

Media Information  
2 July 2021

## **“Chef of the Century” Eckart Witzigmann turns 80.**

- BMW Group congratulates Eckart Witzigmann on his birthday
- Symposium “What does sustainability taste like?” online available
- ECKART 2021 awarded to a pioneering project

**Munich.** The BMW Group and „Chef of the Century” Eckart Witzigmann have been allied in their shared commitment to the art of cooking, deliberate consumption and social responsibility for a long time. This year, the BMW Group will honour its companion of many years on the occasion of his important anniversary and present the jubilarian with a unusual gift – a ECKART Symposium. Following the theme “What does sustainability taste like?” a series of several panel debates featuring first-class experts will focus on important questions of our time.

Ilka Horstmeier, Member of the Board of Management at BMW AG, Human Resources and Labour Relations Director, commented on the special anniversary, „Happy birthday, dear Mr Witzigmann! Our symposium is just a little token of our appreciation to mark our long-standing partnership. From its inception, we have kept in mind our common goal, namely the promotion of healthy eating, sustainable culinary art and responsible use of resources and continue to work towards it to this day. Good, healthy food that is produced and prepared in a sustainable manner is one of the greatest challenges of our time. A challenge that reflects how we at the BMW Group understand and live sustainability. New impulses are key to company catering and fine dining alike. Hand in hand, we are developing and promoting ideas to ensure real change. I would like to express my most sincere gratitude to Mr Witzigmann for his continued commitment to the cause.”

Hosted by Dr Christoph Wirtz, editor in chief at restaurant guide Gault&Millau Germany, the very first interdisciplinary round table on quality and sustainability will be a platform for debate welcoming participants head of human resources Ilka Horstmeier, Norbert Niederkofler, winner of the ECKART 2020 for innovation and Steffi Czerny, CEO DLD Media GmbH. “Quality” has an interesting double meaning. Used in its literal sense, the term denotes the sum of all qualities of any given product. As users, however, we tend to interpret the term as having a value

and attach it to upmarket and premium products. If we furthermore combine the term "quality" with the idea of sustainability, we also bring into question its origin, the way it was produced and the social conditions surrounding its production, its transport and sale as well as its final use and processing. The same is true for food products and vehicles and even digital products. At the roundtable, the participants will explore at what point food and other products can be considered sustainable and what exactly that implies. And if sustainability is to be understood as the basis of new, circular business activities, there is a need to develop new business models.

In the next panel Martin Straubinger, head of BMW Group Company Catering, Barbara Jung-Arntz, journalist, and Jürgen Mäder, CEO Edeka Südwest, will debate a range of issues including transport routes, distribution, quality and cost of our food. Mr Straubinger said, "In line with our overall strategy regarding sustainability at the BMW Group, the department of company catering is a proactive agent in the process and continuously improves its relevant practices. To that end, we routinely examine all processes such as the local sourcing of products, animal welfare, the optimisation of delivery routes and the use of sustainable materials as well as the reduction and prevention of waste. No small feat, keeping in mind the enormous number of meals – 42,000 – that cross our counters every day at the various BMW locations in both Germany and Austria."

The third panel will feature Jürgen Molter, head of catering at the BMW sites in Dingolfing, Regensburg, Landshut and Steyr, Nathalie Leblond, head chef at restaurant "Les Deux", Dr Stefan Hartmann, president of the German Institute of Company Catering (DIG) and Patrick Auer, head of company catering at the Bavarian Association of Insurers debating the similarities and differences of fine dining and company catering. What expectations do they need to meet respectively and what can the two disciplines learn from each other? At the end of the day, fine dining is most appreciated where people make the choice of eating both healthy and well and where most meals cross the counter – at staff canteens.

In the final panel, Maximilian Schöberl, Head of BMW Group Corporate and Intergovernmental Affairs, and Eckart Witzigmann will talk about a future collaboration close to their heart launched on the occasion of the 80<sup>th</sup> birthday of the "Chef of the Century". Donated by the ECKART Academy, named after the century chef Eckart Witzigmann, and endowed with a prize money of 50,000 Euro by the BMW Group, the ECKART 2021 will be awarded to a pioneering project. The project was co-founded by the oncological center of excellence Klinik Bad Trissl, a major partner of Munich's universities as well as Bavaria's leading treatment center for tumor patients and Munich's most awarded chef Jan Hartwig. Together, they harness their expertise in fine dining to develop healthy diets for both patients and staff.

To give an initial boost to the project, Prof Dr Volkmar Nüssler (MD), Executive Coordinator at Munich Tumor Centre (TMZ), responsible for the medical side of "Proof of Concept", will provide scientific support while the business side of the project will be headed by Prof Dr Nicole Graf, Chancellor of DHBW university.

The symposium will be recorded prior to the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Eckart Witzigmann and made available online at <https://eckart-foodlab.com>.

### **The ECKART**

The BMW Group and ECKART Academy have been partners since 2012 and together they award the Eckart Witzigmann Prize for outstanding achievements in the field of gastronomy. Based on their shared commitment to healthy eating, sustainable cuisine and the responsible use of resources, the partnership supports social and sustainable projects. Previous winners of the award include Daniel Boulud, HRH Charles Prince of Wales, Elena Arzak, Anne-Sophie Pic, Harald Wohlfahrt, Dieter Kosslick, Ferran Adrià, Marc Haeberlin, Joël Robuchon, Alex Atala, Jon Rose, Mick Hucknall, Massimo Bottura, Dominique Crenn, Andreas

Caminada, Tiffany Persons, María Marte and Alain Ducasse. This year's award ceremony for the ECKART 2021 will take place in October 2021.

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**The BMW Group**

With its four brands BMW, MINI, Rolls-Royce and BMW Motorrad, the BMW Group is the world's leading premium manufacturer of automobiles and motorcycles and also provides premium financial and mobility services. The BMW Group production network comprises 31 production and assembly facilities in 15 countries; the company has a global sales network in more than 140 countries.

In 2020, the BMW Group sold over 2.3 million passenger vehicles and more than 169,000 motorcycles worldwide. The profit before tax in the financial year 2019 was € 7.118 billion on revenues amounting to € 104.210 billion. As of 31 December 2019, the BMW Group had a workforce of 126,016 employees.

The success of the BMW Group has always been based on long-term thinking and responsible action. The company has therefore established ecological and social sustainability throughout the value chain, comprehensive product responsibility and a clear commitment to conserving resources as an integral part of its strategy.

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