

The logo features the word "The" in a small, decorative font at the top, flanked by two small floral icons. Below it, the words "Blind Dining Experience" are written in a large, elegant, red serif font. The entire logo is set against a light beige background with a subtle horizontal line pattern.

The Blind Dining Experience

MasterChef fundraiser exceeds charity's expectations

Simon Gault and his team at the Auckland restaurant Euro have completed two blind dining events for the charity cbm raising significant funds and awareness for the charity.

Over the two evenings, 50 blindfolded diners experienced a unique three-course meal specially designed by Simon and his expert team to entertain the diners' senses.

The last blind dining event took place on Sunday November 20. Mr Gault spoke to diners about his sponsored Dilmah Tea's trip to Sri Lanka where the company founder Merrill J Fernando took Mr Gault to visit the MJF founded Monaragala School for the Deaf and Blind and met children living with disabilities.

"I shall never forget the kids I visited," he said. "It was an emotional experience, I knew I wanted to do something to help raise funds for children living with disabilities in the poorest countries and cbm NZ was the perfect choice."

cbm is an international aid organisation dedicated to working with persons with disabilities in the world's poorest countries.

Deidre Ross, from Auckland, who was among the diners at Euro, said: "I think the blind dining experience is a wonderful idea. It provides an understanding of what it is like to live with a disability and benefits the great work of cbm.

"It took us completely out of our comfort zone but, at the same time, was a very enjoyable evening. We are very familiar with Euro and the meal was beautiful, as always, but it is a very different experience to taste food that you cannot see. You just have to trust people, and we felt very well looked after at all times."

Darren Ward, cbm National Director, said: "The whole event was a huge success and brought strong attention to our Child Sponsorship programme I look forward to what next year's event has to bring. I want to give a huge thanks to Simon and his team at Euro for their hard work and dedication to cbm."

Blind dining dishes featured on the menu included a smoked tuna tartar entree with wasabi and bell pepper caviars, tomato gel and a balsamic gherkin, served with an interesting twist.

A bowl was wrapped in clear film and the tuna was nestled in the centre. Chefs then pierced the film and injected scented smoke into the cavity below. As the diners began to eat the dish, smoke was slowly released, adding another sensory element.

For dessert a deconstructed carrot cake was presented with walnut cake, lemon-cheese ice cream, carrot gel, shaved apple jelly and candied walnuts.

The money raised from the charity event will go towards stopping disabled children's needless suffering in countries such as Africa, Asia and South America.

The blind dining event took place on November 14 and 20, at Auckland's Princes Wharf restaurant Euro. Tickets were \$150 per person.

For more information on cbm or cbm's Child Sponsorship programmes please visit www.cbmnz.co.nz for further details.