



**THE DATAI LANGKAWI ANNOUNCES THE 2024-2025 EDITION
OF THE CHEF SERIES**

***Iconic Malaysian rainforest resort unveils line-up
of world-renowned visiting chefs in its signature annual activation***



Pictured (l-r): The Datai Langkawi's dining facilities: The Dining Room, The Gulai House, The Beach Club

15 May 2024: Iconic Malaysian rainforest resort [The Datai Langkawi](#) has announced the much-anticipated 2024-25 edition of [The Chef Series](#), its signature dining programme celebrating the very best in gastronomic talent from around the world.

The stellar line-up of names in this edition further reinforces the reputation of The Datai Langkawi as a destination for world-class gastronomy and encompasses some of the leading talents in fine dining. In its quest for the exceptional and the peerless, and by curating an all-female line-up, this year's *Chef-fe Series* (from the French term for female chefs) aims to spotlight the growing representation of female chefs in an industry traditionally dominated by men.

With nine Michelin Stars, this year's edition again reflects the phenomenal calibre of talent visiting The Datai Langkawi to host exclusive dining events for the resort's guests. Spanning cuisines from across Asia and Europe, the diverse philosophies and singular culinary styles being presented are united by a dedication to the highest quality, locally sourced seasonal ingredients. Each chef will create a bespoke menu guided by the produce of Langkawi and the organic ingredients cultivated in the resort's zero-waste Permaculture Garden.

The names featured in *The Chef-fe Series 2024-2025* are:

- February 2024: Douce Steiner of *Hirschen*, Sulzburg, Germany (two Michelin Stars)
- April 2024: Melba Nunis, Kristang cuisine specialist, Malacca, Malaysia
- June 2024: Florence Dalia of *16 by Flo*, Taipei, Taiwan
- August 2024: Cristina Bowerman of *Glass Hostaria*, Rome, Italy (one Michelin Star)
- October 2024: Angela Hartnett of *Murano*, London, UK (one Michelin Star) with Lisa Goodwin-Allen of *Northcote*, Lancashire, UK (one Michelin Star) and Nieves Barragán Mohacho of *Sabor*, London UK (one Michelin Star)
- January 2025: Ana Roš of *Hiša Franko*, Kobarid, Slovenia (three Michelin Stars and one Michelin Green Star*)

* *The Green Star award was introduced in 2021 to highlight restaurants at the forefront of the industry regarding their sustainable practices. These establishments offer dining experiences that combine culinary excellence with outstanding eco-friendly commitments.*

Most of the intimate dinners will be held at the resort's spectacular fine dining venue, *The Dining Room*, overlooking the main pool and the Andaman Sea. The alfresco culinary experience is amplified by the stunning backdrop and magical soundscape of the rainforest. Selected chefs will also offer cooking demonstrations, some even giving guests the chance to join a cooking masterclass, where guests will be able to enjoy a unique hands-on gastronomic education and prepare their very own culinary creations.

Previous editions of *The Chef Series* have welcomed culinary luminaries, including Nils Henkel; the late Michel Roux Sr; Tom Aikens; Arnaud Faye; and Michel and Sébastien Bras.

Arnaud Girodon, Chief Executive Officer of Datai Hotels and Resorts, comments: *"This year's 'Chef-fe' edition of The Chef Series promises to bring some truly extraordinary culinary experiences to our guests, who have come to know and love our resort for its exceptional dining in the dramatic surroundings of the rainforest. Through our guest cheffes, who represent some of the very best gastronomic talents from around the world, we are honoured to have the opportunity to showcase the bounty of exquisite local produce grown on-site and supplied by ethical producers and artisans who share our vision."*

Stephane Duvacher, General Manager of The Datai Langkawi, who took over the resort's signature Chef Series from Arnaud Girodon this year, comments: *"I am thrilled that The Datai Langkawi is partnering with such an esteemed group of cheffes for this year's series, and I am pleased to see guests enjoy the vibrant flavours and high level of craftsmanship each cheffe brings to their dishes. The collaboration offers a truly elevated experience, and we look forward to welcoming the rest of the line-up."*

Each of the resort's four restaurants offers a unique natural setting to elevate the dining experience, including the award-winning *The Gulai House*, sequestered within the rainforest. The Datai Langkawi also has a judiciously stocked wine cellar to complement its celebrated cuisine, and its extensive wine list of over 450 selections has received international recognition with the coveted Wine Spectator award won each year since the resort's reopening in 2018; these are just some of the over 200 accolades attained by the resort since its inception in 1993.



