

**NEWS RELEASE
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Training double celebration for Tourism South East

Tourism managers and chefs have gathered together to celebrate the grand finale of two successful training projects organised by Tourism South East.

Over the last two years nearly 300 individuals and over 300 chefs have taken part in the Hosting the World and Fresh Skills for Chefs initiatives, subsidised through South East England Development Agency funding. Hosting the World has assisted businesses on how to make the most of the upcoming opportunities of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and Fresh Skills for Chefs has helped kitchens across the region to improve their culinary offer by engaging chefs in activities including master classes and tours to local producers.

John Williams, Chairman of Tourism South East, joined course participants at Lainston House Hotel near Winchester, finalists in this year's Enjoy England Awards for Excellence, for the celebration. "Both Fresh Skills for Chefs and Hosting the World have been hugely successful. Chefs across the region are now trying new recipes and increasingly the number of local suppliers they use. We are also carrying forward the most successful Hosting the World training modules into a growing suite of 2012 products that now includes Welcome Host Gold, our new customer service training programme."

Lainston House Hotel has been a long-standing supporter of the Fresh Skills for Chefs project, holding Master Classes and Development Days. Executive Chef at Lainston House and Hampshire Chef of the Year, Andy Mackenzie, gave a cookery demonstration on the day. "Fresh Skills for Chefs has had huge benefits for the industry. Diners are increasingly demanding more local, fresh and seasonal produce with low food miles and initiatives such as this better enable chefs to deliver on these demands."

More information about Tourism South East can be found at www.tourismsoutheast.com

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For further information contact: Hannah Payne on 02380 625471 or email hpayne@tourismse.com

Note to Editors:

Tourism South East is a not-for-profit company which is the official tourist board for the region, covering Surrey, Kent, East and West Sussex, Hampshire, the Isle of Wight, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire.

Tourism South East receives core funding from SEEDA, and is active in a range of programmes to support the tourism sector in the South East region, which is worth in excess of £12 billion p.a. to the regional economy (7% of regional GVA), and supports over 300,000 jobs.