



Aboriginal Bush Foods Forum

Summary

The Aboriginal bush foods forum was held in August 2020 alongside Hospitality NT's Gold Plate Awards. The purpose of the event was to connect Northern Territory (NT) Aboriginal owned bush food suppliers with the hospitality industry. The successful forum was a unique opportunity for the hospitality industry to learn first-hand about the exciting and diverse range of bush foods and their cultural origins, utilising these ingredients in contemporary cuisines, and how to source these bush foods from Aboriginal-owned native food businesses in the Northern Territory.

Over 35 attendees from the hospitality industry attended, including hotels and restaurants from the Darwin, Katherine and Kakadu regions. The forum was overwhelmingly successful and received positive feedback from both attendees and the bush food suppliers at the event. Several hospitality businesses who attended the forum are now sourcing products from bush food suppliers and are featuring these products on their menus.

Chef Martin Bouchier and Athol Wark held cooking demonstrations for all attendees which incorporated the local produce from the suppliers.

The Aboriginal bush food suppliers of the event included:

- **Maningrida Wild Foods** - Owned and operated by BAC in Maningrida, Arnhem Land. They sell seasonal wild native foods sustainably harvested from Arnhem Land Homelands including green ants, bush apples, wild carrots, radishes and berries. Their products incorporate unique practices that have high cultural significance which help to preserve culture to pass on to future generations.
- **Kungkas Can Cook (Raylene Brown)** – Raylene is the founder of Kungkas Can Cook an Aboriginal business that sells ethically sourced bush foods from the Central Desert. Raylene's insistence on using only wild harvest bush tucker sourced directly from the women who gather the food, as a way to support livelihoods and the continuation of connection to story and country, is well known and respected.
- **Gunbalanya Meats**– Gunbalanya Meats is an Aboriginal owned business which produces beef from their station in West Arnhem Land. Their beef has a unique flavour due to the wetland pasture grasses, and is supplied to the Mercure Kakadu Crocodile Hotel. Gunbalanya Meats are developing refined beef products unique to the Northern Territory.
- **Kaiyu Superfoods** – Based in Humpty Doo, Kaiyu Superfoods sources bush foods. Some of their products are sourced from all around Australia. Specialising in native superfoods and the freeze drying of bush foods, their products include Kakadu Plum powder and Desert Lime powder.
- **Gourmet Nation** – Stocks Australian bush native produce from Garrwa-Yanyuwa people from the southern part of the Gulf of Carpentaria, bordering Queensland. Products include paperbark, loose leaf teas and ink berries.

Feedback

Those involved have said it was an excellent networking opportunity and expressed their interest in further bush food forums.

Katherine Country Club

My sous chef Craig and I attended the forum and we found it to be very informative. We definitely have incorporated more native food into our set menus for Melbourne Cup and Christmas and the forum gave us a lot of those ideas.

Chef, Martin Bouchier

It was a great event. I feel the whole reason for these events is to increase networking & information. This was very much achieved. I absolutely loved using & trialling the products & look forward to hopefully showcasing some of the amazing produce we have here in the Top End. Paul, Rowan, Ingrid et al, it was an honour to discover your produce. It was a real pleasure to meet you all. I look forward to working with you all in the future.

Gunbalanya Meats

The forum has already had positives for Gunbalanya Meats. We have dispatched orders today for both our Tenderloin and Dry Aged T/bone, with other participants showing interest in our products. I have also got some samples from Maningrida Wild Foods which I will incorporate into a burger or maybe a sausage. I do a hand formed, (mould ring), burger for my own restaurant business, (located in Manila). I use salt and paprika to bind and add flavour. I am replacing the paprika with Kakadu plum spice to see how that goes. Very happy to keep you informed. I would like to explore marketing bush foods into the Philippines. I agree this was a great event and I learned so much.

Kungkas Can Cook

Thanks so much for the opportunity to present at the bush foods forum. It was great to meet the group from Maningrida Wild Foods and the other bush food businesses. The industry is growing at a rapid pace and this was a great opportunity to start a conversation in the Territory about the future and opportunities for the Territory and to showcase indigenous business. I look forward to our next forum.



Kungkas Can Cook



ManingridaWild Foods