



ON THE MENU: Shane Radbone has big plans to grow his brands.

Picture: TOM LEE

Cooking up a new cafe concept

VALERINA CHANGARATHIL

COOKIE Man and Baskin Robbins owner Allied Brands will roll out its specialist cafe concept in SA as part of a national expansion plan, Adelaide-based CEO Shane Radbone says.

There are two Villa and Hut outlets at the Adelaide Airport, with plans to launch the concept and open more stores in major shopping centres around the state.

The Villa and Hut concept started in Melbourne and uses a unique business

model, selling not just food and drinks but also the furniture used around the cafe.

"It's the 'Body Shop' of cafes where we use organic blends, recycled products and recycled timber furniture from Indonesia," Mr Radbone said.

By June 2010, the company hoped to open 45 Villa and Hut shops around Australia.

Allied Brands would also launch more co-branded Baskin Robbins & Cookie Man stores here to capitalise on the 40 per cent higher sales compared with individ-

ual outlets. Most of the expansion would use the \$4.9 million funding commitment from New York-based SpringTree Global Investor to help grow its franchise services division in the next two years: "This is a great coup for the group. The investment... is testimony to our new strategy and the opportunities in the market... domestically and internationally."

The Cookie Man brand has stores in India, China, Greece and Singapore.