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# Master chefs make it special



The master chefs.

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VISIT Malaysia Year 2007 has placed the global spotlight on the country and with Malaysia International Gourmet Festival (MIGF) 2007 being an integral part of the campaign, food tourism in Malaysia has been taken to a whole new level.

Being one of Tourism Malaysia's 50 key events for Visit Malaysia Year 2007, winning the Pata Gold Award for marketing by MIGF has further increased the country's prominence as an international food tourism destination.

To coincide with this, the organisers have added a number of new elements to the festival.

First among them was the Malaysia Truly Asian Cuisine Showcase which took place recently at One World Hotel in Petaling Jaya.

The showcase required the 30 festival master chefs to use their expertise to create a menu combining all traditional ingredients and influences of Malaysian cuisine — but with an international twist.

Each menu was accompanied by a story explaining the source of its inspiration.

Dishes were judged by a panel of international food experts and writers and the winning Showcase Menu and Showcase Dish will be announced at the festival's grand finale dinner on Dec 3.

Adding further international interest to the festival this year has been the introduction of "Gourmet Tours Malaysia". Designed by festival partner, World Express Sdn Bhd, these special tour packages allow travellers and global food lovers to sample the best of Malaysian cuisine during MIGF.

"Tour gourmets" are chauffeured in limousines to and from the airport and the various festival restaurants of their choice, and have

opportunities to take tours of Kuala Lumpur, select from a range of optional spa and golf packages, and take cooking lessons in Malaysian, Japanese or International cuisine.

A full range of special events and deals are listed in the festival magazine. This month's offers range from wine sampling to capoeira displays, to live music from renowned performers.

There are a host of discounts for Mercedes-Benz Privilege Card holders and American Express also has a range of special offers for diners.

QBA at the Westin will feature international mixologist Joseph Boroski and Michelin chefs, Patricia Yeo, Rodelio Aglibot and Australian maestro Chef David King.

This year, guests can bid in the Chefs' Charity Auction for their favourite chefs while dining in the festival restaurants this month. Winners can treat their guests to specially prepared meals by the master chefs at home or in these world class restaurants.

Life size cut-outs of the festival master chefs were dotted around the gala launch to encourage silent bids in the Chefs' Charity Auction.

This year's charity is Yayasan Budi Penyayang Malaysia, a charity helping needy Malaysians, irrespective of colour, race or creed in the areas of education, welfare,

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research, health, medical and other charitable purposes.

Yayasan Budi Penyayang was set up by the late Datin Peduka Seri Endon Mahmood and the charity's chairperson is her daughter Nori Abdullah.

Silent bidding commenced at the gala launch and will continue throughout the month before final bids are accepted on Dec 3.

Datuk Steve Day says: "Over the years, we have helped create a situation where gourmet restaurants not only survive, but thrive.

"The spin off effects of the International Gourmet Festival have filtered down to benefit the entire F&B industry in the country."