Pictured (l-r): Douce Steiner; Melba Nunis;

Douce Steiner (23-25 February)

Douce Steiner is a German chef who has held two Michelin stars since 2012. Steiner grew up in her parents' hotel and restaurant *Hirschen* in the small town of Sulzburg in South-Western Germany, which is rooted in 500 years of culinary traditions. After learning the ropes as a cheffe in her father's business, she trained with renowned and highly decorated chefs such as Georges Blanc, Fritz Schilling and Harald Wohlfahrt. During her time at Wohlfahrt's *Schwarzwaldstube* restaurant in Baiersbronn, she met her husband, Udo Weiler. Together, they returned to the family business in Sulzburg in 1998 and joined Steiner's father in the kitchen at *Hirschen*, which had been awarded two Michelin Stars in 1995. Steiner took over from her father in 2008, regaining both Michelin Stars in 2012, and remains the only female chef in Germany to hold two Michelin stars. Douce has also made an appearance as a guest on Germany's Deutsche Welle TV Channel.

Steiner says of her philosophy: *"I don't have to shout all day to be heard. The stress and frenzy of the service has never been a driving force for me. We work with absolute respect for each other. And the results are there. Nobody wants to work 16 to 18 hours a day anymore. We are not machines, and we must reinvent ourselves to attract the talents of tomorrow."*

Melba Nunis (19-21 April)

Born and bred in Malacca, Malaysia, Melba Nunis is a Malaysian Kristang chef and award-winning cookbook author. As a child, she spent most of her days in the kitchen with her mother, Mercy, absorbing the techniques, recipes and, most importantly, the passion for cooking Kristang

cuisine. Her recipes have been passed down from generation to generation, and throughout the years, she has strived to keep the dishes exactly as they were since the days her great-grandparents cooked them. Nunis also has TV appearances under her belt, including on popular Star vs Food Malaysia.

Many people are still unfamiliar with Kristang cuisine, so Nunis hopes to highlight its uniqueness by sharing her family recipes. *“Kristang cuisine consists of fiery sambals, spicy curries made using dried spices, fragrant coconut, tanginess from tamarind and fresh ingredients. But there are also non-spicy dishes from the Portuguese, Dutch and Chinese sides,”* she says.



Pictured (l-r): Florence Dalia; Cristina Bowerman

Florence Dalia (7-8 June)

Hailing from the vast vineyards of Burgundy, Florence Dalia’s journey in Asia led her to the bustling kitchens of Shanghai, Hong Kong and Taipei’s most famous establishments, where she honed her art. While helming *La Table de Robuchon* in Taipei until 2023, she gained two Michelin Stars. At *16 by Flo*, Dalia weaves her story, a heartfelt narrative intertwining her deep love for her homeland, vivid memories of her Asian adventures and culinary techniques acquired in the heart of vibrant cities. Each dish on the menu is a chapter of her story, inviting guests to gather around a wooden table, disconnect from their daily lives, and rediscover the joy of sharing exquisite cuisine while reconnecting with others.

Dalia’s favourite part of working in the kitchen is *“There is no set routine, and new challenges await every day. There are always new things to learn, whether it is the ingredients or the techniques.”*

Cristina Bowerman (2-4 August)

Cristina Bowerman was born in Cerignola, a small town in Puglia, Italy. After pursuing legal studies in San Francisco, her culinary interest flourished years later in Austin, where she earned a degree in Culinary Arts, honing her skills and focusing on flavour concentration. In 2005, she moved to Rome and, after an initial experience at *Convivio Troiani*, joined *Glass Hostaria*, a

restaurant that had opened just a year previously in the city's Trastevere district. *Glass* is a contemporary and innovative space, both in philosophy and gastronomic offerings, challenging the traditional Trastevere scene - just like Bowerman's cuisine. Her cooking is a cultural crossroad that tells the story of taste through a constant dialogue between traditions, cultures, memories, and places.

