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Brew of tea culture at inaugural expo

Barbara Foong

TEA lovers are in for a treat next month at the World Tea Festival 2002, to be held at Sunway Pyramid Convention Centre (Level 10), Bandar Sunway, Petaling Jaya from Sept 10 to 12.

In conjunction with the festival-cum-Seventh International Tea Culture Seminar, a World Tea Expo 2002 will be held for the first time in Malaysia.

Malaysia, with its wide-ranging tea variety, has her own tea culture, which places the nation in a unique position to host the exposition.

The expo will demonstrate tea-making arts, tea cultures and practices from around the world, featuring the traditional and modern, as well as the elegant and popular.

More importantly, the expo will give visitors an insight into the world of tea and an appreciation of the relationship between tea and life.

At a Press conference held at Purple Cane restaurant of the Chinese Assembly Hall, Kuala Lumpur, recently, WTE organising chairman Camelia Siow Fei-Chuan said:

"Besides tea art performances, talks by tea experts, tea cultural contests and games, tea exhibition and world tea product showcase, there is also an international cultural charity bazaar."

Tea art performances will feature tea brewing techniques, tea savouring, tea table setting, and the Malaysian teh tarik, as well as other tea customs.

Tea experts will speak on tea culture, tea trades, teapots and healthcare.

There will be contests on tea-brewing and tea knowledge.

The tea exhibition will showcase various aspects of tea drinking and its beauty.

The product showcase will feature teas and tea-related products from top brands around the world.

The charity bazaar will feature tea brewing and sale of cultural memorabilia by various foreign missions and their representatives.

Part of the proceeds from the booth rental will be donated to charity.

Siow said: "The tea festival is to introduce the Malaysian tea culture to the world, establish an international forum for tea culture exchanges and promote friendship and co-operation among tea-drinkers worldwide."

The patron for the festival is Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad.

The exposition is themed "Towards the Golden Century of Tea Culture" and is supported by the Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism Malaysia, and is jointly organised by the China International Tea Cultural Institute (CITCI), Malaysia International Tea Art Culture Alliance (MITCA), Tea Trade Association of Malaysia (TTAM) and Malaysia Chinese Cultural Society (MCCS).

Purple Cane Group manages the exposition project.

Also present at the Press conference were MITCA president Lim Hock Lam, its chairman Tan Choong Cheng, TTAM vice-president Liew Choon Kong and MCCS deputy president Yeoh Bah Chee.

Nine tea stalls held demonstrations on tea brewing, tea sampling and tea art.

Tea lovers from China, Arab Women's Association, Sri Lanka, Fiji, India, Vietnam and Japan as well as Dr Nortier's Rooibos Tea added much colour to

the Press conference.

The exposition hours are from 11am to 9pm, and admission is free.
For details, call 03-20780410 or 03-20784131 between 10am and 6pm.