

## CULINARY FEST

# An Oscar for

**This year's World Gourmet Summit will present a different perspective on gastronomy, focusing on the culture and artistry of wining and dining**

By **TEE HUN CHING**

**TO EPICUREANS**, a good meal entails more than just chow.

So the World Gourmet Summit this year, which kicks off on April 7, will focus on the art of dining to present a different take on gastronomy, with an emphasis on the culture and artistry of wining and dining.

Says Mr Peter Knipp, 46, of food consultancy Peter Knipp Holdings, which is co-organising the six-day event with the Singapore Tourism Board (STB): "We picked this theme because F & B is not just a profession. It is an art. You can make or break a dining experience if both sides — the service and kitchen — don't contribute equally."

Adds Ms Josie Lau, assistant director of events marketing at STB: "There are programmes where diners can learn to appreciate food and ambience, what cutlery and table setting to use and the types of wines to go with different foods."

Now in its sixth year, this annual culinary adventure, which falls during the Singapore Food Festival, is aimed at positioning the country as a gourmet capital of the region.

With the international recognition that it has garnered, it seems to be succeeding.

The United States-based International Festivals and Events Association awarded a gold award to World Gourmet Summit 2001 in the Grand Pinnacle category.

The annual awards given out by this association of worldwide festival and event organisers are viewed as an industry barometer of the best standards achieved at the global level.

The summit last year also won in the Best New Event (within an existing festival)

category for its Themed Masterchef Safaris.

This is arguably the most popular programme of the event, where diners are taken to different participating restaurants with each one serving a course by a master chef.

Of the awards, Mr Knipp, says: "We are flattered that our work we is getting international recognition. But we are not driven by the awards. They merely show that we are doing something right."

"In the past, when you mention World Gourmet Summit, people go, 'Who? What?'. Today, it's an industry name. Maybe five or 10 years down the road, it could become a household name."

The biggest challenge this year was in securing sponsorship for the \$1-million event amid the economic gloom.

"But our team has the never-say-die attitude. Together with STB, this was where creativity and the entrepreneurial spirit came in," he says.

A new programme this year is the Wine Masterclasses, where established wine-makers, rather than just wine merchants, will conduct sessions on wine appreciation.

And world-renowned culinary artists such as the highly-acclaimed Marcus Samuelsson from the United States and Zhang Jin Jie from Beijing are among the 13 master chefs invited this year.

Another highlight is the Awards Of Excellence, which made its debut last year.

The F & B industry's equivalent of the Oscars, this glitzy affair celebrates talents who have achieved a "distinct reputation for providing world-class dining and wining experiences".

Says Ms Lau: "We hope this can set the F & B benchmark for the region."

Judging for the 16 categories, which include Chef Of



The Year, Culinary Institute Of The Year and Wine Article Of The Year, was done by local and regional gourmets at connoisseurs and took three rounds to complete.

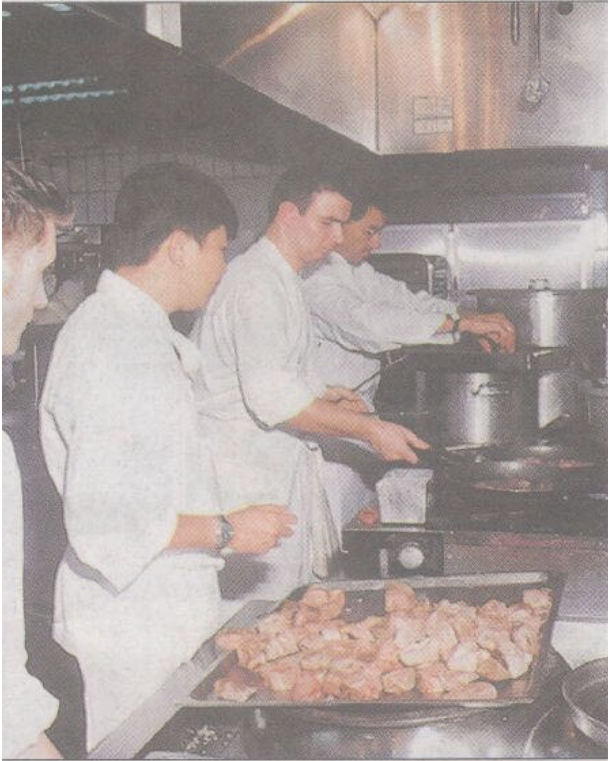
The results will be announced on April 7.

