



18th Symposium of Australian Gastronomy The Federation of Taste

Friday 13 May - Monday 16 May 2011

www.gastronomers.org

MEDIA RELEASE - July 2010

Canberra to host *Symposium of Australian Gastronomy 2011*

Old Parliament House Canberra has been chosen as the venue for the 18th Symposium of Australian Gastronomy in May 2011.

Since the first *Symposium of Australian Gastronomy* in Adelaide in 1984, the ACT has only once before been the venue for these always memorable and at times extraordinary events. Previously, prime gastronomic locations have included the Hunter Valley, the Grampians, Beechworth, and Dover in Tasmania. The symposia offer unique fora for chefs, teachers, writers, academics and passionate foodies to relish debate, as well as the best of Australian food and wine. Themes considered have included simplicity, food and festivity, food and power, nature and culture, the pleasures of the table and most recently, economy.

In keeping with its setting in historic Old Parliament House, the theme of the 2011 Symposium will be *The Federation of Taste*.

It will open with a reception in King's Hall and conclude with a breakfast in the former parliamentary kitchens. While most events include registered participants only, the Symposium highlight: a banquet in the Members' Dining Rooms of Old Parliament House, on the Saturday evening, will be open to all. Early bookings for the banquet are essential.

'Symposiasts' will debate topics including:

- *A Good Constitution.* The Constitution shows how Australians have resolved to govern themselves and the kind of nation they want to build. There is no direct mention of food, yet governments wield considerable power over what we eat and what we pay for it. Could the Constitution provide for the good constitutions of citizens and make good health a national goal? Does government have a responsibility to ensure all Australians have real choices amidst the mediocrity of fast food, cheap eats, supermarket fare and profit-driven food farming? Can government in effect legislate for good taste?
- *Is our future royalist or republican?* Australians took fright at the idea of being called a 'banana republic' and could not be persuaded to become a constitutional republic, but the republican ideal has not gone away. Should Australians aspire to feast like royalty, or dine reasonably like republicans? Is there still a place for 'the roast beef of old England' on a multicultural menu? What does it take to make a democratic dinner?
- *The Heritage of Absence.* European settlement mostly displaced Indigenous foodways, but can there ever be an 'Australian cuisine' which excludes Indigenous food? What can be done to reconnect Australia's cuisine with its heritage?

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For further information visit - www.gastronomers.org