



# Gastronomy and cultural heritage guidebook





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CHAPTER ONE



# Introduction





# Introduction

Gastronomy is a cultural expression that reflects the history, heritage, and traditions of communities. Through this guide, readers will embark on a journey that connects the flavors of our kitchens with the richness of our cultural heritage.

This project not only explores the origins of gastronomy but also how food culture has evolved and continues to be preserved and protected today. The guide highlights the importance of safeguarding and promoting gastronomy, not only as a cultural legacy but also as a driver of tourism and local economies.

In these pages, readers will find a comprehensive perspective on the role of gastronomy in Europe, with a special focus on the European Union's policies for the protection and promotion of its gastronomic heritage. The recipes, case studies and practical examples mostly focus on the six countries that participate in this project: France, Bulgaria, Greece, Italy, Spain and Portugal.



## CHAPTER 1

# Chapter description

This guide is structured to provide a comprehensive yet approachable exploration of how the European Union has embraced and safeguarded its rich gastronomic legacy. In the chapters ahead, readers will discover the following:

### **2. Gastronomy as part of the intangible national & European heritage**

This chapter provides an insight into the origins of gastronomy, tracing back its roots to ancient cultures and how it has shaped civilizations throughout history.

### **3. Origins and history of gastronomy**

Here, readers will explore how gastronomy has evolved in contemporary Europe, showcasing the innovations and trends that have emerged, while still maintaining ties to tradition.

### **4. Modern Gastronomy**

This section describes the deep connection between food and cultural identity, discussing how gastronomy forms an integral part of cultural heritage and its role in shaping collective memories.

### **5. Protection of the food legacy by the EU**

Readers will learn about the various policies and initiatives undertaken by the European Union to safeguard culinary traditions and protect the authenticity of local foods, ensuring they are passed down to future generations.



## CHAPTER 1

# Chapter description

### **6. Gastronomy and tourism**

This chapter highlights the role of gastronomy as a key component of cultural tourism, showing how food experiences attract visitors and contribute to the development of sustainable tourism.

### **7. Gastronomy and local economy**

Here, the economic impact of gastronomy is examined, demonstrating how local culinary traditions and food industries support regional economies and foster community growth.

### **8. Mediterranean diet**

This chapter focuses on the Mediterranean diet, recognized worldwide for its health benefits and cultural significance, emphasizing its role as a pillar of Mediterranean gastronomy.

### **9. Get to know the locals!**

Readers are encouraged to engage with local communities and their culinary traditions, discovering typical recipes from Easter and Christmas traditions of each country.

### **10. Conclusions and recommendations**

The guide concludes with a reflection on the future of gastronomic heritage and offers practical recommendations for preserving and promoting culinary traditions.



# Gastronomy as part of the intangible national & European heritage







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## Gastronomy as part of the intangible national & European heritage

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## CHAPTER 2

# Do you know what intangible cultural heritage is?

Gastronomic heritage is an indispensable part of the intangible cultural heritage – both national and European. It plays an important role in the preservation of the identity of a region, nation and society.

Gastronomy serves as a significant component of intangible cultural heritage, including traditions, practices, and knowledge passed down through generations. At local, national and European levels, gastronomy plays an important role in shaping cultural identities and preserving heritage. In this section of the guide, we will explore how gastronomy contributes to intangible heritage, showing its importance in preserving cultural identity and encouraging conversations between different cultures.

### Gastronomy in our Heritage

Ever noticed how food brings us back to our roots? Gastronomy isn't just about cooking; it's a bridge to our ancestors' wisdom and stories.

From the choice of ingredients to the rituals surrounding food preparation and consumption, gastronomy embodies cultural values, beliefs, and social customs.

Moreover, within gastronomy, there is a wealth of traditional knowledge passed down orally from one generation to another. From indigenous culinary traditions to artisanal techniques, preserving this valuable knowledge is essential for cultural continuity and sustainability. Gastronomy belongs to our heritage.

#### **Three elements contribute to identify what is part of our heritage:**

1. Time, as a vector of memory: heritage is anchored in the past but has a place in the present;
2. Space, as a geographical identifier: heritage belongs to a specific village, region, country, with links and common patterns with other places;
3. Community, as an indicator of belonging: heritage is recognized as such by a group of people, a village or a region.



# Do you know what intangible cultural heritage is?

## Gastronomy in our Heritage



Our Culinary intangible heritage is characterized by its relationship to these three key elements:

Gastronomic traditions serve as a vessel of memory, bridging the past and present by preserving culinary practices and recipes (Time). Culinary intangible heritage is closely tied to specific geographical locations, reflecting the unique culinary identities of communities and regions while also sharing connections with similar gastronomic traditions worldwide (Space). Culinary heritage fosters a sense of belonging and identity among communities (Community).



# Do you know what intangible cultural heritage is?

### Lets define intangible heritage!

Understanding the concept of intangible heritage completely is key to effectively communicating this notion to your visitors.

Unlike tangible heritage, which includes physical objects, buildings, items such as fountains, bridges and mills or even sites, intangible heritage encompasses know-how, rituals, music, dance, stories, and other cultural expressions that shape our collective identity.

The UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) in the “Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage” (2003) defines intangible cultural heritage as:

“The practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artifacts and cultural spaces associated there with – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as part of their cultural heritage.

This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus fostering respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.”



## CHAPTER 2

# Do you know what intangible cultural heritage is?

### Intangible heritage is the living expression!

Intangible heritage, including gastronomy, is the living expression of our cultural identity. It consists of traditions, knowledge, and practices passed down orally, experientially, and through social customs.

#### **The example of Chestnut: legendary fruit part of human culture and practices since ages!**

**Legend:** A lot of legends and expressions are linked to chestnuts. In French popular speech, 'châtaigne' (chestnut) means a punch or an electric shock. In Greece, toponymy reveals the importance of chestnut orchards: there are many villages called Kastania (Chestnuts). Similarly, in Corsica, many villages are named 'castagnetu' (chestnut orchard).

**Festive events:** Chestnuts were part of various traditions and rituals, such as offering them at weddings or during funeral ceremonies. In the south of France, Spain, and Italy, grilled chestnuts were included in the traditional meal for All Saints' Day.

**Know-how:** Traditional cultivation methods, drying techniques, and the production of chestnut-derived products are deeply rooted in the expertise of farmers and craftsmen, forming an integral part of cultural heritage.

**Gastronomy:** Often referred to as the 'bread of the poor' and revered as the fruit that rescued communities from famine, sweet chestnuts served as the primary source of carbohydrates until the 19th century in various European regions where they thrive. They have since become an enduring part of culinary traditions and are used in various forms, including grilled, boiled, or in processed products such as sweet chestnut flour, creams, whole peeled chestnuts, 'marrons glacés' (candied chestnuts), honey, and biscuits. They are integral to culinary practices and have recently gained popularity in gluten-free diets.

Intangible heritage serves as a bridge between our past, present, and future generations. It enriches our lives with meaning and connection, fostering a deeper appreciation for our cultural heritage. It is our responsibility to preserve and transmit these cultural treasures for future enjoyment and understanding. Sharing our heritage is also a way to communicate with visitors, since it expresses a part of ourselves without words and languages, and it can create a bridge to other cultures and individualities. By sharing with visitors these important aspects of our culture, we ensure their continued vitality and relevance in our society.

Last but not least, the gastronomic heritage is an inexhaustible source of knowledge about the food preparation and processing; the indigenous ingredients; the various preservation techniques; the specific ways of foods combination, etc. The gastronomic heritage is a "treasury box" that is not only holding the traditions and past knowledge. It is also a source of inspiration for new culinary creations, recipes and gastronomic innovations for current tourists and future generations.



## CHAPTER 2

# Do you know what intangible cultural heritage is?

### European gastronomic heritage: A delicious walk through centuries

The gastronomic heritage of Europe is a vibrant mosaic of flavors, tastes, techniques and traditions that spans millennia. Its evolution tells a fascinating story starting from the ancient civilizations and evolving to the sophisticated haute cuisine of the modern era. The current European gastronomic landscape is a true testament to the continent's rich history, diverse cultures and unique terroirs.

The genesis of European cuisine can be traced back to the ancient Greeks and Romans. The Greeks "invented" the balance of the five fundamental tastes and introduced wine-making, a tradition deeply incorporated in all European cultures today. The Romans, with their vast empire, brought a world of flavors to the European table, incl. methods for food preservation, like smoking and salting. They were the ones to create and introduce sophisticated dishes using exotic spices and ingredients from their far-away territories.

**The Middle Ages** were mainly marked by the development of more regional cuisines and the strong influence of the Christian church and its doctrine. The imposed meat-free days led to the introduction of fish and vegetables. Meanwhile, the Crusades opened a new culinary gateway to the Middle East, introducing European cuisine to herbs and spices like saffron, cinnamon and cloves.

**The Renaissance**, often referred to as the period of European culture rebirth, had a significant impact also on the cuisine. The discovery of the New World introduced tomatoes, potatoes, peppers and other ingredients that would become essentials in European kitchens in the coming centuries. This period also stimulated the emergence of professional chefs and the first cookbooks, transforming cooking from a domestic chore into a respected form of art.

**The Industrial Revolution** in the 18th and 19th centuries brought new changes to European cuisine. The mechanization in the farms increased the food production, while the development of new preservation techniques prolonged food's shelf life. Improved transportation made it possible to import and export food, resulting in a greater variety of ingredients in the existing diet. The advent of restaurants and the professionalization of chefs played a significant role in developing modern European cuisine.

Today, European cuisine continues to evolve, **blending tradition with innovation**. The slow food and farm-to-table movements emphasize local, seasonal ingredients, celebrating the unique flavors of each region. The evolution of European cuisine is a fascinating culinary odyssey that mirrors the continent's history and cultural diversity and creates a vast gastronomic heritage that should be preserved and further developed in the centuries to come.



# Gastronomy heritage and benefits for the local community

As mentioned by J. S Mulcahy (2019), “Anthropologists such as Claude Lévi-Strauss (1968) have emphasized that eating is not only a basic physical need, but also, and perhaps primarily, a marker of social and cultural belonging.”

### Gastronomy is part of the community’s identify

The Sunday family lunch in Napoli, the “Greek coffee” at the village square, the French champagne to celebrate events... food heritage encompasses common social practices and strengthens the feeling of belonging. In this sense, it strengthens community cohesion, as food festivals and celebrations can demonstrate.

Gastronomic heritage is also important for ensuring the sustainability of the local community or region. As the traditional recipes are based on the local production cycle and use of locally-sourced & seasonal ingredients, they encourage a more sustainable approach to food preparation. Together with the knowledge of food and culinary skills, local food productions are regarded by the communities as their collective legacy.

It is also an entry to define the brand and image of a territory that may be useful to promote local productions and tourism.



foto credit: Pexels



# Gastronomy heritage and benefits for the local community

### Gastronomy promotes intercultural dialogue

Food has always been a common way for people from different cultures to connect. It can unite people, help them understand each other, and create connections between different communities. In our globalized world, where it's essential to communicate across cultures, food plays an important role in encouraging cultural exchange and appreciation.

Sharing a meal with locals when traveling is the best way to meet their culture and "live like locals". Such experience promotes tolerance and respect for cultural diversity and enriches our collective experience.

That's why gastronomy can also help refugees integrate into a new country. The Refugee Food Festival is a traveling project led by citizens and founded by the association Food Sweet Food, with the support of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The festival's idea is for restaurants to open their kitchens to refugee chefs, allowing them to share delicious and unifying moments.



photo: Pexels by Askar Abayev



# Gastronomy heritage and benefits for the local community

### Gastronomy heritage supports local sustainable economy

Preserving the gastronomic heritage is an essential factor for ensuring and supporting the local economy.

In many regions, gastronomy is used to promote sustainable farming, preserve traditional food practices, and support local communities. It is no wonder that gastronomy serves as a means for attracting tourists and represents a territorial capital that brings great social, ecological and economic benefits. Many tourism localities and hospitality facilities have recognized the importance of gastronomic potential for tourism development and have started to promote and offer their own authentic and traditional products (see the case studies).

Basing tourism on local food means preserving the cultural and natural heritage that supports it.

- It helps preserve traditional recipes and culinary practices to be inherited from one generation to the next, therefore maintaining a unique cultural identity of each area.
- These recipes are based on local products, which will in turn be preserved. Doing that, these are local plants and animal species that will be preserved for the good of biodiversity.



# Gastronomy heritage and benefits for the local community

### Gastronomy heritage supports local sustainable economy

Attracting tourists means additional potential clients and source of revenue. Gastronomy tourism encourages the development of local food industries. It will not only create job opportunities in the tourism sector (restaurants, hotels, etc.), but will also benefit local farmers, local product manufacturers (preserves, sweets, wine, etc.) and distributors (food shops, markets, etc.).

During the 8th edition of the UN Tourism World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism in San Sebastian, Spain, the UNWTO decided to highlight gastronomy tourism's role in the preservation of local territories and the promotion of sustainable practices. Joxe Mari Aizega, General Director of Basque Culinary Center stated that "Territory, innovation and creativity are key to successfully moving towards a new scenario in which to promote a model of responsible gastronomy tourism focused on caring for people and the environment. It is essential to promote sustainable practices (...)."

Following this approach, the Greek Ministry of Tourism wants to develop agro-tourism and gastronomic tourism as an essential part of its strategy. Its main action is the development of an agri-food-gastronomy-tourism interface network to function as a thematic Destination Management Organization (DMO). To increase the visibility of Greece as a gastronomic tourist destination, it foresees the mapping of the existing gastronomy tourism products and services provided (such as, agrotourism units, wineries, olive oil mills, catering businesses), gastronomic experiences (such as, organization of thematic itineraries, local interactive workshops, visits to local producers of agricultural products and wine, etc.) and gastronomic experiences (such as, organization of thematic routes, local interactive workshops, visits to local producers of agricultural products and wine, etc. etc.), as well as the digital visualisation of the above.



# Preserving and promoting our gastronomic heritage

In the modern era, however, maintaining and developing culinary traditions is an important challenge, considering globalization, modernization, and lifestyle changes that can threaten the continuity of these traditions. Thus, recording recipes, cooking techniques, stories behind food and historical information related to culinary and gastronomic traditions are essential steps for preserving this heritage.

### A European recognition

Over the last years, cultural heritage has gained importance at EU policy level. Already in 2014, the European Parliament recognized the cultural and educational aspects of gastronomy. In its European Gastronomic Heritage Report (European Parliament 2014), the E.P. emphasizes the importance of identifying, cataloging, transmitting, and disseminating the cultural richness of European gastronomy. Additionally, it advocates for the establishment of a European observatory for gastronomy that would celebrate and preserve culinary traditions while fostering intercultural understanding across European borders.

Most recently, the link between food, culture, heritage and tourism was recognised in the European Commission's Communication on tourism and transport in 2020 and beyond.

Gastronomy at the European level serves as a unifying force, reflecting the continent's rich cultural diversity.

The standardization and industrialisation of food chains has resulted in the decline of small farms, rural employment, and regional processing facilities, jeopardising our gastronomic heritage.

Empowering and encouraging local communities to preserve and protect their regional gastronomic traditions can help them feel that they play an important part in the preservation of their cultural heritage. Teaching the younger generation about the traditional values and cooking techniques is also an important step in ensuring that the gastronomic heritage will be preserved and passed along.



# Preserving and promoting our gastronomic heritage

## A European recognition

Several initiatives have been developed in Europe to preserve Gastronomic Heritage

- **The International Association for the Protection of Gastronomic Heritage** was born in 2021 with the aim of taking the appropriate and necessary measures for the preservation of the traditional gastronomic culture of every country, community, or geographical area. The instrument to assess and certify Protected Gastronomic Heritage it's the homonym Institute that has as well established an international network to broaden their footprint worldwide.

Check in the link below for more information (in Spanish): <https://patrimoniogastronomicoprotegido.org/>

- **The European Region of Gastronomy**

This event fosters collaboration among European cities and regions, promoting gastronomic heritage as a driver of sustainable development and cultural tourism.

The European Region of Gastronomy is an esteemed title awarded annually to one or more cities or regions in Europe. This important recognition is given by the International Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts, and Tourism (IGCAT).

The award is a collaborative effort, and the regions that receive it join a World Platform of awarded and candidate Regions of Gastronomy.



