

Food Destination: Crowne Plaza Terrigal Pacific



A Central Coast institution, the popular **Crowne Plaza Terrigal Pacific** hotel boasts three ocean-facing restaurants and bars, including the award-winning Seasalt Restaurant.

Having recently brought home two major industry accolades, the hotel is going from strength to strength - but they're still making an effort to remember their roots.

We sat down with General Manager **Ryan South** to chat about the hotel's commitment to the Central Coast community and our local food scene.

Congratulations on the recent win at the *Meeting and Events Australia (MEA) Industry Awards*. Can you tell us more about the awards you've received?

Winning MEA's National Meeting Venue Award (Capacity Under 500 Delegates) for the last two years is a source of great pride for our team. Being recognised by the industry for the work we do - to create professional conferences and events - is what drives us to continue to deliver the level of service we're renowned for.

The MEA Industry Awards recognise excellence and best business practice in the Meetings and Events Industry. The recognition helps to bolster our proposals when bidding for new business, and highlights that, when considering a conference venue, our regional hotel is worth getting out of the city for.

You were also recognised for best business practices in the meeting and events industry - what sets you apart when it comes to delivering amazing conferences and events?

The combination of the strength and quality of the Crowne Plaza brand, with the stunning and picturesque location of Terrigal village, makes Crowne Plaza Terrigal Pacific one of the most unique meetings venues in New South Wales.

In addition to bringing to life our clients plans and exceeding their expectations, we're aiming to further develop and maximise partnerships to make the Central Coast the premier destination for conferencing and events.

We want to build a better tomorrow, allowing for additional investment in the hotel and the region, and growing the opportunities for employment on the Central Coast.

Our team strive to put our regional destination on the national and international conferencing stage. We have won international corporate events that put Terrigal on the map, including big association events such as Omerat, Blooms Chemist and The World Arabian Horse Society.

During 2017, business events allowed us to show close to 20,000 delegates the delights of Terrigal, including locally-sourced produce, our reliable and friendly nature, and the incredible landscape which they can view from their conference room or private balcony in their hotel room.

The Executive Sous Chef at Seasalt Restaurant, Dana Chantler, was also named 'Chef of the Year' at the 2018 HM Awards for Hotel Accommodation and Excellence. Tell us more about this exciting win.

More than 700 industry leaders gathered together for the event, which was held at Sydney's International Convention Centre. Nominated along with 22 other incredibly talented Chefs, we were thrilled when Dana took out the honour as joint winner with Anna Polyviou from the Shangri-La in Sydney.

Dana first joined us at Crowne Plaza Terrigal Pacific in 2014 as our Senior Sous Chef in the Florida Beach Bar, before moving up to Executive Sous Chef in Seasalt Restaurant in 2016.

A well-respected colleague, Dana is known for his infectious laugh and friendly personality. Working alongside the team while training and sharing his knowledge, his approachable nature accentuates his level of skill both as a chef and as a leader.

Dana says: *“Co-winning this award with Anna Polyviou, and being a finalist in such a talented field, is a massive honour. My team deserve credit for really buying into what we've established in Seasalt Restaurant over the last year, and of course, my thanks goes to our Executive Chef Simon Quick for always believing in me. This win highlights how serious we are at Seasalt and Crowne Plaza Terrigal Pacific about delivering great food experiences.”*

We have a particular passion for supporting local food and producers, and Chef Dana is known for his fresh seasonal menu with a coastal influence - what local produce do you love to include on the menu?

We focus our menus on fresh seasonal produce, with an environmental sustainability ethos. So key ingredients are chosen keeping this in mind.

For example, an ingredient will be listed as 'citrus' - not specifically 'blood oranges' - so that if limes are in season and freshest, we can utilise the local seasonal products, rather than having to order an ingredient that might not be locally in season.

We order much of our produce via Coastal Providers, and source ingredients like rhubarb from nearby Mangrove Mountain and local farms.

Crowne Plaza is a well-known establishment in Terrigal. What do you love about being a go-to destination for those looking to explore the Coast?

Being part of people's memories. It doesn't matter where you go or who you talk to, someone always has a memory of the time they went on a holiday, conference, to a wedding or to the beer garden in Terrigal.

It's the perfect location to explore the Central Coast with great regional partners like the Australian Reptile Park, National Parks and Wildlife, Norah Head Light House and Tree Tops Adventures, and it's also a great location if you want to park the car and leave it parked for a few days while you relax.

What's the must-try dish when we visit Seasalt Restaurant?

Our 'Seafood Platter for Two' is the hero dish at the hotel. The first course includes a fresh tuna poke, Pacific oysters, Yamba prawns, smoked and cured salmon, sashimi, house made condiments and sauces. The second course features oven roasted mulloway, grilled king salmon, garlic butter bugs, blue swimmer crab, mussels tossed in chilli and coriander, and salt and pepper squid.

Chef Dana's personal favourite from the Spring 2018 menu is the smoked beef short ribs with charred cauliflower, marrow gratin and house made BBQ sauce.

For dessert, the honeycomb with honey lavender labneh, spring berries and ginger lemon syrup is a sweet ending to a meal.

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