

## **Obama Opting For 'Simple' Meals At ASEAN Gathering - KLCC Chef**

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KUALA LUMPUR, Nov 18 (Bernama) -- United States President Barack Obama may be having high-level meetings at the ASEAN summits in Kuala Lumpur but he appears to be opting for simple fares to keep him going, one of them featuring chicken breast with herbs and tomato rice.

This is one of what has been described by Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (KLCC) executive chef Richmond Lim as three "simple" meals to be prepared for Obama during his sessions at the venue of the ASEAN meetings.

"We've also been requested to prepare sweet chili seared-salmon served with basmathi rice and sauteed fresh zucchini, and seabass cooked with local herbs together with tomato rice," he said.

To be presided over by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Najib Tun Razak, 2015 ASEAN chair Malaysia is hosting the 27th ASEAN Summit and Related Summits this week.

Obama, who is expected to fly into Malaysia after attending the APEC meeting in Manila, is scheduled to take part in the 3rd ASEAN-US Summit as well as the 10th East Asia Summit.

With 32 years of experience in the culinary industry under his belt, Lim is overseeing his troupe of some 50 chefs as well as 60 other staff members tasked with concocting more than 100 dishes for the Kuala Lumpur gathering.

Zooming in on the gala dinner for heads of state and government scheduled for Saturday, Lim said the dishes for the special night would count, among others, cinnamon, lemongrass and ginger as ingredients, to reflect local tastes.

"Malaysia is a food paradise. Basically, we will use the best and fresh local ingredients which will bring out the Malaysian culinary identity.

"For example, our wagyu beef satay is specially marinated using these ingredients to bring out the best flavours," Lim said.

Despite being involved in the last ASEAN Summit hosted by Kuala Lumpur 10 years ago, Lim said he was not leaving anything to chance in undertaking the challenging task upon his shoulders now.

Lim revealed that some of his staff had been sent for special culinary courses to fulfil special requests from ASEAN heads of state and government as well as delegates.

"We have a flexible team, along with a high-tech kitchen and facilities to prepare all the dishes. Although we're a little bit under pressure, we'll definitely want to serve the best and look forward to this event," Lim said.

Meanwhile, KLCC general manager Alan Pryor said that after months of preparation, he and his team were all set to host the biggest event of the year.

Using the entire available 22,659 square metres of space, he said the major challenge was to manage the diverse and numerous expectations and also be able to accommodate last minute requests and changes.

He said they were also working closely with other relevant partners to ensure the smooth running of the event.

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