



ADTA LAUNCHES PREMIER GOURMET EVENT GOURMET ABU DHABI 2009 TO PROMOTE UAE CAPITAL AS GLOBAL CULINARY DESTINATION

Abu Dhabi, January 5, 2009: The Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority (ADTA), the apex body responsible for managing the tourism industry within the emirate of Abu Dhabi, has launched the UAE capital's first premier gourmet event - Gourmet Abu Dhabi - to take place from 5 to 14 February 2009.

A 10-day culinary journey featuring a Michelin-star-studded cast of master chefs, celebrities and special guests, Gourmet Abu Dhabi is a world-class event initiated and presented by ADTA. It is aimed at reinforcing the UAE capital's growing reputation as a vibrant destination by leveraging its gastronomic strengths.

"This is another great addition to Abu Dhabi's expanding portfolio of international events and one which will enrich the lives of both our valued visitors and the emirate's residential community, both national and expatriate," said His Excellency Sheikh Sultan Bin Tahnoon Al Nahyan, Chairman, ADTA.

Gourmet Abu Dhabi will bring some of the world's top culinary maestros and celebrities to the UAE capital. These include: Annie Féolde, the Frenchwoman who has become a byword for the cuisine of her adopted Italy and the first woman in the Mediterranean Republic to be awarded three Michelin stars. Other culinary dignitaries expected are: Heinz Beck, arguably Italy's most famous chef and the name associated with Rome's elegant La Pergola restaurant; Atul Kochhar, the first Indian to be awarded Michelin stars and the man behind London's award-winning Benares Restaurant and Bar; Alain Solivérès, the two-Michelin star French chef behind the celebrated Parisian restaurant Taillevent; Jean-Christophe Ansanay-Alex of the gastronomic Lyonnais legend Auberge de L'île; Italy's two-star Michelin legend Marco Sacco, co-founder of the Stelle del Piemonte chefs' lobby which promotes authentic Italian cuisine; Sam Leong, Singapore's genius of modern Chinese cooking and Ian Wright, host of Discovery Channel's Globe Trekker report.

They will headline a festival of epicurean delights and education across 13 premier venues in Abu Dhabi city. These are: the European fusion Etoiles, contemporary seafood Sayad, Mediterranean Mezzaluna and Arabian Diwan L'Auberge restaurants of Emirates Palace; the French Bord Eau, Asian Shang Palace and Modern Arab Pearls & Caviar restaurants of the Shangri-la Hotel Qaryat Al Beri; the Rodeo Grill steakhouse, seafood Finz and Indian Indigo restaurants of the Beach Rotana Hotel, the French Al Fanar restaurant of Le Royal Méridien; the Italian Boccaccio restaurant of the Abu Dhabi InterContinental Hotel and the Armed Forces Officers Club.

Gourmet Abu Dhabi will feature: culinary master classes; a 'Gastronomic Discovery of the Middle East,' which will promote the region's rich, distinctive culinary culture; gourmet safaris; a media fiesta; gala dinner; Royal lunch; a gourmet golf experience as well as a strong professional education programme.

"Gourmet Abu Dhabi will assist in positioning the emirate as a leading premium lifestyle destination. It will also significantly enhance our overall cultural outreach programme by showcasing international, regional and Emirati cuisines and culinary talents," said His Excellency Mubarak Al Muhairi, Director General, ADTA.

Expected to generate keen interest among consumers and trade professionals alike, Gourmet Abu Dhabi will be a vibrant platform for local and international culinary experts to exchange skills and share industry knowledge.

"It is important that the educational aspect of the event is used to elevate Middle Eastern cuisine to a gourmet level and for the local community to celebrate their own culinary heritage and engage in sharing it with a wider audience," explained Peter Knipp, a member of the Gourmet Abu Dhabi organising committee.

"The programme will include a Middle Eastern themed gourmet safari which we are sure will be something the culinary community on international, regional and local levels, will relish.

“Gourmet Abu Dhabi will marry culture and cuisine perfectly by showcasing the city’s advanced modernisation set against its rich heritage. This epicurean festival is crafted for discerning individuals who seek gourmet enjoyment in pure grandeur and therefore presents Abu Dhabi with a prime opportunity to enter the international culinary arena.”

Gourmet Abu Dhabi will also feature the inaugural ‘Abu Dhabi Gourmet Stars Awards’ which will recognise and reward the best of the UAE capital’s and the Arabian Gulf’s hospitality scene and incentivise sector professionals towards ever higher standards. The awards will cover eight categories covering the full spectrum from kitchen management to service delivery.

“With the widening of Abu Dhabi’s accommodation offering comes enhanced opportunities for culinary discoveries. I believe all involved – whether professionals looking to hone their skills, travellers seeking culinary and cultural adventures, or residents wanting to engage in an expanding community-based events programme, will greatly benefit from this exciting international event”, said Nasser Al Reyami, Director Tourism Standards, ADTA.

“ADTA also hopes the Abu Dhabi Gourmet Stars Awards will serve to the emirate’s food and beverage industry to continually strive for the highest standards of excellence for the enjoyment of visitors and residents.”

Leading industry leaders will be in the capital during Gourmet Abu Dhabi for a series of industry-specific programmes, including dedicated sessions on culinary, pastry and hospitality, all aimed at stimulating thought and debate among UAE and Arabian Gulf food and beverage professionals, amateur chefs and hospitality students. The educational programme will feature a two-day Hospitality Summit – a conference with vertical sessions focussing on sector specific issues including restaurant interior design and Arabic hospitality and a panel discussion led by master chefs. The summit will also feature a full-day seminar and workshop devoted solely to chocolate culinary art.

“ADTA is committed to industry training to ensure the destination delivers the highest possible service standards,” added Al Reyami. “This education programme provides an exceptional opportunity for food and beverage professionals within Abu Dhabi, the UAE and the wider region, to engage with experts who are willing to share knowledge.

“Gourmet Abu Dhabi will be a celebration of the best the food and beverage industry can offer, a dynamic educational forum, and one of the UAE capital's biggest social events of the year.”

Please bookmark www.gourmetabudhabi.ae for updates.

About Gourmet Abu Dhabi: Gourmet Abu Dhabi is a culinary lifestyle extravaganza initiated and presented by the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority (ADTA). This world-class festival is crafted for discerning individuals who seek gourmet enjoyment in perfect grandeur and want to experience true Arabian hospitality. This gourmet event features only the finest cuisines and most unique dining experiences in Abu Dhabi.

About ADTA: Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority (ADTA) was established in September 2004. It has wide ranging responsibilities for building and developing the emirate's tourism industry. These include; destination marketing; infrastructure and product development and regulation and classification. A key role is to create synergy in the international promotion of Abu Dhabi through close co-ordination with the emirate's hotels, destination management companies, airlines and other public and private sector travel-related organisations.

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