

# HAPPENINGS AT HOLMESGLEN

## Holmesglen teacher discovers Ethiopia

### A journey written by Warren Guest, from the Centre of Hospitality, Cookery and Bakery at Holmesglen.

The first question people ask you when you tell them you are traveling to Ethiopia for a month is – “Will you be okay for food? Aren’t they starving over there?” So you can imagine their expressions when you tell them that you are actually going for the food? The food is the major draw card; that and the opportunity to study Ethiopia’s unique style of ancient bread making.

Ethiopia is not only under-rated as a holiday destination; most people are also unaware of how vibrant and complex the food culture is. I think it’s fair to say that Ethiopia’s food is much like Ethiopia itself: diverse, unique and completely unlike anything you will find anywhere else.

After training African students at Holmesglen in the art of European Artisan bread making, I soon became addicted to the flat breads and fermented sours that they were bringing in and sharing around the class room. I was hooked. Injera, they told me, is a traditional Ethiopian bread, which is made using a three-day fermentation process. It is seared and steamed over an open fire, baking in less than five minutes.

I decided to investigate the process further, with the intention of broadening our Artisan module to include some African loaves.

Injera is best described as a very large pancake, that looks like a crumpet and tastes like a nicely fermented malt beer. It is soft and rubbery and is so large that it spills from the plate and onto the table cloth – about fifty centimeters in diameter! The Tef seed used to mill the flour is so small it’s like grinding poppy seeds into a very fine dust – impossible to reclaim should you spill them on the floor!

You begin the process by mixing Tef flour and water in a vat and then allow the mixture to ferment for up to three days at room temperature. When it’s bubbling and foaming nicely, (and producing some very interesting aromas!), it’s then poured onto a very large clay disc (pan) over a coal fire. It’s important to place particular care on the thickness and consistency when it is poured on the clay disc. (This, I found out, is where the real skill lies!). The “pancake” is then covered with a conical clay lid and left undisturbed for five minutes, before being peeled off and stacked in a wicker basket.

The result is a lovely acidic crumpet that contrasts beautifully with the fiery and spicy meals the Ethiopians serve as their national staples.



“With Fine Food Australia fast approaching it is time to consider what to do with all the sample products that are usually left over and also what you do with unsold products at the end of normal working days. If donating to charities is being considered, here is a government press release to guide you through the process”

## Donating food to charities in Victoria

It’s an unfortunate fact of modern life that some members of our society can’t afford enough to eat.

Access to a regular food supply is one of our most basic human needs, and many charities have dedicated themselves to meeting this requirement for many years.

Many food businesses have generously supported the efforts of these charities, but others may have worried about whether they can give away food and what the legal consequences might be.

*The Food Act* does not prevent food businesses from giving away food, however the food that is given away must be safe.

*The Food Act* requires food businesses to throw away unsafe food, that is food that is likely to cause the person eating it physical harm must be thrown away.

### Donated food

Usually, food donated to charities is either:

- Unused portions of food prepared by a food business and not served to customers, or
- Food bought by a food business that is excess to requirements.

### What the law says

To support and encourage businesses to donate food, Victorian legislation provides indemnity for organisations that donate safe food to charitable organisations.

*The Wrongs & Other Acts (Public Liability Insurance Reform) Act 2002*, offers protection to food donors as long as certain pre-conditions are in place:

- The food is donated in good faith for a charitable or benevolent purpose,
- The food is donated with the intention that the receiver of the food does not have to pay for the food,
- The food is safe to eat when it leaves the possession or control of the donor, and
- The donor gives the charity any information it needs to have to ensure the ongoing safety of the food.

The donor should also check to ensure that the charity is doing everything to keep food safe.

### Making sure the food given away is safe

Take the same precautions as for food that is sold:

- Take care when handling, storing packing and transporting food.
- Store donated food in clean, covered food-grade containers.

- Keep high-risk foods such as: meat, seafood, poultry, eggs, dairy products and small goods, or foods which contain these ingredients, such as sandwiches, quiches and prepared salads, below 5°C or above 60°C and out of the Temperature Danger Zone.
- Ensure that the food is collected by, or delivered to a charity in the shortest possible time.
- Where possible, keep high-risk foods out of the Temperature Danger Zone while being transported.
- Throw away any high-risk food left in the Temperature Danger Zone for more than 4 hours.
- Everyone involved in handling donated food should maintain the highest standard of personal hygiene and cleanliness.

### For more information

Contact the Department of Human Services, Food Safety Unit on 1300 364 352.

Email: [foodsafety@dhs.vic.gov.au](mailto:foodsafety@dhs.vic.gov.au)

Website: [www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety](http://www.health.vic.gov.au/foodsafety)

or

Contact your local council

If the thought of traveling to Ethiopia itself isn’t enticing enough to get you off the couch, come and create your own authentic sour dough at the 2 day Artisan bread class at Holmesglen on Monday 20 and Tues 21 September.

**For more information on Bakery Programs contact the Centre for Hospitality, Cookery and Bakery**

**T: 03 9209 5938**

**E: [hcb@holmesglen.edu.au](mailto:hcb@holmesglen.edu.au)**

**W: [www.holmesglen.edu.au](http://www.holmesglen.edu.au)**