

Aussie diners eat up Apple's iPad -- as menu

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Diners Darren Gammie (left) and David Wisemantel use an Apple iPad showing the menu at the Global Mundo Tapas eatery at the Rydges Hotel in North Sydney. The restaurant has given diners the option of using the iPad to choose and order their meals.

An Australian restaurant has ditched printed menus and now hands diners the latest tech-craze, Apple's touchscreen iPad computer, from which to choose and order their meals.

Risking damaging wine spills and customers taking an iPad 'to go', the Global Mundo Tapas eatery at the Rydges Hotel in North Sydney introduced its new menus three days ago -- within a week of the iPad's Australian release.

"One of the points of difference for our restaurant was to have a unique [menu](#)," the hotel's general manager Craig Simpson said on Friday.

"Everyone's excited about the iPad and we're jumping on the back of that."

Hundreds of people queued round the block in central Sydney to buy the iPad when it went on sale outside the United States for the first time on May 28.

Simpson flew to Adelaide on the iPad's launch day and bought 15 of the sought-after tablets on launch, which retail from 629 Australian dollars (531 US).

"It's the cost of doing business," he said.

An [iPad](#) application developed ahead of the tactile device's launch allows diners at the 50-seat restaurant to browse the menu -- complete with photographs and tasting notes -- with a flick of a finger.

Order a steak and the application asks how you would like the meat cooked, and placing your order can be done with the press of a button.

Planned features include pop-up boxes that will suggest wines to match meals, and stock-control mechanisms to delete sold-out items from the menu.

"Hotels used to be cutting-edge food and beverage," Simpson said. "We are trying to bring the pizzazz back."

Food and beverage manager Fareid Taheri said the menu has been well received. "It's something to play with while you order," he said.

"With a menu, you don't really know what you're getting," lunch customer David Wisemantel told AFP on Friday. "I would be far more inclined to order... if I knew what it looked like."

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