



our menus



Desmond Davies

Executive Chef

With more than 20 years' experience in the hospitality sector, our executive chef, Desmond Davies, is looking forward to welcoming you to Te Pae Christchurch.

Born in South Africa, Desmond worked in convention centres in Durban, and held his most recent role as executive chef at the Borneo Convention Centre Kuching. His most memorable career moment was his time spent in the catering team for the 2010 FIFA World Cup in Durban, which saw the team cook more than 45,000 meals for VIP clients over several days.

Desmond enjoys cooking with fresh, locally-sourced foods, and has embraced the opportunity to introduce traditional Māori cuisine into his repertoire. During his time developing Te Pae Christchurch's menu's, Desmond has put an emphasis on sourcing local, sustainable, high-quality produce from around the region.

Desmond and his team have been working closely with local suppliers to create a range of menu options that showcase the local region. This approach will create an distinctive culinary experience of Canterbury and the South Island for all guests at Te Pae Christchurch.

Drawing inspiration from international styles and flavours, classic dishes and local cuisine, Desmond's cooking is exciting and authentic, with local ingredients at the heart of every dish.

The ability to customise menus and cater to all dietary requirements is important to Desmond. He believes good food can enhance an experience, and he is looking forward to sharing what he and the team love about our region with the rest of the world.





our food inspiration

The act of sharing food is at the very heart of who we are, how we connect and the way we spend time with those who are special to us. It's a gesture of hospitality that transcends any barrier. It's an act of kindness. A sign of esteem. And an invitation to share in an authentic experience of a place and a culture.

At Te Pae Christchurch Convention Centre, the food we provide you is a central part of our manaakitanga; our hospitality.

Through the food we create for you, we tell our story.

This is our home. And we are extraordinarily proud of it. We are immensely privileged to share our region with some of the country's finest producers of high quality fresh, natural produce, fine wines and unique and flavoursome beer. These talented farmers, producers, growers and artisans are essential partners in our menu design, providing the fundamental ingredients for every meal we serve.

This place has also been a special part of our region's food culture for generations. The ingredients and produce local Māori prized are still part of our cuisine today, and have an important place on our menu – reflecting the respect and honour we hold for our cultural food traditions.

Brought together in our seasonally changing menu, with options to cater for every need and any event, our food is designed to complement and enhance every aspect of your experience at Te Pae Christchurch.





traditional influences and flavours

Māori culinary traditions

Māori cuisine is very traditional, drawing on the ways of the ancestors – particularly when it comes to the preparation and cooking of food – and the belief that the earth is the giver of all life.

Traditionally, food was foraged around the maramataka Māori, the Māori lunar calendar. The moon acted as a guide to when the sea and land could be harvested for kai (food). It also helped determine the best days to harvest or plant produce, and hunt for kai on land and in water.

Māori cuisine was centred around fish, birds, root produce and wild herbs. To catch the living prey, Māori crafted tools, such as harakeke (flax) to use as ropes or fishing nets and lines, and whale and bird bones to use as matau (fishhooks) and spears.

The original Māori cooking method, hāngī, is still used in Māori cuisine today. The hāngī, or earth oven, is a shallow pit in the ground, where hot rocks and water are used to cook the food – traditionally meat or fish and vegetables. Once the food is lowered into the ground and covered, dirt is put back over the hāngī, where the food is then steamed.

The food of our home

In a land where you're never more than 140km from the sea, it's no surprise that kai moana (seafood) forms an essential part of our local cuisine. A wide range of seafood, including fish (including raw fish), kina or sea eggs, tipa or scallops, koura or fresh water crayfish, paua or abalone and tio or oysters, have been enjoyed as a traditional part of Aotearoa New Zealand's cuisine.



Kūtai (mussels)

are enjoyed on their own and in various forms of cooking, including the traditional hāngī. New Zealand Greenshell mussels are world-renowned and extremely flavoursome.



Mānuka

wood chips are used to add flavour when smoking food. The tree is also a source of some of the best honey produced in New Zealand, sought-after for its medicinal and antiseptic value.



Rēwena parāoa (potato bread)

goes well with many meals or on its own as a snack. Sold at many weekend markets and in speciality bread shops, this delicious bread is made from Māori potatoes (taewa tutaekuri).



