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Press Release

Kerala Tourism to organise regional culinary competition

Finalists to present choicest state cuisine at path-breaking Spice Route Culinary Festival

Thiruvananthapuram, Aug 23: While a competition tabling the choicest cuisine from nations along the historic Spice Route is the centerpiece of a unique culinary festival starting next month in Kochi, the gastronomic extravaganza will also showcase the best in local fare from plates and plantain leaves across 'God's Own Country'.

Kerala Tourism is inviting participants for a regional competition for local chefs, the qualification rounds for which will be held from September 1-8. Entries are open to both professional chefs and amateur enthusiasts.

Standout contestants – selected by a judging panel of culinary professionals – will compete in the finals at Bolgatty Palace and Resorts in Kochi on the last day of the Spice Route Culinary Festival, which runs from September 23-26.

The festival's highlight is an international competition that will feature chefs from 31 Spice Route nations whipping up dishes representing the cuisine of their home countries, but with a dash of spices from Kerala added in.

Speaking at a press conference at the Secretariat, Minister for Tourism, Government of Kerala, Shri A.C. Moideen said, "The culinary festival is a great opportunity to reformatify our ancient links with the 31 countries along the historical Spice Route. It will provide a space for exchanging ideas and promoting understanding between different cultures and traditions and also help facilitate trade opportunities with these countries."

"The regional competition intends to identify and promote Kerala's culinary talent. It will showcase both the strength of public participation in Kerala and its fabled cuisine. This worthy initiative will highlight the spirit of people to people links and Kerala's role as the hub of tourism and trade," the minister added.

Filled-in application forms – available on the Kerala Tourism website (www.keralatourism.org) – should be sent via email or handed in by August 27 at the entrant's nearest competition venue: State Institute of Hotel Management, Kozhikode (Phone: 0495-2385861, E-mail: sihmcalicut@gmail.com), Food Craft Institute, Kalamassery (Phone: 0484-2558385, E-mail: foodcraftkly@gmail.com) and Institute of Hotel Management and Catering Technology at Kovalam, Thiruvananthapuram (Phone: 0471-2480283, 2480774, E-mail: principal@ihmctkovalam.org).



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Also to be included is a recipe for four portions of a traditional Kerala dish, highlighting the judicious use of traditional ingredients and spices and taking into account that each contestant needs to prepare and present five individual portions of the same dish – one each for the judges and another for presentation – within the competition’s three hour-cooking limit.

The winning entrant and two runners-up will be felicitated during the culinary festival’s valedictory session. All contestants will be issued certificates of participation by Kerala Tourism.

Held under the aegis of the Spice Route project, an ambitious initiative by Kerala Tourism in partnership with UNESCO, the Spice Route Culinary Festival is a first-of-its-kind celebration of flavours and friendship that will see chefs from across the participant countries sample Kerala’s cultural and gastronomic offerings besides participating in cooking demos and culinary discussions.

“The festival will honour and rekindle the shared legacy of cosmopolitanism, commerce, connectivity and cultural exchange between the countries on the ancient and enduring sea link. It will only augment Kerala’s pull as a destination for cultural tourism,” said Kerala Tourism Director Shri U.V. Jose, who was also in attendance.

The press conference also saw the Minister release the logo for the Spice Route Culinary Festival.

Further details and competition rules can be found on the Kerala Tourism website or collected from the above-mentioned institutions.

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