

A GUIDE TO CREATING YOUR OWN FOOD TALES EVENT

Interested in creating your own **Food Tales** event in the library?

Food Tales events are a great way to build the profile of your library as a cultural and community hub, showcase what your local library has to offer, activate the library space in a non-traditional ways, and encourage people who may not otherwise use the library to explore through the universal themes of *food, history, and place*.

Find below some resources to draw on in planning for, creating, promoting and hosting an event.



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WHAT IS FOOD TALES?

Food Tales is a project from the Queensland Writers Centre [QWC] and the State Library of Queensland [SLQ], designed to promote community engagement with reading and writing through the narratives surrounding food.

Food Tales is a celebration of the many traditions, cultures, and memories contained within recipes old and new. Food writers, cooks, and chefs host author presentations and workshops, talking about their life as a foodie and teaching participants how to translate recipes and experiences into their very own food tales.

The *Food Tales* project kicked off in May 2011 with a series of week-long tours. QWC and SLQ toured a series of prominent Australian food writers to regional libraries across South West Queensland. 2012 saw *Food Tales* branch out with three tours reaching Queensland's West, the North, and Far North Queensland.

In 2013, *Food Tales* reaches further afield visiting Central and West Queensland regions.

Food Tales fosters and expands community cultural engagement with reading, writing, and publishing. The project supports regional libraries in connecting with existing writing networks and engaging their communities. It is also designed to give local regional libraries the tools and resources to build capacity for locally-determined creative projects.

Additionally, *Food Tales* explores digital publishing platforms, encouraging greater involvement with online platforms. To facilitate this, we have set up the interactive community-driven *Food Tales* blog: <http://foodtales.slq.qld.gov.au>.

With the *Food Tales* blog in place, we are encouraging local libraries throughout Queensland to continue and build on *Food Tales* by hosting their own events.

For more information, contact Food Tales Producer Aimée Lindorff at *Queensland Writers Centre* on 07 3842 9950 or alindorff@qwc.asn.au

IDEAS FOR FOOD TALES

The first step in hosting your own *Food Tales* event is deciding what it is you want to do. An author talk with a food writer? A food-writing workshop? A cooking demonstration? A workshop about local produce? Look at your community and what resources and/or interests already exist locally that you can capitalise on

Linking your event

A simple, yet effective way, to generate interest in your event and to attract your favourite food writer is to schedule your *Food Tales* event with what is happening locally. Have a look at the calendar for your local region for any of the following:

- The local show
- farmer's market
- food & wine festival (i.e. Gourmet in Gundy's, Hampton Food & Wine Festival)

By linking your *Food Tales* event in with an existing event like the ones mentioned above, you gain an automatic audience for promotion, mutual promotion of each other's events, and you can capitalise on any visiting food writers or chefs.

Finding a food writer

The first place to look is *local*. Are there any foodies or food writers in your town or region? Who does the restaurant reviews for the local paper? Has the local CWA branch produced a recipe book? Take advantage of what is going on in the region. Are there any festivals or events (book launches etc.) going on in your town or nearby who may have food writers coming? Think about contacting writers already visiting your area.

Think outside the box. Getting Stephanie Alexander to visit may not be feasible. Instead, approach the local paper. Talk to Queensland Writers Centre and see what they can suggest. Talk to nearby wineries or farms to use as much local knowledge as possible. Get in touch with the local writers' group or cooking group as there may very well be a hidden food writer in your midst.

If you have a particular writer in mind, do some research before approaching them. Do they travel to do regional events? What kind of fees do they generally command? Will there be facilities for them to sell books at the event? What will you provide (fees, accommodation, food allowance)? Once you have all the answers, or as many as possible, contact the food writer through their website or publisher and make your proposal. Writers with recent publications are more likely to want to do promotional activities, so keep that in mind as well.

VENUES

Hosting the *Food Tales* event in the library space is a great way to activate the space and encourage people in who may not otherwise use the library. Your library will generally already have resources to support the event, such as internet access, public computers, and chairs/tables, and may have a separate meeting space for larger or noisier events.

If you are going to use the library, there are a few factors to take into consideration.

