Perfecting Pi

Lee Ang works with real and fake tigers (left) in his latest movie Life Of Pi. JOHN LUI reports from Taipei.
Asian healthy eating conference kicks off

Eunice Quek
To boost healthy eating in Asia, Singapore is hosting the first Asian edition of the World of Healthy Flavours 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 conference aimed to educate chefs and those in the food industry - has been held in the United States for the past eight years - and in Japan.

The conference is part of the Health Promotion Board and the National University of Singapore's Food Science Research Institute's efforts to address major nutrition and health issues in Asia and South-East Asia.

The programme hopes to teach out to all aspects of the industry, from cooking demonstrations to restaurant guests, and families to food companies.

Food preparation standards in Singapore will be one of the focus points, Ms Quek said, as the health board's chief executive officer, hopes to improve it. "Our surveys show that in 50 adult Singaporeans aged 40 to 54 in 2010, 42% of men and 35% of women admitted that they did not eat enough fruits or vegetables, while 47% of men and 34% of women did not eat enough fish, tofu and eggs."

At the conference, plans for the Singapore Food Festival, which will run from April 24 to 26, will also be discussed. The festival is being held to promote healthy eating and will feature chefs from around the world, including celebrity chef Bobby Flay from the United States and French chef Michel Guérard from France.

"The festival is an opportunity to showcase the latest in healthy cooking and to promote the importance of healthy eating," Ms Quek said. "It will feature a variety of cooking demonstrations, workshops, seminars and tastings."

The programme will also include a "food and nutrition" seminar, which will focus on the role of food in preventing chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease. The seminar will feature expert speakers from the World Health Organization, the International Union against Cancer and the American Cancer Society.

The conference is being held in partnership with the International Council for Pedometers, which aims to promote physical activity and healthy eating through the use of pedometers. A pedometer is a device that measures the number of steps taken during a day, and can be used to track progress towards a goal of 10,000 steps per day.

The conference is expected to attract about 500 delegates from Asia and the Pacific region, including chefs, nutritionists, food researchers and policy-makers. The event is being held at the Suntec Convention Centre in Singapore, with the support of the Singapore Tourism Board and the Ministry of Health.