

## Eat/Drink

# What's cooking at Singapore World Street Food Congress 2015

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Banh xeo from Vietnam's Bahn Can restaurant. — World Street Food Congress picture

SINGAPORE, April 1 — Fans of street food will no doubt be licking their lips at the prospect of trying out some of the best from around the world when the second World Street Food Congress (WSFC), the brainchild of Singapore's food ambassador KF Seetoh, rolls into town next week.

Organised by Makansutra and supported by Singapore Tourism Board, the event (from April 8 to 12) will take place at the open field at the intersection of Rochor Road and North Bridge Road. It is a much smaller venue compared to its previous location at the F1 Pit Building and Paddock, but it was chosen for its accessibility and visibility, said Seetoh. "Last time it was too spread out. This is a much cosier location that will offer a richer experience," he explained.

Of course, what we really want to do is sink our teeth into some of the tastiest fare to roll out of food trucks, vans and hawker stalls, such as crispy seafood pancakes from Vietnam, fried oyster omelettes from Thailand, fried anchovies from New York and truffle-roasted suckling pig from The Philippines — 23 stalls from 12 cities around the world, to be precise. And this year's "jamboree" will also do away with an entry fee.

"Anyone can just drop in and prices for dishes will start at S\$4.50 (RM12) and run up to about S\$12," he added. While the stalls will not accept cash, diners can pay by NETS, Flashpay or by purchasing coupons. Naturally, a food event such as this will incorporate a celebration of Singapore's 50th birthday in the form of an exhibition, SG50 Deliciously Singaporean, which is organised by the National Heritage Board. It will chronicle Singapore's food heritage and spotlight 50 uniquely Singaporean dishes.

"This is the year for us to really recognise and own the dishes that Singapore can proud of," explained Seetoh. "Besides the exhibition, we will put recipes and videos online, and have pop-up cooking demonstrations."

Meanwhile, five Singaporean stalls will make up the SG Pavilion. They include Chey Sua Carrot Cake and M.A. Deen Blasa, which will be serving up traditional offerings such as chai tau kueh (carrot cake) and mee kuah (Indian-style noodles in a spicy red soup), respectively. Hong Kong Street Chun Kee will put a modern spin on classics like har cheong gai (prawn paste chicken) by turning it into a burger served with coleslaw and sweet potato fries, while zi char restaurant Keng Eng Kee Seafood will serve a dish of soft shell crab fritters with three dipping sauces: Chilli crab, salted egg and black pepper crab.

Such contemporary takes on classic Singaporean dishes, said Seetoh, "will help to start a conversation because it evolves traditional dishes without taking away their heritage". "They open up new ways of thinking, which is the point of this event," he added.

Besides the heady assortment of street food from around the world, visitors to this year's event will be privy to three daily masterclass demonstrations from chefs and culinary experts such as Indonesia's William Wongso and Spice Market London's Peter Lloyd. Finally, the World Street Food Awards will honour winners in 16 categories such as Best Street Food Masters, City, Writers, Concepts and Social Enterprises. What better way to cap an event that brings all the delicious aspects of global street food heritage in one mouth-watering space? Speaking of which, here's a peek at what visitors can look forward to.

**BOLIVIA:** Anticucho (skewered meat with boiled potatoes) from Restaurant Gutsu.

**INDIA:** Litti choka (roasted wheat flour dough balls filled with seasoned gram flour) from D K Litti Corner; Aloo tikki chaat (a snack made from spiced potatoes, onions and lentils) and golgappe (wheat flour puffs made with spiced potatoes, onions and tamarind water) from Mangala Chaat; gulab jamun (fried dough balls in syrup) and puri subji (fried bread served with vegetable gravy) from Pradeep Sweets.

**INDONESIA:** Soto ayam (spiced chicken soup) from Ambengan Pak Sadi; ayam taliwang (spicy grilled chicken) from Taliwang Bersaudara; kupat tahu gempol, the western-Javanese version of gado gado (Indonesian salad with peanut sauce); gudeg (a Javanese breakfast dish of unripe jackfruit jam served with crispy cow skin crackers and braised or grilled chicken) from Gudeg Yu Nap.

**MALAYSIA:** Black satay (or ba cha) and kerabu salad from Tuck Nyonya Catering, a husband and wife team specialising in Penang nyonya and street food; Penang apom manis (sweet Indian-style pancakes) from Ravindran Supramaniam and Kanchanana Devi Kalimmuthu who run a street food cart in George Town, Penang.

**THE PHILIPPINES:** Lechon (roast suckling pig) stuffed with white truffle oil paella from Pepita's Kitchen; pampango sisig (boiled and charcoal grilled pig's ears, cheek and jowl with chicken livers, onions, calamansi and chilli) from Bale Dutung Sisig.

**SINGAPORE:** Chai tao kueh (fried carrot cake) from Chey Sun Carrot Cake; fried soft shell crabs with chili crab, salted egg and black pepper crab dips from Keng Eng Kee Seafood; halal satay bee hoon from Alhambra Padang Satay Stall; har cheong gai (prawn paste chicken) burger with sweet potato fries from Hong Kong Street Chun Kee; Mee kuah (Indian-style spicy noodles in a red soup) from M.A. Deen Blasa; German bratwurst and currywurst from Bratworks.

**THAILAND:** Fried oyster omelette from Hoy Tord Chao Lay.

**UNITED STATES:** Kinilaw (Filipino ceviche) and chicken inasal taco with fried chicken skin from East Side King (Austin, Texas); churro sundae drizzled with gula melaka from Churro Locos (Portland, Oregon); fried anchovies from Bon Chovie (Brooklyn, New York).

**VIETNAM:** Banh xeo (crispy seafood pancakes) from Banhcan 38. — *TODAY*

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