

*"Wherever i go, i look for regional specialities..."*



## DISHING IT UP

*Peter Knipp, the founder of Singapore's prestigious World Gourmet Summit, shares his recipe for epicurean explorations with DESIREE KOH.*

**I**n the early 1980s, Peter Knipp put Singapore on the international foodie map when he struck gold at the Culinary World Cup and the Culinary Olympics as executive chef of the legendary Raffles Hotel. As his career progressed, he went on to cook for dignitaries like German chancellor Helmut Kohl and US president George Bush.

Today, he brings the world's master chefs to Singapore through the World Gourmet Summit (WGS). In between, he works as a culinary consultant with hotels like The Ritz-Carlton in Dubai and The Oberoi Hyderabad, among others, and publishes trade magazine Cuisine & Wine Asia.

"When I came to Asia, I knew nothing about Asian cuisine," says Berlin-born Knipp, who arrived in Kuala Lumpur in 1978 at age 21. "What made me very different was I never shied away from stepping into the Chinese or Malay kitchen." He continues to advise young chefs to probe, explore and discover.

As a young boy, Knipp defied family expectations by apprenticing at the Berlin Hilton instead of going to university, because he wanted "a job that allowed (me) to travel."

It is this spirit of adventure that led to the inception of WGS, which has hosted big names like Ferran Adria, Pierre Herme and Charlie Trotter – just the tip of an astounding alumni list that covers 118 Michelin stars and 222 master chefs. This year, the likes of St John's Fergus Henderson, Calima's Dani Garcia and Junoon's Vikas Khanna will be embracing the theme A Heritage of Flavours through their distinctive styles and colourful personalities.

To always stay one step ahead of what the world is eating, Knipp circumvents the globe, to the tune of 320,000km annually, to taste its best dishes. "Wherever I go, I look for true regional specialities, cooked with an edge yet true to where it comes from," says Knipp. "If I am in London, I will definitely go to Heston Blumenthal's restaurant." The Michelin-star chef is well known for creatively reinterpreting traditional British classics.

When he is in a new culinary destination, he asks these questions of its local experts: What is the signature item? Why do people come back to this restaurant? What is the one dish they order all the time?

"I want to enjoy 40 more years of gastronomy," says Knipp, who is in his 50s. "Retirement is not an option." ■

The World Gourmet Summit ([worldgourmetsummit.com](http://worldgourmetsummit.com)) is on from April 23-May 3.