

Profile

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MELISSA LEONG

There isn't much Melissa hasn't had to do with when it comes to food in Australia. A TV Week Gold Logie-nominated television presenter and personality, freelance food + travel writer, food media consultant, radio broadcaster, MC and cookbook editor, this first generation Singaporean Australian isn't afraid to consume anything at least once.

From getting lost in the back streets of Ho Chi Minh looking for the perfect banh mi at midnight, to living on an abattoir and a sheep dairy in rural Tasmania for two years in order to

better understand agriculture first hand, there is nowhere and nothing she won't do in the name of a great food experience or an important life lesson.

Melissa's work as a television host and judge can be seen on the multi Logie and AACTA award-winning show **MasterChef Australia**, as well as **Junior MasterChef** and **Celebrity MasterChef** on Network 10. In 2024 she was proud to head up MasterChef's sweet new spinoff, **Dessert Masters** alongside internationally celebrated pastry god Amaury Guichon as co-host and judge.

For something different, Melissa has fronted **Fight Week** for UFC on Fox Sports, road-tripped across Australia with comedian Nazim Hussain in SBS's **Great Australian Road Trips**, and hosted **Luxury Escapes: World's Best Holidays**. In 2024, she went deep with Samuel Johnson and Costa Georgiadis in SBS's hard-hitting documentary **The Hospital: In The Deep End**.

She's also popped up on Network 10 favourites **The Amazing Race**, **Have You Been Paying Attention?**, **Would I Lie to You?**, and **Top Gear Australia**, as well as ABC's **Eve of Destruction**. Her breakout work on SBS's **The Chefs' Line** now streams on Netflix US and while it's not all about looks, she was crowned Who Magazine's Sexiest Person of the Year in 2020.

As a radio broadcaster and podcaster, she hosted a regular food show on **FBI Radio** in Sydney for half a decade, as well as a Spotify series

Profile Talent Management Pty Ltd ABN 81 105 752 903
323 Montague Street, Albert Park, Victoria, 3206, Australia
T: +61 3 8958 7810 F: +61 3 8598 7877

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exploring no-holds barred conversations with high profile Australian game changers including Grace Tame, on **More Than Talk**. Most recently in the podcast space, in 2024 she hosted **Coolroom Confessional with Melissa Leong**, a fun and practical series where in each episode they help one hospitality business through a major issue they're facing in their business.

Melissa has featured in campaigns for Lancôme, Cat Amongst The Pigeons wines, Italian tomato icon Mutti, Visit Victoria, QT Hotels, Perrier-Jouët Champagne, Witchery, Georg Jensen, as well as L'Oréal Paris, Hilton Hotels, and the City of Melbourne. . She is a proud Lexus Ambassador and friend of luxury watch brand, **Omega** and has also partnered with tourism bodies both in Australia and abroad, including Western Australia, Northern Territory, Lord Howe Island and Hong Kong. Melissa is also proud to support several charities and initiatives including the **OCRF** (Ovarian Cancer Research Foundation), **Children's Ground**, **Plan Australia**, **The ASRC** (Asylum Seekers' Resource Centre) and **The Lost Dogs Home**.

As an MC, she has also hosted events large and small. From a sold out **Sydney Opera House In Conversation with Jamie Oliver**, to exclusive dinners with other celebrity chefs including Quay's Peter Gilmore, DOM's Alex Atala, Marco Pierre White and Rick Stein, she has worked for top tier brands and events including **American Express**, **Margaret River Gourmet Escape**, **Noosa Food & Wine Festival** and **Parramatta City**, as well as **Fairfax Good Food Month** and **Melbourne Food & Wine** events across Australia.

A background in digital advertising working with brands such as **Coca Cola**, **Nokia** and **LG** gave Melissa her start in the food industry as a freelance food critic for publications such as **Time Out Sydney**, before moving into PR, Marketing and Digital Media consulting. Working with the likes of Adriano Zumbo, Gelato Messina, Meat & Livestock Australia (MLA) and more, Melissa has worked with some of the highest profile and most respected names in the Australian food scene.

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Melissa's first love will always be writing, with her highly anticipated memoir, **Guts** released in 2025. **Guts** is a critically acclaimed and honest account of her life, exploring themes of food, failure, and resilience.

Her first children's book, **A Taste Adventure** (Five Mile Publishing) was released in September 2022, and articulates the 6 main flavour sensations of sweet, sour, salty, bitter, spicy and umami to a whole new generation of food obsessed humans.

As a freelance food journalist and critic, she continues to share her love and knowledge of all things food and travel in publications such as **Delicious**, **Stellar**, and **Escape**. Melissa's life philosophy is the same as that in food - be voracious!

Talent Manager:

Joseph Hanrahan

jhanrahan@profiletalent.com.au

P: + 61 03 8598 7810