



18th Symposium of Australian Gastronomy The Federation of Taste

Friday 13 May - Monday 16 May 2011

www.gastronomers.org

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Gang-gangs, government and good food

Those discerning and devoted diners the Gang-gang cockatoos are just the right symbol for next week's gathering of Australasian gastronomes in Canberra. Our region is the home of the pretty red and grey Gang-gang, the official ACT fauna emblem.

In keeping with the elegant setting of Old Parliament House, the theme of the 2011 Symposium of Australian Gastronomy is *The Federation of Taste*. The weekend of talking and tasting has a focus on the fine food and wines of the Canberra region and also puts the spotlight on governments' role in putting good food on the national plate.

An intriguing program opens with the resonance of French culinary and civic influences, in a royally-styled reception in Kings Hall where Robyn Archer, Creative Director for the 2013 celebrations of the Centenary of Canberra, will deliver the opening address. The ABC's Alan Saunders takes over in the House of Representatives chamber to moderate a fast and furious debate on 'Liberty, Equality and Food'. Guests then move to the Ginger Room to experience *Making the Revolution: La Petroleuse* – a degustation dinner dedicated to the ideal republic.

How hard to choose a highlight from Saturday's feast of ideas and food! Symposium sessions from 'A Good Constitution' to 'Heritage of Absence' surround an autumn lunch with Sassafras growers Richard Moxham and Alison Saunders roasting chestnuts and a chocolatiers afternoon tea party featuring Canberra's extraordinary award-winning trio Robyn Rowe, Lyndsay & Edmunds and the Curious Chocolatier. The Symposium dinner on Saturday evening will transport guests to the very origins of gastronomy and government. The rooms where our members of parliament dined for decades will be transformed, evoking the Deipnosophistae – the philosophers' table of ancient Greece.

Heading the team of chefs is Janet Jeffs, a participant at the now legendary first Symposium in Adelaide in 1984. 'For a young chef that gathering was mind-altering' she recalls. 'The ideas, the dishes, the passion of chefs and scholars and fans of great food unveiled the great Australian food scene - and it is still unfolding'.

Always sited in prime gastronomic locations - including the Hunter Valley, Victoria's Grampians and Beechworth, Dover in Tasmania and, most often, Adelaide - the biennial Symposium of Australian Gastronomy has only once before been held in Canberra. The 2011 symposiasts will venture afield on their second day, for a glimpse of Canberra's food country – and what this tells of our national food futures.

The Sunday sessions ponder federation, place, and taste. A Federation morning tea with Princess of Wales cakes gestures across the first century of our nation, from the Edwardian era to the new Princess William of Wales. A Senators' picnic lunch in the parliamentary rose gardens will be walked off along a bush food trail through the Botanic Gardens. A Sunday drive by suburban community gardens leads further afield, to Mulloon Creek. There Tony Coote will show revolutionary natural farming ideas in

practice, before a starry symposium dinner saluting our southern hemisphere. As always the Symposium will conclude with a farewell breakfast: early on Monday morning a repast of 'Congee, Kedgerie and Dundee' will be served in Old Parliament House's rarely-seen original kitchens.

Registering for Canberra's 2011 Symposium of Australian Gastronomy is still possible at www.gastronomers.org. A few places have also been reserved for those interested in coming to dinner on Friday or Saturday – booking is essential, phone 6273 4366 or see www.gingercatering.com.au.

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