Melbourne Food and Wine Festival reels in globe’s top chefs to celebrate water: Tickets on sale 3 December

From a Spanish seafood crusader and a British fishmonger turned award-winning chef, to a trail blazer for indigenous Chilean cuisine, some of the globe’s most inspiring culinary stars will gather in Australia for Melbourne Food and Wine Festival presented by Bank of Melbourne, 28 February – 16 March 2014.

Buoyed by the central theme of water, Festival 2014 will take food and wine lovers on a journey to discover all things sustainable, wild caught and hand dived, while uncovering forward-thinking chefs and exploring regions from the shores of Victoria to Patagonia, the River Po and everywhere in between.

At the hotly anticipated Langham Melbourne MasterClass, 8 – 9 March, learn from and taste the creations from the new wave of young gun chefs alongside global greats of the kitchen as they share their connection with the world’s most precious resource, water. The 2014 line-up:

Ángel León, Aponiente, Puerto de Santa Maria, Spain – Spain’s Best Chef in the National Gastronomic Awards, Ángel’s food is driven by the mantra ‘Tell a story about what happens in the sea’. Ocean produce is the backbone of his menu from sustainable seafood like mackerel and ling, to seaweed and plankton.

Christopher Kostow, The Restaurant at Meadowood, St Helena, USA – A philosophy graduate who loved cooking, Christopher fell for the kitchen and gained a third Michelin star in 2010. Since then, he has maintained three stars and become one of the most innovative chefs in the USA.

Mitch Tonks, The Seahorse and RockFish, Devon, UK – ‘A fishmonger for the 21st century’ (The Independent, UK) with three award-winning restaurants, Mitch is a self-taught chef with an infectious enthusiasm for cooking with seafood.

Rodolfo Guzmán, Boragó, Santiago, Chile - drawing from his time at Mugaritz and a passion for reinvigorating Chilean cuisine, Rodolfo’s food at Boragó (#8 Latin America’s 50 Best Restaurants) embraces indigenous cooking techniques and foraged produce from Chile’s diverse regions, from the dry Atacama Desert to the enigmatic Easter Island.

Matthew Jennings, Farmstead Inc., Providence, USA – Butcher, forager, chef and artisan cheesemaker, Matthew is passionate about instilling a sense of traditional “Yankee” flavour in his food and has twice been a finalist for the James Beard Foundation’s “Best Chef Northeast” award.

Johnny Iuzzini, New York, USA - with over 20 years’ experience in the kitchen, Johnny is recognised as one of the most influential pastry chefs in America (Forbes) and cooks with the motto “desserts are last, but don’t let them be least”.

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Damian D’Silva, *Immigrants – The Singapore Gastrobar*, Singapore – an ex-aeronautical engineer, Damian takes inspiration from Singapore’s rich food heritage and lost recipes from his childhood to create his spin on traditional street food.

Luigi Taglienti, *Il Ristorante Trussardi alla Scala*, Milan, Italy – Luigi combines his passion for pure Italian produce with inspiration from growing up at his mother’s beachside restaurant to earn his place in the new generation of Italian star chefs, with a Michelin star in tow.

Mauro Uliassi, *Ristorante Uliassi*, Senigallia, Italy – With two decades in the restaurant industry under his belt, Mauro turns Italian classics on their head at his flagship two Michelin-starred restaurant.

James Stapley, *Whare Kea Lodge & Chalet*, Wanaka, New Zealand - Season and guest preference the only two factors that determine James Stapley’s menu. The UK-born chef will delight with his methods of using the best produce in the most beautiful, simple (yet complex) ways.

These international guest chefs will join some of Australia’s most celebrated stars:


Shane Delia, *Maha*, Melbourne – Shane’s original and eclectic approach to Middle Eastern cuisine at Maha has earned his status as one of Australia’s most loved chefs.

Dan Hong, *El Loco, Ms G’s, & Mr Wong*, Sydney – One of Australia’s fastest rising chefs, Dan is renowned for crafting bold and brilliant flavours at his three restaurants.

Ryan Squires, *esquire*, Brisbane – A fierce campaigner for sustainable seafood, Ryan trained at elBulli and The French Laundry and now heads up the only three-hat restaurant in Brisbane.

Mary Valle, Melbourne - Mary’s Greek heritage influences her take on Mediterranean cooking and has seen her become one of the country’s leading experts on broad, delicious cuisine.

