

Photos from the heart

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The passion for photography and a day at a charity drive brought three women together.

Inspired by the enthusiasm of the volunteers at the Food From The Heart food distribution programme last year, the three photographers, who also took part in the charity drive, decided to put their skills to work for a good cause.

Armed with their digital cameras, the trio – Lydie Raimbault, Florence Notte and Ulla Gratton – went around the island taking photos last year.

The result: a 114-page photo-cum-diary book capturing Singapore's colourful cityscape, people and culture titled *Singapore, Day After Day*.

It offers a portrait of the city as seen through Europeans eyes in more than 80 photos with descriptions in French and English.

All proceeds from the book's sales will go to Food From The Heart, a non-profit organisation founded by Christine and Henry Laimer in November 2002.

The Austrian couple started the food distribution programme in Singapore after reading a report in *The Sunday Times* about bakeries dumping unsold bread.

French photographer Notte, 47, who has been living in Singapore for 14 months, tells *Life!*: "We wanted to create more than just a photo book but a special planner where personal memories and important dates can be recorded.

"Singapore, Day After Day is targeted at



Finnish Ulla Gratton (left) and French Florence Notte, two of three photographers behind the *Singapore, Day After Day* photo-cum-diary book. ST PHOTO: MUGILAN RAJASEGERAN

everyone from the expatriate community to tourists and locals."

The mother of three teenage girls is a professional photographer. In Singapore, she works for *La Gazette* French magazine.

With a team of eight women, including the three photographers, the book project took about a year to put together.

The rest, comprising housewives and professionals, help to oversee the production, marketing, public relations and distribution aspects of the book.

The initial print run of 3,000 copies costs about \$30,000, which is covered by 11 sponsors such as Opera Gallery Singapore, ExxonMobil and Foster Wheeler.

Gratton, 49, who picked up photography five years ago at Objectifs, a centre for film-making and photography here, says: "The pictures were selected from over 1,000 photos over several meetings. Some were taken before we took on the project."

The Finnish, who is a mother of two girls aged 17 and 14, has been living in Singapore for 18 years. The other photographer Raimbault, a French national, is married with two children.

Notte, who is holding a photo exhibition next February at The Art Loft in Alexandra Road, adds: "In France, there is a similar charity called *Les Restos du Coeur* that works on the same principles as Food From The Heart.

"The local project is another opportunity for European expats to reach out to the local community."

Singapore, Day After Day is priced at \$25 and is available at major bookstores and more than 30 locations such as Asian Civilisations Museum, Chinatown Heritage Centre, National Museum of Singapore, Opera Gallery Singapore and Peranakan Museum. For details, log on to www.florence notte.canalblog.com

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