- What is the capacity of the library?
- Will you be hosting the event during opening hours? If so, will this disturb other patrons who may be reading/studying?
- Is it appropriate to serve food/drinks in the library space?
- Do you have enough chairs/tables etc.?
- Is the space tidy and presentable?

If the library isn't an appropriate space, the first place to look is at other council venues. The Community Centre or Cultural Space often have public meeting rooms, and may provide the space at low cost for community events like *Food Tales*. Other suitable venues can include your local RSL, local high school, or local bookstore. Remember to keep in mind the following factors when selecting a venue space:

- Will you need internet (wireless) access?
- Does it have disabled access?
- Is it quiet/private?
- What facilities does it have (urn, whiteboard, projector and screen)?
- Is it in a convenient location?

With your venue confirmed, it is important to ensure the following are included:

- Chairs for attendees
- Presentation space at front of room with chairs for guest food writer
- Table for book sales and signings
- Data projector
- Area for tea service
- Area for produce display (if included)
- Area for *Food Tales* display – see **Promoting your event** below for more information

EVENT LOGISTICS

Once you have the author and venue confirmed, the logistics of the event need to be carefully managed to ensure that it runs smoothly on the day.

- Inviting people, marketing the event and managing the RSVP list.
- If it is a ticketed event, how will tickets be sold? Will physical tickets be sent out, or will there be a door list?
- Are you going to put on tea or coffee and biscuits? Wine and cheese? You'll need to make sure you have sufficient catering. If you're serving alcohol, will you need to consider requirements under the licensing laws?
- Who you will invite and how you will get the word out to them (email or flyers, etc.). See **Promoting your event** below for more information.
- A suitable venue – see **Venues** above for more detailed information.
- Will you be selling books? How are they being transported to your venue? You may need to have a cash float to give change to people who buy the book. Will it be easiest to contact a local bookseller?
- What resources does the space need? Are there chairs available for the participants/attendees? Will people need to bring their own paper and pens or will you provide that? Do you need to organise a microphone? See the sample **Event Profile Form** below.

If your food writer is a published author, they may want the opportunity to sell their books at the event. The easiest way to do this is to contact your local bookseller (usually at least a month in advance) and ask them to facilitate book sales at the event. Not only do you support local business, but the bookseller will then look after everything from getting the stock in, to sales and money. They will also help you with promotion. In the event you do not have a local bookseller, ask the author to provide the books, but offer a staff member to facilitate sales.

PROMOTING YOUR EVENT

Who will be interested in coming? Luckily, *Food Tales* is a universal theme, and attracts writers and foodies of all ages!

Here are a few tips and activities you can do that will help make your event a success.

Identify your market

Create a list of who will be interested in coming, who are your likely attendees? Be very clear on *who* your event is for. For example, if you're targeting young children, get in touch with local school networks. Once you are clear on who you want to come, start identifying where to find them and develop marketing angles relevant to your target audience.

Promoting your event

The best tip regarding promotion is: *local, local, local*.

The first place to start is your library. You have at your fingertips the best promotion for an event about food and writing: books! Set up a display of popular food writers or have staff select their favourite food-centric book (fiction or non-fiction) as your book-of-the-week.

Take advantage of the connections you already have in the community. Use your own website and promote through your networks to authors in the area, writers or writers' groups you may know, professional groups that might be interested in the subject of the event, etc. Forming relationships with your local writers' groups and/or cooking groups is important as they are the individuals who will be excited by the content of a *Food Tales* event. School and/or church newsletters are also a great way to get in touch with the community. Reaching out to already established networks will ensure the event is successful.

Promote your event through the local Council as they will have resources and contacts to reach a broad regional audience. Contact your local newspaper or community radio station as they will be looking for content, and use angles that emphasise your relevance to their target audience – a specific local suburban or regional area. Find out the name and contact details of the editor/publisher and address your correspondence to them directly. Always be ready to follow up a phone call with an email/letter that thanks the individual for their time, invites them along to the event, and includes your press release. Be aware of lead times – if it the newspaper comes out on a Thursday, don't call them up on Wednesday night expecting to get a spot. Give them enough time.

