

Balwyn Evergreen's Men's Kitchen - where tasty meals meet meaningful connections



Diane Falzon

Balwyn Evergreen Centre, a community centre dedicated to ensuring that older individuals stay active, healthy and socially connected, is kicking off 2025 with monthly Men's Kitchen cooking classes, giving participants the opportunity to experience a unique blend of culinary exploration and social connection.

Led by qualified nutritionist and Balwyn Evergreen volunteer, Ruby Cheung, these classes are designed to teach new skills, improve nutrition knowledge and foster a sense of community. Participants are guided through interactive cooking demonstrations, where they learn to prepare delicious meals and discover the secrets of maintaining a healthy diet.

But the true highlight? Enjoying the fruits of their labour with new friends and creating a shared experience around the table.

According to Tina Hogarth-Clarke, CEO of Balwyn Evergreen, many men may often find themselves without many social outlets as they get older. 'The Men's Kitchen is a space for men to come together, share stories and form bonds over a shared love of food. We're passionate about providing unique opportunities for social interaction that improve both physical and mental wellbeing.'

Ruby says, 'Cooking is a skill, but it's also a joy. I am looking forward to seeing the participants grow in confidence and form friendships along the way. It will be great to watch them share tips and tricks, have a laugh over a cooking mishap or simply bond over a delicious meal they've prepared together. It's a reminder that food has the power to connect us all.'

Lyndon Smith, who has signed up for the cooking classes, says, 'I joined because I wanted to learn more about cooking. It's a great way to get out of the house, meet new people, catch up with old mates and enjoy a good meal together. Plus, I am keen to pick up a few new recipes that I can use at home.'

The Men's Kitchen cooking classes are held at the Balwyn Evergreen Centre on the last Thursday of the month, from 11am to 2pm. Cost is \$35 for CHSP assessed and approved, \$45 non assessed and Home Care Packages. For more information or to book a spot, contact Balwyn Evergreen Centre at 9836 9681 or email office@balwynevergreen.org.au