

Indigenous culinary delights whipped up for Melbourne cooking challenge

20 Nov 08 @ 07:10am by Dimity Barber

APPRENTICE chef Anthony Jean is letting his creative juices flow.

The Narre Warren resident is one of seven Victorian chefs competing in the final of the second annual Indigenous Foods Cooking Challenge.

The 24-year-old has been slaving over a hot stove for five weeks to come up with a culinary masterpiece using indigenous ingredients to wow the judges at the Melbourne Park Function Centre cookoff on Monday, November 24.

“I didn’t know very much at all about indigenous ingredients before the challenge, so there’s been a lot of experimentation going on,” he said.

“A lot of the flavours are very different and they don’t taste so good on their own. But once you combine them with other food they can be very nice.”

The Sage at Parkhill’s apprentice said he was working with simple ingredients including mountain pepper, native salt, wild lime and lemon myrtle herb.

“The idea is to create a dish that will appear on the menu in your restaurant. I’m tossing up between two dishes at the moment,” he said.

Ascet TAFE chief executive officer D’arcey Kelleher said the competition gave apprentice chefs the opportunity to be creative in their own right while highlighting the increasing popularity of indigenous foods and flavours.

First prize is a return trip to Uluru for a first-hand look at the use of indigenous ingredients in world-class restaurants.