Some possible contacts

- Writers' groups
- Cooking club/school
- The Country Women's Association
- Local growers, producers, and sellers
 - Do you have a Farmer's Market nearby?
- Schools
- Church groups
- Local Council
- Newspaper and community radio
- Cafés
- Community groups
- PCYC/youth groups

PROMOTING YOUR EVENT (cont.)

Marketing collateral

Posters and flyers are a great way to spread the word. Using the *Food Tales* logo, you can create a catchy poster/flyer for distribution. Keep it short and sweet, but make sure you include the following: Who? What? When? Where? Distribute the collateral far and wide – put it up in the library, Council spaces, in local cafes, bookstores, school noticeboards, etc.

Writing a press release

The purpose of a press release is to let the media (newspapers, magazines, radio) know about your upcoming event and hope that they will run a story, or come along to cover the event. Having a simple and catchy press release can greatly assist. Here are some tips:

- Keep it short and to the point – one page is best (additional or background information/images can be attached separately)
- Create a catchy headline to ensure they keep reading
- Make sure your press release covers all the important information: What? When? Who? Why? How (much/many)?
- Include details (name, phone, and email) of the person who can be contacted for further information
- Many newspapers/media outlets will simply print your release directly so ensure you have proof-read your work and that all spelling, grammar, and event details are correct
- Ensure you follow some standard protocols:
 - at the top of the page write 'press release' or 'media release' and include the date and title
 - at the bottom of the release put in a horizontal line or type [ENDS] and include details not to be printed, such as your contact details, after that.

If and where possible, find out the name and email address of the editor or publisher so that you can send your press release through directly. Following that up with a phone call a day or two later to ensure they received your email is fine.

Social media

One of the easiest, cheapest, and most effective ways to get word out about your event is through social media platforms such as Facebook or Twitter. These forums allow you to connect with interested and relevant groups, organisations and individuals, regularly and directly updating them with content about your event. Some tips include:

- Ensure your Facebook/website makes very clear what your event is about and how people can get involved
 - Keep it short and concise. Ensure you send only enough information to pique your follower's (and friends) interest, and include a URL link to more event information.
- Stay involved – social media is an interactive medium so when people start commenting or asking questions, answer them and ask them, to spread the word about your event.

FOOD TALES ONLINE

<http://foodtales.slq.qld.gov.au>

One of the best things about *Food Tales* is that it is more than simply the event. Our wonderful interactive blog means that participants in the event, and those who weren't able to make it along, can still participate and engage with the project by posting up their own story/recipe.

By making the blog a community-driven space, we hope to facilitate conversation between people who may be physically distant but still share the same food interests and passions. Think of it as an online, constantly-updated, recipe book, where you can go to get ideas and be inspired.

The blog is designed to be user-friendly and easy to engage with. It is a community space, where you can read other people's stories and recipes, comment on them, and post your own to share with others. It is easy to use. Here is a step-by-step guide:

1. Go to the *Food Tales* website: <http://foodtales.slq.qld.gov.au>
 2. Along the top, click on the 'Submit a Post' tab.
 3. Put in your title – it can be anything from 'Chicken Kiev' to 'Sunday Lunch with the Family'
 4. Add in your content, whether it be a food story, a recipe or both (you can copy & paste this directly from a Word doc.)
 5. Upload a photo or an image if you have one – it could be a photo of the food, a photo of you, or just something pretty (don't forget to click 'upload now!' once you've browsed for your photo). If you are using someone else's image, please acknowledge them by including a link to their URL
 6. Select a category (if your town isn't listed there, select 'other')
 7. Put in your name and location
 8. Add some 'tags', the 'subject headings' or 'key words' of your story (i.e. Italy, bananas, dessert, Dalby, family)
 9. Click preview to check it out, then click send and off you go!
- As soon as you click 'send', your *Food Tale* is up on the site. You can then send the URL to friends and family so they can read and comment on your recipe.

Encouraging participants

Encourage continued participation with *Food Tales*. Print out the step-by-step guidelines above and leave them someplace visible near the library computers. Offer assistance for those people who aren't familiar with computers or blogs.

Promoting your *Food Tales* event online

Feel free to use the *Food Tales* website to promote your event. Add a post that includes the date/time of the event and detail of the visiting food writer. Put up photos and stories, and share what is going on with your *Food Tales*!

