

Cooking for Life

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre is committed to the community, engaging in a strong agenda of community involvement.

They came, they saw, they conquered – and had a lot of fun along the way.

Basic nutrition, healthy eating, shopping choices and affordable meals were all on this year's menu for the second series of Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre's 'cooking with the community'.

Conducted by Centre Executive Chef, Martin Latter for the clients of West End Community House - one of the Centre's long term community partners - the success of cooking classes held for the first time last year, prompted a second series.

West End Community House is a not for profit organisation providing much needed services to those facing challenges in society.

Aged from 18 to 80 years, the enthusiastic audience came to listen and learn about basic nutrition, understanding food labelling, making healthy choices and elementary cooking skills. The lessons began with banana smoothies and easy to make home-made muesli and continued through preparing and cooking the most cost effective cuts of meat, chicken and fish and choosing fresh seasonal vegetables.

Under the watchful eyes of Master Chef and Teacher, Martin and others in his team, the course finished with a cook off and lunch of lamb curry, chicken stir fry and braised beef cheeks, demonstrating newly gained skills by the enthusiastic group.

Classes covered tips for shopping and cooking for one person, making the most of leftovers, safe storage of food items, and how to cook cheap one pot meals with basic equipment. Part of the program is an information guide detailing the different cuts of meat, chicken and fish, cooking terms, food labelling guidelines and recipes.

Martin, who personally prepares and conducts the cooking classes, says the objective is to demonstrate useful living skills and improve quality of life. "I am privileged to have this opportunity to share our knowledge and resources and to educate and demonstrate how easy it is to access cheaper, healthier fresh foods.

"I honestly believe that I take more away from these sessions than the participants and I look forward to them all year," he said.

Star graduate this year was undoubtedly 27 year old, Paul (not his real name), who, midway through the classes successfully purchased the right cuts of meat and prepared and cooked osso bucco and beef cheeks following Martin's methods.

"And that" says Martin, "is the real success of this project."

Kat Ogilvie from West End Community House said the feedback from the cooking classes was extremely favourable and very encouraging. "Martin and his team put together a very informative, entertaining and well pitched program for disadvantaged and marginalised residents from the local area.

“Participants said that the knowledge they gained during the group classes helped them with their shopping and gave them a new awareness around how to make healthy and tasty dishes at an affordable cost.”

Kat said being able to cook for friends and family can increase self esteem and promote healthy eating. This, she says, encourages positive relationships and can spill into other areas of life such as increased mental health, stronger social connections and upgrading skills.

The Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre, operated by international venue management group, AEG Ogden, hopes to continue with its program of community cooking classes as part of its broader agenda of community activities.



More images here: <https://bcec.box.net/shared/z85nla3rj380uxrtet5u>

About BCEC:

Brisbane Convention & Exhibition Centre is owned by South Bank Corporation and proudly managed by leading international venue management specialists AEG Ogden.

About AEG Ogden:

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