Kūmara (sweet potato)

or sweet potato (available in red, gold or orange varieties) was brought to New Zealand from Polynesia during the early voyages of local Māori, along with vegetables like taro and yam. Kūmara is a particularly sweet ingredient and very popular in traditional foods as well as modern Kiwi cuisine.

common herbs and seasoning



Harakeke

or New Zealand flax is a superfood, rich in omega-3. It is available as unrefined oil and as a seasoning. Unique to New Zealand, harakeke is one of our oldest plant species. Harakeke was an important fibre plant to Māori and an important component of traditional diets.



Horopito

is New Zealand's indigenous pepper and one of the most widely-used herbs in traditional cuisine. It can be taken as a delicious tea, used in sauces or as a dressing.



Karengo

is a type of edible seaweed closely related to Japanese Nori and Welsh Laver (which is used to make traditional Welsh Laver Bread), was traditionally harvested by South Island Māori.



Pikopiko

fern tips are added to bring a forest flavour into a dish. Pikopiko is a fern shoot found growing in a damp shady areas of New Zealand bush, which can be used as a signature garnish or as vegetable.



Lemonwood

is a tree commonly found in forest and regenerating scrub. Its glossy yellow-green leaves when crushed emit a strong lemon scent, and when finely chopped and added during the cooking process reinforce the lemon taste of the food being created.



Kawakawa

is found in coastal areas and has a rich forest aroma and light minted flavour. It is dried and used as seasoning on various foods.



Kowhitiwhiti

or watercress, found near freshwater rivers, has a mild mustard flavour – great with all kinds of meats. It is a powerhouse vegetable, full of nutrients, antioxidants and minerals.



Puha

or sow thistle has a distinctive, slightly bitter taste. It is high in vitamin C and contains magnesium, iron, potassium and calcium.

meet our artisan producers



Akaroa Salmon

Bred in the wild, from the deep waters of the Akaroa Harbour, comes Akaroa Salmon's Chinook salmon.

The rich flavour of the Chinook salmon is made possible through great care of the fish and the safeguarding of their vulnerable environment.

Keeping stocking densities so low that each pen has 1% salmon and 99% water, Akaroa Salmon is committed to running a sustainable farm. Akaroa Salmon is rated "green" by Seafood Watch and is also part of a programme to protect the local waterways – alongside A+ New Zealand Sustainable Aquaculture.



Lumina Lamb

Lumina Lamb has emerged from an unprecedented 10-year programme with lambs specifically bred in the New Zealand high country.

The specially-bred sheep are free roaming and finished on chicory, and because of the land conditions and farming practices, the sheep produce high levels of Omega-3 and polyunsaturated fats. This ensures Lumina Lamb has an excellent, micro-scale marbling, which – after being aged for 21 days – ensures every product is rich and flavoursome.



Poaka

Poaka is a free-range heritage breed pig farm producing top quality, sweet chestnut and acorn-finished pork products. Based in Aylesbury, Canterbury, Poaka uses traditional farming methods, resulting in strong flavours and only the finest pork.

Poaka pigs are free to roam across 100 acres of land, and an additional 25 acres in autumn, when the sweet chestnut trees are blooming with nuts. Their slow roaming lifestyle exceeds the highest animal welfare codes – something that the Poaka team is very proud of.




Robinsons Bay Olive Oil

Robinsons Bay Olive Oil is home to one of the most southerly olive groves in the world.

Planted in 1994, the grove includes seven different varieties of olive trees from Europe, Australia and the Middle East, which when matched with Canterbury's unique climate, clear atmosphere, and the rich Banks Peninsula soil produce a range of award-winning olive oils.

As well as its Best in Show Robinsons Bay Grove Blend extra virgin olive oil, the company also offers an array of versatile infused oils.



Te Pae Christchurch will make every effort to cater for guests with special dietary requirements, i.e. vegetarian, vegan, gluten free or lactose intolerant, or medically diagnosed food allergy anaphylaxis at no extra charge.

Any other additional special meal requests will incur a \$10 surcharge per person.

Although every possible precaution has been taken to ensure that these menu items are allergen free, certain items may still contain traces of allergic ingredients as they are prepared in facilities that also process milk, egg, gluten containing products, lupin, fish, crustacean, soybean, sesame seeds and nut products.

Menu items may change due to seasonal availability.

All food and beverage prices shown are for the 2023 calendar year, are in New Zealand dollars (NZD) and exclusive of GST.