

Noosa Slow Food members Matt Gloiski, Martha Shepherd and Kirsten Von Homeyer.



# Food for thought

Slow food is the antithesis of fast food, but **Janine Hill** discovers it's about a lot more than a plate of organic vegetables versus a Big Mac or deep-fried chicken and chips

**E**VERYONE who visits Kirsten von Homeyer's Doonan home gets a tour of the vegetable garden.

It's something the interior designer is proud of, but something she also admits was out of character for her – an upwardly mobile, double income, no kids, city slicker into driving business and fast cars.

"This was something I always thought – and no disrespect intended towards anyone here – was for people with hairy armpits and lots of time," she said.

Although she is still driven (and still drives too fast sometimes), she has learned some things – especially about good food and taking her time, hence her involvement in the Slow Food Noosa group.

Like many others, she had assumed it was just a dining group that liked long, leisurely meals at nice places, until she was drawn into it through a friend and discovered that it was much more.

"I had no understanding of the substance of it or the underlying philosophy or what it was, if it was just a buzz word," she said.

Through slow food, the Prada bag-carrying DINK now stands up for the same issues as "hairy-armpitted, plenty-of-time" sorts – issues like producing good quality food, supporting cottage industry and preserving biodiversity.

Noosa Slow Food – or convivium, as they would call it in Italy, where the slow food movement began – is one of the legacies left by

Noosa restaurateur Leonie Palmer. Leonie, with her right-hand gal Kim Wherrett, got the group off the ground, roping in friends and acquaintances like Kirsten for a committed cause before her restaurant closed, forcing her out of the local hospitality industry for the time being.

The group remains, with a membership of some 100 people, as much as a testament to Leonie as a testament to good food and the philosophies behind it.

Kirsten describes slow food, simply, as the opposite of fast food. But be warned: this is about more than a plate of organic vegetables versus a Big Mac.

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