## CHAPTER 2

# Preserving and promoting our gastronomic heritage

### A European recognition

#### Main goals of the European Region: of Gastronomy program

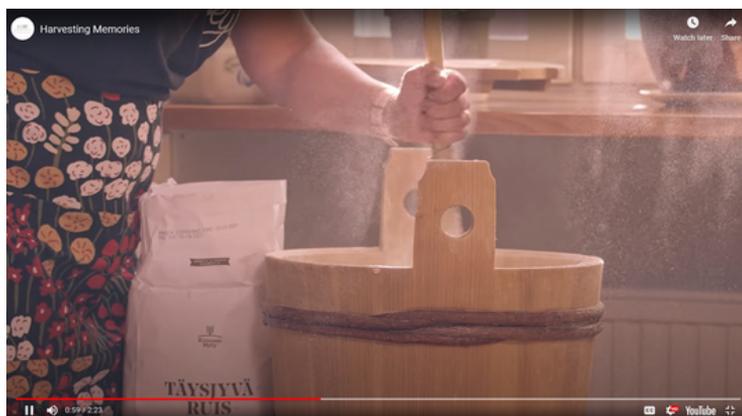




## CHAPTER 2

# Preserving and promoting our gastronomic heritage

### A European recognition



Food Film Menu 2023 - IGCAT - International Institute of Gastronomy, Culture, Arts and Tourism



# Preserving and promoting our gastronomic heritage

## Good practices to preserve and promote gastronomic heritage

- **Increase your knowledge on your own Gastronomic heritage**

Get in touch with local cooks! You can contact chefs, grandmothers, and food artisans to organize to your visitors hands-on cooking workshops. Participants can learn traditional techniques, such as fermenting, pickling, or baking bread. These workshops not only teach practical skills but also foster a sense of continuity with the past.

You can conduct interviews with older community members who hold valuable culinary knowledge. Ask about family recipes, seasonal practices, and food-related customs. Capture these insights in written or audio form

- **Share your Gastronomic heritage with others**

For farmers or small tourism businesses, there are different ways to help visitors understand that gastronomy reflects the unique cultural identity of a city, a region or a country. Several practices are proposed in the table below:



## CHAPTER 2

# Preserving and promoting our gastronomic heritage

Action	Expected impact
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Encourage the chef in your restaurant/facility and in local restaurants you collaborate with to</li></ul> <p>- document and share <b>traditional recipes and cooking techniques</b> (even if they keep the secret of the final touch!).</p> <p>- mention in their menu the traditional character of the dishes they propose</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>These culinary practices embody cultural values, historical connections, and social customs. <b>By preserving and promoting these gastronomic traditions, communities protect their cultural identity against homogenization and globalization.</b></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>You can organize <b>gastronomic events and festivals</b> that celebrate local specialties. Through food fairs, street food festivals, or themed dinners.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>These gatherings allow people to experience the flavors and stories behind the dishes.</li><li>It also gives opportunity for collaboration among local restaurants, markets, food producers and tourism businesses.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Invite <b>elders and community members</b> to your facility/organization to share their <b>food-related memories and stories</b>.</li><li>You can record these narratives, transcribe them, and include them in your guidebook, website, social media or other dissemination tool.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Elders and community members share valuable insights on local cuisine, preserving traditions and connecting past to present through their experiences. By inviting them to share their food-related experiences, <b>we ensure that these oral traditions remain alive.</b></li><li><b>Highlighting the emotional connections</b> people have with certain foods will help visitor better relate to your cultural identity.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>You can also <b>develop guided food trails</b> that take visitors through historical neighborhoods, markets, and cafés/restaurants. Explain to them the cultural significance of each stop, <b>emphasizing how the food served there contributes to the local identity</b>. You can provide practical maps and itineraries for tourists to explore on their own.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><b>Guided food trails allow visitors to engage themselves in the local gastronomic scene</b> and learn directly about the culinary heritage.</li><li>Explaining the cultural significance of each stop gives context to the food, because visitors appreciate not only what's on their plate but also the stories that happened in the surroundings.</li><li>Such trails can be the opportunity for visitors to buy local products and meet producers.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>What is more exciting than <b>working with youth</b>? You can contact teachers or representatives from schools to organize workshops to teach students about local food traditions, the science of cooking, and the cultural stories behind ingredients. Arrange field trips to food markets, farms, and historical kitchens.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>You will help schools and educational institutions to integrate gastronomy into their curriculum.</li><li>And encourage <b>future generation</b> to maintain culinary tradition with deep knowledge on its background.</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>An innovative idea to highlight to your visitors the connections between gastronomy and traditional knowledge is through <b>establishing a community garden</b> where traditional ingredients are grown.</li></ul> <p>Engage the local authorities in the development of the project.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>It will help explain the historical context of each plant or herb.</li><li>Encourage schools and families to participate in maintaining these gardens.</li><li>Provide produce for local restaurants or food events that are locally organized.</li></ul>

# CHAPTER 2



## Case studies

### 1. Developing a tourism business around an emblematic production:

The "Messianian Story" initiative showcases the commitment of the Bousdoukas family in Korifasio, Messinia to promote and preserve local traditions and diversify their farming activity with agritourism. Built on the family olive grove, a nice place has welcomed visitors since 2019. Visitors have the opportunity to discover the basics of olive oil production and participate in a cooking class. Once prepared, the meal will be cooked in the wood-fired oven and enjoyed together in the lovely courtyard, in the shade of the olive trees! These initiatives not only preserve Messinia's cultural heritage but also contribute to preserving Greece's unique culinary identity against the pressures of modernization, ensuring that the country's gastronomic traditions continue to thrive for future generations.

Check: [Messianian Story – Olive Oil & Gastronomic Experience](#)



Photos: Messinian Story

## CHAPTER 2



# Case studies

## 2. Promoting the Gastronomy as a cultural asset of a Country in Greece

In Greece, gastronomy is a key asset of the national tourism sector, able to provide substantial economic and social benefits. It adds significant value to the destination, enhancing its appeal to visitors.

Convinced by this approach, some private and public organisations have developed websites to promote more than the classic 'moussaka' and 'Greek salad'! They want to offer a chance to discover the many distinctive features of the gastronomy of Greek regions and islands. They highlight these specificities, based on the quality of the products used in the dishes, the know-how of the locals, whether or not they are professional cooks, and ancestral culinary traditions.

Here are two examples of websites developed to promote Greek cuisine through a territorial approach, linking food and local communities. They recommend places of gastronomic interest, creating routes to explore for national or international visitors.

### The Greek Gastronomy Guide!

The online Greek Gastronomy Guide is a delightful journey through the flavors, people, and landscapes of Greece. It was developed by two lovers and experts of Greek Gastronomy, George Pittas and Bilio Tsoukalas.

It celebrates the rich culinary culture of the country, highlighting its unique gastronomic treasures and focusing on the communities behind them.

Local cuisine is presented through:

- Places and Landscapes: the web pages help you explore the diverse regions of Greece, each forming a gastronomic destination.
- Products and Producers: you can learn about local ingredients, artisanal products, and the passionate producers behind them.
- History and Tradition: you will dive into the historical context of Greek food, and discover age-old recipes and culinary customs.
- Events and Rituals: to learn about food-related festivals, rituals, and celebrations.
- Gastronomic Communities: to discover professionals in agriculture, processing, catering, and hospitality composing the "Gastronomic Communities"



## CHAPTER 2

# Case studies

### 2. Promoting the Gastronomy as a cultural asset of a Country in Greece

#### Visit Greece

Visit Greece has been developed by the Greek National Tourism Organisation, a public body in charge of the promotion of tourism in Greece. The site promotes various destinations, cultural and environmental heritage, and also... gastronomy, as part of it!

The site provides information on:

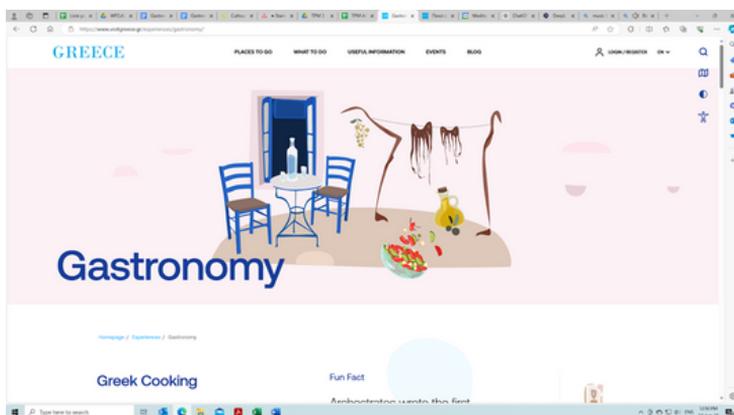
- Traditional cuisine
- Traditional products
- Greek wines, and other drinks

Each information is linked with a specific place of Greece, and is an invitation to visit it.

See more on:

The Greek Gastronomy Guide <https://www.greekgastronomyguide.gr/en/>

Visit Greece, Gastronomy <https://www.visitgreece.gr/experiences/gastronomy/>



Source: [www.visitgreece.gr](http://www.visitgreece.gr)



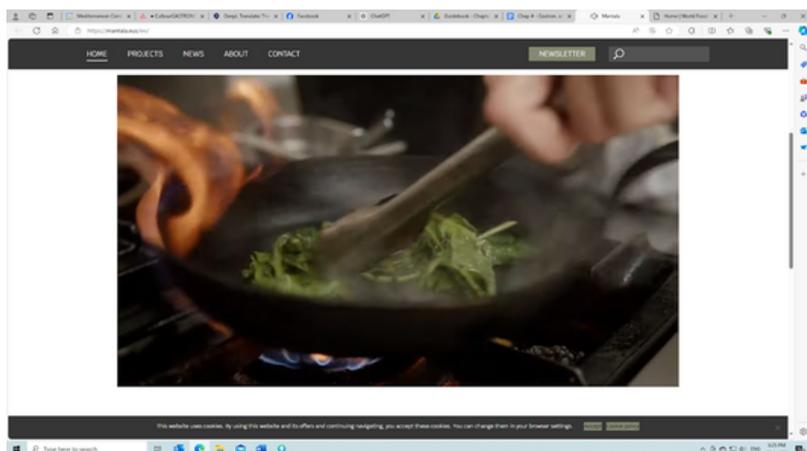
## CHAPTER 2

# Case studies

### 3. In Spain: the Mantala Basque Gastronomy

Mantala Basque Gastronomy is an initiative which aims to promote and develop Basque gastronomy, fostering exchanges of knowledge and co-creation. Mantala is the result of a public – private collaboration backed by Basque Culinary Center and Hazi Fundazioa among others. Its main purpose is to maintain and secure Basque gastronomy position through projects, knowledge and content development as well as research.

Check in the link below for more information: <https://mantala.eus/en/>



## CHAPTER 2

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# Origins and history of gastronomy







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## Origin & history of gastronomy of European Countries

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## CHAPTER 3



# Ancient Bulgarian Cuisine

Bulgarian cuisine has a centuries-old and rich history, marked by the crossroads location of Bulgarian lands. For every region in Bulgaria, there are as many memories we can gather about something "typically Bulgarian." Something unfamiliar to some has left lasting memories in the minds and hearts of others. It is interesting to see what history "says" about traditional Bulgarian cuisine.

Our ancestors, the proto-Bulgarians, did not have many options, nor much time, for preparing lunch or dinner. They were nomads, literally living on their horses, so their food was quicker and easier to prepare and consume. They focused on meat because they mainly raised herds. They despised plant-based food because they believed that ploughing the fields opened a path to the negative spaces of the dead. (Photo – [link](#))

The Slavs were farmers, which predetermined the seasonality of their dishes. They also used primitive culinary techniques – boiling and baking.

With the establishment of the Bulgarian state, the fusion of the cuisines of Thracians, Slavs, and proto-Bulgarians began, leading to the development of the national cuisine. Each ethnic group contributed its culinary traditions. Due to the mutual penetration of culinary practices, grains – oats, barley, wheat, millet, spelt – especially in the form of porridge, gradually took a significant place in the diet. An infantry was formed in the army, and soldiers carried mainly bulgur in their bags, which does not mold, cooks quickly, and has valuable nutrients.

In parchment scrolls, sealed with state stamps, bread was called "the foundation of the Bulgarian's life." Bread was the most essential part of the Bulgarian's menu, and in some poorer regions, the only means of sustenance. White bread, mekitsi, and polenta were consumed by the wealthy, while poorer regions ate black, rye bread, and bulgur. Every household baked its bread (directly in the embers). Dough on the Black Sea and Aegean coasts was made with seawater, which precisely dosed the salt in the bread. Bread is also an essential part of rituals. It is widely believed that bread has a "soul," and thus tradition dictates that bread should be broken, not cut or pierced. Bulgarians not only never sit at the table without bread but also prepare pogachas and loaves for celebrations and even greet guests with bread and salt & honey. (Photo – [link](#) with receipt of the pogacha)

Bread was highly esteemed, and traditional filled breads – such as those with onions or greens – were common. The old Bulgarians used the protein-rich broad bean, which they stored in jars sealed with clay. This way, it could last all winter. Additionally, they utilized milk far more efficiently and made many more types of cheese than are made now.





## CHAPTER 3

# The Christianity & its influence on the Bulgarian cuisine

With the arrival of Christianity in our lands, dietary habits and traditions also changed. Fasting, imposed by religion, was introduced into culinary customs. Byzantine influence taught Bulgarians to steam, stew, and fry. Many spices came into Bulgarian cuisine from India and China through Byzantium, such as cinnamon, turmeric, caraway, ginger, cumin, allspice, bay leaf, and black pepper.

Archaeological research shows that the main products in the medieval kitchen were cabbage, carrots, beets, turnips, onions, and garlic. Meat consumption was also high, including sheep, goat, pork, beef, poultry, and game. Among the grains were millet, oats, barley, rye, and wheat, as well as some legumes like broad beans, lentils, peas, and vetch. (Photo – [link](#))



As in every country, food in Bulgaria is influenced by other peoples who have passed through our lands. When we talk about "Bulgarian national cuisine," we should keep in mind that we are talking about Balkan cuisine (moussaka is more of a Thracian dish). The greatest influence comes from the Greeks and Turks, with whom we had direct contact for decades. From Turkish cuisine, we adopted the heavy red roux with lots of fat and spicy seasonings, kebabs, stews, moussaka, as well as sweet desserts such as halva, baklava, lokum, and kadaif. The direct influence of the East brought rice, eggplants, and coffee to our table. Proximity to the Orient enriched the menu with dishes like imam bayildi, kyopolou, pilaf, baklava, and kadaif.

Much later, in the 16th-17th centuries, plants and animals characteristic of America reached our lands. Previously unknown foods like beans, peppers, tomatoes, potatoes, corn, sunflowers, and turkey meat appeared. This introduced dishes such as moussaka, gyuvetch, and various interpretations of beans to the table.

After the Liberation, European influence also affected our cuisine.

(Photo – [link](#)) (Photo – [link](#)) (Photo – [link](#))



## CHAPTER 3

# Bulgarian cuisine after WWII

After 1940, and especially after 1965, many of the basic ingredients were missing from the market and were quickly replaced with others that are now part of our national cuisine. Instead of butter, lard was used, and instead of olives, pickles. The traditional "Rousenko Boiled" appeared. Later, dishes that became emblematic of contemporary Bulgarian cuisine emerged, such as Shopska salad, Radomir-style kavarma, monastery-style bean soup, Panagyurishte-style eggs, and stuffed peppers.



One of the features of our native cuisine is that most ingredients are cooked simultaneously. This is especially true for baked goods and dishes with meat and vegetables. According to historians, the explanation is simple – in the not-so-distant past, women did not have their own ovens at home. Therefore, they took their ready-to-cook dishes to the public oven or to a neighbour who had a sufficiently large oven. This meant that everything had to be put in the tray at the same time, including the spices. This is how Sunday gyuvetch was prepared, how Easter cakes were baked, and how lamb was cooked for St. George's Day. This tradition persisted until almost the end of the 1980s.

## CHAPTER 3

# The ingredients in the traditional Bulgarian cuisine

Bulgarian women used spicy seasonings like onions, garlic, red and black pepper, allspice, and bay leaves, but in moderate quantities. The dishes were flavoured with strong aromas and aromatic combinations of mint, basil, rosemary, fenugreek (sometimes unacceptable to the tastes of consumers outside the region). In our cuisine, the typical seasoning for mature beans is mint, for lentils – savoury, for broad beans and zucchini – dill. Fish soups were flavoured with thyme and lovage, and stewed meats with tarragon.

Lard was mainly used during the cold seasons for dishes with pork and legumes.

Fish was not among the most preferred products, with meat dishes made from pork, lamb, and beef being more common. Traditionally, fish in our cuisine is fried or stewed, while fattier fish are grilled. Poultry is prepared by stewing, boiling, baking in the oven, or grilling. As mentioned, unlike other cuisines, in ours, the meat is cooked along with the other ingredients (stews, baked dishes, etc.). Ingredients are added together (oven-baked *gyuvetch*) or sequentially, according to their cooking time.

Our grandmothers primarily cooked in clay pots, which were left to simmer on moderate heat, with water gradually added as needed.

Traditional for us are dried sausages such as sausages, *sujuk*, and *dyado* (a type of dry-cured sausage). (photo – [link](#))

Soup or broth? In the past, broths – chicken, beef, tripe – were more commonly consumed. In general, broths or soups at a later stage were quite rich in variety and ingredients.

