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Asian healthy eating conference kicks off

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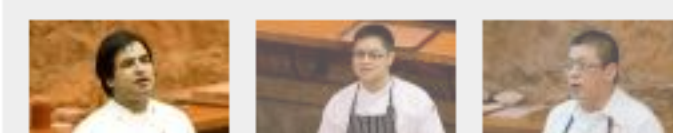
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Chefs who will be doing culinary demonstrations include Indian chef Suvir Saran (above), owner of the American Masala Farm in New York; Malcolm Lee, chef-owner of The Candlenut Kitchen in Singapore; and Alex Ong, chef of Betelnut restaurant in San Francisco. -- PHOTO: THE CULINARY INSTITUTE OF AMERICA



By Eunice Quek

To boost healthy eating in Asia, Singapore is hosting the first Asian edition of the Worlds of Healthy Flavors conference from today till Friday at the Raffles City Convention Centre.

Organised by The Culinary Institute of America and the Harvard School of Public Health's department of nutrition, this trade conference - attended by chefs and those in the food industry - has been held in the United States for the past eight years.

Both institutions are working with the Health Promotion Board and the National University of Singapore's Saw Swee Hock School of Public Health for the three-day educational initiative, which will address major nutrition and health issues in Asia such as diabetes and obesity.

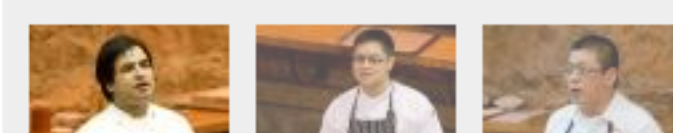
The programme hopes to reach out to all segments of the industry, from fine dining restaurants to restaurant groups, and hawkers to foodcourt operators.

Food preparation standards in Singapore will be one of the focus points that Mr Ang Hak Seng, the health board's chief executive officer, hopes to improve. "Our surveys show that six in 10 adult Singaporeans eat out at least four times a week and this has been increasing over the past few years.

"With more people eating out, we need to pay attention to not only the supply of healthier products and ingredients, but to also improve the way we prepare our food so that dishes served remain healthy."

Some of the board's initiatives so far include the Healthier Choice Symbol Programme for food products as well as the Healthier Hawker Programme for nutritious hawker fare, which will also be discussed during the event.

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