Since 2010, she has held one Michelin Star and three forks from *Gambero Rosso* and became a case study at Bocconi University in the same year. *'From Cerignola to San Francisco and Back – My Life as a Contrarian Chef'* (Mondadori 2014) is one of the two books published by Bowerman highlighting this unconventional personality. In 2024, Chef Cristina Bowerman was honoured by Il Gusto as the Ambassador of Italian cuisine in the world, receiving the award in a category that included three other Michelin-starred Chefs, among the biggest names in Italian haute cuisine.

Bowerman says of her success: *"I learnt not to be afraid to be a woman in a professional field, including the kitchen. It's taken me years to succeed, and I still continue to have no fear. We don't want riches; we reinvest everything back into the business. Ultimately, I wish to be a role model for women in the kitchen."*



Pictured (l-r): Close friends Angela Hartnett, Lisa Goodwin-Allen, and Nieves Barragán Mohacho will host a six-hand dinner together in October at The Datai Langkawi.

Angela Hartnett (11-13 October)

Angela Hartnett, OBE, is one of the UK's most loved chefs and restaurateurs, known for her sophisticated yet simple, Italy-inspired cooking. Born in the UK, her passion for good, honest food and the best ingredients was instilled in her by her Italian grandmother and mother.

After starting in the kitchens at *Aubergine*, *Zafferano*, *L'Oranger* and *Petrus*, Hartnett became head chef at the latter within seven short months, helping the restaurant to achieve a Michelin Star. She went on to launch many other restaurants in the UK and overseas and, in 2007, was awarded an MBE (Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire) for services to the hospitality industry. The following year, she opened her own restaurant, *Murano* in Mayfair, where she is a Chef Proprietor and holds one Michelin Star. Serving modern, seasonal food with an Italian accent, *Murano* is one of the few restaurants to hold 4 AA Rosettes. In November 2013, Hartnett opened the critically acclaimed *café Murano* in St James', a brasserie little sister to *Murano*, and two more London *Cafés* followed.

Hartnett was the chef judge in BBC1's Britain's *Best Home Cook* in 2020. In June 2022, she launched the podcast *Dish* by Waitrose & Partners, which she co-hosts with celebrity broadcaster Nick Grimshaw. In January 2022, Hartnett was awarded an OBE (Order of the British Empire) for services to the hospitality industry and to the NHS (National Health Service England) during the Covid-19 pandemic.

When talking about restaurants where she likes to dine, Hartnett says, *"I like restaurants that don't mess around with ingredients. For me it's about really good simple, tasty food."*

Lisa Goodwin-Allen (11-13 October)

Lisa Goodwin-Allen is one of the most innovative and exciting chefs in the UK today. She has been Executive Chef at one-Michelin-starred *Northcote* since October 2017, when she took over the reins at the age of 23. Goodwin-Allen's impressive culinary skills have landed her multiple TV appearances: she is a regular guest on James Martin's Saturday Morning and has judged and mentored on both MasterChef: The Professionals and Celebrity MasterChef but is perhaps best known as one of the veteran judges on BBC1's Great British Menu. *Northcote's* ethos of using local suppliers is close to Lisa's heart. Goodwin-Allen believes there are many unsung heroes and new generations developing new products that she likes to discover and work with.

Giving back to the industry and training her team is hugely important to Goodwin-Allen. In 2017, Goodwin-Allen was involved in Springboard's Future Chef, an industry-backed resource aimed at inspiring young people aged 12-16 to cook through classroom activities, demonstrations, competitions, and awards. She takes an active role in Hospitality Action, which provides support services to help workers in hospitality get back on their feet again after setbacks.

When speaking about her favourite food, Goodwin-Allen says *"I like food to be very visual, very elegant and packed with great flavours. It must taste of what you see. Food is very emotive, and I love re-visiting some of the classics."*

Nieves Barragán Mohacho (11-13 October)

Barragán Mohacho grew up in Bilbao in Spain's Basque region, learning about local produce and cuisine from an early age. In 1998, Barragán Mohacho came to London and began work at *Simply Nico*. In 2003, she joined Sam and Eddie Hart as Sous Chef at *Fino*, and in 2007, became the group's Executive Chef ahead of the launch of the first *Barrafinna* restaurant on London's Frith Street. As Executive Chef for both *Fino* and *Barrafinna* for 10 years, Barragán Mohacho oversaw the launch of two more *Barrafinna* restaurants (Covent Garden and Adelaide Street) and in 2014 was awarded a Michelin Star for *Barrafinna Frith Street*. In February 2018, Barragán Mohacho opened Sabor on Heddon Street in London with Jose Etura, and in 2018, the restaurant was awarded its first Michelin star, just 8 months after opening – a star they have retained to this day.