Baked dishes are also traditional, such as oven-baked chicken with rice, chicken with potatoes, and sauerkraut with pork. Bulgarian cooks are particularly known for their skill in making stuffed vegetables. Vegetables in Bulgarian cuisine are perfectly combined with dairy products and flour, meat, and fish.

Bulgarians love appetizers. Everyone enjoys delicious slices of white bread spread with homemade *lutenitsa* or *kyopolou*. Roasted peppers and the appetizers and dishes made from them are traditional for us, as is the device used to roast them in more recent times – the pepper roaster.



## CHAPTER 3

# The ingredients in the traditional Bulgarian cuisine

Our dessert traditions are not particularly elaborate. Simple baked desserts were usually prepared. Families daily placed fresh fruits, compote, or dried fruits on their table. More specific pastry practices were adopted from Western European or Oriental pastry traditions – such as assure, white jam, semolina halva, cake, sweet banitsa, cookies, malebi, rice pudding, torte, and halva. As for drinks, Bulgarians have long produced the drink of the god Dionysus- the wine as well as rakia, and various fruit beverages.

Traditional breakfast usually consisted of something made from dough, such as mekitsi, rolls, donuts, and banitsa. Alongside these are the beloved tutmanitsi, katmi, pancakes, cookies, homemade biscuits, and others that have come to our table from neighboring countries and have been modified over the years.

Ritual foods or foods for specific holidays play a significant role in Bulgarian cuisine. Bulgarians prepare certain dishes related to holidays from the folk or church calendar. Examples include meatless stuffed cabbage rolls and peppers stuffed with beans or rice on Christmas Eve, kapama and dishes with sauerkraut for New Year's, fish for St. Nicholas Day, banitsa and halva for Forgiveness Day, kozunak for Easter, and lamb for St. George's Day.

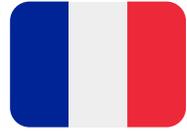
Today, things are changing according to modern healthy eating trends and influences from global cuisines. Contemporary Bulgarians often enjoy pizza, spaghetti, sushi, and paella. However, this does not mean that traditional cuisine is being neglected. On the contrary, the love for Bulgarian dishes remains strong in the hearts of young people, who increasingly appreciate the delicious meals their grandmothers used to cook.



(Photo – [link](#))



Photo – [link](#) Photo – [link](#) Photo – [link](#)



# France: History of regional gastronomy

In the early days of French gastronomy, each region had its own culinary specialities, often influenced by local natural resources and climate. In the north, the cuisine was characterised by the use of dairy products, potatoes and meats such as beef and pork, while in the south, dishes were infused with olive oil, aromatic herbs and seafood.

In the Middle Ages, the spices and exotic ingredients introduced by the Crusades enriched French cuisine, while the Renaissance saw the emergence of the first cookery books and the development of the arts of the table. The chefs of the great royal courts, such as Catherine de Médicis, helped popularise new cooking techniques and refined ingredients.

The French Revolution also left its mark on gastronomy, with the emergence of bourgeois cuisine and the increased accessibility of food products. However, it was in the 19th century, under Napoleon Bonaparte, that French gastronomy reached its apogee, with the creation of the first great gastronomic houses in Paris and the invention of emblematic dishes such as duck à l'orange and boeuf bourguignon. Over time, the French regions have continued to develop their own culinary traditions, showcasing local produce and adapting recipes to suit regional tastes. Brittany, for example, is renowned for its seafood and crêpes, while Provence is famous for its olive oil, aromatic herbs and sunny dishes such as ratatouille.

In the 20th century, French gastronomy underwent a renaissance with the advent of Nouvelle Cuisine, characterised by light cooking techniques and the use of fresh, seasonal produce. Chefs such as Paul Bocuse and Alain Ducasse revolutionised French cuisine by emphasising the quality of ingredients and culinary creativity.



## CHAPTER 3

# Cultural influences on local cuisine

Cultural influences can be seen throughout the different regions of France, where local culinary traditions have each been shaped by history, terroir, and cultural exchange.

For instance, in the north of France, you can feel Flemish and Germanic influences, with meat, potato and dairy dishes predominating. The region is renowned for hearty dishes such as carbonade flamande and potjevleesch, as well as sweet specialities such as waffles and crepes dentelles.

To the west, Brittany offers a maritime cuisine influenced by the Atlantic Ocean, with seafood but also by the strong presence of agriculture and pig farming. Traditional Breton dishes such as Kig-ar-farz and kouign-amann are just two examples.

In the south of France, Mediterranean influences predominate, with a sunny, fragrant cuisine characterised by the use of olive oil, aromatic herbs and sun-kissed vegetables. Provence is famous for colourful dishes such as ratatouille and bouillabaisse, while the cuisine of Nice features local ingredients such as olives, tomatoes and anchovies.

To the east, Alsace and Lorraine have been influenced by German cuisine, with dishes such as sauerkraut, pretzels and flambé tart. These regions are also renowned for their white wines and delicate pastries such as kougelhopf and gingerbread.



Galette bretonne (letribunal.dunet) - North West region of France - Brittany



Choucroute (pexels.getty\_606744289) - Germanic roots - North East region of France



Cassoulet (Taste Atlas) - South West region of France



## CHAPTER 3

# Traditional ingredients and techniques

Wine and cheese play a central role in French gastronomy. Throughout the regions of France, wine is often associated with specific dishes, reflecting the diversity of the country's wine-growing terroirs. From the full-bodied reds of Bordeaux to the refreshing whites of the Loire Valley, each region offers a distinct palette of flavours. France's vineyards produce 3240 different wines under 1313 different names in 80 departments and 16 major vineyards. Similarly, French cheese is an institution in its own right, with an incredible variety of textures, tastes and aromas. From the goat's cheeses of the Loire to the soft cheeses of Normandy and the blue cheeses of the mountains, France boasts more than 1,000 different types of cheese, according to the national dairy interprofessional body. The perfect combination of a local wine with a regional cheese is an art in itself, and one that contributes to the tradition of conviviality and sharing around French tables.

French cuisine is also distinguished by its culinary techniques, including French-style cooking (sautéing, roasting, braising and pan-frying), complex sauces (béarnaise, béchamel sauce), refined pastry-making (macaroons, profiteroles, madeleines) and precise cutting methods (brunoise or julienne strips).

France also helped popularise sous-vide cooking, a technique appreciated by chefs for its ability to preserve food flavours. These techniques have earned French cuisine an unrivalled reputation worldwide.



Bouillabaisse – Fish soup (cooklook) – South East region of France



Crepes (pexels-elly-fairytale-3807389) – North West region of France – Brittany



# Greece: Ancient culinary heritage

Welcome to the world of Greek gastronomy, where history and flavors intertwined. Our journey begins in ancient times, tracing back to the days of Homer and the classical era. From the fertile plains of Attica to the uneven landscapes of Crete, each region of ancient Greece enjoyed its own distinct culinary traditions, shaped by local ingredients, agricultural practices, and cultural exchanges with neighboring civilizations. In ancient Greece, the diet was predominantly plant-based, with an abundance of grains like barley and wheat, legumes such as lentils and chickpeas, and a variety of fruits like figs, grapes, pomegranates, and of course... olives, as well as vegetables like garlic, onions, and cucumbers. Olive oil, often referred to as "liquid gold," was not only a vital ingredient but also held sacred significance in Greek culture. "The Symposium", a social gathering where food, wine, and philosophical discussions were shared, symbolized the importance of food in ancient Greek society.

Ancient Greek cuisine? Think simplicity, fresh and tasty ingredients, and communal feasting. Grilling, roasting, and boiling were common techniques, while herbs and spices enhanced natural flavors.

### Basic food of the ancient Greek diet:

- **Vegetables:** Key part of the diet, with horta (dandelion), cucumbers, chickpeas, celery, and onions being popular.
- **Fruit and Nuts:** Common fruits included pomegranates, figs, cherries, plums, apples, pears, grapes, strawberries, and blackberries. Many fruits were dried for preservation. Nuts like walnuts, chestnuts, beech nuts, and almonds were also consumed.
- **Olives:** Essential fruit, olives were central to the diet, providing olive oil for cooking and as fuel.
- **Cereals:** Usually barley, sometimes wheat.
- **Seafood:** Abundant due to the surrounding Aegean Sea, including fish, shellfish, shrimps, and octopus.
- **Legumes:** Among which lentilles
- **Meats:** Rare and expensive, with beef, pork, and lamb reserved for special occasions and sacrifices.
- **Honey:** The main sweetener, used also in medicines.





## CHAPTER 3

# Evolution of Greek Gastronomy

From the early civilizations of the Minoans and Mycenaeans to the classical era of Athens and Sparta, Greek cuisine has continuously evolved while retaining its core principles of simplicity, freshness, and seasonal abundance. The Hellenistic period brought a fusion of Greek and Eastern culinary influences, sparking new ingredients and techniques.

The Ottoman influence in Greece brought about significant changes to Greek gastronomy. The Greek cuisine adapted to incorporate elements of Ottoman culinary culture: it assimilated ingredients such as eggplant, yogurt, and lamb, as well as cooking techniques like stuffing, braising, and slow-cooking. Dishes like moussaka, dolmades, and baklava are examples of this culinary fusion.

Despite periods of foreign rule, Greek gastronomy remained resilient, preserving techniques like grilling, roasting, and baking, alongside staple ingredients such as olive oil, feta cheese, honey, and aromatic herbs. The Renaissance brought a renewed interest in Greek cuisine, with specialists rediscovering and translating ancient texts on food and wine.



The "Greek salad" ("Choriatiki", from the village, in Greek) - Photo: (pixabay) [galyafanaseva](https://pixabay.com/users/galyafanaseva/)



## CHAPTER 3

# Regional Diversity in Greek Gastronomy

But local food is dynamic and in constant change. Depending on the climate, the soil, the crops and the cultural influences, each region of Greece has developed different flavors and traditions. Here are some of the most well known.

### Notable dishes and techniques:

**Moussaka:** A classic Greek dish of layered eggplant, minced meat, and béchamel sauce, reflecting the rich flavors of the Mediterranean. Its origins trace back to the Byzantine era, where variations of this dish were enjoyed by nobles and common herd alike.

**Souvlaki:** Skewered and grilled meat, often served with pita bread and tzatziki sauce, showcasing the Greek love for simple yet flavorful street food. This dish has ancient roots, with evidence of similar preparations dating back to ancient Greece.

**Dolmades:** Vine leaves stuffed with rice and herbs, a delicacy enjoyed across the Mediterranean region. dolmades have evolved over centuries to become a beloved part of Greek cuisine.

In Crete, known for its healthy Mediterranean diet, traditional dishes like **dakos** (rusk salad, with tomatoes and feta) showcase the island's abundance of olive oil, tomatoes, and herbs. The origins of Cretan cuisine can be traced back to the Minoan civilization, one of the earliest advanced civilizations in Europe. The Minoans cultivated olives, grapes and various fruits and vegetables, which had a significant impact on the island's culinary practices.



The dakos from Crete - Photo: (pixabay) [DanaTentis](#)



## CHAPTER 3

# Regional Diversity in Greek Gastronomy

**In the Cyclades**, seafood takes center stage, with dishes like grilled octopus or marinated in vinegar, grilled or fried fishes highlighting the region's maritime wealth. The Cycladic islands were historically significant trading hubs in the Aegean Sea, which created a great connection with the sea. This sea connection is represented in their plentiful seafood that you can enjoy with the well-known ouzo, an anise-flavored strong drink that is synonymous with Greek culture and is often enjoyed alongside fresh seafood by locals and visitors alike. Ouzo's roots can be traced back to the ancient Greek practice of infusing distilled spirits with herbs and spices. Then its production evolved over time, and it originated from Tsipouro, which used to be produced by the monks on Mount Athos.

Northern Greece is famed for its warm meat dishes, such as kokoretsi (grilled offal wrapped in intestines) and soutzoukakia (spiced meatballs in tomato sauce). These dishes reflect the region's pastoral heritage and influence from neighboring Balkan cuisines. The region's history of Ottoman rule introduced cooking techniques like cooking by slow heat and the use of aromatic spices.

Additionally, tsipouro, a strong distilled spirit made from grape pomace, is a popular accompaniment to meals in this region, offering a strong and flavorful drinking experience.

**In Athens**, a vibrant food scene blends traditional Greek fare with modern twists. From full of life tavernas serving classic moussaka and souvlaki to chic restaurants reinterpreting ancient recipes, Athens offers a culinary journey through Greece's rich gastronomic history. The city cuisine shows the historical heart of Greece, where you can taste the result of ancient culinary traditions meeting the modern innovation.

Each region tells a unique story through its flavors, ingredients, and culinary techniques. From the olive groves of the Peloponnese to the vineyards of Macedonia, Greek gastronomy is a celebration of tradition, innovation, and the art of good food.



The "kokoretsi" Photo: (pixabay) [ozlemgezdiren](#)

## CHAPTER 3



# Italy: Ancient origins

### **Etruscan and Greek Influences:**

- Etruscans (800–300 BC): The Etruscans, who inhabited the region of Tuscany, laid the groundwork for Italian cuisine. They practiced advanced agriculture, growing a variety of crops, and their diet included grains, legumes, fruits, vegetables, and meats.

- Greek Colonies (8th–3rd Century BC): Greek settlers in Southern Italy and Sicily introduced olives, grapes, and the art of winemaking. They also influenced the local diet with their methods of bread making, seafood dishes, and use of herbs and spices.

### **Roman Empire (27 BC – 476 AD):**

- The Romans adopted and adapted Etruscan and Greek culinary traditions, enriching them with ingredients from their vast empire. Roman cuisine was characterized by its diversity, incorporating spices, fruits, and vegetables from the Middle East and North Africa.

- The Roman diet included staples like bread, wine, olive oil, and garum (a fermented fish sauce), along with a variety of meats, seafood, and fresh produce. Elaborate feasts and banquets were common among the wealthy.

### **Medieval Period (5th – 15th Century)**

- Feudalism and Monastic Influences: The fall of the Roman Empire and the rise of feudalism led to more localized cuisines. Monasteries became centers of agricultural innovation, preserving culinary knowledge and cultivating herbs, fruits, and vegetables.

- Arab Influence: During the 9th century, the Arabs introduced new crops and cooking techniques to Sicily and Southern Italy, such as citrus fruits, sugarcane, rice, and spices like saffron. They also introduced pasta, which became a staple in Italian cuisine.

### **Renaissance (14th – 17th Century)**

- Culinary Renaissance: This period saw the resurgence of interest in the arts and culture, including gastronomy. The courts of wealthy families, like the Medicis in Florence, became centers of culinary experimentation and refinement.

- New World Ingredients: The discovery of the Americas brought new ingredients to Italy, such as tomatoes, potatoes, maize, and cacao, which were gradually incorporated into Italian cuisine.



# Modern Period (18th Century – Present)

## **Regional Diversity:**

- Italy's unification in the 19th century did not homogenize its culinary traditions. Instead, regional cuisines flourished, each with its own unique dishes and ingredients. For example, the North is known for its use of butter, rice, and polenta, while the South favors olive oil, tomatoes, and pasta.

## **Global Influence:**

- Italian cuisine has spread worldwide, particularly due to the large waves of Italian immigration to the Americas in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Italian-American cuisine, for example, developed its own unique characteristics.

## **Modern Innovations:**

- Today, Italian cuisine continues to evolve, embracing modern techniques and global influences while still respecting traditional methods and regional ingredients. The Slow Food movement, which originated in Italy in the late 20th century, emphasizes the importance of preserving local food cultures and promoting sustainable practices.



## CHAPTER 3

# Key Elements of Italian Gastronomy

- Pasta: Varieties like spaghetti, penne, and lasagna are central to many regional dishes.
- Pizza: Originating from Naples, pizza has become an international symbol of Italian cuisine.
- Wine and Cheese: Italy is renowned for its diverse wines and cheeses, with each region producing distinctive varieties.
- Seafood: Coastal regions feature an abundance of seafood dishes.
- Seasonal and Local Ingredients: Italian cooking emphasizes the use of fresh, seasonal, and locally-sourced ingredients.



In summary, Italian gastronomy is a tapestry of ancient traditions, regional diversity, and external influences, all woven together over centuries to create a cuisine that is celebrated worldwide for its flavors, simplicity, and variety.



# Spain: A culinary crossroads

Spain's cuisine is a vibrant tapestry woven from the threads of several cultures' influence. Throughout history, the Iberian Peninsula has been a crossroads of civilizations, each leaving its mark on the local food traditions. This rich exchange has resulted in a unique and diverse culinary landscape, where ancient flavors mingle with modern innovation.



