

Media Release

The Hon Martin Pakula MP

Minister for Industry Support and Recovery

Minister for Trade

Minister for Business Precincts

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Racing



Friday, 12 March 2021

BIG APPETITE FOR MELBOURNE EVENTS AT LONGEST LUNCH

The Andrews Labor Government has welcomed the return of Australia's leading culinary event, the Melbourne Food & Wine Festival, to the state's major events calendar.

After the 2020 festival did not proceed due to the global pandemic, the 2021 festival includes an expanded program throughout the year across Melbourne and regional Victoria.

Now in its 29th year, the festival kicks off today with the World's Longest Lunch at Treasury Gardens with more than 1,650 people set to enjoy dishes from local masters Stephanie Alexander, Philippe Mouchel and Jacques Reymond.

Guests will be supplied with a hit-list of post-lunch city bars to experience, which will help spread the benefits of the event to CBD businesses that are recovering steadily from the effects of the pandemic.

The Longest Lunch will be complemented this year by a new event, the World's Longest Brunch on Saturday, 13 March – also in the Treasury Gardens.

The brunch menu has been designed by Lune Croissanterie's Kate Reid in collaboration with Melbourne cafe luminary Nathan Toleman, whose influence across venues including Higher Ground, Top Paddock and Kettle Black helped to put Melbourne on the map for modern brunches.

The Melbourne Food and Wine Festival's March program also features a series of progressive dinners through Melbourne's west and 50 events across the city created in partnership with friends of the festival.

Later in the year, the program will feature a 'Winter Edition' with events across the city from 30 July to 8 August, followed by a 'Regional Edition' to celebrate local produce and culinary talent beyond the city.

The festival is supported through the Victorian Government's Major Events Fund, which ensures that Victoria continues to secure the best major cultural and sporting events.

The Andrews Labor Government is also supporting Melbourne's hospitality industry through the Licensed Hospitality Venue Fund and the Outdoor Eating and Entertainment Package Business Grants program.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Martin Pakula

"The Melbourne Food and Wine Festival combines what Melbourne does better than any other city – great food and exciting events."

"With the Melbourne Fashion Festival also running, audiences back in the theatre district and footy returning to the MCG from next week, the momentum of our recovery continues."

"Victorians are following the public health directions required to keep everyone safe while embracing the chance to come together at these much-loved events."