

TASTE OF THE TROPICS

FAMILY & FRIENDS



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SBS AND SCREEN QUEENSLAND PRESENT A QC PRODUCTION

Taste of the Tropics is part of Screen Queensland's North Queensland Regional Program, delivered by Screenworks in association with SBS and supported by Cutting Edge.

**FILMED ON MULURIDJI,
KUKU YALANJI & GIMUY COUNTRIES**

We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the Traditional Custodians of the lands on which we work, live and travel. We pay our respect to Elders past, present and emerging and extend that respect to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples today.



LOGLINE:

Join Davy O'Rourke on a culinary journey across Tropical North Queensland as he prepares a traditional Papua New Guinean Mumu - earth oven - with the help of his Family and Friends.

SYNOPSIS (SHORT):

On this episode of Taste of the Tropics, Cairns chef Davy O'Rourke -a charismatic, classically trained chef that specialises in Mexican and South American cuisines- honours the tradition of his country of birth by cooking a Papua New Guinean Mumu under the guidance of his mum -Wawa. Adding a twist of South American flavours with the help of his restaurant colleagues -including a Colombian Merengón cake that uses fresh Tropical North Queensland ingredients sourced along the way, Davy creates a feast for the eyes and the taste buds to celebrate the arrival of two new members of the O'Rourke family.



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SYNOPSIS (FULL):

This 24 min episode of the cooking series 'Taste of the Tropics' follows accomplished local chef Davy O'Rourke traveling through breathtaking landscapes across Tropical North Queensland in search of fresh ingredients for a family feast.

The episode starts with Davy, his mum and his Colombian head chef, Nico, preparing the earth oven -or Mumu: A traditional method of cooking observed across many cultures and an important cultural practice in Papua new Guinea. With Roseanna (Davy's mum, a.k.a. Wawa) acting as master of ceremonies -a role usually reserved for males until she broke with tradition in order to pass on that knowledge-, a fire pit is dug, wood is burned and river rocks are heated to a staggering 450 degrees while the food is prepped, seasoned and wrapped in banana leaves.

The parcels of chickens and root vegetables -as well as a whole suckling pig- are then buried amongst the hot rocks, along with banana trunks and leaves to provide moisture, and then covered with hessian sacks before the rest of the soil goes back into the pit.

While the food cooks for about 8 hours, Davy will prepare the rest of the dishes, including sak-saks (banana and sago puddings), a PNG dessert that is traditionally served alongside the mumu and which uses a method very similar to South American tamales - to conclude Act 1.

On Act 2, Davy visits the Daintree -the oldest Rainforest on Earth- to meet Peter and Gina who, a couple of years ago, they swapped a busy cafe in Sydney CBD for an off-the grid property in this remote part of Australia. We discover what attracted them to the Tropics and visit their organic orchard to learn about some of the fruits they grow.

After tasting and picking an array of tropical fruits, Davy heads to his kitchen to meet Nico and prepare the Colombian merengón cakes, made with layers of meringue, cream and fruit, that will be later served for dessert at the Mumu. We find out the similarities and differences with the pavlova as they're given a FNQ twist by using some of the fruits just sourced locally.

During Act 3 we learn how to cook some South American salsas which will accompany the Mumu: a -chimichurry style- Chilean Pebre Sauce, a Mexican Salsa Macha (with the addition of local macadamias) and an Ají de Piña (made with local pineapples that have been roasted on an open fire.

The episode concludes with the unveiling of the Mumu and the family and friends, enjoying the feast as Davy and Wawa reflect on the experience of the day and this very special tradition.



THE RECIPES:

Mumu: Whole Roast Suckling Pig + Chickens + Root Vegetables cooked in an earth oven with herbs and coconut milk and served with market greens.

Banana and Sago Puddings.
Mexican Macadamia Salsa Macha.
Chilean Pebre Sauce.
Ají de Piña.

Colombian Merengón Cake.

MUMU:

Mumu (composed of pork, sweet potato, rice and vegetables) is regarded as the national dish of Papua New Guinea. It is also a traditional method of cooking and therefore an important cultural practice used in celebrations (harvesting, weddings, babies being born, or to celebrate special visitors and family gatherings) and even at household level throughout many regions of PNG.