[Photo credit: Pexels](#)

## CHAPTER 3

# Early influences Medieval Period

The earliest evidence of culinary activity in Spain dates back to the Paleolithic era, with people consuming meat, fish, and wild fruits. The arrival of the Phoenicians, Greeks, and Romans further shaped Spanish cuisine. The Phoenicians introduced techniques for salting fish and using spices, while the Greeks brought olive cultivation and viticulture, laying the foundation for Spain's love affair with olive oil and wine. The Romans, meanwhile, contributed garum (a fermented fish sauce) and wheat bread, not to forget the establishment of viticulture in Spain.





## CHAPTER 3

# The Arab legacy

The Middle Ages saw the arrival of the Arabs, who had a profound impact on Spanish gastronomy. They introduced a wealth of new ingredients, including rice, almonds, saffron, and a variety of spices like cumin, turmeric, and ginger. Citrus fruits like oranges and lemons also arrived with the Arabs, adding a new dimension of flavor to Spanish cuisine. Arab culinary techniques, such as irrigation and advanced agricultural practices, also flourished, leading to increased food production. Jewish communities also played a role in shaping Spanish cuisine, particularly in the areas of food preservation and breads.





## CHAPTER 3

# The New World and beyond

The Age of Exploration brought a wave of new ingredients from the Americas. Tomatoes, potatoes, chocolate, peppers, corn, and beans were all enthusiastically adopted by Spanish cooks, becoming integral parts of the national cuisine. The Spanish court also became a center of culinary innovation, with elaborate and refined dishes prepared for the nobility. French influence also made its mark during this period, introducing the concept of haute cuisine to Spain.



Foto credit: Pexels



## CHAPTER 3

# Modern transformations

The 19th and 20th centuries saw significant social changes in Spain, with industrialization and urbanization impacting eating habits. New methods of transportation and communication facilitated the exchange of products and culinary ideas, leading to a wider variety of ingredients available to Spanish kitchens.

The late 20th century saw the emergence of modernist cuisine, led by chefs like Ferran Adrià, whose restaurant El Bulli became a symbol of innovative cooking techniques and creativity. Adrià's deconstructionist approach to traditional dishes revolutionized not only Spanish cuisine but also the global culinary scene. Techniques such as foams, spherification, and molecular gastronomy became popular, pushing the boundaries of traditional cooking.

The rise of Michelin-starred restaurants throughout Spain, such as El Celler de Can Roca and Arzak, highlighted the country's dedication to culinary excellence. These restaurants have garnered international acclaim for their innovative approaches to Spanish cuisine while still honoring traditional flavors and ingredients.





## CHAPTER 3

# A symphony of flavors

Spain's diverse climates and sceneries have played a crucial role in shaping its culinary identity. The rugged mountains provide ideal grazing land for sheep and goats, leading to a rich tradition of cheesemaking and cured meats. Lush coastal areas offer an abundance of fresh seafood, while fertile valleys yield an array of fruits and vegetables. From the olive groves of Andalusia to the vineyards of Rioja, each region boasts unique agricultural products that define its local cuisine. This interplay between climate, geography, and cultural influences has created a symphony of flavors, making Spanish gastronomy a true feast for the senses.



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# Modern Gastronomy



## CHAPTER 4

# Objectives

- Explore the evolution of gastronomy
- Analyze contemporary trends in gastronomy
- Analyze changes in food consumption

# Requirements

- Know the basic elements of European gastronomy
- Interest in food and gastronomy culture





# Contents

## Modern gastronomy

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## CHAPTER 4

# Modern dishes and trendy restaurants

Bulgaria has long been known for hearty traditional comfort food. But springing up around its classic cooking is a new wave of culinary innovation: exciting new chefs, eclectic restaurants and cool independent food producers serving up organic local produce with contemporary flair.

"In the last five or six years, Bulgarian food has been taken to a different level," says Milen Zlatev, Executive chef at Biorest restaurant. "I like to take something from the past, but present it with modern techniques to make it different, to add something of myself." The focus of his cooking is on classic Bulgarian food with a modern twist. The menu might include cauliflower cream soup with piperade and smoked chorizo, seabass with spring vegetables and nettle espuma, or duck magret sous-vide with celery root confit and celery cream.

Kosmos (aka Kocmoc) is a contemporary Bulgarian restaurant and one of the best in Sofia, according to Zlatev. There's traditional fare on the menu, presented innovatively. Think spicy beef tongue with foie gras mousse, pickled sprouts, harissa and herb mustard, or a "gin and tonic" pudding with lemongrass, cucumber, tonic sorbet and gin jelly.

Also taking Sofia by storm with a menu that pays homage to the slow food movement is Made in Home. This modern eatery emphasises locally sourced food, but with international influences and a focus on vegetarian and vegan dishes. On the menu: roasted yams with chilli, grape and spring onion; quinoa pilaf with cranberries; Black Sea mussels; and green tea tart.



Photo - [link](#)



## CHAPTER 4

# Modern dishes and trendy restaurants

Also taking Sofia by storm with a menu that pays homage to the slow food movement is Made in Home. This modern eatery emphasises locally sourced food, but with international influences and a focus on vegetarian and vegan dishes. On the menu: roasted yams with chilli, grape and spring onion; quinoa pilaf with cranberries; Black Sea mussels; and green tea tart.

Andre Tokev is regarded as one of the top chefs in Bulgaria (he's a MasterChef in the literal sense, as well as being a judge on the Bulgarian reality TV cooking competition). At his restaurant Moments, Andre Tokev has created an eclectic fine dining menu that features ingredients like locally sourced pickled fish, forest mushrooms, a white chocolate and Amarula mousse, and a chocolate cake with pumpkin ice cream and yuzu tofu.

Meanwhile, MoMa sticks with tradition, serving up typical Bulgarian salads, barbecued meats and stews. This is where to get the dishes you might typically expect from Bulgaria – slow-baked rabbit leg; stewed lamb knuckle. But MoMa does it in a creative way (you can order a local dish served in a bowl made of bread) and with a cool modern interior.

Let's not omit the modern trends in the Bulgarian street food as well. As when in Bulgaria, it's crucial that you sample the modern twists of traditional street food. You might try pumpkin baked with honey and nuts. "Kebapche", a classic mincemeat and herb kebab. Banitsa, a savoury breakfast pastry filled with yoghurt, eggs and white cheese. Or skara, Bulgarian for grilled meats, meatballs and sausages (ask for meshana skara for a mixed grill). Wash it all down with ayran, a cool, savoury yoghurt drink.





## CHAPTER 4

# Modern gastronomy in Bulgarian media

In recent years, there has been an exceptionally heightened interest in culinary arts both nationally and internationally. Almost every television channel has its own cooking show, specialized cooking channels have emerged, and professional and amateur chefs are constantly competing for big prizes in various TV formats. Numerous feature films with culinary plots are being produced. Cookbooks, thematic culinary books, magazines, recipe collections, and books about wine, chocolate, and more are being published. Culinary blogs are being created, and special empty notebooks are issued to collect and preserve favorite recipes from "grandma's kitchen" or "mom's kitchen."



Photo - [link](#)



## CHAPTER 4

# Invention of new foods & receipts in the decades after the WWII

Shopska salad is perhaps the most emblematic dish of Bulgarian national cuisine, representing us to the world. The widely known salad has an established recipe. Every Bulgarian knows that traditional vegetables like tomatoes, cucumbers, red onions, and either roasted or raw peppers cut into cubes are the main ingredients. It is generously sprinkled with grated white brined cheese and parsley. The dressing consists of salt, vinegar, and oil.

Shopska salad is unique both in taste and appearance. The contrasting flavors of vegetables, onions, and cheese make it a standout among appetizers. Its interesting look is achieved with the national tricolor of the ingredients. The popularity of this appetizer is so great that in a survey of Europeans on favorite traditional European dishes, most participants mentioned the Bulgarian Shopska salad.

The question of the origin of Shopska salad is intriguing. The first attempts to prepare this beloved Bulgarian recipe are not from ancient times shrouded in the mists of history but almost from modernity.

The authors of the Shopska salad recipe are professional chefs from the Balkan Tourist establishments, who prepared food for foreign guests. In the mid-20th century, they created this salad to represent Bulgarian culinary art. By the late 1960s and early 1970s, it gained popularity in Balkan Tourist restaurants, becoming known as a "typical Bulgarian salad." By the early 1970s, it became an attraction for foreign tourists, marketed as "the healthy food of our ancestors." The salad's colors—white, green, and red—reflect the Bulgarian tricolor, reinforcing its status as a national symbol.

Variations of the salad include roasted or raw peppers and either grated or crumbled cheese. Some versions also add garlic or hot pepper for extra spice.



Photo - [link](#)

## CHAPTER 4



# France: Technical evolution & aliments

The technical evolution of French gastronomy is a rich and complex story, shaped by a series of significant advances over the centuries. In the 19th century, eminent chefs such as Auguste Escoffier played a crucial role in codifying French culinary techniques, laying the foundations for modern cuisine. Key developments included the introduction of classic sauces (Bearnaise, velouté, Béchamel, etc) which provided an essential structure for a wide range of culinary preparations. Contemporary chefs have revisited classic sauces with unique variations and twists. For example, the traditional béarnaise sauce made with clarified butter, shallots, tarragon and vinegar is often reinterpreted with the addition of ingredients such as Sichuan pepper or miso to create new and surprising flavours.

At the same time, advances in cooking techniques, such as sous-vide cooking and low-temperature cooking, made it possible to achieve precise, consistent results while preserving the quality of the food. The technical evolution of French gastronomy has also been marked by the emergence of molecular cuisine, an innovative approach that uses the principles of science to transform the texture and presentation of food. Pioneers such as chef Thierry Marx have explored new culinary frontiers by experimenting with techniques such as spherification, gelling and mousseification. In pastry-making, innovations such as the use of sugar and the creation of puff pastry have enriched the repertoire of French desserts. From sweets based on honey and nuts, pastries have gained importance, with own specialist, incorporating new textures and new foods.

For instance, the introduction of exotic ingredients such as passion fruit, yuzu and salt flower as well as techniques have enriched the repertoire of French gastronomy.

The French gastronomic meal was included on UNESCO's list of intangible heritage in 2010. The aim of this listing is to protect the meal as a cultural fact in France and is a clear demonstration of the importance gastronomy still has nowadays.



## CHAPTER 4

# Consumption evolution

Globalization has had a major impact on gastronomy. It has led to the spread of certain products and foods. In France, the influence is mainly Asiatic with spices, soja sauce, tofu and some cooking techniques like wok cooking appearing. It has also had a strong impact on street food but less on home catering. Indeed, contemporary globalization is characterized above all by the distribution of products intended to be consumed as they are, with little or no local reinterpretation. This is still true, even after the Covid period, which saw an increase in the snacking and takeaway/delivery trend in France. From 1986 to 2010, the time spent eating has increased slightly, by 13 minutes. However, the time spent cooking fell by 18 minutes. The French have changed their eating habits: they eat less fresh produce, more ready-made meals, and more often have their meals delivered. At the same time, the number of fast-food outlets has risen sharply, making it easier for people to eat on the run: over the last decade, the number of outlets in this sector has increased the most. Despite the fact that it's becoming easier and easier to eat at any time of day, French people's daily lives are still punctuated by three traditional meals, eaten overwhelmingly at the same times of day.

In today's food landscape, two trends stand out: the quest for transparency and the emergence of new diets. Consumers are demanding detailed information on the origin and composition of products, while at the same time adopting diets such as veganism and flexitarianism to give new meaning to their diet. This trend needs to be qualified. After several years of declining in France, meat consumption has picked up again in 2021. In 2017, 86% of French meals (excluding breakfast) contained meat and only 2% of the population declare to be vegetarian or vegan.

## CHAPTER 4



# Greece: Following the Mediterranean diet

Let's jump into the world of modern Greek gastronomy! From the 19th century to the modern culinary scene, Greek cuisine has undergone a remarkable transformation, but it has preserved its authentic flavors and techniques. While iconic dishes like Moussaka and Greek Salad remain beloved classics, and traditional ingredients like olive oil, feta cheese, and fresh herbs continue to play a central role in modern Greek dishes, modern chefs have embraced innovation by incorporating locally sourced ingredients and experimenting with global flavors. Cooking techniques have been preserved. Take, for example, the art of grilling, as evidenced by the beloved Greek dish Souvlaki, or the use of filo pastry, a thin, crumbling dough used in dishes like Spanakopita and Baklava.

Modern Greek cuisine adapted their culinary heritage to meet modern dietary preferences and lifestyles. It emphasizes health-consciousness with the use of fresh and seasonal products, with a focus on the Mediterranean diet principles, recognized by UNESCO since 2013 as Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The Greek Mediterranean Diet consists mainly of olive oil, cereals, fresh or dried fruit and vegetables, a moderate amount of fish, dairy and meat. This nutritional model has been linked to longevity and reduced rates of heart and digestive diseases.

Today's Greek cuisine can meet the modern demands of a cuisine based on local, fresh, seasonal produce, and capable of offering a cuisine for people with special diets (low-calorie, vegetarian, gluten-free, etc.).



Photo: Pexels by Dana Tentis



## CHAPTER 4

# The Greek gastronomy? A way of life!

Greek gastronomy means knowledge and skills, but also social interaction and customs. It is not by chance that the word of "diet" is from the Greek δῖαιτᾶ (diaeta) meaning way of living!

Greek dining traditions play a significant role in shaping the gastronomic experience. Meals are often communal affairs, with families and friends gathering to share a variety of small dishes known as Mezedes. This tradition fosters a sense of hospitality and encourages social interaction around the table.

Furthermore, the duration of eating and cooking in Greece reflects a slower pace of life, where meals are enjoyed leisurely. This relaxed approach to dining contrasts with the fast-paced lifestyles of modern society, offering a relief from the hustle and bustle of daily life.

When you think of modern Greek gastronomy, think quality and simplicity! Dishes such as Octopus with Ouzo, Feta Cheese with Honey, and Tzatziki showcase the rich flavors and simplicity of contemporary Greek cuisine.

And let's not forget about Thessaloniki, Greece's first UNESCO City of Gastronomy! that exemplifies the country's culinary heritage and innovation. With its vibrant food markets, traditional tavernas, and innovative restaurants. (see more: [Network of Creative Cities of Gastronomy - Thessaloniki | Municipality of Thessaloniki](#))



# Italy: Emphasis on Quality and Freshness

Modern Italian gastronomy is a dynamic blend of tradition and innovation, characterized by a deep respect for regional ingredients and culinary heritage while embracing contemporary techniques and global influences. Here's an overview of the key aspects of modern Italian cuisine:

Emphasis on Quality and Freshness

### 1. Seasonal Ingredients:

- Italian chefs prioritize using fresh, seasonal ingredients to ensure the best flavors and nutritional value. Markets and local producers are often the sources for fruits, vegetables, meats, and seafood.

### 2. Local and Sustainable Sourcing:

- There is a strong focus on local and sustainable sourcing. Chefs and consumers alike are increasingly aware of the environmental impact of their food choices, leading to a preference for organic and locally-produced foods.

# Innovation in Culinary Techniques

### 1. Fusion and Experimentation:

Modern Italian cuisine often incorporates elements from other culinary traditions, leading to innovative dishes that blend Italian flavors with global techniques. For example, sushi made with Italian ingredients or pasta with exotic spices.

### 2. Molecular Gastronomy:

Some Italian chefs have embraced molecular gastronomy, using scientific techniques to transform traditional dishes. Chefs like Massimo Bottura have gained international acclaim for their creative and avant-garde approaches to Italian classics.



## CHAPTER 4

# Reinventing Traditional Dishes

### 1. Modern Interpretations:

- Traditional Italian dishes are being reinvented with a modern twist. For instance, classic pasta dishes may be deconstructed or presented in new forms while maintaining their essential flavors.

### 2. Health-Conscious Adaptations:

- There is a growing trend towards healthier versions of traditional recipes. This includes using whole grains, reducing fat and sugar, and incorporating more plant-based ingredients without compromising on taste.

# The Slow Food Movement

### 1. Preservation of Culinary Heritage:

- Originating in Italy, the Slow Food movement advocates for the preservation of traditional and regional cuisines, supporting local farmers, and promoting biodiversity. This movement has a significant impact on modern Italian gastronomy by emphasizing the importance of artisanal and heirloom foods.

### 2. Educational Initiatives:

- The movement also involves educating the public about the cultural significance of food, sustainable farming practices, and the benefits of consuming locally-produced foods.



## CHAPTER 4

# Regional Diversity

### 1. Northern Italy:

- Known for its rich and hearty dishes, often featuring butter, cream, and cheese. Risotto, polenta, and beef are staples. Regions like Emilia-Romagna are famous for products like Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese and Prosciutto di Parma.

### 2. Central Italy:

- Features a balance of meats, grains, and vegetables. Tuscany is renowned for its steaks (bistecca alla fiorentina), legumes, and olive oil. Rome's cuisine includes iconic dishes like carbonara and cacio e pepe.

