

HOTELS NERVOUS AS CABINET CLOSES ON CASINO DEAL

Govt approves Casino tax pitch

INDAILY EXCLUSIVE

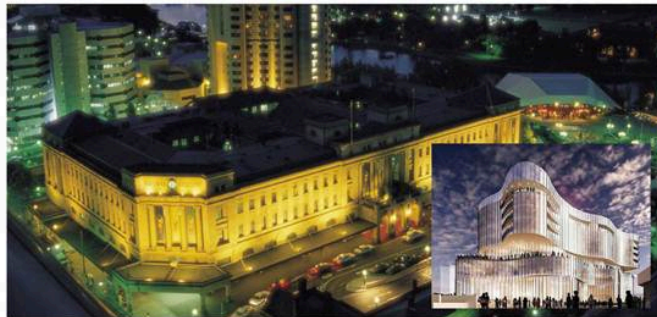
Kevin Naughton

THE State Government has approved the drawing up of a formal tax pitch to Adelaide's SKYCITY Casino and an announcement appears imminent.

The Casino operator has been negotiating with State Government officials for a cut in gaming machine tax rates since March 2011 when it first unveiled plans to redevelop its Adelaide operation.

Again this week, SKYCITY emphasised that a mooted multi-million-dollar redevelopment of its Adelaide casino was dependent on tax concessions.

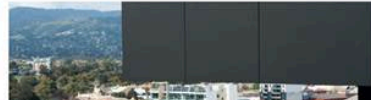
Treasurer Jack Snelling yesterday told *Indaily* that an



The current casino and, inset, one of the proposed designs for a redevelopment. Main photo: SATC

Susan Mitchell: Time to embrace apartment living

Adelaide has never really taken to apartment living in the city. Why is this? Are we essentially still just a larger version of an English village, where the city or



"The food blogger's dining experience is usually similar to that of the average reader, unlike high-profile restaurant critics who are may be recognised in restaurants."
Food bloggers stake their claim.

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FOOD

Focus on food, glorious food

EIGHTY food bloggers from around Australia will converge on Adelaide later this year for a conference which will shine a spotlight on the state's food producers and restaurant industry.

"This is huge for South Australia," said Amanda McInerney, of **Lambs Ears & Honey** blog.

"It's an opportunity that hasn't been afforded in South Australia before, to put our distinctive premier food products in front of people who live to write about food – it's an opportunity money can't buy."

She and fellow organiser Christina Soong-Kroeger (**The Hungry Australian**) have been thrilled by the response to the November *Eat Drink Blog 3* conference, which

is already over-subscribed with more than 90 bloggers applying for the 80 places available.

The interest is indicative of the growing popularity of food blogging in Australia and overseas. An Adelaide food bloggers' group Soong-Kroeger set up on Facebook now has 44 members.

"There are certainly a lot more than I ever imagined," she says.

"There can be competition but that doesn't stop you networking and having bodies that represent you. I take the approach that you are only in competition with yourself – if you share as much information as possible, it's good for everyone."

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Suzie Keen



Food blogger Christina Soong-Kroeger.

THURSDAY, 16 AUGUST 2012

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Eat Drink Blog 3 will cover topics such as social media, blog design, editing, food styling, legal issues and restaurant writing. Speakers will include food writing coach Dianne Jacob, author of the award-winning book *Will Write for Food*, Adelaide chef Simon Bryant; photographer Grant Nowell; internet marketing consultant Geoff Kwitco, and barrister Paul Bullock.

Soong-Kroeger, a freelance writer, consultant and recipe developer, says it is important bloggers are aware of their legal and ethical responsibilities, as problems can arise around issues such as potentially defamatory restaurant reviews, adapted recipes and copyright.

She acknowledges the concerns some chefs and restaurants have about being critiqued by people who may have little or no food industry experience. However, she says the food blogger's dining experience is usually similar to that of the average reader, unlike high-profile restaurant critics who are may be recognised in restaurants and therefore receive special attention.

"Most bloggers just write from their own personal experience, and that is the same as what the reader experiences.

"It's writing in a very informal, personal way ... the quality varies, but that's for readers to pick and choose."

Despite having completed the Le Cordon Bleu Master of Arts (Gastronomy) at Adelaide University, McInerney has chosen to not to write restaurant reviews, which she likens to "taking someone's livelihood in your hands". Instead, her blog focuses on highlighting South Australian producers and their products.

"The more I did it, the more I discovered not only the talent and quality of the products we have in Australia, but the stories and passion behind them," she says.

"I love finding distinctive products; we have some astonishing things here."

Both women say food blogging has opened up new opportunities for them. While McInerney has received writing commissions, Soong-Kroeger has also been offered work in areas such as recipe development and photography.

She says bloggers have to promote themselves via avenues such networking and links from other sites if they want to increase their readership.

"It's been a tremendous journey," she says of *The Hungry Australian*, which she launched last June after being on extended maternity leave.

"Blogging is a way to showcase what I can do ... it's been absolutely life-changing for me.

"Content is king – if you have killer content, people will find you. You always have to have your blogger's hat on, but you also have to have your marketing hat on. You have to think about how you promote yourself and get yourself out there."

One of the things she likes about blogging is the potential to connect with people all over the world, and the fact that anyone can do it. That said, not all are food blogs of equal quality.

"I get a bit cross with people saying everyone can write a food blog," Soong-Kroeger says. "It's like saying everyone can write a book. Yes, they can, but people won't necessarily want to read it.

"It's a very personal thing and that's what so fascinating. You are getting to know someone ... you feel like you have a little window into their world.

"It's a level playing field. You can sit down and write and if you are any good, you will get traction and people will read it."

Eat Drink Blog 3 will take place on November 4 at Adelaide Central Market. Details: www.eatdrinkblog.org.