



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## TOURISM MALAYSIA PROMOTES GASTRODIPLOMACY PROGRAMME WITH DATO' CHEF ISMAIL AHMAD AND THE ASSOCIATION OF SPOUSES OF HEADS OF DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS IN MALAYSIA

**KUALA LUMPUR, 3 November 2023** – Tourism Malaysia collaborated with Dato' Chef Ismail Ahmad and The Association of Spouses of Heads of Diplomatic Missions in Malaysia (SOHOM) on the Gastrodiplomacy Programme, which aims to promote Malay cuisine among spouses of ambassadors in Malaysia by experiencing first-hand in the preparation of the locals' comfort food.

The programme began on 13 to 14 September 2023, when SOHOM members had the unique opportunity to learn the art of cooking local traditional Malay delicacies at Rebung Restaurant. This included the making of *masak lemak cili padi*, *onde – onde* and a special recipe of banana fritters by Rebung Restaurant.

Malaysia's gastronomy is a unique strength and plays a vital role in promoting tourism. The invaluable lessons at one of Malaysia's finest restaurants, featuring an array of traditional local cuisine, are bound to attract more foreign tourists to Malaysia. In fact, some of the spouses have already brought their guests to dine at Chef Ismail's Rebung Restaurant.

On 20 September 2023, the participants have the chance to visit the iconic Putrajaya, and throughout the half-day tour, participants enjoy a cruise on Putrajaya, taking in the breathtaking views of iconic buildings and the beautiful scenery of Putrajaya. They also learn about the history of Putrajaya, visit a chocolate shop, and explore the Tuanku Mizan Mosque, famously known as Masjid Besi. The final stop of the tour is the Putrajaya International Convention Centre (PICC), where Perbadanan Putrajaya hosts lunch.

Dato' Dr. Ammar Abd. Ghapar, the Director-General of Tourism Malaysia, said: "This is a wonderful opportunity for us to introduce our traditional food to foreign delegates and further elevate the tourism industry, especially as we progress towards Visit Malaysia 2026."

The evening was enhanced by a traditional dance performance by Lentera Seni, highlighting the coexistence of food and culture.

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### **About Tourism Malaysia**

Malaysia Tourism Promotion Board, also known as Tourism Malaysia, is an agency under the Ministry of Tourism, Arts & Culture Malaysia. It focuses on the specific task of promoting Malaysia as a preferred tourism destination. Since its inception, it has emerged as a major player in the international tourism scene.

The next Visit Malaysia Year, set to take place in 2026, will commemorate the sustainability of the nation's tourism industry, which is also in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDG).

Furthermore, Tourism Malaysia actively endorses the Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT), working towards the realisation of the IMT-GT Visiting Year 2023-2025, with the shared aim of promoting the region as a unified tourism destination. For more information, visit Tourism Malaysia's social media accounts on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), and [TikTok](#).

**For enquiries, please contact:**

**Ahmad Kamarudin Yusoff**

Deputy Director

Corporate Communications Division

[akamarudin@tourism.gov.my](mailto:akamarudin@tourism.gov.my)

Tel: +603 8891 8744

**Muadz Samat**

Assistant Director

Corporate Communications Division

[muadz@tourism.gov.my](mailto:muadz@tourism.gov.my)

Tel: +603 8891 8755