### 3. Southern Italy:

- Mediterranean flavors dominate, with abundant use of olive oil, tomatoes, garlic, and fresh herbs. Seafood is a key component, and the region is the birthplace of pizza and many types of pasta.

# Influence of Top Chefs and Restaurants

### 1. Renowned Chefs:

- Chefs like Massimo Bottura (Osteria Francescana), Carlo Cracco, and Nadia Santini have brought Italian cuisine to new heights, earning Michelin stars and global recognition. Their work often combines traditional Italian ingredients with innovative cooking methods.

### 2. Gourmet Restaurants:

- Italy boasts numerous world-class restaurants that set trends in modern gastronomy. These establishments often feature tasting menus that showcase the creativity and skill of their chefs.



## CHAPTER 4

# Global Influence

### 1. Italian Cuisine Abroad:

- Italian cuisine continues to be highly popular worldwide, influencing global culinary trends. Italian restaurants and pizzerias can be found in almost every corner of the globe, often adapting to local tastes while maintaining core Italian principles.

### 2. International Collaboration:

- Modern Italian chefs often collaborate with international chefs, participate in global culinary festivals, and contribute to a global dialogue on food innovation and sustainability.

In summary, modern Italian gastronomy is a celebration of the country's rich culinary heritage, updated with contemporary techniques, health-conscious adaptations, and a commitment to sustainability. It remains deeply regional while being open to global influences, making it one of the most dynamic and beloved cuisines in the world.



## CHAPTER 4



# Spain: Basque Nouvelle cuisine

Spain's culinary landscape has undergone a remarkable transformation over the past few decades, evolving from its traditional roots to become a global center of gastronomic innovation. This transformation can be traced back to the 1960s, when a new wave of chefs began to challenge the prevailing French-influenced cuisine and forge a uniquely Spanish culinary identity.

The Basque Country played a pivotal role in this culinary renaissance, with chefs like Juan Mari Arzak, Pedro Subijana, and Martín Berasategui pioneering the Nouvelle Cuisine Vasca. This movement emphasized fresh, local ingredients, innovative techniques, and a deep respect for traditional Basque cuisine. These chefs pushed the boundaries of what was considered possible in the kitchen, laying the foundation for Spain's modern culinary revolution.





## CHAPTER 4

# Molecular gastronomy and the influence of Ferran Adrià

Ferrán Adrià, the visionary chef behind the world-renowned restaurant El Bulli, took Spanish cuisine to even greater heights with his groundbreaking approach to molecular gastronomy. Adrià and his team explored the scientific principles behind food, experimenting with innovative techniques like spherification, deconstruction, and gelation to create dishes that challenged conventional notions of taste and texture. El Bulli's influence extended far beyond Spain, inspiring chefs around the world and transforming the global culinary landscape.





## CHAPTER 4

# The rise of a new generation

Today, a new generation of young chefs is reshaping the landscape of Spanish gastronomy. While still inspired by the innovations of Adrià and his contemporaries, these chefs are forging their own path, prioritizing flavor and experience over technical wizardry. Their cuisine is rooted in tradition but infused with a sense of creativity and playfulness that reflects the diversity of contemporary Spanish culture. From bustling urban eateries to intimate countryside bistros, these chefs are leading the charge towards a more inclusive and accessible culinary future.

Spain's modern gastronomic culture is more developed and dynamic than ever before. It is deeply rooted in the country's rich culinary heritage, while also embracing innovation and creativity. This unique blend of tradition and modernity is what makes Spanish cuisine so special.

Spain is home to numerous world-renowned restaurants, many of them with Michelin stars. We can highlight:

- El Celler de Can Roca in Girona, run by the Roca brothers.
- DiverXO in Madrid, run by chef Dabiz Muñoz.
- Arzak in San Sebastian, run by Juan Mari Arzak and his daughter Elena.



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<https://www.lavanguardia.com/comer>

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<https://www.gastroactitud.com/>





# Protection of the "food legacy" by the EU



## CHAPTER 5

# Objectives

- Presentation of gastronomy as UNESCO intangible heritage of humanity
- Present the evolution of the gastronomic heritage in Europe across the centuries to modern times
- Present the protection measures implemented by the European Union to safeguard gastronomic heritage – Protected Designation of Origin; Protected Geographical Indication; Geographical Indications
- Showcase success stories about ways to preserve local and national gastronomic heritage

# Requirements

- Understanding UNESCO definition of gastronomy
- Interest in exploring gastronomic history of Europe
- Basic knowledge of the EU structure and operational mechanism
- Willingness and desire to learn more on the topic





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## Protection of the "food legacy" by the EU

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# Gastronomy as UNESCO intangible heritage of humanity

Intangible cultural heritage includes living practices and expressions inherited from our ancestors and transmitted to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe, and knowledge and skills linked to traditional craftsmanship.



Photo - [link](#)

The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, adopted by the General Conference of the Organisation at its 32nd session in October 2003 and which entered into force on 20 April 2006, opened a new phase in the protection of this heritage. Among its objectives are:

- 1.The safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage
- 2.Respect for the intangible cultural heritage of communities, groups and individuals.
- 3.Raising awareness at local, national and international levels of intangible cultural heritage
- 4.Mutual recognition of intangible cultural heritage among countries and international cooperation and assistance.

The Convention recognises as elements of Intangible Cultural Heritage:

- 1.Oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of tangible cultural heritage
- 2.Performing arts
- 3.Social practices, rituals and festive events
- 4.Knowledge and practices relating to nature and the universe.
- 5.Traditional craft techniques



# Gastronomy as UNESCO intangible heritage of humanity

For greater visibility to intangible cultural heritage, the Convention establishes a system of two lists:

- **Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity:** is composed of expressions that illustrate the diversity of intangible heritage and contribute to a greater awareness of its importance and is considered the equivalent of the World Heritage List.
- **List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding:** consists of elements of intangible cultural heritage that communities and States Parties consider in need of urgent safeguarding measures to ensure their transmission. Inscriptions on this List help to mobilise international cooperation and assistance to enable the actors concerned to take appropriate safeguarding measures.

It also provides for the periodic selection and promotion of national, sub-regional or regional programmes, projects and activities for the safeguarding of heritage that best reflect the principles and objectives of the Convention. There are currently 192 elements inscribed on the Representative List, 35 on the Urgent Safeguarding List and 11 programmes, projects and activities for the safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage.

There are currently 6 gastronomic elements on the Intangible Heritage of Humanity list:

- **Mediterranean diet.** This type of diet is widespread in several countries and cultures such as Greece, Italy, Spain, Croatia, Cyprus, Morocco and Portugal. Known worldwide as a healthy and longevity-friendly option, this type of diet is based on a set of traditions that are related to the preparation and production, as well as the sharing of food, since eating together (family, friends...) is a basic component of the cultural identity of Mediterranean countries. As well as for its fresh and quality ingredients such as fresh fish, olive oil or traditional cheeses.



• Photo - [link](#)



## CHAPTER 5

# Gastronomy as UNESCO intangible heritage of humanity

- **French gastronomy.** UNESCO indicates that French gastronomy is a social practice to celebrate important moments in the lives of individuals and groups, and highlighted the importance of cohesion around a table on special occasions. The concept of repas gastronomique refers to the careful selection of pairings and recipes, the best French wines, the decorations, the setting... much more than the delicious and distinct flavours that exist within this fantastic gastronomy. (photo – [link](#))



- **Mexican food** Michoacán style. These traditional Mexican dishes have made the list because they are considered an integral cultural model that encompasses aspects such as traditional agriculture, ancestral community customs and ritual practices. These dishes not only stand out for their best-known ingredients such as chilli, beans or corn, but also for their cultivation methods such as milpas (fields dedicated to the cultivation of corn and other seeds), their chinampas (artificial cultivation system in water areas) or nixtamalisation, which is the processing method by which the nutritional value of the corn is increased. (photo – [link](#))





# Gastronomy as UNESCO intangible heritage of humanity

- **Kimchi.** This is possibly Korea's most popular cabbage recipe. UNESCO has considered both the South and North Korean preparations, which are very similar, but have some differences, with the northern preparation being less spicy and whiter in colour. The reason for this recipe's inclusion on the list is its preparation, as it mixes different traditions: it is made in summer as a community in order to save as many provisions as possible for the long Korean winters.

Photo - [link](#)



- **Turkish coffee.** This dish is included not so much for its taste as for the way it is prepared. In order to make it, different maceration and steeping techniques are used, which are considered a ritual. It is prepared in copper pots on a cooker and the result is a thick, frothy, sweet coffee served in small cups. The ritual is a symbol of hospitality and friendship, making it a unique ceremonial element.

Photo - [link](#)



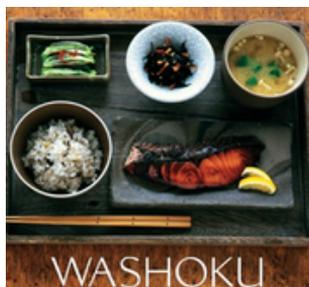


## CHAPTER 5

# Gastronomy as UNESCO intangible heritage of humanity

- **Washoku.** The term translates as Japanese cuisine, and UNESCO highlighted its essential spirit of respect for nature, which is closely related to the sustainable use of natural resources. Traditional Japanese cuisine is based on local ingredients such as rice, fish, vegetables and edible plants typical of the different Japanese regions.

Photo – [link](#)



Inscribing food on the UNESCO World Heritage List is a great step towards a brighter future. The method of preparing dishes carries a lot of information about a culture, its values and history. As humans, we also strongly emotionally attach to traditional meals. They are symbols of your childhood, families and homeland. Therefore, it is extremely important to cultivate culinary traditions and not forget about them among the new trends in gastronomy

.UNESCO also keeps a **Register of Good Safeguarding Practices** that allows States Parties, communities and other stakeholders to share successful safeguarding experiences and examples of how they surmounted challenges faced in the transmission of their living heritage, its practice and knowledge to the future generation. These methods and approaches should be useful as lessons and models that can be adapted to other circumstances, including those in developing countries.

In case you are interested to browse the Lists of Intangible Cultural Heritage and the Register of good safeguarding practices, you can do it through this [link](#)

While **UNESCO doesn't have specific regulations or labels** for food products, its focus on community-based safeguarding empowers local communities to take an active role in preserving their gastronomic heritage for future generations. However, UNESCO organises **workshops and training programs** to help communities document their intangible cultural heritage, including their gastronomic heritage. This empowers communities to take ownership of their heritage and develop effective safeguarding plans.

UNESCO also works to **raise public awareness** about the importance of intangible cultural heritage, including the significance of gastronomic traditions. This encourages appreciation for cultural diversity and promotes respect for traditional gastronomy.



## CHAPTER 5

# EU measures for protection of gastronomic heritage

The European intangible heritage of food is an expression of our cultural identity and diversity. Gastronomic heritage continuously inspires human creativity and innovation, which in turn can drive policy change and tackle key societal questions, such as climate change and social inclusion.

The diversity of food constitutes a unique and precious heritage: genetic diversity, but also cultural, social, and economic. It will be a key asset for Europe's socio-economic recovery and resilience as it contributes to protecting biodiversity, sustainable local development, sustainable cultural tourism, social cohesion, and inclusion. The gastronomic heritage should be seen as:

- key for preserving biodiversity and fighting climate change;
- Key for sustainable local development;
- key for sustainable cultural tourism;
- key for social cohesion and inclusion.

EU quality schemes help protect the heritage of Europe's agricultural sector and enhance consumer recognition of quality products all over the world.

**Geographical indications** apply to various foodstuffs, agricultural products, wines and spirit drinks produced in identified regions. They protect the reputation of specific product names, the regional and traditional production processes, or other essential elements (such as local breeds or plant varieties) that shape culinary heritage throughout Europe.



Photo - [link](#)



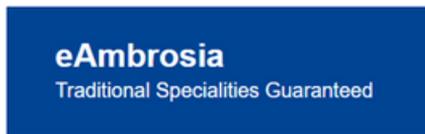
# EU measures for protection of gastronomic heritage

Agri-food products and wines can be protected as Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI), and spirit drinks as Geographical Indications (GI). EU symbols have been established to publicise these products. These symbols appear on product packaging, making it easier to identify these products on the market. They guarantee that an EU product is authentic, not an imitation or counterfeit, and serve to reinforce its national and international recognition. More information on PDO, PGI & GI can be found in Module 8 of the training course.

More detailed information on the PDO, PGI & GI can also be found her: [Geographical indications for foods and drinks](#) (online article, 2023)

European Union has also introduced the “Traditional Specialities Guaranteed” label (TSG). The TSGs are names of products, registered and protected across the EU to safeguard traditional methods of production and recipes.

eAmbrosia is a legal register of the names of agricultural products and foodstuffs, wine, and spirit drinks that are registered and protected across the EU. It provides a direct access to information on all registered geographical indications, including the legal instruments of protection and product specifications. It also displays key dates and links for applications and publications before the geographical indications are registered.



The search engine for protected products eAmbrosia is available here.

European Union also provides financial aid to projects that promote and protect gastronomic heritage. This can include initiatives for documenting traditional recipes, supporting educational programs about food culture, and promoting local food markets.

EU also encourages and funds research into traditional food production methods and ingredients. This knowledge can be used to safeguard endangered food traditions and develop sustainable practices for the future.



## CHAPTER 5

# Practical examples

### Italy, an example of the registration on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list

Italy exemplifies how gastronomy can benefit local communities. In 2017, the art of Neapolitan-style pizza making, known as the Neapolitan Pizzaiolo, was inscribed on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity list. This was not the only time Italian food has caught UNESCO's attention. The Italian government has officially nominated the nation's cuisine for inclusion on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list. This nomination reflects the authorities' recognition of the importance of gastronomy and its impact on local communities. Such recognition can benefit local communities by preserving culinary traditions and boosting tourism.

The nomination dossier emphasizes the significant role Italian cuisine has played in shaping the country's biocultural diversity. Italian cuisine is described as "a set of social practices, rites, and gestures based on the many local knowledge that, without hierarchies, identify and connote it." This definition highlights the integral connection between local traditions and the overall culinary landscape of Italy, underscoring the importance of regional diversity in the nation's food culture.

Many areas in Italy are famous for their local recipes or ingredients. For example, Tuscany's vineyards and olive groves are emblematic of its identity. Local communities strengthen their social bonds by using products like wine and olive oil to celebrate food festivals, such as the Chianti Wine Festival and the Sagra del Tartufo (truffle festival), together with visitors.

See the "Tuscany Travel Guide": <https://untolditaly.com/tuscany-travel-guide/>

### The Pumpkin Festival in Bulgaria

The "Pumpkin Festival" is held in the city of Sevlievo every year in the month of October. The first "pumpkin festival" was held in 2006. Since then, the festival has been traditional for the city. The reason for its origin is that the region of Sevlievo is famous for the production of pumpkins, and even the town is jokingly called PumpkinVille by the local population. Every year in Sevlievo, a pumpkin festival is held – a culinary festival of local traditional feasts, delicacies and crafts, created in the pumpkin capital – Sevlievo.

In the square in front of the House of Culture, various competitions for attractive pumpkins are held, in which local producers participate with their products. There are competitions for the heaviest pumpkin, the longest pumpkin, the smallest pumpkin, the most unusual pumpkin, the most beautifully decorated pumpkin, etc.





## CHAPTER 5

# Practical examples

Another event during the festival is the culinary exhibition "Pumpkin delights", where various pumpkin specialties are presented – stuffed pumpkin with meat, baked pumpkin boats with minced meat, pumpkin desserts, etc. It has become a tradition to prepare and eat the biggest pumpkin square pie (in Bulgarian language called tukvenik) every year. This traditional pumpkin square pie is made to be over 200 meters long.

Children also take part in the festival by giving a poetry recital with poems and songs dedicated to the pumpkin and participate in competitive exhibitions with their drawings.



### Homemade Cheese Festival in Bulgaria

Homemade Cheese Festival in the village of Cherni Vit in Teteven is organized in the end of September. Homemade cheeses from different regions of Bulgaria, cheeses from small dairies, bread, honey, wine will be presented at the Festival. There are demonstrations, presentations, tastings and meeting interesting people. The presentation of scientific research on traditional products and innovative approaches is particularly valuable.

The organizers of the Festival are Teteven Municipality and Cherni Vit City Hall.





## CHAPTER 5

# Practical examples

The event is intended for people who want to get to know Bulgarian traditional cheeses!