Next year's summit could be extended to two weeks, "some have complained that they can't eat at so many restaurants and participate in many programmes in one week", says Ms Lau.

Adds Mr Knipp: "Between the World Gourmet Summit and the Singapore Food Festival, Singapore is able to have events for all categories of foodies."

◆ For enquiries and ticket information, call 270-1254 or visit [www.worldgourmetsummit.com](http://www.worldgourmetsummit.com). Citibank Visa and MasterCard holders enjoy a 10-per cent discount.

# the chef



**Renowned culinary artists** (above) from around the world are among the 13 master chefs invited to the World Gourmet Summit.

**The gastronomic showcase this year** will focus on the art of dining (left)

## GOURMET MENU

### **EPICUREAN DELIGHTS**

- ◆ **WHEN:** April 9 - 12
- ◆ **WHAT:** The 13 master chefs who have been invited to this year's World Gourmet Summit will whip up cuisine extraordinaire from kitchens of participating host restaurants and complement it with fine wines of participating wineries for lunch and dinner promotions.
- ◆ **COST:** Check with participating restaurants.

### **CULINARY MASTERCLASSES**

- ◆ **WHEN:** April 9 - 12
- ◆ **WHAT:** The master chefs will offer tips on how to match wines with the cuisine by participating vintners, combined with a workshop on entertaining at home with style.
- ◆ **COST:** \$90 per person for sessions with two master chefs.

### **MASTERCHEF SAFARIS**

- ◆ **WHEN:** April 9 - 11
- ◆ **WHAT:** A sell-out every year, this event takes diners on a gastronomic odyssey to different restaurants, where each master chef will serve one course. The food will be matched with the wines of guest vintners.
- ◆ **COST:** \$290 per person.

### **WINE MASTERCLASSES**

- ◆ **WHEN:** April 9 - 12
- ◆ **WHAT:** Presented by wine merchant Tasting Room, four themed sessions that encompass four major wine-producing regions — Spain, Australia, France and Germany — will be conducted.
- ◆ **COST:** \$60 per person per session.

### **VINTNER DINNERS**

- ◆ **WHEN:** April 9 - 12
- ◆ **WHAT:** A stellar gathering of renowned wine-makers and a series of wine tastings and programmes, these programmes will offer participants the rare opportunity to sample some of the finest wines in the world.
- ◆ **COST:** Check with participating restaurants.

### **WGS FORUM**

- ◆ **WHEN:** April 11
- ◆ **WHAT:** Conducted by prominent food and beverage luminaries, this is designed to help the relevant industries meet the challenges of today's competitive environment.
- ◆ **COST:** \$160 per person for the full-day forum, which includes two coffee-breaks.

### **SPECIAL EVENINGS**

- ◆ **WHEN:** April 11 - 12
- ◆ **WHAT:** Distinguished culinary institutions are invited to showcase their skills at these Special Evenings — Le Cordon Bleu Dinner on April 11 and James Beard Foundation Charity Dinner the next day.

The latter will be held in aid of the Community Chest of Singapore.

- ◆ **COST:** Le Cordon Bleu Evening costs \$160 per person and the James Beard Foundation Charity Dinner costs \$1,000 per person.

### **GRAND FINALE DINNER**

- ◆ **WHEN:** April 13
- ◆ **WHAT:** Billed as a spectacular showcase of signature dishes from the Masterchefs and accompanied by fine wines of guest vintners, this glitzy banquet will wrap up the week-long gourmet adventure.
- ◆ **COST:** \$400 per person