It has since won numerous other prestigious accolades. She has also made a television appearance on MasterChef: The Professionals and Celebrity MasterChef.

Upon receiving her first Michelin Star for Barrafiná, Barragán Mohacho said *“We were not fine dining, we didn’t have white tablecloths. You couldn’t make a reservation. We were just doing good food with passion, with love.”*



Pictured: Ana Roš

Ana Roš (24-25 January 2025)

Slovenian Chef Ana Roš is a sport and travel enthusiast, polyglot, international and diplomatic relations graduate from the University of Trieste in Italy, and much more. She’s one of only eight female chefs whose restaurants have been awarded three Michelin Stars and was named The World’s ‘Best Female Chef’ in 2017 by The World’s 50 Best Restaurants. Roš is a self-taught cook, and with her cuisine, she expresses the seasons, the terroir, her character, travels, and femininity.

Roš is Chef Patron of *Hiša Franko*, one of the few restaurants in the world with three Michelin Stars and the Michelin Green Star, which has been a regular on The World’s 50 Best Restaurants list since 2018. In 2023, Roš was ranked third in the ‘Best Chef Awards’ list and was the only woman in the top ten. In 2022, she received ‘The Best Chef Pristine Award’ for her utmost respect for and use of the highest quality local produce at a terroir-based restaurant from the same organisation. Through her work, Roš has been named the ambassador for gastronomic tourism at the World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO). Roš also stars in *Chef’s Table* on Netflix using ingredients from remote surroundings to create inspired and surprising dishes.

While speaking about talent Roš says, *“You can be talented, but the talent may be 30% of the success. It all comes back to motivation, I could have failed as a chef and failed as a parent. But I was highly motivated in both.”*

For more information on The Chef Series and to make a dinner reservation for any of the events of The Chef Series 2024, please visit the website of The Datai Langkawi here:

www.thedatai.com/events-and-occasions/the-chef-series or email reservations@dataihotels.com.

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Notes to Editors:

For high-resolution photos of The Datai Langkawi, [please click here](#).

For high-resolution photos of The Chef Series, including press photos of each chef for The Chef-*fe* Series 2024, [please click here](#).

ABOUT THE DATAI LANGKAWI

One of the world's most stunning resorts, The Datai Langkawi, is situated on the northwest tip of the island of Langkawi in Malaysia. Located in an ancient rainforest rich in wildlife and overlooking the tranquil Datai Bay awarded by National Geographic one of the Top 10 Beaches worldwide, the iconic property enchants with mesmerising nature, visionary architecture, understated elegance, and Malaysian hospitality. All the 121 rooms, villas, and suites at The Datai Langkawi, including the five-bedroom The Datai Estate Villa, offer breath-taking views of the surrounding nature. Elevated among treetops, set in the very heart of the rainforest, and located directly on the coastline, the dining outlets which include the award-winning The Gulai House, The Pavilion, The Dining Room, and The Beach Club, pay homage to the exotic flavours and culinary traditions of the region and beyond. Bespoke facilities include The Nature Centre, an educational facility and home to resident naturalists and marine biologists, and The Spa featuring Ramuan treatments, its own Akar retail range, and VOYA facials. Leisure facilities include three pools, a state-of-the-art fitness centre at The Health Club; an array of wellness activities including silat and yoga, retail outlet The Boutique, a reserved space to showcase local arts and talents at The Atelier, as well as one of the most scenic golf courses in the world designed by golf legend Ernie Els, The Els Club Teluk Datai. The resort has founded The Datai Pledge in 2019 - a sustainability and conservation trust that supports Langkawi's unique fauna, flora, and communities. All proceeds from The Datai Pledge aid this work and contribute to local non-profit organisation. The Datai Langkawi is managed by Datai Hotels and Resorts Sdn Bhd, a company incorporated to manage and operate hospitality properties in Malaysia and beyond.

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