**Protected Designation of Origin for Bulgarsko byalo salamureno sirene (Българско бяло саламурено сирене)**



You can check the info on the product in eAmbrosia here:

<https://ec.europa.eu/agriculture/eambrosia/geographical-indications-register/details/EUGI00000017826>

You can check the Official Journal of the European Union on entering a name in the register of protected designations of origin and protected geographical indications here:

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:32023R1571#d1e106-11-1>

You can check the Official Journal of the European Union on Publication of an application for registration of a name pursuant to Article 50(2)(a) of Regulation (EU) No 1151/2012 here:

[https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52023XCO413\(04\)](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/HTML/?uri=CELEX:52023XCO413(04))

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# Gastronomy & tourism







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## CHAPTER 6

# Introduction to gastronomy & tourism

The synergy between tourism and gastronomy has been a key direction for the development of the tourism economy since the early 20th century, notably highlighted by the Global Report on Food Tourism (UNWTO, 2012). Gastronomy, although variably defined, is central to promoting tourist destinations and designing specialized tourism products. Eating and drinking are not merely natural needs but are deeply intertwined with social life and the environment. Culinary tourism fosters interaction between tourists and local communities, creating opportunities for cultural exchange and economic development. It diversifies the range of experiences available to tourists, enhancing the overall appeal and competitiveness of destinations. By valuing local gastronomy, it helps preserve cultural heritage and local food traditions. In this document, we will explore the special link between gastronomy and tourism, from History to special customer needs.

### History of the relationship between gastronomy & tourism

The synergy between tourism and gastronomy has been identified as a key direction for the development of the tourism economy since the beginning of the 20th century. This partnership has been strengthened over time, particularly at the end of the 20th century, with the implementation of specific strategies, as evidenced by the Global Report on Food Tourism (UNWTO, 2012). Gastronomy, although its definition is still largely open to debate, has become a central element in the promotion policies of tourist destinations, sometimes even as the main argument or fundamental pillar in the design of specialized tourism products. We know that eating and drinking are not just natural needs that produce basic forms of cultural and appetitive behaviors. There are also needs linked to social life and the environment.

From the time of medieval trade routes such as the Silk Road, travellers exchanged food products and recipes, helping to spread culinary traditions across Europe. In the first travel guides, which were designed to identify travel routes, information was already given on local food production and where to stop to eat and sleep since the Middle Ages (Csergo, 2016). This was followed by the development of the culinary arts in Europe's royal courts, where chefs competed to create more sophisticated dishes. Grimod de la Reynière in France (1758-1837) wrote the *Almanach des gourmands*, arguably the first gastronomic guide in history.

Over time, each region of Europe developed its own culinary specialties, often based on locally available produce, helping to shape each region's culinary identity, and attracting travellers curious to discover new flavors.

During the 19th century, the preoccupation with eating and drinking well when travelling meant that, for the most enlightened of travelers, gastronomy could find a place among the motivations for undertaking a trip, although it never appeared to be the main motivation (Csergo, 2011). Still, this has fueled tourism with the improvement of transport infrastructures, particularly the development of railways, making it easier for wealthy travelers to travel around Europe and discover different regional cuisines. In the 20th century, governments and tourism bodies recognized gastronomy as a major tourist attraction. Gastronomic festivals, culinary itineraries and restaurant guides were created to promote destinations by highlighting their gastronomic heritage.



## CHAPTER 6

# Introduction to gastronomy & tourism

### Travelling & culinary experience

Travel and the culinary experience are closely linked, forming an essential aspect of the world's tourist appeal. Paul Bocuse, famous French chef, used to say "Cuisine is the reflection of a country's culture". Well, it's true. Cultural discovery is at the heart of this relationship, with food being a living expression of the identity of a region or country. European gastronomy is rich and varied, with dishes ranging from the simplest to the most elaborate, from the most rustic to the most refined, from the lightest to the heartiest. Each country has its own specialities, often the result of ancestral heritage, regional influence, or adaptation to local produce. Among European cuisines, we can cite French cuisine, characterised by its creativity, finesse and diversity; Italian cuisine, gourmet and Mediterranean; Spanish cuisine, recognisable by its taste for tapas, paellas and tortillas; Greek cuisine, distinguished by its use of olive oil, cheese and vegetables; Bulgarian cuisine, with its cold soups and salads; and Portuguese cuisine, with its sunny flavours influenced by the Atlantic Ocean.



Travellers aspire to authenticity and immersion, often preferring to forgo standardised restaurants to savour genuine local cuisine, a true reflection of the traditions and way of life of the local people. This culinary adventure nurtures a sense of adventure and discovery, offering travellers the chance to sample new flavours and create lasting memories. What's more, sharing meals is a great opportunity for socialising and cultural exchange, encouraging encounters between travellers and local people. Culinary tourism fosters interaction between tourists and local communities, creating opportunities for cultural exchange and economic development. Finally, gastronomy has a significant influence on the choice of destination, with travellers drawn to destinations renowned for their quality cuisine and unique culinary experiences. The sector is booming, a recent [market research by Brainy Insight](#) predicted that the global market of culinary tourism will grow by almost 19% between now and 2033. Travel and the culinary experience complement each other, offering travellers a window onto the diversity of cultures around the world, while fostering intercultural links. To preserve this diversity, the EU has introduced certifications such as Protected Designation of Origin and Protected Geographical Indication, which make it easier for consumers to identify the origin of the products they eat. The EU has launched the "[EuroFoodArt](#)" campaign to promote these two labels in the 2021-2023 period.



## CHAPTER 6

# Gastronomy as a tourist attraction

### Analysis of tourist motivation linked to gastronomy

From February to April 2016, the World Food Travel Association (WFTA) conducted a survey of 2,527 leisure travellers living in ten different countries to gain a better understanding of the food and beverage industry. The WFTA defines culinary tourists as leisure tourists who have participated in unique and memorable food and beverage experiences during a recent trip, and for whom these activities are a primary motivation in choosing a destination. In this study, the culinary activities most likely to motivate a trip were tasting local produce, visiting a famous restaurant, taking part in a culinary, beer or wine festival or going on a guided tour. The culture of culinary tourism is growing. Among all respondents (all leisure tourists), 59% say that food and drink are more important when travelling than they were five years ago.

#### Culinary activities:

Memorable experience in restaurant	Famous restaurant or bar	Food truck – Street food	Gastronomic restaurant
Cooking lessons	Culinary tour	Culinary festival	Wine routes or vineyard
Farm or orchard	Farm market	Microbrewery or beer circuit	Distillery or drinks circuit

(World Food Travel Association, 2016)

The profile of travellers attracted by culinary experiences does not generally differ from that of other types of tourists. It is almost similar in terms of age and gender, although the majority are in the 30–60 age bracket. However, they can be classified into three distinct groups according to their interest in and expectations of the experience: the volunteer, the opportunistic and the accidental. Volunteers are most of the culinary tourists. Their main objective is to explore local cuisine and learn more about it. They therefore choose their activities with this in mind. Generally, from a high socio-economic background, they combine their passion for culinary culture with their desire to travel, which leads them to allocate a significant proportion of their budget to food, up to 50%. Opportunists, on the other hand, take the opportunity of their trip to discover the local cuisine, but this is not their main motivation for choosing a destination. On an adventure trip, for example, they may include a unique culinary experience. These tourists account for around a quarter of culinary travellers. Lastly, accidental visitors take part in culinary activities only because they are accessible or part of the initial offer.



## CHAPTER 6

# Gastronomy as a tourist attraction

### Impact of gastronomy on local tourism

Culinary tourists have many expectations, but they all focus on the authenticity of the place, its culture and its history, through the meals they eat throughout their stay, and the products they buy and consume on their return, thus prolonging the memory of their holiday. Hall (2006) points out that culinary tourists contribute in their own way to the diversification and maintenance of a diversity of local fruit and vegetable varieties, and even to the reintroduction of old varieties that have been abandoned by mass production in favour of higher-yielding specimens. For culinary tourists, there's no point in going on holiday with the same food they eat every day at home. Local restaurateurs have an important role to play here, as they can be the first to help bring these local foods and products together with culinary tourists. In a more general sense, culinary tourism is very important for rural areas as it can be a way of diversifying economic activities & resources. Furthermore, culinary tourism also helps to strengthen the sense of belonging to a region and to promote local identity and culture (Hall, 2006). The promotion of local food products is thus becoming an essential element in the preservation of a region, thanks to the use of labels and controlled or protected designations of origin. As these products become symbols of their region, they play a crucial role in maintaining the diversity of regional cultures over the long term. Hall uses the term Slow Tourism to describe this form of tourism, which is aligned with the principles of the Slow Food movement.

Incorporating local gastronomy into tourism offerings diversifies the range of experiences available to tourists and enhances the overall appeal of the destination increasing its competitiveness. Moreover, by highlighting and valuing local gastronomy, tourism maintains cultural heritage and preserves local food traditions.



foto credit: Pexels



## CHAPTER 6

# Initiatives by EU / UNESCO & ONU

### Global Roadmap for Food Waste Reduction in the Tourism Sector

A consistent framework for Tourism stakeholders to embrace the sustainable management of food so that it never becomes waste “Action on food waste must be a top priority for the tourism sector. The Roadmap provides the framework within which tourism organizations can play their part whilst bringing benefits to their own operations, guests, the environment, and the sector as a whole.” (Zurab Pololikashvili, UNWTO Secretary-General).

The objective of the Global Roadmap for Food Waste Reduction in the Tourism Sector is to accelerate the uptake of food waste reduction strategies by tourism stakeholders. The Roadmap aims to raise awareness among tourism stakeholders of the opportunities deriving from a more sustainable and circular management of food, with special emphasis on reducing food waste as a cost-effective and environmentally responsible strategy.

12.3: “By 2030, halve per capita global food waste at the retail and consumer levels and reduce food losses along production and supply chains, including post-harvest losses”.

The Roadmap sets out how the tourism sector can contribute to the achievement of target 12.3 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which aims at halving food waste globally by 2030. It provides an action framework to accelerate food waste reduction in tourism, sharing practical insights and guidance for the sector.

All in all, the Roadmap aims to guide the tourism sector to make a contribution towards a more sustainable and regenerative global food system, reflecting the sector’s role in the food value chain and its potential to shape production and consumption patterns. The Roadmap proposes a consistent framework for tourism stakeholders to reduce food waste based on prevention, redistribution and diversion (circulation).

Rooted in the principles of the food waste hierarchy, the Roadmap sets out an action framework with the prevention of food waste as the primary strategy to avoid food surplus and waste being generated in the first place. In a second instance food surplus needs to be redistributed to feed people, followed by animal feed or reuse in biomaterial processing. Thirdly, where food waste can no longer be prevented, it should be diverted from landfill or discharge to sea by applying circular and value added processes, such as recycling, (i.e. composting, anaerobic digestion and land spreading) or energy recovery; so as to avoid disposal (i.e. to landfill, incineration –without energy recovery–, sewer or discharge to sea, or littering).

Tourism businesses are involved in various stages of food management: procurement; inventory management, preparation and presentation of menus; consumption by the guests; and waste management, with food waste occurring at each of the stages and hence being a cross cutting issue. Therefore, by addressing food waste, changes at all stages can be triggered, leading to a more sustainable management of food.



## CHAPTER 6

# Initiatives by EU / UNESCO & ONU

### #TravelTomorrow, Tourism & Gastronomy

Gastronomy is about much more than food. It reflects the culture, heritage, traditions and sense of community of different peoples. It is a way of promoting understanding among different cultures, and of bringing people and traditions closer together. Gastronomy tourism is also emerging as an important protector of cultural heritage, and the sector helps create opportunities, including jobs, most notably in rural destinations.

As part of the UNWTO #TravelTomorrow campaign, chefs from around the world show us how to prepare local dishes at home. We are also proud that the UNWTO Ambassadors for Gastronomy Tourism have joined this initiative. Also, UNWTO Secretary-General shared a typical dish of his native Georgia. All of these are dishes to enjoy while planning our next trip and getting ready to travel again once it is safe to do so[1].



<https://www.breakingtravelnews.com/images/sized/images/uploads/logos/TravelTomorrow - UNWTO-700x350.jpg>



## CHAPTER 6

# Initiatives by EU / UNESCO & ONU

### INTERNATIONAL CODE FOR THE PROTECTION OF TOURISTS

Adopted by the Resolution A/RES/732(XXIV) of the General Assembly of UNWTO at its twenty-fourth session As a soft-law instrument of non-legally binding nature, the ICPT does not create obligations for states nor imposes additional burdens on them. To the contrary, it intends to support the efforts taken by Member States in restoring tourists' trust and assist them in accelerating tourism recovery by providing guidance to governments as to proposed policy, legislation and regulatory practice at the national level.



Source: UNWTO



## CHAPTER 6

# Practical examples

- Several examples on culinary and proximity tourism experiences and enterprises presented in this Youtube channel: <http://www.youtube.com/@CulinaryandProximityTour-ku5vt>
- ‘Spanish Capital of Gastronomy’ initiative: it is a competition that was launched in 2012 by the FEPET (Spanish Federation of Tourism Journalists). It is a unique event that stands out for its continuity for 365 days and which represents a special promotion for the city’s restaurants. The cities that have held the title are Logroño/La Rioja (2012), Burgos (2013), Vitoria-Gasteiz (2014), Cáceres (2015), Toledo (2016), Huelva (2017), León (2018), Almería 2019, Murcia (2020/2021), Sanlúcar de Barrameda (2022) and Cuenca (2023). In 2024 it will be the city of Oviedo.
- Good practices about culinary tourism: [Food Tourism Fundamentals: Seven Global Best Practices to Celebrate & Develop Your Destination’s Cuisine | Miles Partnership](#)
- Itinerary route for french culinary tourism: [Parcours \(valleedelagastronomie.com\)](#)
- Itinerary route for spanish culinary tourism in Andalusia: [Gastronomic Routes – Official Andalusia tourism website \(andalucia.org\)](#)
- Tips for european foodie itinerary by train : [Ultimate Foodie Itinerary \(interrail.eu\)](#)
- The European region of gastronomy is an european initiative to enlight regional richness and culinary heritage in Europe: [EUROPEAN REGIONS OF GASTRONOMY \(europeanregionofgastronomy.org\)](#)

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# Gastronomy and the local economy







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## CHAPTER 7

# Introduction

In the pursuit of sustainable economic development, rural communities face unique challenges and opportunities. The integration of gastronomy into economic strategies has emerged as a transformative force, fostering job creation, enhancing local businesses, and preserving cultural heritage. This essay explores the multifaceted role of gastronomy in sustainable economic development, focusing on gastronomic tourism, artisan producers, the farm-to-table movement, culinary events, and the circular economy. By understanding these dynamics, we can appreciate how local sustainable economic development not only revitalizes rural areas but also ensures their long-term viability.



[El texto del párrafohttps://www.pexels.com/es-es/foto/comida-arquitectura-monitor-mostrar-21287057/](https://www.pexels.com/es-es/foto/comida-arquitectura-monitor-mostrar-21287057/)



## CHAPTER 7

# Rural Development and Gastronomic Tourism

Rural development often grapples with issues such as population decline, economic stagnation, and the erosion of cultural identity. Gastronomic tourism—a sector that emphasizes the unique culinary offerings of a region—can significantly enhance rural economies. By attracting visitors interested in authentic culinary experiences, rural communities can diversify their economic base and create new opportunities for local businesses.

### **Economic Diversification Through Gastronomy.**

The appeal of gastronomic tourism lies in its ability to diversify rural economies. Tourists seeking culinary adventures often spend money on local accommodations, restaurants, and artisanal products. This influx of visitors stimulates demand for goods and services, creating jobs in hospitality, food production, and retail. As rural areas capitalize on their culinary heritage, they can attract a broader audience, thus reducing reliance on traditional sectors such as agriculture or mining.

The integration of sustainable food practices, waste reduction, and the principles of a circular economy is crucial for addressing the challenges posed by environmental degradation and food insecurity. As we strive for a more sustainable future, it becomes essential to recognize how these concepts interlink to create resilient food systems that benefit both people and the planet.

Sustainable food practices encompass methods of producing, processing, and consuming food that prioritize environmental health, social equity, and economic viability. These practices include:

- **Organic Farming:** Utilizing natural processes and materials to grow food without synthetic fertilizers or pesticides, thus preserving biodiversity and soil health.
- **Regenerative Agriculture:** Focused on improving soil health and ecosystem functions, regenerative agriculture practices aim to restore the land while enhancing food production.
- **Local Sourcing:** Supporting local farmers and producers reduces transportation emissions and promotes fresh, seasonal foods, contributing to the local economy and community resilience.



## CHAPTER 7

# Rural Development and Gastronomic Tourism

### Job Creation and Skills Development

The growth of gastronomic tourism has a profound impact on job creation within rural communities. As restaurants, farms, and local businesses expand their operations to cater to the increasing demands of tourists, a wide range of employment opportunities emerge. This burgeoning sector requires a diverse workforce, including chefs who bring local flavors to life, servers who provide exceptional dining experiences, marketers who promote these culinary offerings, and tour guides who share the stories behind the region's food culture.

As these roles develop, they often necessitate skill enhancement, fostering a more capable workforce. The demand for skilled professionals in the culinary field has led to the establishment of various training programs focused on culinary arts, hospitality management, and sustainable agriculture. These programs are designed not only to equip individuals with the specific skills required for their immediate roles but also to impart transferable skills that have value in other sectors. For instance, a chef trained in sustainable practices might also find opportunities in food policy advocacy or nutrition education, while a hospitality manager may develop skills in customer relations that are applicable in various service industries.

