

Yangon's first European food bonanza

By Ashok Manandhar | Tuesday, 21 June 2016



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A collection of popular restaurants are gathering to provide a Europe-themed gastro-festival, the profits from which will all go to the Myitar Yaung Chi orphanage – which translates to “ray of love” in English.



French fare will be only one of many regional cuisines on offer. Photos: Supplied

Myanmar's inaugural European Food Festival will be held at 3pm on June 24 at [Mahlzeit](#) restaurant and will feature dishes from eight of Yangon's European restaurants.

L'Opera will provide the Italian twist, Le Planteur will bring French cuisine and Bar Boon will fly the Dutch flag. Le Bistro from The Savoy will add a Swiss element, with Union Bar & Grill representing Britain and Ireland. Chococity is the Belgian ambassador and [La Taverna](#) will offer tastes of Greece and Cyprus. Delicacies from other nations will be handled by Mahlzeit.



One of the restaurant's previous offerings.

Magnus Scherr, the self-styled “initiator of the event” and general manager of Mahlzeit, told *The Myanmar Times* that the aim is to show the people of Yangon the diversity of Europe's culinary culture.

“Most [people] know about Italian or French food but there are so many more cuisines to explore.”



German delights.

Scherr said that traditional dishes from 28 different EU member states, as well as Switzerland and Norway, will be showcased.

He also assured *The Myanmar Times* that even in the event of a [Brexit](#), British food would still be included as it is – and always will be – geographically part of Europe.

Union Bar & Grill declined to comment about their stance on the EU referendum, although they did divulge what they would contribute: black-pudding [scotch-eggs](#) (the combination paralleling Southeast Asian blood cakes) and lemon tart.

“Nothing says summertime quite as much as a classic English lemon tart and with the monsoon weather reminding us of English summertime we thought it was apt,” they said.



Dishes from across Europe will be served.

Le Planteur said they will bring gourmet appetiser samples and some of their main menu items.

The Savoy will break out their *lauchwaehen* (a Swiss leek quiche), which is actually a secret menu item and can be ordered for breakfast (shhhhhh don't tell anyone).

The 6000 or so “small bites” will be washed down courtesy of Carlsberg and Heineken respectively – there's even talk of Champagne and cheese from Fine Wine and Arla respectively.

Some cocktails and whisky will be on sale.

In addition to the food and drink mayhem, roughly 80 prizes will be doled out through a lucky draw.



The festival is the first of its kind in Yangon.

The first prize is a Lufthansa flight to Europe, the second is a stay at the Savoy, and the third is a dinner at Le Planteur, numerous other dinners at other establishments are on offer too. Baseball caps, pens and the like make up the bulk of the remaining booty.

The [event](#) was inspired by a similar festival in Vientiane, Magnus Scherr explained.

“I thought if they can have one in Laos five years in a row, it should be also here in Myanmar,” he said. “It was a very spontaneous and recent idea.”

He also thought it would be a good idea for it to coincide and tie in with Euro 2016.

The entry fee is a flat K15000, which covers food, drinks and entry into the draw. All proceeds benefit the Myitar Yaung Chi orphanage which takes care of 38 girls and 98 boys.

Doors open at 3pm and tickets can be bought at all participating restaurants.

But just 500 tickets were printed, and as of 2:55pm on June 20 only 150 were left. You'd better move quickly!