The Mumu consists of an earth oven filled with hot stones, One of the simplest and most ancient cooking structures -the earliest known in Central Europe dates back to 29,000 BC- they have been used in various civilizations around the world and are still commonly found in the Pacific region to date. Many other cultures still use cooking pits for ceremonial or celebratory occasions, including the indigenous Fijian lovo, the Hawaiian imu, the Māori hāngī, the Mexican barbacoa, and the New England clambake.

Approximately 80% of the population in PNG is reliant on subsistence agriculture, with the staple foods including root crops, bananas, and sago. Pork is used in celebrations and often an entire suckling pig -along with whole chickens- are cooked in the Mumu.

To cook food, the fire is built, then allowed to burn down to a smoulder -along with rocks. The food is then placed in the oven, covered with green vegetation to add moisture and then buried. The food in the pit can take up to several hours to a full day to cook.



CONTRIBUTORS (FAMILY & FRIENDS):

NICOLÁS SUÁREZ. HEAD CHEF @ GUERRILLA



A Colombian chef living in Cairns and working at Davy's restaurant. He is in charge of the dessert for the family feast and shows Davy how to prepare a Merengón cake, the Colombian version of a pavlova, using tropical fruits found in the area -and also common in Colombia.

PETER & GINA TSIGRIS



Having left behind a busy café in Sydney CBD to relocate in an off-grid organic farm in the Daintree, Davy's new friends provide him with inspiration -and the tropical fruit he needed- for the Merengón cake, also attending the celebration along with their 5 children.

ROSEANNE 'WAWA' O'ROURKE



Davy's mum and the expert on all things 'Mumu'. A proud grandmother of newborns Theo and Myra, in honour of whom the celebration takes place; she is keen to pass on the traditional knowledge - despite breaking tradition by being in charge of the Mumu, which normally would be man's business.





THE TEAM:

KAREN WARNER



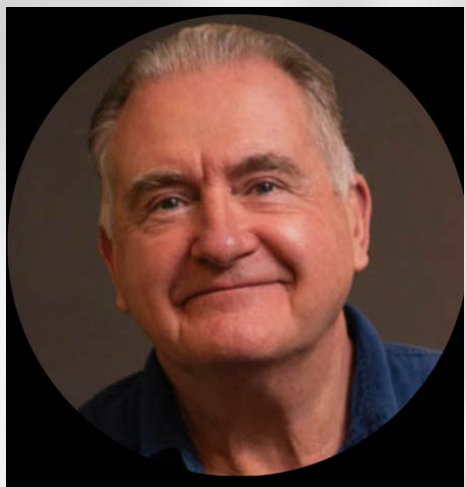
With three decades of commercial TV experience, Karen Warner is one of Australia's most respected television Executive Producers, Showrunners, and storytellers.

During her career, Karen has remained at the top of the factual and reality Television genres by producing some of Australia's highest-rating TV shows for Nine Network Australia, Network TEN and Fremantle Media including Getaway, The Farmer Wants a Wife, The Apprentice Australia, Masterchef, Masterchef the Professionals, and Rachel Khoo's Kitchen Notebook Melbourne.

More recently Karen completed her fourth series as the Showrunner for Foxtel's Love it or List It Australia, which won an AACTA Award in 2019 for 'Best Lifestyle Program'.

In 2022 Karen was involved in developing a brand-new format for an international competition food reality show for US Discovery Food Network from concept to execution; including scripting, casting, directing, and overseeing postproduction. She has just completed series five of Love It or List It Australia which was nominated in the 2024 AACTA Awards for Best Lifestyle Program. Her latest Factual Entertainment series, Australia's Most Identical Twins is slated for The Nine Network later in 2024.

