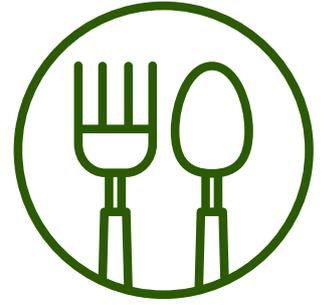


# Local Food Innovators: Bowlarama Bowls

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Social media's most gram-worthy food has exploded on the Coast thanks to the energetic duo behind Bowlarama Bowls.

Elle and Scott have been serving up deliciously healthy plant-based smoothies and bowls to health conscious foodies for six months now.

And a quick scroll on Instagram will tell you, our region is loving it!

We recently sat down with them to chat about the Bowlarama Bowls journey and left feeling totally inspired by their passionate 'just go for it' vibe.

## **How was Bowlarama Bowls born?**

Scott: I own **Body Movement**, the gym next door, and had this dead space that wasn't being used. So we decided to turn it into something really useful. At first we thought we'd open a juice bar, but after travelling to Bali and eating so many amazing smoothie bowls, we knew we had to bring them to the Coast. When we got back from Bali, we locked in a builder and then just went with the flow.

Elle: Yeah. Just going for it has been really key for us. I mean, we work in the gym, not in hospitality. So while it's all still new to us, I think having a 'just go for it' personality really helps us get things done!

I have always looked for nourishing, natural foods and am currently studying a Bachelor of Health Science in Nutritional Medicine. But my love of plant-based and vegan foods really began after travelling through Central America, Hawaii and then Bali. I really wanted more people to know that healthy food can taste amazing too! And so (after a few dodgy attempts) I made a winning bowl for Scott and we both knew we'd found our thing.

## **It sounds like you're really inspired by other cultures.**

Absolutely! Smoothie bowls haven't really taken off here in Australia. So we're always looking at how people from around the world are innovating. It helps us make our offerings even better.

When we were in Bali, we had heaps of smoothie bowls every day. Each place we went, we'd try a new bowl, check out their branding and their systems. It gave us a whole bunch of ideas to expand on and helped us create something different and special.

We've spent hours making so many bowls - testing, tasting, refining recipes - until we know we've nailed it. Serving up the best quality food that is healthy and tasty is so important for us!

## So, what exactly is a smoothie bowl?

We get that question a lot! Our bowls of goodness are packed with frozen fruit, raw acai, plant protein powder, coconut milk or coconut water and topped with a very wide range of superfoods. You can customise them by adding your choice of delicious extras like cacao nibs, hemp seeds, bee pollen or an extra boost of super greens, blue spirulina or activated charcoal.

As people try them, they're becoming more educated about the benefits of plant-based, superfoods – and that's really exciting for us.

We won't compromise on quality plant-based, vegan and sugar-free ingredients. We get all of our fresh fruit from our local fruit shop, **Fresko**, in Kincumber and we've just found a great local honey guy. Our pure frozen organic acai berry pulp is unsweetened and untouched from **Amazon Power**. And we're really lucky to use one of the best vegan proteins on the market from local supplier **White Wolf**.

## You're the first smoothie bowl business on the Central Coast. What else makes you different?

We're pink (laughs). There aren't many pink brands on the Coast.

What really makes us different is that we're not just selling smoothie bowls, we're creating an experience for people. You know, we're inviting people into our shop to hang for 10-15 minutes. While they're waiting for their bowl, they can sit down and chat to our staff and learn about healthy food.

We have a sign near our blenders reminding our staff to 'Blend and Breathe'. We're about making quality food, so we really encourage our staff and our customers to take their time and enjoy the smoothie bowl experience.

Creating something that brings people together as a community is also super important to us, so we're excited to be starting more community events next year. We've got some great ideas around local collaborations - so keep your eyes peeled!





**You've just celebrated six months in Kincumber, and have already expanded into Long Jetty. Congratulations! That's no small feat. How did it all happen?**

Yeah, it's all happened pretty fast. We've had such a positive response here in Kincumber, despite being located in the back of an Industrial Centre, and without much passing traffic. But on our opening day we sold over 200 bowls (we were hoping to sell 30!). Our commercial grade VitaMix's couldn't handle the pressure - they only lasted for 90 minutes before they overheated. Luckily one of our customers brought in a Thermomix and saved the day. It actually brought out this unreal texture to our recipes, so it was a blessing in disguise! We now only use Thermomix.

I think having a good team has been crucial to our success. We couldn't have done it without them. Our staff are all really health conscious, and invested in the business - they're always coming to us with new ideas. It's so great.

After seeing how well Kincumber was going, some of our friends said they wanted to open up one in Long Jetty. We've really built Bowlarama Bowls to be a collaborative brand, so after getting some advice from a Franchise Lawyer, we started this joint venture in Long Jetty with a great couple and it's doing really well. It's cool to be part of a community up there. All the cafés are working together, supporting each other and tagging each other on social media. It's really nice.

Before we opened Long Jetty we'd have people driving from Canberra and 50 minutes away to get our bowls. So now we've got two locations, people can get the smoothie bowl goodness at both ends of the Coast. It's awesome.

## Consumers are becoming a lot more eco-conscious. How has this impacted the way you operate?

Yeah, people really are becoming more environmentally aware. From the beginning we've used biodegradable bowls, spoons, straws, lids and bin liners. We have a compost, recycle and general waste service to keep our waste as close to zero as possible. We really try to encourage people to bring their own bowl to keep waste low. And anyone who does BYO bowl gets free toppings as an incentive. So our customers can really help us reach our goal. We're also about to introduce branded coconut bowls that people can purchase and bring back every time they get another smoothie bowl. It's always evolving.

## After such a successful six months, what's next for Bowlarama Bowls?

We've been going pretty hard and have a lot of exciting plans in the works, but also don't want to move too fast. We're going to slow down a little bit next year. Get grounded and ensure we keep serving up quality, delicious bowls and smoothies.

We feel there's so much potential in this brand – it could be as big as Boost Juice. But we want to make sure it's always fun – for us and our future franchisees. So that will always be a huge focus for us.



## FIND OUT MORE

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