

8 AT TRINITY REDEFINING LAKE DINING

Destination venue serving success with 5-star signature

LAKE MACQUARIE BUSINESS EXCELLENCE AWARDS

8 at Trinity

NATALIE Johnson, Managing Director of 8 at Trinity, says her restaurant's success at the Lake Macquarie Business Excellence Awards is vindication for hard work and vision.

The magnificent 350 seat, \$8 million waterfront 'pop-up' venue on the shores of Lake Macquarie at Morisset, won two honours - the Excellence in Large Business award and the coveted Origin Energy People's Choice Award, decided by a public online vote.

"We're extremely grateful for the wins, because when we first proposed the idea of a restaurant of this calibre in this area, everyone said 'you can't' and 'you won't'," Natalie said. "It was hard to believe the negativity.

"Well, 'we did', and it has been hugely successful. It was especially gratifying to take out the People's Choice award because people have obviously embraced it."

Natalie describes 8 at Trinity as a premium yet approachable modern Australian dining restaurant inspired by the luxurious beauty of international seaside destinations.

"We offer sophisticated food and drinks with a buzzing 5-star resort atmosphere overlooking Trinity Point Marina and Lake Macquarie," Natalie said. "We are open Thursday to Sunday and employ over 100, people including a team of 40 in the kitchen,

serving over 1000 people per day."

The menu is intentionally huge and caters for all tastes and budgets.

"Our food is not fine dining but great quality, without pretentiousness, to suit all budgets in a resort atmosphere that transports you to anywhere in the world," Natalie said. "You can order a pizza from \$26 or pasta from \$29 and a glass of wine for \$12, or you can choose one of our signatures the 1.1kg Tajima Wagyu Tomahawk MBS9+ from \$298 and a bottle of Grange, or Singapore Chilli Prawns, Hong Kong Style Lobster.

"It's up to you the experience you want to have. But please take note of the quality of the produce we use. Aquina Bay Murray Cod for our fish and chips as an example, which costs us \$65 a kilo fresh from the market. We are not trying to compete in price by selling cheaper quality frozen fish and compete with a takeaway down the road.

"Our wagyu beef cheek is a MBS9+ which means the marbling in the meat is superior and dissolves in your mouth. We use stone ground Italian flour for our pizza, and imported Italian cheeses. We need to offer people a world class product in a resort atmosphere that people will travel to experience."

The restaurant redefines the benchmark of how an accessible regional area like Lake Macquarie can develop a world class venue.

"Our vision is to transport diners to what feels like distant corners of the globe on what



Natalie Johnson and her award-winning 8 at Trinity team pose outside their magnificent lakefront venue at Trinity Point near Morisset. Picture supplied

can be a day trip or overnight stay for our key target market of Sydneysiders," Natalie said. "We have many local regulars from Newcastle and Central Coast but 80 per cent drive up from Sydney each weekend just to eat. You can come by car, boat, sea plane or helicopter."

The restaurant was conceived as a way to introduce people to the \$588 million Trinity Point development, the brainchild of Natalie's husband Keith Johnson of Johnson Property Group. That development, now state government approved, includes a 5-star hotel, marina, luxury apartments, two large-

scale restaurants, function centre and wellness/day spa.

"We wanted to attract guests to see our vision and plans," Natalie said. "The restaurant wasn't cheap. Every element, from the tables to the chairs to the cutlery and all-weather marquee, was custom made both in Australia and abroad, with no expense spared.

"But since the restaurant has been open, all the land has sold. The marina is full. The restaurant has done its job. The final stages of the development will cement Lake Macquarie as an internationally known destination."



A Modern Australian restaurant at Lake Macquarie, on the waterfront of Trinity Point.

'8 at Trinity' is a premium dining destination offering a modern Australian menu in a luxurious, international seaside-inspired setting and buzzing 5-star resort atmosphere

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