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Inaugural Jianghu Market and Jom Makan x Visit Malaysia 2026 gets off to a great start in Bukit Jalil

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The inaugural Jianghu Market and Jom Makan x Visit Malaysia 2026 official promotion event was successfully held. Hosted by the Malaysia Food and

tourism programmes, formalised two strategic Memorandums of Collaboration, and announced the official establishment of the FRA Halal Cuisine Division.

The event was graced by Azmi Abdullah, Deputy Director of Tourism Malaysia, who witnessed this significant milestone for the national F&B and tourism industry.

The inaugural Jianghu Market features an original cultural concept anchored by HuHu the Panda IP. The market gathers authentic local street delicacies, cultural showcases and creative lifestyle activities, creating a new platform for grassroots food promotion. Partnering with Tourism Malaysia's official mascots Wira and Manja, the event actively supports the national Visit Malaysia 2026 campaign by showcasing Malaysia's rich multicultural food heritage to domestic visitors and global audiences.



Committed to long-term collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, FRA continuously drives food tourism integration in line with national tourism transformation goals. The launch marks a pivotal step in industry resource consolidation, platform upgrading and cross-sector collaboration.

The six core flagship programmes unveiled during the event are as follows: Launch of Jom Makan × Visit Malaysia National Food Guide Platform. FRA officially introduced the Jom Makan × Visit

Malaysian culinary destinations. Pre-registration is now open for all F&B merchants nationwide with free entry, allowing local restaurants and food brands to position themselves for the upcoming peak tourism season.

Penang Three Major Signature Events: BOTC Chef King Competition, IGE International Gourmet Expo & 21st Asia Food King Award Ceremony. Three industry-leading programmes will take place concurrently from 21 to 24 October 2026 at Setia SPICE Arena, Penang, with the grand awards ceremony scheduled on 22 October 2026, forming a complete ecosystem of culinary competition, trade exhibition and industry recognition.



BOTC Penang International Chef King Competition: Organised by the Penang Chefs Association and co-organised by FRA, the 20th-anniversary

edition is fully accredited by Worldchefs. The four-day event hosts international culinary challenges, professional masterclasses and industry sharing sessions, aiming to assemble 2,000 professional chefs from 15 countries to promote Malaysia's culinary talent globally.

IGE International Gourmet Expo: As one of Southeast Asia's most comprehensive F&B trade expos, IGE covers food ingredients, kitchen technology, halal products, ready-to-cook meals and full supply chain services. The exhibition connects international manufacturers, distributors, hotel buyers and restaurant operators, while hosting high-level industry forums focusing on halal market expansion, brand internationalisation and digital transformation.

21st Asia Food King Gourmet Guide "Like Leaderboard" Awards Ceremony 2026: Jointly developed by FRA and the Asia Food King organising team, the prestigious award platform has been established since 2006, widely recognised as the "Oscar of the F&B Industry". Previously broadcast on TVB, the award system has maintained strong regional influence across the Asia-Pacific.

The full six official award categories are standardised as below: Asia Food King Gourmet Guide “Like Leaderboard” Award; Famous Gourmet Award; Signature Star Dish Award; Malaysia Tourism Gourmet Wira Award; Malaysia Tourism Gourmet Manja Award; Asia Tourism Gourmet Award.

The evaluation framework combines official industry assessment, professional judge audits, KOC on-site tastings and public reputation data, ensuring high credibility, transparency and public recognition.

Two Strategic Partnerships Formalised via Memorandums of Collaboration: FRA sealed official collaboration with Jianghu Market and VYBE Platform, establishing dual offline and online promotion channels to accelerate national food tourism publicity.

Jianghu Market: As a nationwide travelling cultural food market, Jianghu Market adopts a grassroots promotion model, providing continuous booth opportunities for local F&B operators. It consolidates Malaysia’s multi-ethnic food varieties in one experiential platform, enabling the public to discover authentic local brands while offering low-cost, high-exposure marketing channels for small and medium food enterprises.

VYBE AI Content Platform: VYBE is a global AI creator ecosystem supporting low-cost,



marketing, expanding food tourism visibility across social media and creator communities.

Establishment of FRA Halal Cuisine Division: Malaysia is globally recognised as the world’s leading halal market hub, serving more than 1.9 billion Muslim populations worldwide. The newly launched FRA Halal Cuisine Division focuses entirely on industry promotion, market education and business expansion. It aims to strengthen public and industrial awareness of the vast global halal economy, encourage more local F&B entrepreneurs to venture into the halal food sector, and position Malaysian halal culinary models for international replication.

For the record, Malaysia Food and Restaurants Association (FRA) continues to build an inclusive, industry-driven F&B ecosystem, providing brand certification, resource linkage, industrial training and nationwide promotion for local merchants.



With the Jom Makan Food Guide Platform and the Asia Food King Awards as core flagship programmes, FRA will further deepen food-tourism integration, boost domestic consumption, and strengthen Malaysia's global reputation as Asia's Premier Food Paradise.

WHAT THEY SAY

Dr. Edmund Koh (Jianghu Market Founder): "The inaugural Jianghu Market is the exclusive offline lifestyle platform for Jom Makan × Visit Malaysia 2026. Featuring our original HuHu Panda IP, the market brings together authentic local street food, cultural showcases and creative art displays. We strive to offer a vibrant, youthful food tourism



Tourism Malaysia on the national campaign Jom Makan x Visit Malaysia 2026. As the official core association of Malaysia's F&B industry, FRA focuses on national-level food tourism promotion, official industry standardisation and nationwide merchant empowerment. We work hand-in-hand with the Ministry of Tourism to integrate local food resources into national tourism development, strengthen Malaysia's gourmet cultural branding, and continuously boost domestic and international tourism consumption for Visit Malaysia 2026."

Azmi Abdullah, Deputy Director of Tourism Malaysia: "Food tourism is one of the priority sectors under the Visit Malaysia 2026 national agenda. The Ministry of Tourism strongly supports industry collaborations led by FRA and event organisers to systematically promote Malaysian local food culture. Food is the most approachable cultural ambassador of Malaysia. We will continue to provide official guidance, promotional resources and policy support to integrate local gourmet resources into national tourism routes, attract more international visitors, and upgrade Malaysia's overall tourism competitiveness."

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