OTHER EVENT IDEAS

Food Tales is only one event that you can host. If you are keen to do more events, there are a range of different events that can be run through the library, ranging from events for children, events for readers such as author talks or book launches, and workshops for writers.

If you want to run an author talk or workshop, you will need to source the right writer/author/publisher to host your event. If you have someone in mind, try contacting them directly via their website. If not, try sourcing writers who live locally or in nearby regions – ask at your local bookstore, get in touch with writers’ groups, or contact the Queensland Writers Centre. Keep an eye on local writers’ festivals and other events so you know which writers will be touring your region.

For information on industry standard fees for visiting authors/writers, visit the Australian Society of Authors website at <http://www.asauthors.org/>.

Author talks

Inviting along an author or publisher to give a talk draws people into the library in a non-traditional manner and invigorates their reading practice. Authors – especially those who have recently had a book published – enjoy the exposure and it is a great way to activate the library space.

Workshops

Use your own knowledge and expertise to run workshops, or identify local community members who might be able to offer something. If you have a local poet, run a poetry workshop. Perhaps you know a bit about blogs – host a blogging workshop!

Book clubs

The book club is a tried and true method of getting people to start reading, and start exploring the ideas that reading inspires. It is also a lovely social occasion – a chance to catch up with friends, or a way to make new ones. Offering up a meeting room or other space at the library to host a book club every fortnight/month connects readers and develops a sense of community among readers, and can invigorate and revitalise unused library space. There are dozens of ways to pick the books for the book club - here are some ideas:

- Favourite Picks: each month each member chooses one of their favourite books
- Local Talent: each month choose another Queensland-based author to read
- Crime Fiction: each month read another thrilling detective story
- The Classics: start in the 1800’s and move right through to the present
- World Tour: each month read an author from a different country

QUEENSLAND WRITERS CENTRE

Queensland Writers Centre (QWC) is the leading provider of specialised writing services in Queensland. Through its annual programs, it promotes skills development and professional practice and works to advance the recognition of Queensland writers and writing, locally, nationally, and internationally.

QWC regularly receives requests to make presentations on writing and publishing for writers' groups, universities and other community events. QWC is always happy to offer advice on hosting an event, recommend some writers, and put you in touch with interested groups, festivals, or organisations in your region.

Please visit the QWC website at www.qwc.asn.au for further information, or call 07 3842 9922

STATE LIBRARY OF QUEENSLAND

The State Library has been enriching the lives of Queenslanders for over a century. The primary custodian of Queensland's documentary heritage, SLQ is also a significant partner with local government to provide library services for over 340 public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres.

The State Library is reimagining library services, progressively realising the potential of digital technologies and collaborative approaches for empowering people to discover, use, share and transform content in library collections and available globally, to create new content, and to connect with each other. We are advancing our agenda for making libraries more valuable than ever for Queenslanders through a range of partnerships, including with National and State Libraries Australasia; the public library network; other cultural institutions; schools and universities; and across all levels of government.

The State Library is committed to the belief that an empowered and progressive society depends on creative thinking and the sharing of knowledge.

The SLQ website is a dynamic tool linking the State Library to the world. Please visit on <http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/> for further information, or call 07 3840 7666

SAMPLE MEDIA RELEASE

Media Release

04 April 2011

For immediate release



Food Tales

Professional food writer Karen Reyment will be visiting libraries in the Southern Downs in May as part of the Food Tales Tour to give talks and workshops on writing about recipes and the experiences that make them special.

Food Tales, a celebration of the stories and narratives behind everyone's favourite recipes and food traditions, is a new initiative from Queensland Writers Centre (QWC) and the State Library of Queensland (SLQ).

Brisbane-based food and travel writer Karen Reyment will share her passion for all things food: cooking it, eating it, and writing about it. Participants will hear her speak about her work, join her for brunch, and join in a creative food-writing workshop, where Karen will demonstrate how to explore culinary delights in narrative and how to translate family recipes and food experiences into personal food tales.

