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Dips with a twist

Israeli couple Dari and Yehiel Kaplan drive to Canberra each week from Bondi to sell their dips and soups at the farmers' market at Exhibition Park.

The couple's products, sold under the Pilpel Fine Foods brand, are gluten-free, dairy-free and egg-free, and contain no animal fat, preservatives, artificial colours or flavours. The company also makes a non-vegan pesto under the brand name Darikay.

The Kaplans, who came to Australia in 1989, founded Pilpel Fine Foods, named for the Hebrew word for the capsicum family, in December 2004. The Canberra market is the only one the pair attends. They've been making the trip for two years. Dari Kaplan, a graphic designer, says, "Customers have started asking for specific products so we have developed a range of products strictly for the farmers' market, which includes marinated olives, antipasto, curries, marinades and cheese spreads."

The recipes are influenced by the couple's Israeli background, but have an Australian twist and use as much local produce as possible, she says.

Yehiel Kaplan was a chef in a five-star hotel in Israel, and opened a restaurant in Bondi before turning full-time to Pilpel. Pilpel Fine Foods won 10 medals for its dips in 2006, and medals for its soups in 2007, at the Sydney Royal Fine Food Show.

Some products are available at David Jones, in delicatessens and at independent supermarkets, but some are sold only through the farmers' market.

■ This article was contributed by Dennis Rutzou Public Relations for the Capital Region Farmers Market.



Yehiel Kaplan displays award-winning dips.