While they’re in town, guest chefs will also pair up with some of Melbourne’s hottest restaurants for one-off International Chef and Wine Dinners with collaborations including:

- Sneaker-loving hip hop fans Dan Hong and Casey Wall (Rockwell & Sons) will cook up a fun and delicious night out hosted by Lucky Peach editor-in-chief Chris Ying (7 March);
- Event wunderkinds Bright Young Things will create an unforgettable night with Relais & Chateaux chefs Christopher Kostow, James Stapley, Dale Gartland (Kauri Cliffs, NZ) and honorary Relais & Chateaux Grand Chef, Jacques Reymond (6 March);
- Matthew Jennings will join Scott Pickett and Joe Grbac at The Age Good Food Guide Best New Restaurant Saint Crispin for a menu showing both elegance and adventure;
- Damian D’Silva and Adam D’Sylva (Tonka) will explore their shared passion for heritage recipes and street food cuisine;
- Johnny Iuzzini will bring his trademark New York flair to The Langham, Melbourne’s afternoon tea (6 March).

Also part of Langham Melbourne MasterClass, Perfect Match uncovers classic and quirky food and wine pairings guided by Victorian chefs, winemakers, sommeliers and producers. Presenter duos include Geoff Lindsay (Dandelion, Elwood) and Mike Aylward (Ocean Eight Winery, Mornington Peninsula) creating matches for fresh Vietnamese flavours, and Rosa Mitchell...
(Rosa’s Kitchen, Melbourne) and Owen Latta (Eastern Peake Vineyard, Ballarat) sharing pairings inspired by ‘God’s Kitchen’, the island of Sicily.

Now at the core of the Festival’s new dedicated wine weekend, 1 – 2 March, Acqua Panna Global Wine Experience returns with a four-session program guided by Australia and the world’s most influential winemakers, writers and sommeliers including Tim Atkin MW (UK), Aline Baly (Chateau Coutet, France) Rick Kinzbrunner (Giaconda, High Country) and Guill de Puré (Yeringberg, Yarra Valley).

Rounding off the opening wine weekend, four of Australia’s best sommeliers Tim Bryar (Botanical, Melbourne), Matt Dunne (ARIA, Sydney), David Lawler (Rockpool Bar & Grill, Melbourne) and Daniel Wegener (Print Hall, Perth), will go head to head for Battle of the Sommeliers (2 March) with Tim Atkin MW and Aline Baly’s esteemed palates on hand to judge their wine pairings to chef Lionel Abello’s dishes at Botanical.

For the first time the Festival’s famed outdoor MasterClass experience moves to Regional Victoria. Water MasterClass (15 March) in the natural surrounds of the Bellarine Peninsula is a one-off, progressive experience celebrating the bounty of water. The day-long event for only 50 guests features fly fishing and fish smoking workshops with chef luminaries Peter Gilmore (Quay, Sydney), the UK’s Michelin-starred Nathan Outlaw (Nathan Outlaw Restaurant, Cornwall) and Aaron Turner (ex-Loam, Drysdale), plus hands-on mussel and oyster demonstrations with seafood farmer Lance Wiffen (Sea Bounty, Portarlington). This intimate event culminates in a spectacular four-course lunch at Campbell Point House overlooking Lake Connewarre.

Other highlights include the Festival’s hub The Immersery: Festival Kitchen, Bar and Raingarden popping up in Queensbridge Square for only 17 days, and Festival favourite Bank of Melbourne World’s Longest Lunch (28 February) on the first day of the Festival gathering 1,500 for lunch on the banks of the Yarra River.

28 February – 16 March 2014
Program online from 26 November 2013 at melbournefoodandwine.com.au
All Festival events on sale 3 December 2013
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MFWE Presenting Partner: Bank of Melbourne
Government Partners; State Government of Victoria, City of Melbourne and Tourism Victoria
Principal Partners Gastronomy: The Langham, Acqua Panna and Smeg
The Immersery: Festival Kitchen, Bar and Raingarden is proudly supported by major partners City of Melbourne and Melbourne Water. Design partner HASSELL.
Major Partners: Crown, IGA and Seppelt
Industry partner: HOSTPLUS
Following chef visits thanks to:

Damian D’Silva: Tonka
Mitch Tonks: The European
Ángel León: MoVida
Rodolfo Guzmán: The Town Mouse
Mauro Uliassi: Grossi Florentino
Christopher Kostow and James Stapley: Relais and Chateaux

Dan Hong: Rockwell & Sons
Matthew Jennings: Saint Crispin