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food

# Two-day special dialogue at World Street Food Congress offers food for thought



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*Panel discussions by street food advocates to make you 'think, act and react'*

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SINGAPORE — The second World Street Food Congress (WSFC) rolls into town this week and it won't be offering only food, but food for thought.

Following this year's theme, Engage, Empower and Enterprise, one of the highlights will be the special two-day Dialogue-Hackathon on Wednesday and Thursday, which will feature panel discussions and presentations by renowned street-food advocates, media and street-food vendors.

"They will talk about stuff that will make people think, act and react," said WSFC creator and Singapore food ambassador KF Seetoh. "For instance, Top Chef Season

Nine winner Paul Qui will detail his journey from cooking fine food to becoming the owner of East Side King, a group of Asian-inspired street-food trailers and restaurants in Austin, Texas. I think his story will inspire young cooks to continue Singapore's street-food culture.

"Then you have Thai (celebrity) chef Ian Kittichai, who is a fine example of how far you can go and what you can do with a bit of knowledge of street food," he added. "We also have a City Food panel from New York University. Because they are academics, they think about food in a very different way. What they have to say on the subject will really open your mind."

Other personalities include Claus Meyer, co-founder of top restaurant Noma and founder of an organisation that runs food schools in Danish prisons, and Sangeeta Singh, who works with an organisation that protects the livelihood of street vendors in India.

During the Dialogue-Hackathon, participants will also hear about plans for Anthony Bourdain's much-anticipated Singapore-style hawker centre Bourdain Market in Manhattan.

For industry players and young individuals and companies looking to enter the street food business, this conference is an invaluable opportunity to network and engage with a truly global group of movers and shakers. Tickets for the two-day event cost S\$450, though students and start-ups have a chance to secure a limited number of subsidised tickets at S\$100 and S\$150, respectively, by writing to the organisers.


The latter group would probably benefit most from the Street Food Pitch Box segment, in which participants are encouraged to write down and submit their business ideas. Those with the best ideas will then be given three minutes to present their concepts and pitches to the panel of industry professionals and influencers.

"The Hackathon will be a town hall-style dialogue, where we want people to say what they really feel," said Seetoh. "The best ideas come from the ground. We really want to hear what the younger generation want in order for street-food culture to thrive."

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