



Sydney Road jewel

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in the know for coffee, as well as vegetarian, Indian, Japanese, Thai and Vietnamese restaurants, including a Moroccan restaurant with the Spanish title 'La Paella'. With a great variety of restaurants and cafes you can be confident that Sydney Road can offer something for everyone's taste. Whether it is good coffee and Mediterranean cuisine at Moka Gigi (165A Sydney Road) or South Asian flavours at Tom PhaT (184 Sydney Road), you'll find it here. There is no absence of fast food, cakes, breads, kebabs and felafels for those with a tighter budget.

Stretching from Dawson Street and Glenlyon Road to Victoria Street, the Brunswick precinct of Sydney Road houses second hand clothing and bric-a-brac outlets. Cafes, bars and pubs also line this part of the strip, including The Retreat (280 Sydney Road) which attracts students for live music and a large beer garden. It has all the ingredients for a great night out, offering huge traditional pub meals, live music every night and DJs on Fridays and Saturdays. It also offers a BBQ in the beer garden on Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays all summer.

The Moreland Precinct has attracted students for its bulk food and direct factory outlets. Student shoe addicts on a budget will find Shoes Direct Outlet (771 Sydney Road), The Handbag and Shoe Factory

Outlet (794-796 Sydney Road), and Quik Shu (829 Sydney Road). Fashionistas on a budget also like Lulamae (151 Sydney Road) and Kinki Gerlinki in the Jewell precinct (209 Sydney Road) to quench their fashion thirst.

For those of you who prefer to test your culinary skills, Mediterranean Wholesalers (482 Sydney Road) is where you will find everything you need to cook an Italian feast including pasta, olive oil, balsamic vinegars, cheeses, and meats. One of the biggest kept secrets on Sydney Road is its lively Middle-Eastern section.

To celebrate the wealth of unique experience Sydney Road offers, Moreland City Council organises The Brunswick Music Festival every year in February-March. The festival has been running since 1989 and it brings together a variety of local and international artists. The Festival also holds the Sydney Road Street Party, an all-ages event incorporating music, dance, kids' shows, street theatre and cuisine from all over the world.

But let's not forget that food and entertainment are not the only necessities for students and those with moths in their pockets. Students also need accommodation and relative proximity to our places of study. Sydney Road is close to a number of tertiary institutions including Melbourne

and RMIT. According to Ian Robertson, Project Manager, Activity Centres it is the relatively cheap accommodation, affordability and accessibility that attracts students to the area. There are also a number of organizations which provide low cost accommodation to students. Brunswick Uniting Church has a Student Housing Program that has been running since 1998 and is designed for full time tertiary students moving away from home to study.

So while Sydney Road is accessible, cheap and has a great variety of restaurants, bars and entertainment venues, it is the composition of its locals and business owners that makes the area unique. Moreland council says almost 35 per cent of its population comes from a different cultural background. That cultural and linguistic diversity is reflected in the atmosphere of Sydney Road. As Claire Perry, SBRA Coordinator, suggests, it is the "urban, gritty, bohemian edge" and its multicultural flavour that makes Sydney Road a unique place to live, eat and shop. And of course it's cheap. 

Kate Taylor and Mirjana Beresic

Photographs by Peter Casamento



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