Illuminated beautifully by candlelight, the olde world charm of the historic Brisbane Arcade transformed into a whimsical backdrop for our intimate, long table high tea.

Hosted by Dominique Rizzo, the candlelit High Tea evening showcased Brisbane Arcade’s divine restaurants and gourmet providers. We took time to reflect on historic moments and shared personal memories of the arcade. What resonated with us all was the ambient feeling of elegance and how lovely it is to have a place to escape the city’s hustle and bustle.

Built in 1962 and added to the Queensland Heritage Register in 1992, the Brisbane Arcade stands three-storeys high and has two fronts; one on the Queen Street Mall, and one on Adelaide Street. Retained by original terrazzo finishes, an elegant corridor runs the length of the arcade (which is two-stories inside) and is crossed by a central walkway leading to the gallery of shops and cafés on each side.

Bringing my dreamy gaze back to the grandly dressed table, our first tasting by L’s Espresso Bar was served. A comforting winter warmer soup duet of pumpkin soup with coriander and a traditional pea and ham soup. L’s Espresso Bar owners, Cate Swan and David Lawler make everything on-site and from scratch. They have generated a loyal following with those wanting wholesome café dining in a homely and warmly welcoming environment.

The very dapper Peter Craig of Keri Craig Emporium lead the way in our second course, serving up Salmon rosettes filled with crab and served with avocado, asparagus, goats cheese, roasted capsicum and rocket. Roast turkey breast on a fluffy potato rosti with cranberry sauce; and the personal highlight of the evening, the freshest of fresh sand crab finger sandwiches with lime. Keri Craig is arguably one of Brisbane’s high tea originals and has been presenting and perfecting high tea since the early 90s.

To cleanse our already spoilt pallets we were taken on a Tea Tasting tour with owner Kim Torstensson of The Tea Centre. Sourcing teas from around the world they are recognised for their high quality and high standards. The Tea Centre has been described as heaven for tea lovers with an incredible 185 varieties of the freshest tea available in Australia. They also stock an exciting range of tea ware and accessories.

Named by Vogue Living as one of the top five high tea venues in Australia, Vicki Pitts from Room with Roses presented our next high tea course. Served elegantly on a three-tier rose stand were dainty ribbon sandwiches, a leek and mushroom tartlet, to-die-for mini ginger scones, raspberry scones and a tangy sweet lemon curd tart. Everything at Room with Roses is lovingly made and baked in-house including all their jams and preserves and they are utter sticklers for real butter, cream and eggs.

From Tanzania to Belgium, chocolatier and owner, Gerrard Gosens from Chocolate Moments hand crafted our final sweat treat with tastings of his finest chocolate. Gerrard works with chocolate from all parts of the globe and experiments with flavours and hand-makes each chocolate in house. Gerrard, who is congenitally blind, is not just known for his chocolate talents. His incredible life triumphs include being a champion paralympian marathon runner, former Dancing With The Stars contestant and Mt Everest conqueror to name a few. The man is an inspiration.

Steeped in tradition and elegance, the Brisbane Arcade has so much to offer. In an age of avant-gardism, fast food, Masterchefs, hipsters and fancy cuisine, it is indeed refreshing to rediscover the romance and tradition of such a unique place to eat in Brisbane.