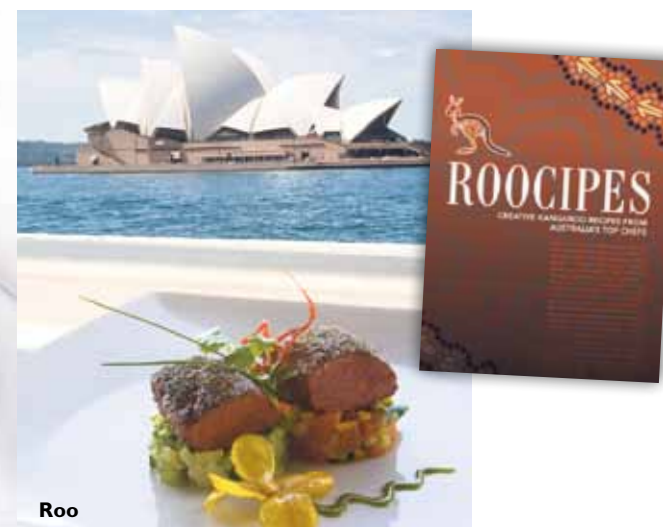




Alfalfa House



Paradise Beach Purveyors



Roo

DINING DILEMMAS

CONQUER THE CO-OP

I don't know about you, but I fancy myself as a bit of an ethical shopper. I buy ethical produce; I care about provenance; I shop at Farmers' Markets; and I even remember my canvas bags every now and then. Why is it then, that the humble co-op is such a sticking point for me? I have walked past **Alfalfa House Community Food Cooperative** on Enmore Road so many times, but somehow I've never entered. For some reason it felt intimidating, cliquy, not really aimed at me...

Last week I finally gathered the guts to go in and see what makes

this place so successful. To my relief Co-op Coordinator Adam Taylor and the hemp-dressed women shopping inside didn't look at me as if I was yuppie scum! Adam took me around the wide range of products on offer, showed me where to wash my hands before touching them, and reminded me to bring my own containers next time I come to stock up!

As Adam explains, the team at **Alfalfa House** work to "become part of the community because they don't want people to feel that this is just a store." One of the ways they encourage this is by offering a 25% discount for a couple of

hours of your time – stocking shelves, designing flyers, recycling – whatever takes your fancy.

As Adam points out, at first buying their mostly organic products "might cost a bit more than conventional produce, but with the discount it might even work out to be cheaper!" Definitely a good way forward if you're one of those folk who'd like to buy organic but feel you can't afford to. For me, I'm happy to pay more for guaranteed provenance, and at **Alfalfa House**, "there's always a connection made with the farm." You might even meet one of those farmers in the store! www.alfalfahouse.org

DITCH DIP DODGING

With the financial screws still

reasonably tight, if you're anything like me, some of the tasty extras have dropped out of the trolley during your weekly shop. Dips were among the first thing to go. In terms of price, they're up there with the *Kohu Road Golden Syrup Ice Cream* - gone but not easily forgotten! When you think about it, dips are expensive, considering they rarely constitute a whole meal, and a few scoops into most tubs I usually wish I'd chosen better.

With **Paradise Beach Purveyors** dips though, you can ditch dip dodging forever! Each tub is devoured in this household from beginning to end. Their very sensible flavours even compliment meals - try the *Pesto Swirl* tossed through pasta. Plus they've taken

out the **Most Successful Dip Exhibitor 2011** and **Champion Dip** categories for the third time at the **Sydney Royal**. I'm totally obsessed with their *Caramelised Onion Swirl*... www.paradisebeach.ws

DON'T RUIN ROO

By now we've all eaten a bit of 'roo in a restaurant, but it seems not all that many of us pick it up when we visit the butcher. For me, part of the problem is not having a cultural memory of kangaroo favourites, like I do for lamb, pork and beef. While my mouth is always going to water over a pork roast with crackling, I need some good ideas and a bit of reassurance that I'm not going to just ruin a nice bit of roo.

You'll find both in the glossy magazine-format **Roocipes**. Not only does it contain an easy list of how long to cook each cut (kangaroo fillets are only three or four minutes each side for medium rare), there's also a bunch of great recipe ideas.

There's even some surprising applications which I managed to try at a kangaroo luncheon at Bondi's **Kam Fook**. The eye-opening meal, which was dubbed by one participant as *What's Up Skip? Want to Be A Wonton?* really showcased how well kangaroo lends itself to Asian cuisine. It's so lean, there's no more furry tongue after wonton noodle soup! You'll find Chef Darren Ho's excellent *Kangaroo Char Sui Bao* recipe in the book. www.rirdc.gov.au

