to spy Santa and his dolphins cruising on a 27m floating sleigh or ride the Ferris wheel at the carnival (Dec 16-24). Catch a tram in the free zone back to the Club for a meal at Bistro. From maple-glazed salmon to a beef burger and fries, there’s something for all the family, including turkey and ham in the lead-up to Christmas.

INDULGE AT LE PETIT GÂTEAU
With its new outdoor seating, Le Petit Gâteau is the perfect place for a little indulgence. Try the Yuzu Exotic cake, a consummate combination of coconut, mango and white chocolate. Or the Monsieur Green Tea, a tantalising fusion of black sesame, green tea and raspberry. There are perennial favourites such as lemon tart, plus gluten-free, nut-free and dairy-free options. Order a Bûche de Noël while you are there.

DOCKLANDS AND SEAFOOD FOR DINNER
Melbourne’s harbour may be understated compared to Sydney’s, but it’s just as relaxing to wander around the Docklands area and along Newquay Promenade. Admire the boats in the 48-berth marina or consider taking a cruise along the Yarra River. It sets the mood for a seafood dinner back at City Club, with scallops ceviche for entree and baked whole Binder for main in the Members Dining Room. In January, tuck into a seafood platter brimming with crab, prawns, crayfish and mussels, accompanied by a fine glass of sparkling wine.
### DECEMBER

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<td><strong>EVENING MAHJONG</strong></td>
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<td><strong>MORNING MOVEMENT WITH FRAN</strong></td>
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<td><strong>MAHJONG</strong></td>
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<td><strong>DRAMESE SEDGWICK LECTURE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>SUPERVISED BRIDGE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>MORNING YOGA WITH KATHY</strong></td>
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<td><strong>CUPPA &amp; CONVERSATIONS</strong></td>
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<td><strong>DUPLICATE BRIDGE</strong></td>
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<td>9</td>
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<td><strong>SOLO PLAY &amp; CHRISTMAS LUNCH</strong></td>
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<td><strong>LADIES SNOOKER CHRISTMAS LUNCH</strong></td>
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<td>SOJOURN, NEW CHANCERY LANE, CITY</td>
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<td><strong>KENNETH PARK LECTURE</strong></td>
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<td><strong>SOCIAL S-BALL</strong></td>
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<td>31</td>
<td><strong>NEW YEAR’S EVE: VEGAS IN THE VALLEY</strong></td>
<td>7.30pm</td>
<td>HEALESVILLE</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CITY CLUB CELEBRATION: BUFFET &amp; BAND</strong></td>
<td>LEVEL 17, 7.30pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td><strong>NEW YEAR’S EVE: MEMBERS DINING ROOM</strong></td>
<td>7pm</td>
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### WHAT’S ON THIS MONTH

**VEGAS IN THE VALLEY**

See 2021 out in style with a seafood buffet, Elvis tribute show, Vegas show girls, blackjack and roulette wheel. Selected beverages included in the ticket price. Kick on to the Grand Conservatory from 11.30pm, with a special DJ and drinks available at bar prices.

Fri 31 Dec, 7.30-11.30pm, $185, Healesville Country Club & Resort, Club Member price.

### INXSIVE: THE INXS TRIBUTE DINNER

What band originally formed in 1977 in Sydney as the Farriss Brothers? Who wrote the song Never tear us apart? If you know the answers, chances are you’re a fan of the Australian band INXS.

Relive their great hits - or discover them for the first time - with INXSIVE.

Sat 28 Jan, 2022, 8pm-10.30pm, Healesville Country Club & Resort, $135pp for dinner and show. Drinks at bar prices. Price inclusive of Club Member discount.

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**Information in Highlights and the events listed in this calendar were correct at the time of publication. However, changes in circumstances may impact on the accuracy of this information.**
Indulge in a Le Petit Gâteau Christmas hamper filled with festive favourites including Christmas pudding, mince pies, savoury nuts, sour cherries and more. Small or large hampers starting from $70, available in store at Le Petit Gâteau or contact the team directly to place your order today.

orders@lepetitgateau.com.au or 03 9944 8893