

1Malaysia Food - A World of Fabulous Culinary Delights

Kuala Lumpur, 24 October, 2009 --- Special menus weaved from the classics, nostalgic dishes and dining experiences from the past, weekend celebrations of scrumptious ASEAN heritage food trails and fun, culinary workshops, top ten `must visit' food outlets and more...this is what the Fabulous Food 1Malaysia is all about. A three-month food drive by the Ministry of Tourism Malaysia and Tourism Malaysia, it aims to celebrate and promote Malaysia's unique local cuisine with a series of exciting activities to titillate, engage and delight the taste buds of all Malaysians and visitors alike.

For many centuries a major crossroad for the ancient eastern spice route, Malaysia (then Malaya) is considered to be the melting pot of Asia endowed with a potpourri of international class cuisine. Malaysian food is not one particular distinction of food but a culinary diversity originating from its multi-ethnic population of Malay, Indian, Chinese, Nyonya, Eurasian and the indigenous people of Borneo (Sabah and Sarawak), hence, offering a diverse menu as well as some very unique blends of their multi-ethnic dishes making the country a gourmet's paradise. The problem for a traveller is not finding fine food, but deciding what to eat. With a staggering array of dishes, the pleasure of enjoying the fabulous Malaysian cuisine is a culinary delight not to be found in any other country.

Thus it is no denying, as aptly said by our Minister of Tourism Yang Berhormat Dato' Sri Dr Ng Yen Yen at the launch of Fabulous Food 1Malaysia logo launch this morning, that Malaysian food is fabulous in every sense be it taste, smell or sight, hence, staying true to its name, Fabulous Food 1Malaysia!

"With 1Malaysia added to it, we mean more than its taste or its presentation. It strikes a chord in the heart of every Malaysian and it is really an invitation to share, not only a meal, but also the fellowship and closeness that comes with trading stories and experiences over plates of tasty delights. Thus the Fabulous Food 1Malaysia celebrates the unique, diverse and fabulous Malaysian culinary that so aptly conveys the rich cultural tapestry of Malaysia", Dato' Sri Dr Ng said.

This three-month drive, kicked off early this month with the Malaysian International Gourmet Food Festival, will be followed in November with the promotion of shopping mall food court dishes. Prior to that, the ASEAN Heritage Food Trail with Chef Wan (an event collaboration with Chef Wan Sdn Bhd) that offers the rich and diverse cuisine from all over the ASEAN region will be launched where from October 29 till end November 2009, our foreign visitors and Malaysians will have the opportunity to savor food from 10 countries in the said region. At the same time, Malaysians will be able to witness renowned chefs from these countries cooking up

their respective signature dishes at Lot 10 and Avenue K shopping malls. Participating countries include Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia, and of course our own popular chefs.

Given the diversity of Malaysian food and the wealth of choices, the Ministry will also go all out in December to promote Malaysian restaurant and street/hawker food. As a platform for food outlets to showcase their culinary expertise in their signature dishes as well as to help our visitors to navigate their way through our local food maze, the participating local food associations will put up a list of 10 "Best" or "Must Try" outlets from each of Malaysia's 13 states in three different categories. Chosen for their uniqueness and relation to Malaysian culture and heritage, the three categories are: Nasi Lemak, Laksa and Bak Kut Teh (Meat Bone Tea).

It is hoped that the Fabulous Food 1Malaysia drive as a whole will also create a buzz and encourage conversations amongst local residents. In this way, locals will be more familiar with the stories behind our local food and share them with their visiting friends and relatives. To this end, the Ministry will roll out different initiatives to encourage Malaysians to be our "Food Ambassadors". One of these includes targeting taxi drivers who themselves know the best places to eat in town.

"All these, plus the fact that our local food is affordable, hygienic and so easy to enjoy - they collectively inspire us to want to share our distinctive Malaysian cuisine with overseas visitors and keep them coming back for more", added Dato' Sri Dr Ng.

Under the Fabulous Food 1Malaysia programme, there are three tiers: the first promotes our gourmet cuisine capabilities and top restaurants; the second encompasses food court (in shopping malls) dishes; and the third promotes Malaysian multi-culturally-influenced hawker and street restaurant food.

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For further information, please contact:

Mona Fairuz Nordin, Head of Corporate Communications

monafairuz@motour.gov.my

+603 4047 4422/+603 4043 0462

Hajjah A'eshah Hakim Tan Sri L. Abdullah, Corporate Communications Officer

aeshah@motour.gov.my

+603 4047 4525/+603 4043 0462