

SE News  
HD **From cafe, exports grow**  
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THE nerve centre of SA's trade links with **China** operates from the back of a Campbelltown restaurant.

Va Bene Cafe owners Pasquale Catania and Domenic Clemente have been made the state presidents of the **China** Australia Entrepreneurs Association, an international trade organisation.

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They are planning to grow local exports to **China** from a freshly minted office behind their restaurant.

"We normally just store things out the back so it's funny to think we will be working on export deals out there now," Mr Clemente, 27, of Paradise, said.

"I think a lot of people would be shocked to know their local cafe is running an international trading office." Three staff will promote SA produce from the back of the cafe on Lower North East Rd, replacing the old state office at Glandore.

"In SA we've got the best **wine** and seafood and locally we have so many fantastic food manufacturers so why not use it to grow our economy?" Mr Clemente said.

"Our food and **wine** should be just as precious to us as oil in Dubai." The friends bought Cafe Va Bene in 2011 and began exporting wines, olive oil and honey to **China** in 2012.

In early 2013 they started their exporting **company** Red Lion Australia. They travelled to **China** five times last year and in August signed a \$4.6**million** export contract with a **company** based in the **Chinese** province of Fujian.

Last May they joined 30 other businesses on a three-day Primary Industries and Regions SA conference in McLaren Vale where they met **China** Australia Entrepreneurs Association president Raymond Wang.

"Raymond organised a second meeting with us and it just grew so we are very honoured to be the presidents of the SA branch," Mr Catania, 28, of Teringie, said.

"We used to work here (at the cafe) as teenagers and we always said one day we would come back and **buy** the place and we did.

"But we never imagined we would own an international export **company**." They now export more than 10 products and want to help manufacturers from the northeast and across the state do the same.

"We've both grown up in the area and always lived here so we really want to get our local community involved in international exports," Mr Clemente said.

"The opportunities for our local area and SA are endless." They plan to travel to **China** every couple of months. Businesses interested in joining email [contact@redlionaustralia.com](mailto:contact@redlionaustralia.com) or visit [redlionaustralia.com](http://redlionaustralia.com)

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