



THE STAR

Media release

Culinary apprentices take over Nineteen at The Star to showcase top skills and training

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The next generation of super ‘star’ chefs are proving their talent and skills after taking over one of The Star Gold Coast’s award-winning restaurants, Nineteen at The Star, to prepare an exclusive six-course feast.

The 13 apprentices prepared the private dinner for a line-up of guests including Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development Hon Shannon Fentiman MP, and top executives from the tourism and hospitality sector.

The second and third-year apprentices are currently studying at The Star Culinary Institute, which has been providing three-year culinary apprenticeships since 2012, as part of The Star Entertainment Group’s partnerships with TAFE Queensland and TAFE NSW.

The Star Gold Coast Executive Chef Dustin Osuch said the apprentices were given a tall order of running the kitchen on their own including choosing the ingredients, designing the menu, and cooking and plating each dish.

“We’ve been wanting to host a ‘culinary apprentices takeover’ dinner series at The Star Gold Coast for some time but never had the right premium venue to host a function of the calibre that we wanted,” Chef Osuch said.

“We wanted to give the apprentices a feel for what it’s actually like working in an award-winning, fast-paced restaurant where they’re using all the skills they’ve learnt to cook for VIP guests.

“This year, under the guidance of Nineteen at The Star Executive Chef Kelvin Andrews, our apprentices finally got the exciting opportunity to test their skills and experience in this setting – and they didn’t disappoint!

“We asked them to choose from a range of fresh Queensland produce commonly used at Nineteen at The Star – but which they had never used before – produce like bunya nuts, guava, and custard apple.

“I am very proud of how the apprentices committed to the event and put their best on the plate to ensure our guests – including Minister Fentiman and our Group Managing Director and CEO Matt Bekier – enjoyed the evening!”

Minister for Employment and Small Business and Minister for Training and Skills Development Hon Shannon Fentiman MP commended the talented apprentices cooking up a storm in the kitchen.

“Queensland is home to so many talented chefs and TAFE Queensland and The Star are providing world-class training for our future master chefs,” Ms Fentiman said.

“Our Jobs Queensland Tourism Workforce Plan predicts that we will need 20,000 more skilled workers in the thriving tourism and hospitality industry by 2020.

“All of our apprentices tonight are on their way to a bright future in the thriving hospitality and tourism industry.”

The Star Entertainment Group Managing Director and CEO Matt Bekier said he was delighted with the culinary prowess shown by the apprentices, as well as the ongoing partnership with TAFE Queensland to train the state’s future chefs.

“Across our properties, we currently employ more than 90 full-time culinary apprentices with about half of these in Queensland, as well as 20 school-based culinary apprentices with half from Queensland,” Mr Bekier said.

“Along with our consortium partners, we’re growing and we will need hundreds more chefs in the future to support our Queen’s Wharf Brisbane development; and our proposed \$2-billion-plus expansion of The Star Gold Coast, which includes our recently announced plans to fast-track development on a fourth hotel on Broadbeach Island.”

The Star Gold Coast 17-year old second-year apprentice Lizette Marr said working with her fellow apprentices to run the kitchen for the high calibre group of guests was a challenging yet powerful learning experience.

“The Star Culinary Institute is incredible – we participate in so many unique learning opportunities like signature masterclasses run by the chefs, competitions, site visits, and now operating our own kitchen,” Ms Marr said.

“I was teamed up with fellow apprentice, Edward Stagg, to create and prepare the last course for the evening, a dessert where we decided to use guava from Bowen as the hero ingredient.

“We chose to make an Atherton Tablelands custard apple mousse cake featuring a shiny mirror glaze and filled with a guava gel, which sat on top of a brown sugar shortbread – we also brushed the shortbread with some Madagascar white chocolate to give some extra flavour.

“It came with a side of Tonka bean ice-cream and finished with a guava paper.

“It took us two days to make all the components, and then being the last to serve on the night gave a huge rush of nerves and anticipation – it was definitely a proud moment when we were able to present all our hard work.”

Chef Osuch said Nineteen at The Star will now host a ticketed event on 10 July 2019 with the apprentices taking over the restaurant again to serve the same menu for the general public to indulge in.

“This will be a fantastic opportunity for our food-loving public to appreciate the hard work of our apprentices and celebrate their Queensland-inspired creations,” Chef Osuch said.

“Our goal is to run an exclusive, invite-only event annually – so that as our apprentices’ skills and experience grow each year, they get another opportunity to show how they’ve developed in front of our tourism and hospitality industry – followed up by the chance to replicate that same menu for the general public to enjoy.”

Tickets for the public event will go on sale next week via www.thestargoldcoast.com.au.

For more information:

Naomi Jamieson, Media Manager, The Star Entertainment Group +61 419 661 648