



Bargain Hunter

email: bargainhunter@townsvillebulletin.com.au



Make seafood regular treat

By CHRIS QUAGLIATA

EVEN the most ardent bargain hunter will know that you don't have to survive on bread and water to live within your means.

In fact a gourmet dinner usually reserved for Christmas or Good Friday is not out of reach for the savvy shopper.

Seafood is often regarded as a treat for special occasions but it can be an affordable option if you look at the cost of a portion, rather than the price per kilo.

Ingham Road Seafood owner Mark Partland said prawns, crabs, shellfish or reef fish could often work out to about the same price — or cheaper — than quality cuts of meat.

For example, Mr Partland said a prawn salad using cooked endeavour prawns (at \$19.50 a kilo) would cost about \$6.20 per person.

A main meal including 200g portions of seared Atlantic salmon with a dollop of mayonnaise and fresh cooked vegetables would also cost about \$6.20 per person.

A side dish of garlic barbecue prawns at less than \$15 a kilo

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will serve more than the average family.

Mr Partland said seafood could easily be included in the shopping budget on a regular basis.

For an occasion such as a family barbecue, a seafood platter with oysters, prawns and bugs would cost \$25 per person.

"For most families a seafood dinner or lunch is usually limited to special occasions

because it is seen as more of a treat," Mr Partland said.

"What most people don't realise is that there is room for seafood in almost any family budget, whether as an entree, main meal or an entire menu.

Mr Mudcrab Seafood Market owner Joe Panzera said shoppers should look for pre-prepared meals to save on buying extras.

"We sell calamari already crumbed for example and garlic prawns ready to cook," he said.

"That's an inexpensive way of doing it.

"It's a food that's necessary in the diet, not necessarily every day but there are health benefits."

Mr Panzera said while imported seafood was cheaper, fresh local product was better value for money.

Ingham Road Seafood has introduced 'Market Mondays' with weekly specials and discounted fresh produce.

"The concept has generated enormous support and people are definitely starting to eat seafood on a much more regular basis," Mr Partland said.



AFFORDABLE . . . Ingham Road Seafood owner Mark Partland reckons seafood should be eaten regularly

Photo: MEGAN BRAYLEY