

De. Wan 1958
by Chef Wan



Visit Malaysia 2026
Truly Asia

SOUL OF MALAYSIA

SERIES 02
THE CROSSROADS
OF CULTURE



WHERE FLAVOURS MEET

FOREWORD BY CHEF WAN

Malaysia's food story has never followed borders.

It has travelled with traders crossing seas, families seeking new beginnings, communities preserving traditions, and generations sharing recipes around the dinner table. Every dish carries traces of these journeys — cultures, ingredients and memories coming together to shape who we are.

In this second edition of Soul of Malaysia, we continue exploring the nation's culinary heritage through four dishes: Ayam Masak Bali, Ikan Bakar Daun Mengkudu, Lamb Devil Curry, and Ikan Keli Salai Masak Lemak Cili Padi. Each reflects a different meeting point of migration, trade, community and tradition.

Rather than asking where a dish belongs, this collection celebrates how flavours meet, evolve and flourish through food.

As you turn these pages, I invite you to look beyond the ingredients and discover the stories that continue to inspire our kitchens today.

Because food is more than what we eat.

It is who we are.



— Datuk Chef Wan
Culinary Ambassador of Malaysian Heritage



SOUL OF MALAYSIA

Series 02: The Crossroads of Culture

THE ART OF COASTAL FIRE COOKING

IKAN BAKAR DAUN MENGKUDU

Fire-grilled seabass infused with the earthy fragrance of daun mengkudu, celebrating the timeless flavours of Malaysia's eastern shoreline.

Along Malaysia's East Coast, fresh seafood has long been grilled over charcoal fires. Wrapping fish in *daun mengkudu* imparts a subtle herbal aroma while preserving moisture and flavour. Daun mengkudu was once commonly grown in village gardens but is seldom used in modern cooking, making this traditional grilling technique increasingly uncommon.

DID YOU KNOW?

Daun mengkudu is a traditional Malay ingredient valued for its herbal aroma and long-standing role in local wellness traditions.

RM78



De. Wan 1958
by Chef Wan

MICHELIN
2026

Visit
Malaysia 2026
Truly Asia

SOUL OF MALAYSIA

Series 02: The Crossroads of Culture

MIGRATION, MEMORY & SPICE

AYAM MASAK BALI

A Bugis-inspired favourite where fragrant spices and chilli come together in a dish rich with warmth, heritage and coastal influence.

Brought to Selangor by the Bugis community through centuries of migration and trade, Ayam Masak Bali is celebrated for its rich *rempah* and balanced sweet-spicy flavours. Traditionally served during weddings, *kenduris*, and festive gatherings, authentic versions are increasingly found only in family kitchens where recipes are passed down through generations.

DID YOU KNOW?

Despite its name, Ayam Masak Bali is not from Bali. Over generations, Bugis communities helped shape the dish into a beloved part of Malaysia's culinary heritage.

RM48

All prices are subject to 10% service charge & 6% SST.



De. Wan 1958

by Chef Wan

MICHELIN
2026

Visit
Malaysia 2026
Truly Asia

SOUL OF MALAYSIA

Series 02: The Crossroads of Culture

FIRE, SMOKE & TRADITION

IKAN KELI SALAI MASAK LEMAK CILI PADI

Smoky catfish meets velvety coconut and fiery cili padi in a comforting dish that captures the soul of traditional village kitchens.

A defining dish of Negeri Sembilan's Minangkabau heritage, combining traditionally smoked catfish with rich coconut gravy and fiery cili padi. Authentic *ikan keli salai* requires hours of traditional wood-fire smoking, a craft practised by fewer kitchens today.

DID YOU KNOW?

In traditional Negeri Sembilan cooking, the quality of the dish was often judged by the aroma and flavour of its smoked fish.

RM 58



All prices are subject to 10% service charge & 6% SST.



De. Wan 1958
by Chef Wan

MICHELIN
2026

Visit
Malaysia 2026
Truly Asia

SOUL OF MALAYSIA
Series 02: The Crossroads of Culture

WHERE CULTURES CONVERGE

LAMB DEVIL CURRY

A Melakan Eurasian treasure, balancing spice, tang and richness in a recipe shaped by generations of cultural exchange.

Originating from Melaka's Portuguese-Eurasian community, Kari Debal reflects centuries of cultural exchange between Portuguese settlers and local Malay traditions. Authentic Kari Debal remains closely associated with Melaka's Portuguese community and is rarely featured on mainstream restaurant menus.

DID YOU KNOW?

Unlike many local curries, traditional Kari Debal uses vinegar, chillies, and aromatic spices rather than coconut milk, creating its distinctive fiery character.

RM68



De. Wan 1958
by Chef Wan



Visit Malaysia 2026
Truly Asia

ANOTHER JOURNEY AWAITS

SERIES 03
LAUNCHING SEPTEMBER



De. Wan 1958
by Chef Wan



Visit
Malaysia 2026
Truly Asia

www.dewan.space.my
[@dewan1958bychefwan](https://www.instagram.com/dewan1958bychefwan)

www.tourism.gov.my
[@malaysia.truly.asia](https://www.instagram.com/malaysia.truly.asia)

