

For immediate release



## KITA FOOD FESTIVAL RETURNS TO MALAYSIA AND SINGAPORE IN 2023

The annual food festival will host a series of culinary events throughout  
September and October 2023



**June 6, 2023, Malaysia:** The **Kita Food Festival** will return in 2023 with a series of dining events and food celebrations to be held from September 27 (Kuching), October 13 – 16 (Penang), October 19 - 23 (Singapore) and October 26 – 30 (Kuala Lumpur). The festival will feature both Malaysian and renowned international chefs for a series of fine dining and casual dining events, along with two **Big Sunday Barbecues** and **The Great Mezze**. It will also include a series of TED style talks and symposiums titled **Kita Conversations** with discussions from chefs, food producers, historians, anthropologists, and food suppliers all talking about what is pertinent to the industry here and now, such as sustainability, food waste, and how to make a business profitable.

The Kita Food Festival is an annual event to celebrate Southeast Asian culinary culture. The festival showcases an array of experiences with some of the finest chefs, winemakers and food

thinkers from around the globe. The goal is to put a spotlight on Southeast Asia's emerging food scene and to also offer inspiration for the next generation of food producers.

The word Kita means 'Us' or 'We' in Malay and as such signifies that the Kita Food Festival is all about embracing all cultures and bringing food lovers together to enjoy the act of sharing and learning about sustainable food production with the theme 'We Are One'.

The Kita Food Festival was founded by Malaysian-born chef **Darren Teoh** who is the head chef of fine dining restaurant [Dewakan](#) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; along with Australian-born food and travel journalist **Leisa Tyler** who has been based in Asia since 1998 and sat on the board of the World's 50 Best Restaurants for 10 years and was part of the team for Asia's 50 Best; and also Malaysian-born **Adrian Yap**, the founder of [Tiffin](#) Culinary who hosts F&B centric pop-up events and food hall Tiffin at the Yard; he is also the founder of Freeform which runs Malaysia's longest-running creative arts festival Urbanscapes. Together they have more than 50 years' experience in food, festivals, media and business.

"Following on the success of our 2021 and 2022 festivals, we are proud to be back and bigger than ever. While the 2021 Kita festival was localised due to closed borders, and the 2022 festival featured chefs and speakers from across Southeast Asia, 2023 will cast an even wider net, with chefs, culinary historians and business leaders from across the world".

"Kita Food Festival is in the vanguard for culinary initiative, innovation and thought leadership that puts community and creating a robust and sustainable F&B industry at the centre," said co-founder Leisa Tyler.

Co-founder Darren Teoh said "Kita Conversations hopes to be a catalyst for a positive conversation around food that isn't always discussed in this region. A lot of the people we are inviting aren't only good cooks but some of the most original thinkers surrounding food in the world. Kita Conversations is an F&B industry led event, for the industry."

This year's guest curator for the **Singapore Weekender** event is Chef Ivan Brehm from the Michelin-starred restaurant [Nouri](#) and creative space [Appetite](#) in Singapore. Chef Ivan will be instrumental in bringing together some of the best chefs in the region, as well as showcasing his own talent to guests attending the event.

"Kita Food Festival stands as a unique attempt for the region to ask questions specific to its reality on the ground. An opportunity not only to discuss the most relevant and pressing issues found in our industry, but a way to cultivate and rejuvenate a community outside of our competition and content starved day to day. What Darren, Leisa, Adrian and team have started bears the spark of a movement that we embrace eagerly," said Ivan.

Another highlight of this year's festival will be **Horizons**, a free-to-attend mentorship program which is designed to inspire, evolve and broaden the horizons of Malaysia's next generation of top chefs. The program will include 12 hand-picked young chefs (under the age of 28 years) who have demonstrated a commitment to their craft. The young chefs will be taken on a journey of culinary experiences from masterclasses and study groups with some of the KFF chefs as well as farm experiences around Malaysia. Along the way, they will be mentored by some of Kuala Lumpur's top chefs including Daniel Yap (Gooddam), Gary Anwar (Ember Modern Bistro) and Haznizam Hamzah (W Hotel Kuala Lumpur). At the end of the program the young chefs will cook a specially prepared dinner for invited VIP guests using mainly proteins, vegetables and grains that are usually considered grade two or surplus, namely food that is often destined only for landfill.

"The Horizons programme is very close to our hearts, and together with Kita Conversations, the key reason Darren Teoh and I started Kita Food Festival. By giving committed young chefs an opportunity to experience ethical farms and manufacturers first hand, plus give them one on one time with senior chefs, we can not only sharpen their skills and open them up to new opportunities, but support the type of producers that will take Malaysia's F&B industry to the next level", Tyler continued.

## **Events Confirmed to Date**

**Kuching:** [Roots Bistronomy](#) with Chef Anthony Yeoh (Summer Hill, Singapore) and Chef John Lim (Roots Bistronomy) casual dining event on **September 27**

**Penang:** The Great Mezze on **October 15** brings together eight lauded chefs, two to a counter, working over open flames with Malaysia's finest produce in the courtyard of [China House](#) in Penang. The event will feature an international acclaimed mixologist, live music, a DJ, natural wines and a dance floor.

**Singapore:** The **Singapore Weekender** with Chef Ivan Brehm includes fine dining and casual dining events, Big Sunday Barbecue and Kita Conversations **19 - 23 October**

### **Kuala**

**Lumpur:** Fine dining event at one-Michelin star restaurant and #74 on Asia's 50 Best Restaurants 2023 [Dewakan](#) with Chef Darren Teoh along with Chef René Stein from a one-Michelin star restaurant in Germany - [Tisane](#).

The Big Sunday Barbecue on Sunday, **October 29** will be an event not to be missed. A coterie of some of the region's best grill masters will join forces to open flame grill meat, seafood and vegetables – all with a 'zero-waste' approach to turn 'ugly' food into beautiful creations.

Where: [Tiffin at the Yard](#)

### **Kita Conversations:**

**Kita Conversations** is an on-going dialogue on all things food including its production, history and consumption in SE Asia. The goal is to build an open platform for everyone working in the food and beverage industry and will include speakers such as David Thompson.

Tickets for each event will go on sale in early August. For more information about the Kita Food Festival and to stay up to date with news and upcoming events please visit [Kita Food Festival](#) or follow us on social media: [Facebook](#) [Instagram](#) and [Linkedin](#)

For Chef Ivan Brehm bio please visit [HERE](#)

To download images for Kita Food Festival visit [HERE](#)

To download video content for Kita Food Festival, visit [PROMOTION VIDEO](#)

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**\*\*Ends\*\***

**About Kita Food Festival**

Kita Food Festival (KFF) is a culinary event that brings together some of Southeast Asia's leading chefs and culinary minds. The event was created to put Malaysia on the gastro-tourism map and create a community of like-minded people who appreciate good food and wine. The event also aims to give the Malaysian dining scene a yearly event to look forward to and pave the way for spin off events to emerge. The goal is to give people a reason to eat out, while expanding the palate and knowledge of food and drinks to festival goers. The Kita Food Festival was also created to give career opportunities and inspire and connect culinary professionals.