



**Licensed**

**Lunch** Tues-Fri & Sun noon-3pm

**Dinner** Tues-Sat 5-11pm

**Seats** 40; pavement 42

**Non-smoking area**

**Owners** Bruce Dowding &  
Neil Prentice

**Chef** Kazu Nomura

**Cards** AE BC MC V

**Price** About \$58+GST for two,  
plus drinks

**Map** 3

**Melway** 2P A4

## Birdcage

129 Fitzroy Street, ST KILDA

Phone 9534 0277

**MODERN JAPANESE**

ITS name may suggest the high camp of *La Cage aux Folles*, but there's nothing farcical about this wonderfully decadent old space in the foyer of the famous George Ballroom. And, while the proprietors will hope you take your wine seriously, they'll also be encouraging you to have some fun. Birdcage, primarily a wine bar, chirpily and quirkily matches Western wines with 'Japanesque' food. It may look like an old Milanese *caffe* with its dark marble, mosaic tiles, gilt box beams and feature ceilings, but the menu, sort of a Japanese tapas collection with a few more substantial rice and noodle dishes, goes way beyond sushi and sashimi. That's not surprising, as it's the work of Japanese chef Kazu Nomura, who won hearts at his former Toorak restaurant, *Le Japon*. His salted soybeans in their pods matched with a glass of riesling is this year's best bar snack. But there's more: his fascinating pork and miso rillettes with rice wafers with a glass of pinot grigio. Or his octopus-filled 'pancake balls' with a sangiovese. Or his wonderful rice dish topped with smoked and poached salmon, perfect with a chardonnay. Very St Kilda. Very good. **14/20**