

SINGAPORE CHEFS ASSOCIATION PRESS RELEASE

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Contact: Irene Gomez
Email: irene@corpmediapl.com
Mobile: 96676601

TEAM SINGAPORE TO BID FOR WACS PRESIDUM 2008 AT BIANNUAL CONGRESS IN DUBAI

Singapore, April 16, 2008: A team of culinary heavyweights from Singapore will be traveling to Dubai in May 2008 in a bid to secure the World Association of Chefs Societies (WACS) Presidium 2008. If successful, Asia will, for the first time in 80 years, host the Presidium for a four-year term. Europe created WACS in 1928 and led it for 50 years. Since 1980, Canada and the USA were the main drivers, followed by a stint in South Africa and Germany.

Representing Team Singapore are Chef John Sloane who is standing for President of WACS, Chef Otto Weibel for Vice President and Chef Eric Low for Secretary General. Collectively, they bring over 80 years of experience and service to the culinary industry. In their professional and personal capacity, all three have worked tirelessly to raise the culinary standards of global cuisines, and the professional development of chefs in Singapore, the Middle East, and Asia-Pacific region.

“The Presidium is an extension of our efforts to raise the standard of culinary excellence,” said Chef Sloane, who is the WACS Continental Director for Asia. “Our vision is to make WACS relevant to every chef, cook and consumer,” he added. Under Team Singapore’s leadership, the focus will be on three key areas aimed at institutionalizing the management of WACS to achieve sustainable goals and results; providing effective communication channels with chefs, cooks and the public; and increasing the education, training, and professional development of WACS members.

Asia remains one of the fastest growing regions in the world, and its GDP at US\$18 trillion is the third largest of all the continents; and the burgeoning growth of hotels, restaurants and food service operations are already attracting huge investments from global companies. Tokyo was recently conferred the world’s most Michelin-starred gastronomic city while Singapore is emerging as the premier tourism destination with the advent of the Formula 1 Grand Prix, Integrated Resorts and the Youth Olympics 2010. “We need to stay relevant to ensure a high quality of professionalism – by bringing the Presidium to Asia, Team Singapore aims to transform WACS into a World Authority on Food and World Class Chefs Association,” said Chef Sloane.

Team Singapore’s bid is endorsed by the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) and the Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA).

In 2006, visitors to Singapore spent more than S\$1 billion on F&B or more than 10 per cent of total visitor expenditure, making it the third largest visitor expenditure item after shopping and accommodation.

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“Over recent years, Singapore’s fine restaurants have been making their mark locally and overseas. With dining expected to remain a key pillar of tourism, it is important to maintain high culinary standards to meet the increasingly sophisticated tastes of discerning locals and visitors. We are confident that Singapore possesses the qualities and infrastructure to support the WACS Presidium in its bid to grow the world’s culinary industry and raise the standards of professional development.” said Mr Lim Neo Chian, Deputy Chairman and Chief Executive of the Singapore Tourism Board.

“WDA is proud to support Team Singapore's bid for the WACS Presidium. Our F&B scene is vibrant, dynamic and exciting. Being at the cross roads of civilisations, we have a very rich and diverse food culture,” said Mr Ong Ye Kung, Chief Executive, Singapore Workforce Development Agency (WDA).

The WDA plans to tap on the Lifelong Learning Endowment Fund that the government has enhanced to \$3 billion to train and upgrade the workforce as well as to professionalise the tourism industry. “Singapore offers the ideal environment to enhance the stature of WACS as the authority and thought leader in the culinary arena,” Mr Ong said.

Over 700 of the world’s leading leisure-industry professionals are expected to attend the WACS biennial congress which will be held at the Dubai International Convention & Exhibition Centre from May 12-15, 2008.

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Media contact:

Irene Gomez, Tel: (65) 6327 8825, Mobile: (65) 9667 6601 or email irene@corpmediapl.com

FACT SHEET

The World Association of Chefs' Societies (WACS) is a global network of chefs associations first founded in October 1928 in Paris. It is currently made up of 75 official chefs associations as members and is managed by an elected presidential body consisting of the WACS president, vice president, treasurer, secretary general and ambassador honorary president, as well as a board of continental directors that look after the regions of Asia, Europe, Africa, the Pacific and the Americas. A separate committee manages all culinary competition-related affairs. WACS is a non-political professional organization, dedicated to maintaining and improving the culinary standards of global cuisines. It strives to accomplish these goals through education, training and professional development of its international membership. As an authority and opinion leader on food, WACS represents a global voice on all issues related to the culinary profession.

ABOUT TEAM SINGAPORE – WACS PRESIDUM BID

President of WACS

Chef John Sloane hails from New Zealand and has worked in his native country as well as in the UK, Guam, Papua New Guinea, Australia, Japan, and Singapore. He is currently the Executive Chef of SATS In-flight Catering Centre 1. He is also the WACS Continental Director for Asia.

Vice President of WACS

Chef Otto Weibel is from Switzerland has worked in the UK, Hong Kong, the Philippines and Singapore. He is Director of Kitchens at the Swissotel The Stamford and Fairmont, Singapore. He currently serves as President Mentor to the Singapore Chefs Association.

Secretary General

Chef Eric Low is from Singapore and has worked in the Middle East, Mediterranean, and the Caribbean. He is R&D Chef with Nestle R&D Singapore and also manages the website of the Singapore Chefs Association.