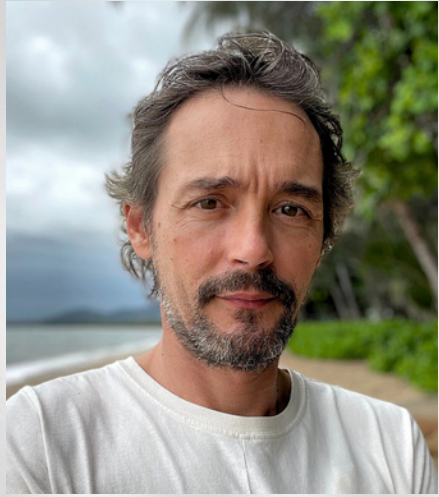
NICK LORENTZEN



Nick's career has been shaped by his extensive travel experience. From his beginnings as a deck boy in the Norwegian merchant navy, where he subsequently qualified to the rank of Master, to later transitioning ashore in his late twenties, Nick's professional trajectory has included diverse roles such as trade union official, startup entrepreneur and CEO, showcasing his ability to successfully navigate various domains. Having worked at senior executive levels in international cultural exchange, quality management, and compliance, Nick later diversified into the realm of video and film production. His personal interests include writing, politics, travel and film. He values a sense of humour and enjoys good food, wine and jazz, often shared through his culinary endeavours with family and friends.

THE TEAM:

ALVARO DEL CAMPO



Alvaro is an emerging filmmaker based in Far North Queensland. Born and raised in Spain, he attended Film School and trained as a documentary director before migrating to Australia in 2002, where he co-founded a company which pioneered online video production.

Alvaro has spent 20 years producing and directing commercial content for blue chip companies, and his work has received two international Communicator awards. His career is now back to his original passion of film and documentary making.

He is also a co-producer of 'The Vegetable Plot' a children's TV animated series - and one of only two Australian projects selected to the Asian Animation Summit in 2022.

DAVY O'ROURKE



Davy is an accomplished restaurateur. Having trained under some of Australia's most respected chefs, he owns two renowned Cairns eateries, Mama Coco & Guerrilla..

Storytelling has always been a part of his life, through the experience of traditional folklore passed through family, to absorbing the practice of filmmaking through his father, a renowned documentarian.

Applying his sensibilities to this project, he hopes to communicate his passions in this field.

NATALIE LORENTZEN



A multidisciplinary artist, Natalie holds a Bachelor of Visual Arts from Sydney College of the Arts and a Masters of Interactive Multimedia from the University of Technology, Sydney. Natalie moved from England to Sydney as a child, to Colombia as an exchange student, and to Spain as an Intern. She co-founded a production company with her partner in Sydney in 2007 and relocated to Cairns with her family in 2019. This move coincides with a decision to commit to her art practice.

GLENN SAGGERS



Tropical North Queensland has served as the backdrop to Glenn's passion for filmmaking over the last 12 years. With a skill set that includes directing, drone operation, DOP, and editing, he expertly blends these elements to create visually stunning content that captivates audiences. Glenn's love for meeting new people and capturing their stories is reflected in the award-winning films he produces. When not working, he can be found exploring the natural wonders of the region and seeking inspiration for his next project. Glenn's most recent project is the Do & Don'ts of Getting Married, which won best runner up short film at the Gold Coast Film Festival.



TEAM STATEMENTS:

PRODUCER & DIRECTOR, ALVARO DEL CAMPO

I'm extremely grateful to Screen Queensland, ScreenWorks and SBS for the opportunity to produce an episode for the Taste of the Tropics series and commend them on their efforts to help develop the local screen industry.

Tropical North QLD boasts an incredible food culture -with a variety and quality of produce not found anywhere else in the world. As a filmmaker and a self-confessed foodie, I'm delighted to be able to share that experience.

Working alongside Davy O'Rourke, expanding our local professional network and meeting so many wonderful people along the way have been some of the highlights.

The project has provided an invaluable experience. Not without its challenges, the support and expertise of our supervising producers was key to its success.

This region holds a special place in my heart since my first visit 20 years ago - newly arrived from Spain- until I moved here with my family in 2019. We hope our episode does justice to the region and the people who call it home.



WRITER & PRODUCER, NICK LORENTZEN

In a landscape often dominated by celebrity chefs and manufactured drama, our theme of 'Family & Friends' was chosen to highlight the importance of food in cultivating social connections. This timeless and universal truth is frequently overlooked.

At the heart of our episode is a traditional Papua New Guinean celebratory feast or 'mumu' being staged by Davy, our charismatic host, and his mother Roseanne, to welcome two new members to their family.

