

# Sabah cuisines deserve greater recognition

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KOTA KINABALU: Bambangan Pavlova anyone? This could well be featured in the dessert selection of restaurants round the world in the not too distant future.

Universiti Malaysia Sabah (UMS) is currently carrying out research and development to give the traditional cuisine of Sabah the recognition it deserves.

Its Food Science and Nutrition Faculty Dean Professor Dr. Sharifudin Md. Shaarani said Sabah's rich diversity of native delicacies commands great potential and requires further research and development to develop higher value-added products.

"We will expand research and studies into ethnic delicacies with unique flavours like Bambangan and tuhau for taste, nutritional content and texture before taking it a step further by trying to process them into



Dr. Sharifuddin sees great commercial potential in Sabahan native cuisine which can be further developed and processed for bigger markets abroad

higher value-added commercial products," he said.

Furthermore, he added native cuisine, including much-loved condiments such as bambangan and tuhau has unique, versatile flavours that can be incorporated into modern fusion cuisine and mass-produced into ready-made products for export.

"Traditional cuisine has a unique flavour not found in

other parts of Malaysia and is highly sought after by locals as well as tourists," he said, adding more publicity and promotion is needed to raise the profile of Sabah's culinary legacy in larger markets abroad.

"There needs to be a greater effort to organise mega food festivals celebrating Sabahan traditional cuisine on a national-scale at major cities throughout the country. I'm sure everyone would be delighted to try Sabahan native delicacies, whether traditional or fusion-inspired," he beamed.

Combining Western, Asian and contemporary culinary traditions, the faculty masterfully produced a spectacular range of Sabah-inspired fusion cuisine. For appetizers comes the Pucuk Manis Cream Soup, a surprisingly flavourful rich chowder blended with Pucuk Manis (*Sauropus androgynous*), a much-loved local vegetable.

The main course, Aglio Olio Hinava brings fresh, new flavours into the traditional Italian pasta-based dish, combining prawns and the distinctive Hi-



Sabah cuisine deserves more recognition to bring the state's diverse culinary heritage to the world... (pictured) Kadazan ladies with a range of native delicacies including preserved bambangan, Hinava and Bosou.

nava consisting of raw fish slices with lime and coriander dressing.

Pavlova Bambangan Coulis makes a fitting finale; a tra-

ditional Russian meringue-based treat topped with fruit slices and whipped cream, drizzled with sweet and sour bambangan syrup.

"There is so much potential in Sabah cuisine that can be further explored, and this is an exciting frontier for our faculty," Dr Sharifuddin said.