



Title: PH to host World Street Food Congress in April

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(From left) Karem Miranda, MICE Department officer in charge of Tourism Promotions Board, WSFC creator and Makansutra founder K.F. Seetoh and Javier Hernandez, assistant vice president Ayala Land Inc. *Vladimir Bunoan, ABS-CBN News*

MANILA – Hawkers from around the world will gather in Manila in April for the World Street Food Congress, which will be held outside Singapore for the first time since it started in 2013.

This was announced on Saturday at a 15-hour food crawl which brought local and international media on a food trip to Pampanga, Binondo and the Bonifacio Global City, where the World Street Food Congress 2016 will be staged from April 20-24.

“You all may have heard that in 2015, CNN named the Philippines the second-best culinary destination in the world. It has a dynamic food heritage inherited from its native flavors and the many world culinary concepts. Filipinos have travelled wide and far and are very receptive of international flavors. It is very appropriate that they bring this world

culture of flavors home for all the attendant opportunities it can promise,” the organizers said in a statement.

Singapore celebrity K.F. Seetoh, the founder of the popular food guide Makansutra, credited the vision of the Department of Tourism and the Ayala Malls for making the event happen.

“They were the ones who went to WSFC last year and said, ‘Let’s bring this to the Philippines.’ It’s been a year in the making and today, we are here and it’s finally happening,” he said at the press conference at the Diamond Hotel.

Some 24 top hawkers from Indonesia, China, India, Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam, Singapore, South Africa and the US have confirmed their participation at the World Street Food Jamboree, which Seetoh described as an “international food party.”

“They are like the three-Michelin-star version of hawkers. It’s a huge feasting festival. There’s drinking, there’s music. You just go there and eat, get drunk and dance,” he said, adding that they expect 100,000 foodies to join the festivities.

Seetoh also promised that foodies can expect to try “street food dishes never before seen in the Philippines.”

Some of the participating international hawkers are Jin Ji Kway Chap, Alhambra Padang Satay Stall and Keng Eng Kee Seafood from Singapore; Banh Can 38 from Vietnam; Taliwang Bersaudara and Martabak Markobar from Indonesia; and Churros Locos from Portland, Oregon, which is known for its Churros Sundae.

The Jamboree is just one component of the WSFC 2016. The event also includes a two-day Dialogue with the theme “Comforting Flavors of Home” and will include presentations on the future of street food and panel discussions with street food hawkers who will share their experience and insights for those who are interested in the food business.



K.F. Seetoh and Indonesian culinary ambassador William Wongso. *Vladimir Bunoan, ABS-CBN News*

Among the speakers and presenters are “MasterChef Asia” winner Woo Wai Leong, Bourdain Market creator Stephen Wether, former director of Singapore’s Hawkers Department Richard Tan and Indonesian culinary ambassador William Wongso, who did a short cooking demonstration at Saturday’s press conference.

Seetoh also teased that plans to open an international hawker center in Manila will be announced at the event.

The last component of the event is the World Street Food Awards, which recognizes the best players and professionals in the field. Among the categories are Best Street Food City, Best Writer/Commentator/Blogger and the Best 20 Street Food Masters.

The WSFC 2016 is among the major events planned for the celebration of Philippine Food Month in April.

“Together with the other events Madrid Fusion Manila and Flavors of the Philippines, the WSFC is a key event to showcase the culinary heritage of the Philippines,” said Karem Miranda, officer in charge at the MICE Department of the Tourism Promotions Board.