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**PIZZA PERFECTION THANKS TO ISUZU FOOD TRUCK UPGRADE**

Making the best woodfired pizza is all about the correct ingredients, the best timber and especially, the right oven, but in the dynamic world of mobile catering, having the right set of wheels is just as crucial.

After years as an executive chef in Queenstown New Zealand, Mark Beeby and his wife Paula moved to Australia in the early 2000s to fire things up in the world of mobile catering.

Mark soon found a niche with woodfired pizza, and with a new base in Point Cook, Melbourne, founded mobile catering business, [Pizza Party Hire](https://www.pizzapartyhire.com.au/).

Mark’s delicious menu has been a big hit with customers—so popular that the pizza oven hasn’t been able to keep up with demand.

Mark decided the best option to accommodate a larger oven was to upgrade his passenger van and hitched trailer, to a light-duty truck - fully designed and fitted with an integrated kitchen.

Despite never having hopped behind the wheel of a truck before, Mark stopped in for a chat with the team at [Westar Trucks in Derrimut](https://www.isuzu.com.au/?gad_source=1&gclid=Cj0KCQjwlN6wBhCcARIsAKZvD5iHi3SWhVphkMIknjCaWDW7QDh0uJn_oZmtuOAL0TkBTNTLB3iRURQaAjADEALw_wcB) to help sort out the right rig for his niche operation.

“I just walked in unannounced and told them I needed a truck,” recounted Mark.

“We worked with Isuzu’s engineering software, and that same day I ordered an Isuzu [NLR 45-150](https://www.isuzu.com.au/our-range/series/n-series/) for our first fully integrated woodfired pizza truck.”

The modified NLR 45-150 has a total load capacity of 1,400 kg and is designed to expand the kitchen on one side, with the opposite side available for storage. A mobile cool room towed on a trailer behind the truck allows Mark to keep perishables separate from other materials.

Benches to serve patrons and a barista coffee station sitting underneath awnings attached to the truck, complete a welcoming foodie environment.

Hauling the weight of the kitchen and supplies is straightforward thanks to the NLR’s four-cylinder, three-litre turbo powered engine that produces 110 kW (150 PS) @ 2,800 rpm and 375 Nm of torque @ 1,600 – 2,800 rpm.

The choice of six-speed automatic transmission and the ability to be driven on a standard car licence has also made the experience of transitioning from van to truck that much easier for Mark.

“The whole set-up gives us flexibility with the cooking, and we can also have a range of configurations depending on the space—plus, for bigger events, we can easily have more staff on without tripping over each other,” said Mark.

“I was very specific about needing the 800 kg oven onboard. I worked with Isuzu and [Alltruck Bodies](https://alltruckbodies.com.au/) to get a truly bespoke build which came out even better than I anticipated.”

With the first NLR truck performing well and proving a functional choice for their business, Mark and Paula began planning for a second unit with a larger 1,200 kg oven, handling no less than nine pizzas at any one time.

An [NMR 65/45-150](https://www.isuzu.com.au/our-range/series/n-series/) with a load capacity of 2,355 kg was selected by Westar Trucks and complemented with a matching custom kitchen from Alltruck Bodies to hero this huge woodfire oven.

“Again, we went through the process with Isuzu’s engineering software and this time in the design we added an air deflector on the roof of the cab and the body—we also ended up adding a similar scoop for our smaller truck.” Mark explained.

“That aerodynamic addition made a big difference to the stability of the setup and an impact on fuel consumption, plus it improved the look of the truck which is important at events.

“I am pleased with the performance of both trucks, as well as the creature comforts, especially the AMT transmission.

“I really like the ability to adjust the transmission gear-change timing as sometimes we are loaded heavy, and I can make that adjustment to better suit the driving experience,” Mark added.

With 12 years behind the pizza paddle, Mark is still enjoying the hustle and bustle of public events but is evolving the business to focus on catering for private and corporate bookings.

He’s recently introduced a food truck experience at caravan parks on the Murray River and Lake Eildon in Victoria during the school holidays.

“We rotate between a number of parks in the Echuca-Moama and Lake Eildon areas to create an eating experience in the evenings. It’s been a big hit with our two separate operations running, effectively hundreds of kilometres apart.

“The caravan parks love it as it provides an added bonus for the people staying. It also introduces us to further potential customers for future private bookings.”

Mark and Paula haven’t stopped here, upgrading their transport capabilities with another light-duty NLR 45-150, which is used for transportation of extra equipment including tables and chairs for larger scale events requiring seating.

“Business is booming! Right now, we are 30 per cent public events with the rest as exclusive bookings,” Mark said.

“A huge advantage with our current business model is that we're going to where the people want us, instead of us waiting for the people to walk into a shop as retails does.

“I have no doubt that scaling-up with Isuzu Trucks has been the single best decision we have made for the business.”

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**For further information, please contact:**        **For Isuzu Trucks releases and photos:**

Sam Gangemi                                                      Arkajon Communications

Isuzu Australia Limited                                       Phone: 03 9867 5611

Phone: 03 9644 6666                                           Email: isuzu@arkajon.com.au