

Patron: His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales

PRESS RELEASE

Iwokrama and Tocuma Traditional Amerindian Cooking Classes

In Celebration of Amerindian Heritage month, Iwokrama International Centre partnered with Tocuma Indigenous Restaurant to host Traditional Amerindian Cooking classes. The classes highlighted Amerindian Heritage and culture in Georgetown, celebrated both Iwokrama and Tocuma's relationship with the Amerindian communities of the North Rupununi and Moraikobai village, while bringing a flavour of Heritage to Georgetown.

It is common knowledge that the Indigenous peoples of Guyana have very close ties with the environment; their traditional recipes demonstrate how they have used their local resources for years, to sustain their livelihoods. The cooking classes encouraged coastlanders to take inspiration from the Amerindian way of life; sourcing food locally and sustainably, while learning about the history of their country's oldest inhabitants.

Guests received a short introduction from Iwokrama, detailing the relationships we have fostered with communities for over 20 years and the importance of traditional Amerindian knowledge in our operations. From Tocuma, guests learnt about the history of Amerindian cuisine, the methods of cooking and also the importance of responsibly sourced "Bush meat". All meat and fish provided in the classes were harvested by Indigenous people on Indigenous lands.

To conclude the class, participants received a certificate of completion and will receive the recipes they have learnt in a "coastland" adapted format. Participants can then purchase locally and support local produce when recreating the traditional dishes.

All Profits from the event will be re-invested into resources to help develop and support students of Fair View School. Fair View Primary is the only school within the boundaries of the Iwokrama Forest and is a place of learning for just over 100 children from nursery through to Grade 8.

Iwokrama International Centre and Tocuma Indigenous restaurant would like to thank all guests for their participation and enthusiasm and would like to wish all of Guyana a Happy Amerindian Heritage month.

Notes to the Editors:

About Iwokrama

The Iwokrama International Centre (IIC) was established in 1996 under a joint mandate from the Government of Guyana and the Commonwealth Secretariat to manage the Iwokrama forest, a unique

reserve of 371,000 hectares of rainforest “in a manner that will lead to lasting ecological, economic and social benefits to the people of Guyana and to the world in general”.

The Centre, guided by an international Board of Trustees is unique, providing a dedicated well managed and researched forest environment. The forest is zoned into a Sustainable Utilization Area (SUA) and a Wilderness Preserve (WP) in which to test the concept of a truly sustainable forest where conservation, environmental balance and economic use can be mutually reinforcing. The IIC collaborates with the Government of Guyana, the Commonwealth and other international partners and donors to develop new approaches and forest management models to enable countries with rainforests to market their ecosystem services whilst carefully managing their resources through innovative and creative conservation practices.

Iwokrama brings together:

- 20 local communities (approximately 7,000 people) who are shareholders and participants in the IIC’s sustainable timber, tourism, research operations and forest management activities through complex co-management and benefit sharing arrangements;
- Scientists and researchers engaged in ground breaking research into the impacts of climate change on the forest and measuring the scope and value of its ecosystem services; and
- A portfolio of sustainably managed and certified business models using innovative governance systems which include participation of the private and public sectors and the local communities,

- earning income from the forest and its natural assets whilst employing international social, environmental and economic best practice, whilst still keeping abreast of the ever changing thinking on funding for environmental projects in the face of climate change and the perennial scarcity of international finance.

This alliance and the Centre's work programmes are committed to showing how a rain forest can be used for real sustainability, real climate change protection and real community benefit.

For further details about the Iwokrama International Centre please visit www.iwokrama.org, www.iwokramariverlodge.com or contact Dane Gobin, Chief Executive Officer on dgobin@iwokrama.org



The Iwokrama International Centre for Rain Forest Conservation and Development is an autonomous non-profit institution established by Guyana and the Commonwealth. The Centre manages the nearly one million acre (371,000 hectare) Iwokrama Forest in central Guyana to show how tropical forests can be conserved and sustainably used for ecological, social and economic benefits to local, national and international communities.