



Seoul 1988

# QUALITY AND QUANTITY

**F**ood services during the Seoul Olympics were carried out with the basic understanding that the highest quality dining should be provided to athletes and officials at the lowest cost and with maximum economy.

The food service plan was to cover 33 days from 3 September to 5 October, but it was implemented two days ahead of schedule when some 190 delegates from 17 nations entered the Village on 1 September.

It was generally agreed that a long preparation period was necessary to secure enough manpower and materials to operate a large-scale service such as that required by the Games, and that professional assistance would be the most effective way to do this.

The Seoul Olympic Organizing Committee (SLOOC) decided in its initial food service plan in March 1987 to refer to professional organizations and received outlines from prospective caterers, the Hotel Lotte, the Hotel Shilla and the Plaza Hotel. These three establishments had already acquired experience and expertise by participating in the 10th Asian Games in Seoul, and the SLOOC decided to select the official food service contractor by conducting a specified closed bidding among them.

In May 1987, the Hotel Lotte and Hotel Shilla were chosen as joint service contractors with a contract payment of 5.61 billion Korean won.

The Games menu listed 266 different kinds of food, 39 more than the Los Angeles Olympics, and more diverse than the 220 dishes at the 1987 Universiad and the 244 at the Seoul Asiad. There were 70 different choices for breakfast, 92 for lunch

by Jae-Hoon Sun



and 104 for dinner, as well as 19 kinds of box lunches and 20 kinds of snacks to satisfy the various tastes of athletes and officials.

The SLOOC called on the Korea Tourism Development Institute of Kyunggi University in February 1987 to draw up the estimated costs of the menu. The menu list was determined in March after consultations with related organizations.

The first tasting was held on 17 September. The tasting exhibition was held at

Gymnastics Hall inside Olympic Park with some 1,000 people, including IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch, participating. It lasted for about three hours.

A general survey was conducted at the exhibition, in which Koreans gave a relatively favourable evaluation. Foreigners, however, rated the taste, food colouring and meat quality as inadequate, and as a result, remedies and complementary plans were sought for the menus. The new plan called for hydroponic vegetables, an emphasis on hot dishes, guarantees of quality meat by designating suppliers, and diversification of Korean and Asian traditional foods.

The new supplemented menu was sent out to 167 NOCs in May 1988 to poll their opinions. A second tasting exhibition was held on 3 September with the finalized menus.

The finalized food service comprised mainly Western-style dishes, on a five-day cycle providing a minimum of 6,000 calories per day. A special menu was

also devised to provide a choice of meals for those with specific needs according to religion and geographical origin.

Food materials used at the Village dining hall amounted to 1,044 tonnes, which meant an average of four 8-tonne trucks per day during the 33 days of operation. The cost was 2.3 billion won or \$3.66 million.

The main ingredients were 42,776 kilograms of beef, 30,227 kilograms of pork, 42,561 kilograms of chicken, 10,117 kilograms of lamb, 1,813 kilograms of turkey, 30,651 kilograms of fish, 166,237 kilograms of vegetables, 180,544 kilograms of fruit, 27,820 kilograms of grain and 124,138 cans of juice.

Cooking material supplies were basically domestic products. Domestic

*Fresh native grapes.*





products accounted for 80.3 percent, or 838 tonnes, while imports made up 19.7 percent, or 205 tonnes.

The dining hall at the Athletes' Village,

could seat 4,200 people at one time, 2,700 on the first floor and 1,500 on the second. The dining hall was open 24 hours a day. Regular meal services ran from 6 am for breakfast, 11 am to 4 pm for lunch, and 5 pm to 11 pm for dinner.

The hall was run in self-service style with unlimited servings. However, taking food outside the dining hall was prohibited. The dining hall arrangements were the responsibility of the operations personnel.

The dining hall served a total of 835,344 meals to 14,501 athletes and officials from 160 countries. This averaged out to 58 meals and a 19-day stay per person.

A box lunch was available for athletes who had to stay at their competition site for longer than four hours. In total, 20,468 boxes, 18,833 for lunch and 1,635 for dinner, were distributed.

Box lunches had to be requested in writing by chefs de mission 24 hours before they were needed. During the meal service period, 14,649 box lunches were delivered while 5,819 were picked up by athletes themselves.



*The Olympic Village restaurant.*