Moreover, this focus on skill development contributes to a more resilient local economy. As workers gain expertise, they become more competitive in the job market, enhancing their employability both locally and beyond. The ripple effects of this job creation extend throughout the community, strengthening local businesses and promoting economic stability. Ultimately, the integration of gastronomic tourism not only enriches the cultural fabric of rural areas but also serves as a catalyst for sustainable economic development by creating a dynamic, skilled workforce prepared to meet the challenges of an evolving industry.



foto credit: Pexels



## CHAPTER 7

# The Role of Artisan and Specialty Producers

At the heart of gastronomic tourism are artisan and specialty producers who provide the local ingredients that make regional cuisines unique. These producers are vital for maintaining local jobs and fostering economic resilience.

### Maintaining Local Jobs

By sourcing ingredients from local farms and artisans, restaurants and markets play a vital role in sustaining jobs within their communities. This model creates a symbiotic relationship between food businesses and local producers, fostering economic interdependence. Small-scale producers, who often rely on the sale of their goods in nearby markets and eateries, benefit significantly from this practice. Their livelihoods depend not only on the volume of sales but also on the community's support, which is bolstered when restaurants actively seek to feature local products on their menus.

As consumers increasingly prioritize quality and authenticity in their food choices, there has been a remarkable surge in demand for artisan products. Handmade cheeses, locally sourced meats, and organic produce have gained popularity, as people seek to connect with the origins of their food and appreciate the craftsmanship behind it. This shift in consumer behavior has profound implications; it encourages restaurants to curate their offerings carefully, emphasizing the story behind each ingredient, which often resonates with diners looking for a meaningful dining experience.

This trend does more than simply bolster local economies—it also plays a crucial role in preserving traditional crafts and culinary practices that might otherwise fade into obscurity. By prioritizing local sourcing, restaurants not only support the economic viability of small producers but also help to maintain the cultural heritage associated with specific foods and preparation methods. For instance, a local cheese maker using age-old techniques to produce artisanal cheese can continue to practice their craft, knowing that there is a market for their high-quality products.

Moreover, this emphasis on local sourcing fosters a sense of community pride and identity, as residents come to appreciate and celebrate the unique flavors and traditions of their region. When restaurants highlight local ingredients, they invite diners to experience the essence of their locality, creating a stronger bond between consumers and their food sources. This interconnectedness not only enhances the culinary landscape of the community but also encourages sustainable agricultural practices that prioritize environmental stewardship.

In essence, the movement toward sourcing local ingredients is a powerful driver of economic growth, cultural preservation, and community cohesion. As restaurants and markets continue to champion local farms and artisans, they contribute to a vibrant, resilient local economy that values quality, authenticity, and tradition, ensuring that both producers and consumers thrive together.



## CHAPTER 7

# The Role of Artisan and Specialty Producers

### Quality Products and Sustainable Local Development

The emphasis on quality products plays a pivotal role in fostering a sustainable local development model. When communities consciously prioritize locally produced foods, they not only support their local economies but also promote a culture of environmental stewardship that can have far-reaching benefits. This commitment to sourcing food from local producers encourages the adoption of sustainable farming practices, creating a virtuous cycle that benefits both the environment and the community.

Local producers, who are often deeply connected to their land and resources, tend to be more inclined to embrace eco-friendly methods. Practices such as crop rotation and organic farming are commonly adopted, as these techniques help maintain soil health, reduce reliance on chemical fertilizers, and promote biodiversity. By utilizing sustainable agricultural practices, these producers not only protect the environment but also contribute to the creation of healthier food systems. This results in food that is not only fresher and more nutritious but also free from harmful chemicals, ultimately benefiting the consumers who prioritize their health and well-being.

Moreover, this dedication to quality and sustainability enhances the attractiveness of rural areas, transforming them into desirable destinations for gastronomic tourism. Travelers are increasingly seeking authentic experiences that allow them to connect with the local culture and cuisine. Regions that emphasize their unique agricultural products, traditional farming practices, and commitment to sustainability become magnetically appealing to these tourists. Visitors are drawn not only by the promise of delicious food but also by the opportunity to support sustainable practices and learn about the rich agricultural heritage of the area.

As a result, the influx of gastronomic tourists provides a significant boost to local economies. Restaurants, markets, and farms benefit from increased patronage, which in turn allows them to invest further in sustainable practices and enhance their offerings. This cycle of investment and growth fosters a resilient local economy that thrives on quality and sustainability, attracting even more visitors over time.

In essence, prioritizing quality products cultivates a deeper appreciation for the land and its resources, fostering a sense of responsibility within the community. It encourages collaboration among producers, consumers, and local businesses, creating a cohesive network that is dedicated to preserving the environment while celebrating local culinary traditions. Ultimately, this approach not only enriches the local food landscape but also ensures that rural areas can flourish as sustainable, vibrant destinations for gastronomic tourism, where both people and the planet benefit.



## CHAPTER 7

# The Farm-to-Table Movement

The farm-to-table movement embodies the principles of local sourcing and sustainable practices. By promoting the use of locally sourced ingredients in restaurants and markets, this movement supports regional farmers and fosters economic growth.

### Supporting Local Farmers and Producers

When restaurants commit to sourcing their ingredients locally, they forge direct relationships with farmers and producers. This approach cuts out intermediaries, ensuring that more profits remain within the community. As a result, farmers can receive fair prices for their goods, incentivizing them to continue sustainable farming practices. This model not only benefits the producers but also enhances the quality of the food served, creating a win-win situation for both parties.

### Sustaining Rural Economies

The economic impact of local sourcing is profound. By supporting regional farmers, fishers, and artisans, communities can sustain their rural economies. This reliance on local resources not only fosters economic resilience but also strengthens community ties. When residents support local businesses, they contribute to a cycle of economic activity that benefits everyone involved, ensuring the survival of traditional food practices and cultural heritage.



<https://www.pexels.com/es-es/foto/proceso-de-encurtido-casero-en-cocina-rustica-28645474/>



## CHAPTER 7

# Restaurants and Culinary Businesses as Economic Drivers

Restaurants and culinary businesses serve as essential economic drivers in rural communities. By creating a vibrant food scene, these establishments not only generate revenue but also enhance the overall appeal of the area.

### Job Creation and Economic Opportunities

Culinary businesses serve as vital engines of job creation, generating a diverse range of employment opportunities that span various functions and skill sets. From the bustling kitchens where chefs and cooks craft exquisite dishes to the front-of-house positions that ensure patrons enjoy memorable dining experiences, the culinary sector is a rich tapestry of roles that cater to different talents and interests. As these businesses flourish, they inevitably require a broader support network to sustain their growth, leading to the emergence of additional positions such as suppliers who provide fresh ingredients, marketers who promote the brand and its offerings, and event coordinators who orchestrate special occasions and culinary experiences.

The expansion of the culinary sector not only bolsters job opportunities for existing residents but also plays a pivotal role in attracting new talent to the area. As restaurants and food-related businesses thrive, they create a vibrant atmosphere that draws individuals seeking employment in a dynamic and creative environment. Young professionals and skilled workers may find themselves inspired by the opportunities presented in a growing culinary scene, prompting them to relocate and contribute to the local economy.

Moreover, the proliferation of culinary jobs fosters a sense of community and collaboration among residents. As individuals from various backgrounds come together to work in the culinary industry, they share their knowledge, skills, and experiences, enriching the local culture. This collaboration often leads to the establishment of mentorship programs, workshops, and training sessions, further enhancing the capabilities of the workforce. Local culinary schools and training institutions may emerge to meet the demand for skilled workers, providing education and hands-on experience that prepare individuals for successful careers in the food industry.

In addition to the direct economic benefits, the growth of culinary businesses can also stimulate ancillary sectors. As more restaurants open and culinary events gain popularity, there is an increased need for services such as catering, food photography, and food styling. This diversification creates a ripple effect, where related industries thrive alongside the culinary sector, generating even more job opportunities.



## CHAPTER 7

# Restaurants and Culinary Businesses as Economic Drivers

### **Job Creation and Economic Opportunities**

Furthermore, as culinary businesses flourish, they often engage with local farms and artisans, fostering a sense of interconnectedness within the community. This partnership not only supports the local economy but also promotes sustainable practices, as businesses prioritize sourcing ingredients from nearby producers. This commitment to local sourcing not only enhances the quality of the food offered but also strengthens the local agricultural sector, ensuring that both culinary and farming communities benefit from this symbiotic relationship.

In summary, the growth of culinary businesses leads to a multifaceted expansion of job opportunities that enriches the local economy. By creating a vibrant ecosystem of employment, fostering collaboration, and supporting related industries, the culinary sector becomes a cornerstone of community development. As these businesses thrive, they not only provide jobs but also contribute to a cultural and economic landscape that celebrates the art of food and the people who bring it to life.

### **The Importance of Culinary Tourism**

Culinary tourism significantly increases demand for local products and services. Tourists are drawn to authentic dining experiences that showcase regional cuisine, leading to higher sales for restaurants and markets. This demand creates a feedback loop where increased patronage enables businesses to invest in quality ingredients and innovative offerings, further enhancing the local food landscape.



## CHAPTER 7

# Culinary Events and Festivals: Boosting Local Economies

Culinary events and festivals play a crucial role in promoting local products and attracting tourists. These gatherings create vibrant marketplaces that showcase the best of what rural communities have to offer.

### Attracting Tourists and Stimulating Economic Activity

Food festivals, farmers' markets, and culinary events serve as significant attractions for tourists. They provide platforms for local producers to showcase their products, allowing them to connect directly with consumers. The influx of visitors during these events stimulates economic activity, benefiting local businesses and generating additional revenue streams.

### Strengthening Community Bonds

Culinary events foster community pride and cohesion. As residents come together to celebrate their culinary heritage, they reinforce social ties and create a sense of belonging. These gatherings not only promote local products but also strengthen the overall fabric of the community, making it more resilient and vibrant.



<https://www.pexels.com/es-es/foto/grupo-de-personas-cerca-de-gyros-pita-wraps-puesto-de-comida-1483858/>



## CHAPTER 7

# Economic Benefits of Protecting Culinary Heritage

Preserving traditional food production methods and products is essential for maintaining cultural heritage and enhancing the market value of local offerings.

### Protecting Cultural Identity

Culinary heritage is a key aspect of cultural identity. By preserving traditional recipes, cooking techniques, and food production methods, communities can maintain their unique identities in the face of globalization. This focus on heritage not only protects local culture but also attracts consumers interested in authentic experiences.

### Enhancing Market Value and Competitiveness

As the demand for authentic and locally produced foods grows, communities that prioritize the protection of culinary heritage can enhance the market value of their products. Unique offerings—such as artisanal cheeses, regional wines, and traditional preserves—can command premium prices, contributing to the economic sustainability of local producers.



<https://www.pexels.com/es-es/foto/caja-de-madera-marron-96379/>



## CHAPTER 7

# Circular Economy and Sustainability

Gastronomy plays a vital role in promoting a circular economy, emphasizing waste reduction and the efficient use of resources.

### Reducing Waste and Supporting Eco-Friendly Practices

Culinary businesses can adopt practices that minimize waste, such as composting food scraps and utilizing by-products in innovative ways. By reducing waste and embracing sustainable practices, these businesses contribute to environmental protection and resource conservation.

### Encouraging the Use of Local, Seasonal Products

The focus on local and seasonal ingredients not only enhances the quality of food served but also minimizes environmental impact. By sourcing ingredients that are in season, culinary businesses can reduce transportation emissions and support sustainable farming practices. This alignment between gastronomy and sustainability fosters a resilient local economy that benefits both producers and consumers.



<https://www.pexels.com/es-es/foto/frutos-rojos-y-verdes-en-banco-de-madera-marron-5503338/>



## CHAPTER 7

# Conclusion

Local sustainable economic development is intricately linked to the culinary landscape of rural communities. By embracing gastronomic tourism, supporting artisan producers, and prioritizing local sourcing, these communities can create vibrant local economies that celebrate their unique identities. The benefits extend beyond economic growth; they foster cultural preservation, environmental stewardship, and social cohesion. As rural areas harness the power of gastronomy, they can pave the way for a more sustainable and prosperous future, ensuring that both people and place thrive together. By investing in culinary heritage and sustainable practices, communities can build resilient economies that honor their past while adapting to the challenges of the present and future.



<https://www.pexels.com/es-es/foto/grupo-de-personas-haciendo-tostadas-3184183/>



## CHAPTER 7

# Practical examples

**In Italy**, gastronomy plays a fundamental role in the sustainable economic development of rural communities. Here are some notable examples:

1. **Tuscany and Chianti:** This region is famous for its wines and olive oil tourism. Wineries offer tours and tastings, attracting tourists and supporting the local economy.

2. **Emilia-Romagna:** Known for high-quality food products like Parmigiano Reggiano and Prosciutto di Parma, the region promotes local artisans through culinary tours and markets, benefiting local producers.

Parmigiano Reggiano adheres to the "open dairies" initiative. In fact, these are not just simple guided tours of dairies, stables and maturing warehouses, open shops, events for children and tastings, but an authentic journey through time to discover the artisanal production method of the PDO, which has remained unchanged for over nine centuries (it is produced today with the same ingredients as a thousand years ago – raw milk, salt and rennet, with a completely natural production, without the use of additives or preservatives): a tour of the area of origin rich in history, art and culture.



3. **Campania and Buffalo Mozzarella:** Farms producing buffalo mozzarella offer guided tours and tastings, contributing to gastronomic tourism and the local economy.

4. **Sicily:** Food festivals and sagre celebrate local dishes like arancini and cannoli. These events attract visitors and promote local producers.

5. **Puglia:** The region has embraced the farm-to-table movement, with restaurants focusing on local ingredients. Masserie (farms) offer culinary experiences and agritourism.

6. **Liguria:** The promotion of pesto and local products, such as olive oil and Taggiasca olives, has led to events and festivals that celebrate Ligurian cuisine, drawing tourists.

These examples demonstrate how gastronomy can serve as a catalyst for economic growth and cultural preservation in Italy's rural areas.



## CHAPTER 7

# Practical examples

In **Spain**, gastronomy plays a crucial role in sustainable economic development for rural communities. Here are some notable examples:

1. Andalusia and Olive Oil:

- Known for its high-quality olive oil, particularly from regions like Jaén. Olive oil tours and tastings attract visitors and support local farmers.

2. Catalonia and Wine Tourism:

- The Priorat and Penedès regions are famous for their wines. Many wineries offer tours and tastings, promoting local wine culture and boosting the economy.

3. Basque Country and Pintxos:

- The Basque culinary scene, particularly in San Sebastián, is renowned for its pintxos (small snacks). Culinary tourism, including cooking classes and food tours, fosters economic growth.

4. Galicia and Seafood:

- Galicia is famous for its seafood, particularly octopus (pulpo). Food festivals celebrate local dishes, attracting tourists and supporting local fishermen.

5. Valencia and Paella:

- Valencia is the birthplace of paella, and the region hosts numerous festivals celebrating this iconic dish, drawing visitors and promoting local agriculture.

6. Asturias and Cider:

- Asturias is known for its unique cider (sidra). Cider houses offer tastings and tours, creating a niche for cider tourism and benefiting local apple growers.

These examples illustrate how gastronomy can drive economic growth and cultural preservation in Spain's rural areas.

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# Mediterranean Diet





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## CHAPTER 8

# Introduction to the Mediterranean Diet

The Mediterranean Diet is celebrated as one of the healthiest and most sustainable eating patterns globally, originating from countries like Spain, Italy, Greece, and parts of France and Portugal. It embodies a holistic lifestyle that intertwines cultural traditions, local agricultural systems, and social practices.



Map from [www.alamyimages.fr](http://www.alamyimages.fr)

Beyond mere food choices, the Mediterranean Diet emphasizes a balanced lifestyle supported by strong local food systems. It prioritizes seasonal and locally sourced ingredients, fostering sustainable practices like small-scale farming and biodiversity preservation. This approach ensures that key products, such as olive oil, fresh vegetables, and whole grains, are produced in harmony with the environment.

Research highlights the diet's significant health benefits, linking it to lower rates of cardiovascular disease, obesity, diabetes, and some cancers. It features a high intake of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, and healthy fats, particularly from olive oil, while encouraging moderate consumption of dairy, poultry, and fish, and limited intake of red meat and processed foods. The occasional consumption of red wine with meals also supports heart health.

The Mediterranean Diet fosters social interaction through shared meals, reinforcing family and community bonds, which contributes to emotional well-being and mental health. Deeply rooted in culinary heritage, it preserves traditional recipes passed down through generations. Its focus on fresh, simple ingredients not only honors local culture but also ensures sustainability for future generations.