This event allowed us to explore the importance of cultural traditions and culinary exchange that literally bring colour and flavour to our daily lives. The involvement of Davy's Colombian head chef, Nico, a new immigrant to Australia, served to further illustrate and amplify those points.

The preparation and sharing of a meal involve a unique alchemy that goes beyond the ingredients. It's a labor of love, a tangible expression of care and consideration for family and friends. Against the lush backdrop of Far North Queensland, we set out to showcase the diverse stories and cultural exchanges that unfold around food.



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PRODUCER & PRESENTER, DAVY O'ROURKE

The Taste of the Tropics widened my lens from the busy day to day life of running restaurants. My upbringing taught me that the best form of hospitality is found in the home, and it's always been my aim for my guests to experience this warmth and generosity of spirit.

Taste of the Tropics gave me an opportunity to practice these values, sharing my Papua New Guinean heritage through the gift of food with family, my team, new friends, and Tsigris family.

A highlight for me was meeting Peter & Gina, exploring their farm, and finding ingredients unique to our region but also ingredients from other areas of the World that flourish here. Cooking alongside my Mum and Chef Nico and sharing our culture and knowledge with each other was truly inspiring.

As a chef there is so much planning and preparation involved in every aspect of a dish. But the real magic happens when you hand over your control to the elements and let all the flavours come together.

Our MUMU was a celebration of eclectic flavours and homely island hospitality. The end result is a reflection of the melting pot of people, cultures, produce and cuisines of FNQ. Though of course, there were moments when we were all wondering if it was going to come together on day! But the tropics is like that! To a newcomer it's uncomfortable: hot, humid, full of insects and things that bite. But as a community of people from all over we also flourish. Since moving here twenty years ago, the unique cultural mix that makes up this place has meant that it's always felt like home.

I'll be forever grateful for this opportunity, the meals shared, and people of Cairns who have supported me and my restaurants over the years.





CREDITS:

Presenter: Davy O'Rourke

Supervising Producer: Karen Warner

Director: Alvaro del Campo

Producers: Nick Lorentzen, Alvaro del Campo & Davy O'Rourke

Writer: Nick Lorentzen

DOP: Glenn Sagers

Editor: Glenn Sagers

Art Director: Natalie Lorentzen

Additional Camera: Ella Pearce

Sound Recordists: Terry Meehan & Bastián Agosto

Stills Photographers: Toby Stanley & Alexandra Gow

Safety Officer: Kristie / Category 5 Emergency Care

Head of Post Production: Marcus Bolton

Post Production Producer: Sally Wortley

Post Production Coordinator: Marcela de Oliveira

Post Production Assistant: Nicole Hargreaves

Colourist: Drew McPherson

Online Artist: Phoebe Ireland

Conform Artist: Casey Hukins

Sound Supervisor: Simon "Slash" Hicks

Creative Technology Specialist: Simon Alberry

Technical Support: Philip Chhour & Amitav Nakarmi

Senior Media Supervisor: John Warneke

Media Operations Coordinator: Claudia Di Pasquale

Media Operator: Kieran Stanley, Matthew Burgess & Kate Kelly-Wilson

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SBS Production Coordinator: Megan Thomas

SBS Business Affairs Manager: Verity Scrimshaw

Screenworks CEO: Lisa O'Meara

Screenworks Production Executive: Louise Hodgson

Screen Queensland Chief Executive Officer: Jacqui Feeney

Screen Queensland Chief Creative Officer: Belinda Burns

Screen Queensland Head of Creative Industry Partnerships: Rowena Billard

Screen Queensland Legal Manager: Paul Judge

With Special Thanks to:

Myra Singh & Theo O'Rourke / del Campo Lorentzen Family / O'Rourke Family / Tsigris Family (Daintree Fan Palm Farm) / Hudson Family / Guerrilla Family (Allan Tucker, Bo Joinbee, Paula Pintos, Lucila Macarena, Bautista Pascolutti, Lucy Proctor, Emily Taylor, Zak Taylor, María Suárez, Diana Velasquez) / Isabel Barlow / Randy Singh / Leah Horstmann- (Tropic Magazine) / Gudju Gudju Fourmile / Ewan Cutler / Coleen Bryde (Granite Gorge Park)

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