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Food glorious food at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne

Five wonderful foodie events have been planned at the Royal Botanic Gardens Melbourne for the 2009 Melbourne Food and Wine Festival.

From the highly playful 'Mud pies and butterflies' in The Ian Potter Foundation Children's Garden to the 'Sparkling Stars' night at the Melbourne Observatory, there is something for everyone to enjoy.

First off the track is the **Botanic Breakfast** on Labour Day weekend, 7 and 8 March. This is the chance to get off the Tan and enjoy a feast of seasonal fruits and organic yogurt drizzled with honey, bush tomato with Persian feta tarts, and sparkling wine. There are six sessions on both days starting at 8am. **Botanic Breakfast** costs \$40 an adult.

Bush tucker treats

Join the Gardens' Aboriginal guide for a personal tour of local plant lore before feasting on bush foods. Prepared by Native Oz Cuisine, dishes include braised kangaroo, red wine and mushroom mini pies, and filo pastry pites with native spinach 'Warragul green' and ricotta cheese. The tour finishes with a refreshing cup of lemon myrtle tea. **Bush Tucker Treats** is on Sundays 8 and 15 March and Wednesdays 11 and 18 March between 1 – 2.30pm. Cost is \$45 an adult.

Bush bites and boomerangs

This is your chance to learn about boomerangs and ancient bush tales with an Aboriginal guide while children enjoy ochre painting and string making. This afternoon of indigenous culture is completed by a selection of native-flavoured party pies and sausage rolls and exotic ice cream flavours such as lilly pilly, wattle seed and wild peach- quandong. **Bush bites and boomerangs** is on Saturday 14 and 21 March from 1 – 2.30pm. Cost is \$45 adult; \$35 child and \$140 family (2 adults and up to 3 children).

Sparkling stars

Sunday 15 March will be an evening to remember at the Melbourne Observatory. Look up at the stars as you feast on freshly shucked oysters, tuck into southern- spiced quail and delight in aromatic wild mushroom arancini balls. After the savouries, attention is turned to mapping the night sky through historic telescopes with our expert astronomers before enjoying sweet tartlets, gateaux and exquisite profiteroles created by Andrew Blake of Blakes Feast. **Sparkling stars** is from 8pm until late.

Mud pies and butterflies

One for the children: what child does not like to get their hands into mud? Children will harvest vegetables and use leaves and flowers to decorate their very own mud pie, enjoy a yummy butterfly cake and home-made lemonade before listening to the story of the 'Hungry Caterpillar', followed by a final flutter with the butterfly song and dance. Adults, in the meantime, can indulge in a slice of delectable Mississippi mud cake. **Mud pies and butterflies** is on March 10, 12, 18 and 20 at 9.30am or 10.45am. Cost is \$15 an adult and \$10 per child.

Public information and bookings (required for all events): Tel: (03) 9252 2429

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