"I am proud to bring the food writing discussion and debate to regional areas of Queensland and share the genre with like-minded people who have been blessed with, what I call, *the food gene*," says Ms Reyment.

"With book deadline looming I really shouldn't be gallivanting around the Queensland countryside," she says, "But when I was approached to join the *Food Tales* tour, there was no way I could resist."

Practical digital publishing techniques will also be covered, giving all participants the chance to contribute to the collaborative *A State of Writing: Food Tales* website, or even set up their own blogs to share recipes and food tales with friends and family close by, or across the country.

Food Tales will take place on Wednesday 4 May in Stanthorpe Library, and on Thursday 5 May in Warwick Library. To book contact your local library, or call Sarah at QWC on (07) 3842 9950.

ENDS

Media contact: Food Tales Producer on 07 xxxx xxxx, or [<email address>](#)

Where: Stanthorpe Library / Warwick Library
When: Wednesday 4th May 2011, 10am / Thursday 5th May 2011, 10am
What: Author talk followed by brunch and a creative food writing workshop

Karen Reyment Freelance Writer, The Word on Food and Travel

After a life-long curiosity and adoration for food, Karen obtained her Graduate Certificate in Food Writing at Adelaide University. Her success has been wide and varied; she has been published by magazines and newspapers Australia wide, writes online for SBS Food, is the Brisbane Correspondent for Australian Gourmet Traveller magazine, and is authoring *Foodies' Guide to Brisbane*; published by Hardie Grant and due in stores October 2011. She says, "My career as a food writer fuels my desire and curiosity for things I love; food, travel, people and learning. It brings me in contact with producers, chefs and artisans and satiates my craving for taste, texture and discovery. To write about and share my experiences with readers, surely this is bliss."



SAMPLE FOOD TALES BLURB

The Queensland Writers Centre and the State Library of Queensland are delighted to invite you to *Food Tales*:



A series of regional tours visiting libraries throughout South West Queensland in the month of May, *Food Tales* brings words and stories to the table in a series of luscious narrative feasts. *Food Tales* is a celebration of the many traditions, cultures, and memories contained within recipes old and new. Join food writer and 4-Ingredients co-creator **Kim McCosker** for an author talk and creative food-writing workshop, translating your favourite recipes and food experiences into your very own food tales.

Whether you be a writer, a cook, or simply a lover of good food, *Food Tales* will have something for you! For more information, and to get a taste of *Food Tales*, visit our [website](#). Get some recipe ideas, and even add something of your own to the [blog](#) and share it with us all!



Food Tales in Mundubbera

Featuring: 4-Ingredients co-author **Kim McCosker**

What: Author talk with Kim, followed by afternoon tea and a creative food-writing workshop

When: Tuesday 24th May

Time: 10am – 1pm

Where: Mundubbera Library, Lyons Street Mundubbera QLD 4626

RSVP preferred. Please contact the <library name> on <phone number>

SAMPLE EVENT PROFILE FORM

Please complete form and return to *[insert own details here]*

EVENT TITLE:

TYPE OF EVENT:

Workshop Talk Seminar Other

CONTACT DETAILS	
Event Organiser	Writer/Author/Presenter
Name:	Name:
Phone:	Phone:
Email:	Email:

EVENT DETAILS

Target audience/age group(s):

Max/min number of participants:

Duration (hours):

Cost:

PRODUCTION REQUIREMENTS

Start time:

End time:

Bump in:

Bump out:

Break time(s):

Equipment requirements (please circle):

Data Projector

Internet access

Lap Top

Whiteboard

Television

Other (please specify):

Resource Requirements (please circle):

Printing

Butchers paper

Pens/pencils/blank paper

Photocopying

Newspapers/magazines

Other (please specify):

Venue configuration (please tick):

Configuration	Description
<input type="checkbox"/> Classroom	Tables with 4 chairs at each facing lengthways down room
<input type="checkbox"/> Horseshoe	Tables set up in wide horseshoe facing widthways across room
<input type="checkbox"/> Small Groups	Clusters of tables seating 4-6 participants
<input type="checkbox"/> Seminar	Chairs set up facing lengthways down room
<input type="checkbox"/> Board Room	Tables grouped together widthways in centre of room

OTHER INFORMATION: