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Street food is more than just street food. It's also a celebration of culture and heritage.

For the second time in a row, the Philippines is playing host to the World Street Food Congress. The five-day celebration from May 31 to June 4 at the SM Mall of Asia Concert Grounds puts the spotlight on the humble streetfood.

The food fair showcases 28 pop-up specialty stalls serving street food favorites from the USA, Mexico, Germany, India, Taiwan, Vietnam, Malaysia, Japan, Singapore, Thailand, Hongkong, Germany, Indonesia, and of course, the Philippines.

Those who attend can choose from about forty different dishes — from Indonesia's sweet pancake called Martabak to spicy Bicol express risotto from the Philippines. The dishes are priced at about PHP250 per order.

During the first two days of the event, the World Street Food Congress saw industry experts share their food philosophies and ideas. Included in the line-up of speakers were rockstar chef Anthony Bourdain, Makansutra founder KF Seetoh, Michelin-star chefs Malcolm Lee and Andy Yang, and more.

Here are five food lessons we learned from some of the chefs and food experts who shared their culinary wisdom during the event:

**1. From Greg Drescher, VP, Strategic Initiatives and Industry Leadership at the Culinary Institute of America**

Street food has evolved and top chefs and food critics have learned to welcome street food, even in the West. He recognized that chefs are now opening restaurants inspired by hawkers and even Michelin is awarding stars to street food vendors. Drescher explained that "street food needs more vigorous champions" if we want to pass this great cultural heritage to the future generations.

**2. From KF Seetoh, founder of Makansutra and creator of the World Street Food Congress**

K.F Seetoh is the hero of one-dish entrepreneurs. He talks about the importance of making street food more visible and making hawkers more professional. For Seetoh, the most important effect of the popularity of street food is the creation of job opportunities for all. Heritage recipes have helped people rise out of poverty.

**3. From chef Sau del Rosario, owner of Cafe Fleur and 25 Seeds and captain of the Philippine contingent in the event.**

Chef Sau is the epitome of hardwork. He tirelessly presents the wonder of Filipino food to the world. His effort has brought triumph to Filipino cuisine when he represented the Philippines at Mexico City's Foro Mundial Gastronomía Food Festival last year. "I hope to see Mexico and other countries develop a deep respect and love for the Philippines; and for the rest of the world to experience our culture and cuisine would be ecstasy," he said.

**4. From Arbid Singh, a social entrepreneur who professionalized street food in India**

Arbid Singh is an advocate of regulating the street food vendors in India. Aside from helping hawkers rise from poverty, he also helped professionalize the industry. Recognizing that hawkers are important in Asian culture, he said that improving the working conditions for street food vendors is for the greater good of society.

**5. From Anthony Bourdain, rockstar chef, book author, and TV personality.**

Bourdain explained that street food is a "reflection of who we are, where we come from and what we love." When traveling to another country or experiencing a new culture, the best food is not found in a 5-star restaurant, but in a humble home with a nonna (grandma) who loves to cook. That's why street food culture is still flourishing in some parts of the world.