

Media Release

Steve Dimopoulos MP

Minister for Environment

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events

Minister for Outdoor Recreation



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FOOD & WINE FESTIVAL BEGINS A FEAST OF FLAVOURS

Australia's premier food and drink festival returns today, bringing ten days of world-class dining, exciting collaborations and unmissable events to foodies and tourists across the state – thanks to the Allan Labor Government.

Member for Footscray Katie Hall representing the Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos today joined acclaimed chef Curtis Stone to launch the festival, which includes more than 200 events celebrating the best of local and international cuisine.

The festival begins in spectacular style with the iconic World's Longest Lunch, set in Melbourne's Kings Domain – where Stone will craft a three-course meal for hundreds of guests seated along an impressive 600-metre table.

Other festival highlights include the revamped World's Longest Brunch, where diners looking for morning indulgence can enjoy a menu curated by beloved author and cook Julia Busuttil Nishimura.

Guests will explore the Royal Botanic Gardens while sampling treats that includes lemon mascarpone tarts, chive pancakes and roasted apricots with labne.

This year's program also features the return of the Global Dining Series, welcoming 20 celebrated international chefs to Victoria to bring food from around the world to the tastebuds of festivalgoers.

Meanwhile, the popular Baker's Dozen at Fed Square expands to include live croissant-making from Lune and appearances by some of Melbourne's most renowned bakers.

New to the festival is Feast at Flemington Racecourse, with the upcoming Australian Cup race day transformed into a culinary showcase featuring top Melbourne restaurants, while a plant-based bake-off between two world-leading vegan chefs, Shannon Martinez and Philip Khoury, brings innovation and creativity to the table.

As one of Victoria's signature events, the Melbourne Food & Wine Festival plays a key role in attracting visitors and boosting the state's \$39.7 billion visitor economy.

Joining a packed calendar of events – including the weekend's Formula 1 Grand Prix, the NGV's Winter Masterpieces exhibition and Beetlejuice, The Musical – the festival showcases the state's passion for food, culture and major events.

The festival runs from today until Sunday, 30 March and full program details and tickets can be found by visiting www.mfwf.com.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events Steve Dimopoulos

"This festival is a true celebration of what makes Victoria a global food destination – exceptional produce, world-class chefs and an incredible dining culture."

"With big names like Curtis Stone and Julia Busuttil Nishimura alongside local culinary talent, this year's festival will not only delight food lovers but also deliver a strong boost to our visitor economy."

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Quote attributable to Member for Footscray Katie Hall

"The Melbourne Food & Wine Festival is a true showcase of Victoria's passion for food, bringing together world-class chefs, incredible local produce, and unforgettable dining experiences."

"This festival not only celebrates our state's vibrant culinary culture but also plays a key role in supporting local businesses and attracting visitors, strengthening Victoria's \$39.7 billion visitor economy."

Quote attributable to Food & Drink Victoria CEO Anthea Loucas Bosha

"This is the biggest and the longest-running food and wine Festival in the country and we look forward to celebrating with Australia's food and drink lovers over the next 10 days, and welcoming some of the most innovative and talented chefs from around the world to the kitchens of Melbourne."

Quote attributable to Visit Victoria CEO Brendan McClements

"The Melbourne Food & Wine Festival continues to reinforce our state's reputation as Australia's food capital and shine a global spotlight on our world-class major events."

Quotes attributable to Curtis Stone

"It's an incredible honour to be asked to take part in the Melbourne Food & Wine Festival, which is truly one of the world's best food and drink events. In March there's no place more exciting to be than Melbourne."