



GLADESVILLE

Journey from beans to bar

Cafe owners see where chocolate starts its life

Stacy Thomas

ARTHUR and Esther Lazarou were among the country's finest chocolatiers to take part in a once-in-a-lifetime trip to Ghana.

The ChocolArts, Gladesville store owners took part in the cocoa plantation tour, learning about the bean to bar process and everything there is to know about cocoa.

Immersed in the culture, Mr Lazarou said it was extremely unique.

"Cocoa is Ghana's biggest agricultural export and it's third biggest export overall," he said.

"They're small time farmers with four or five acres each, working the land. Cocoa needs to be sheltered so it's grown in the canopies of avocado and yam trees for nine months of the year."

While on the Callebaut cocoa plantation tour, they helped the farmers pick the cocoa pods. The next step was slicing them open and removing 30 to 40 seeds inside.

"The white flesh inside is like a custard apple in con-

sistency but tastes like lychee," he said.

"The seeds are fermented for up to five days and dried for up to 10 days. This is all dependent on weather.

"We got to see every step of the process."

They also learned about the Barry Callebaut Cocoa Horizon program, which works to help shape a sustainable future for cocoa and chocolate.

"It's improving the livelihoods of cocoa farmers and making the cocoa bean even better," Mr Lazarou said.

The couple has had its Gladesville store for a decade and source chocolate from all over the globe to make their more than 70 deliciously crafted treats.

Other attendees on the trip included chocolate shop owners from across Australia and hotel pastry chefs.



The chocolatiers travelled to Ghana to meet the cocoa farmers and get an indepth look at the bean to (chocolate) bar process.



Chocolatiers Arthur and Esther Lazarou at ChocolArts, Gladesville. Picture: Craig Wilson