## CHAPTER 8

# Introduction to the Mediterranean Diet

The Mediterranean Diet has garnered global attention, shaping modern culinary trends that emphasize sustainability and health. Recognized as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by UNESCO in 2010, it highlights the diet's cultural significance and its role in promoting sustainable development.

the programme aims to draw attention to the importance of safeguarding intangible heritage, which UNESCO has identified as an essential component and as a repository of cultural diversity and of creative expression.

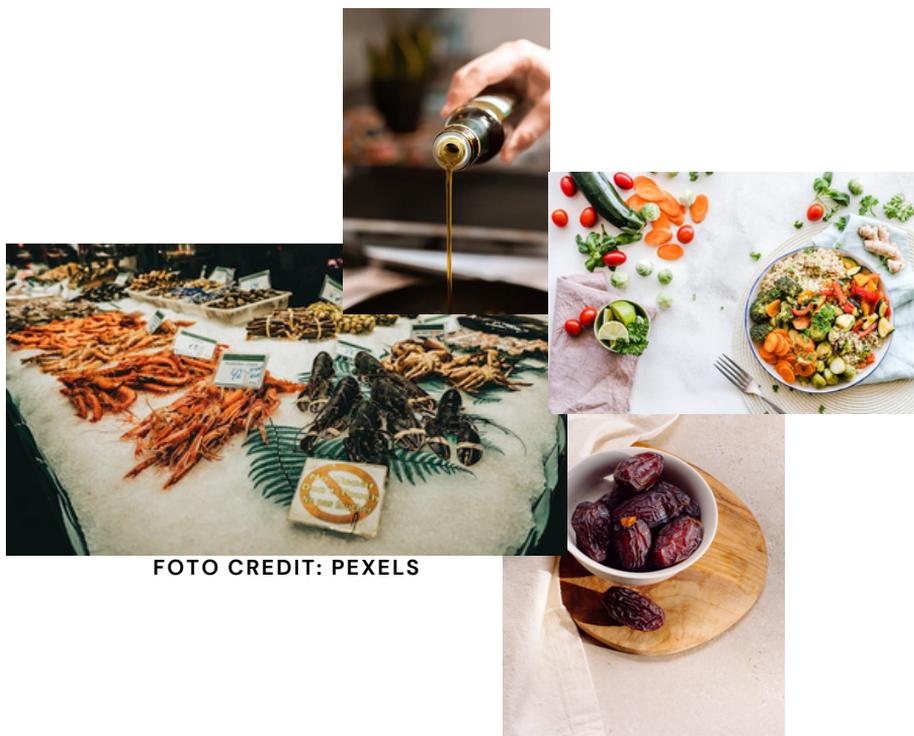


FOTO CREDIT: PEXELS



## CHAPTER 8

# Key Elements of the Mediterranean Diet

The Mediterranean Diet is built upon a foundation of simple, high-quality ingredients that are fresh, locally sourced, and deeply intertwined with the region's cultural identity. Each element reflects not only a culinary choice but also a way of life that values sustainability, health, and community. Below are the core components that define the Mediterranean Diet:

### Fresh, Local Produce

At the heart of the Mediterranean Diet is an abundant use of fresh, seasonal produce, which forms the basis of most meals. Fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and nuts are not just dietary staples—they reflect the rich biodiversity of Mediterranean agriculture. This region's mild climate allows for a wide variety of crops to flourish, such as tomatoes, eggplants, zucchinis, peppers, olives, and citrus fruits. These ingredients are often grown by local farmers using traditional and sustainable methods, ensuring that each meal is not only nutritious but also eco-friendly.

Plant-based foods provides essential vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, contributing to the Mediterranean Diet's well-known health benefits. The reliance on locally sourced produce also supports regional economies and reduces the carbon footprint associated with food transportation.





## CHAPTER 8

# Key Elements of the Mediterranean Diet

### Olive Oil: The Golden Elixir

Olive oil is perhaps the most iconic ingredient of the Mediterranean Diet, serving as the primary source of fat in daily meals. Rich in monounsaturated fats and antioxidants, olive oil is prized for its health benefits, particularly for heart health. It is used generously in cooking, dressing salads, and even drizzling over bread or vegetables. The cultural significance of olive oil goes beyond the kitchen; it has been a symbol of prosperity, peace, and longevity in Mediterranean societies for centuries.

Different Mediterranean regions, from Spain to Greece to southern Italy, take pride in their unique varieties of olive oil, each with its own distinct flavor and production method. Olive groves are a key feature of the landscape, and the annual olive harvest is a time-honored tradition that brings communities together.

The high content of oleic acid, a monounsaturated fat, and polyphenols in olive oil helps reduce inflammation and lower the risk of cardiovascular disease, making it a cornerstone of the diet's healthfulness.



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### Seafood, Poultry, and Dairy

While the Mediterranean Diet is predominantly plant-based, it also includes moderate amounts of animal proteins, primarily in the form of seafood and poultry. Fish, particularly fatty fish like sardines, mackerel, and salmon, are rich in omega-3 fatty acids, which promote heart health and support brain function. Poultry is consumed more frequently than red meat, which is reserved for special occasions or consumed in small portions.

Dairy, especially in the form of cheese and yogurt, plays a complementary role in the Mediterranean Diet. Traditional cheeses like feta in Greece, pecorino in Italy, or manchego in Spain are consumed in moderation, often incorporated into meals rather than served as a standalone dish. Yogurt, particularly natural or Greek yogurt, is a daily staple, providing probiotics and calcium.

These protein sources are less saturated in fat than red meat, contributing to the diet's overall health profile.



(pexels-solliefoto-566343 - Terje Sollie)



## CHAPTER 8

# Key Elements of the Mediterranean Diet

### Herbs and Spices: Flavor from the Land

Aromatic herbs and spices play a crucial role in Mediterranean cuisine, adding depth and complexity to dishes without the need for excessive salt or artificial flavoring. Local herbs such as oregano, thyme, rosemary, basil, and parsley are used liberally, often freshly picked from gardens. Garlic, onions, and other alliums are also essential flavor components. These herbs not only enhance the taste of dishes but also offer their own health benefits, such as anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties.

The use of herbs and spices reflects the resourcefulness of Mediterranean cooking, where flavor is derived naturally from the land. This approach to seasoning promotes healthy eating by reducing the reliance on processed additives and salt.



(pexels-alleksana-4113898)

### Wine in Moderation: A Social and Cultural Tradition

In Mediterranean cultures, wine is more than just a drink—it is a symbol of hospitality, celebration, and communal life. Red wine, in particular, is consumed in moderation and is often enjoyed with meals, not as an isolated beverage. Wine accompanies food, enhances the dining experience, and fosters social interaction around the table.

Moderate consumption of red wine, particularly due to its resveratrol content, has been associated with heart health benefits. However, the key is moderation—typically, one glass per day for women and two for men.

Wine has deep historical and cultural roots in the Mediterranean. The tradition of winemaking dates back thousands of years, and the vineyards of the Mediterranean are celebrated worldwide for producing some of the finest wines. In these cultures, wine is enjoyed in a mindful, social setting, often accompanied by conversation and shared experiences.



## CHAPTER 8

# Key Elements of the Mediterranean Diet

The Ancient Greeks drank wine by mixing it with water, usually in a ratio of 1:3 (one part wine to three parts water). They used special vessels for both mixing (craters) and cooling it. Drinking wine that had not been mixed with water ('unmixed wine') was considered barbaric and was only used by sick people or during journeys as a tonic. The consumption of wine with honey and the use of herbs was also widespread. The addition of absinthe to wine was also a well-known method (attributed to Hippocrates and referred to as 'Hippocratic Wine'), as was the addition of resin (la "retsina").



(photo Hervé Lewandowski)



## CHAPTER 8

# Health Benefits of the Mediterranean Diet

One of the standout benefits of the Mediterranean Diet is its ability to promote cardiovascular health. At the heart of this diet is a high content of unsaturated fats, particularly from olive oil, which is rich in monounsaturated fats and antioxidants like polyphenols. These compounds help lower levels of bad cholesterol (LDL) while raising levels of good cholesterol (HDL), reducing the risk of heart disease and stroke.

The inclusion of whole grains—such as barley, bulgur, and oats—provides a steady source of fiber, which is known to help maintain healthy blood pressure levels and improve overall heart function. The diet also encourages the consumption of fatty fish, like salmon, sardines, and mackerel, which are high in omega-3 fatty acids. These essential fatty acids help reduce inflammation, decrease the likelihood of blood clots, and lower triglyceride levels, all of which contribute to better cardiovascular health.

A growing body of research links the Mediterranean Diet to a reduced risk of developing several chronic diseases. By prioritizing plant-based foods, such as fruits, vegetables, and legumes, which are rich in antioxidants, vitamins, and minerals, the diet helps combat oxidative stress—a key contributor to conditions like diabetes, cancer, and Alzheimer's disease.

Moreover, the diet's focus on unprocessed foods and its low intake of refined sugars and unhealthy fats contribute to better metabolic health, lowering the risk of obesity and Type 2 diabetes.

For example, studies show that the Mediterranean Diet can help regulate blood sugar levels and improve insulin sensitivity. The high fiber content from whole grains and legumes also supports digestive health and helps to maintain stable blood sugar levels.

As for cancer prevention, the Mediterranean Diet's antioxidant-rich ingredients, like tomatoes (which contain lycopene), leafy greens, and fruits, help reduce the formation of free radicals, which can damage cells and lead to cancer. Additionally, the emphasis on anti-inflammatory foods like olive oil and nuts further reduces the risk of developing inflammatory diseases.

Populations in the Mediterranean region, particularly in "Blue Zones" like Sardinia (Italy) and Ikaria (Greece), are known for their exceptional longevity and high quality of life. These regions follow a dietary pattern closely aligned with the Mediterranean Diet, and their inhabitants live longer, healthier lives with lower rates of age-related diseases.

The Mediterranean Diet's emphasis on plant-based foods, healthy fats, and lean proteins, combined with regular physical activity and a strong sense of community, creates a lifestyle that promotes overall well-being. In these communities, meals are often enjoyed slowly, in the company of friends and family, which reduces stress and fosters social connections—both key factors that contribute to mental and emotional health.

The longevity observed in these regions is also attributed to a lower incidence of degenerative diseases, such as heart disease, Alzheimer's, and certain cancers. The diet's balance of nutrients, coupled with its anti-inflammatory properties and low levels of processed foods, helps protect cells and organs from the damage associated with aging, thus increasing lifespan and enhancing the quality of life in later years.





## CHAPTER 8

# Conservation of Local Ingredients

One of the essential pillars of the Mediterranean Diet is its deep-rooted connection to local ingredients that have been a part of the region's culinary and agricultural heritage for centuries. These native plants, fruits, and traditional farming and fishing practices form the foundation of Mediterranean cuisine and play a crucial role in preserving the diet's authenticity, sustainability, and health benefits. The conservation of these ingredients is vital to maintaining the integrity of the Mediterranean Diet, promoting biodiversity, and ensuring that future generations can enjoy its rich culinary traditions.

The Mediterranean region is home to an incredible variety of native plant species, many of which have been cultivated and consumed for thousands of years. These include ancient grains such as emmer wheat and farro, fruits like figs, pomegranates, and olives, as well as a wide variety of vegetables and herbs that are integral to Mediterranean dishes.

Efforts to identify and protect these native plant species are crucial to preserving the region's agricultural heritage. Many traditional crops are under threat from modern agricultural practices, climate change, and the globalization of food systems, which favor high-yield, commercial varieties over local, often more nutrient-dense, species. In response, several organizations and farmers across the Mediterranean are working to safeguard and promote heirloom varieties of plants and native seeds.

For example, initiatives such as seed banks and community-supported agriculture (CSA) projects help conserve local plant species by encouraging farmers and consumers to grow and buy local, traditional crops. These efforts ensure that the unique biodiversity of the Mediterranean region remains intact, supporting both ecological balance and the health of the population. By focusing on heritage crops, the Mediterranean Diet supports sustainable agricultural practices that promote resilience in the face of changing environmental conditions.



## CHAPTER 8

# Conservation of Local Ingredients

In addition to plant conservation, the Mediterranean Diet also relies on the preservation of traditional fishing and farming methods, which have been practiced for generations. These methods are often more sustainable than industrial farming and fishing techniques, as they emphasize environmental stewardship, small-scale production, and respect for natural ecosystems.

Sustainable fishing practices are critical to preserving the rich marine biodiversity of the Mediterranean Sea. Many communities in the region have developed traditional fishing methods that are selective and low-impact, avoiding the overfishing of species and reducing damage to marine ecosystems. These include techniques like hand-lining, small nets, and artisanal fishing, which target specific species and avoid bycatch, helping to maintain fish populations and protect endangered marine life.

Furthermore, efforts to promote responsible aquaculture are gaining traction, with a focus on eco-friendly fish farms that avoid the use of harmful chemicals and antibiotics. Sustainable fishing practices not only help conserve fish populations but also ensure that seafood remains a healthy, abundant source of protein in the Mediterranean Diet.

In terms of local farming methods, the Mediterranean region has a long history of small-scale, family-run farms that use traditional, organic techniques. These farms are often focused on crop rotation, polyculture, and dry farming, all of which contribute to soil health and the conservation of water—an especially important consideration in the Mediterranean's often arid climate.

By prioritizing organic farming and reducing the reliance on chemical fertilizers and pesticides, these methods help preserve the fertility of the land and protect the surrounding ecosystems. This approach also fosters the production of nutrient-rich crops, which are central to the Mediterranean Diet's health benefits. Local, sustainable farming practices play a vital role in preserving agrobiodiversity—the variety of crops and farming systems that are crucial to maintaining the ecological balance in rural areas.

Additionally, many of these traditional farming and fishing methods are closely tied to the cultural heritage of the Mediterranean, representing the way of life for rural communities. Promoting and conserving these practices not only ensures the sustainability of the Mediterranean Diet but also helps sustain the local economies and livelihoods of small farmers and fishermen who rely on these methods for their survival.



## CHAPTER 8

# Sustainable Farming Methods

The Mediterranean Diet has long been associated with sustainability, not just as a dietary model, but as a broader cultural system that promotes environmentally friendly farming practices and responsible food production. These sustainable methods play a key role in preserving the environment, supporting local economies, and ensuring a more responsible use of natural resources. Here's how the Mediterranean Diet emphasizes sustainability through its farming practices:

-One of the core principles of the Mediterranean Diet is its reliance on organic and small-scale farming. Small farms, often family-owned, form the backbone of local food systems in Mediterranean regions. These farms use organic farming practices, avoiding chemical fertilizers and pesticides, which helps to maintain soil fertility, protect ecosystems, and enhance biodiversity.

Small-scale farms also tend to produce a variety of crops and livestock, promoting agrobiodiversity and reducing the reliance on monocultures, which are more vulnerable to pests, diseases, and environmental changes. The focus on diverse, local production helps preserve regional food varieties, ensuring that unique species of fruits, vegetables, grains, and herbs continue to thrive.

In addition, these local farming systems help minimize the environmental impact of food production by reducing the need for long-distance transportation and excessive packaging, which are major contributors to pollution.

-The Mediterranean Diet is plant-based, with a significant focus on fresh, locally sourced foods. This emphasis on plant-based consumption, particularly fruits, vegetables, legumes, and whole grains, plays a major role in reducing the carbon footprint of food production.

Compared to diets that rely heavily on animal products, the Mediterranean Diet's lower intake of red meat and focus on fish, poultry, and plant proteins significantly decreases greenhouse gas emissions. The cultivation of plant-based foods requires less land, water, and energy, making the overall impact on the environment much smaller.

By prioritizing locally grown ingredients, the Mediterranean Diet also reduces the carbon emissions associated with food transportation, sometimes referred to as "food miles." This practice not only cuts down on emissions but also supports local farmers and helps strengthen regional food systems.

-A defining feature of the Mediterranean Diet is its respect for seasonal and regional foods. Traditional Mediterranean communities have long based their meals on what is locally available during specific times of the year, ensuring that foods are consumed at their peak freshness and nutritional value.

Eating seasonally helps reduce the demand for out-of-season produce, which often requires energy-intensive greenhouse production or long-distance imports. It also encourages consumers to reduce food waste, as seasonal produce is usually more abundant and less costly when consumed in its natural growing period.

In addition, this seasonal approach preserves local food traditions, connecting people to the rhythms of nature and the cultural heritage tied to specific ingredients. It fosters a deeper appreciation of local flavors and ensures that regional culinary practices continue to be passed down through generations, maintaining a rich cultural legacy.



## CHAPTER 8

# Enhancement of Biodiversity in Gastronomy

The Mediterranean Diet is not only a healthy and sustainable way of eating but also a powerful tool for the preservation and enhancement of biodiversity. A central feature of the Mediterranean Diet is its incorporation of a wide range of ingredients, reflecting the rich biodiversity of the Mediterranean region. This includes a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, nuts, herbs, and seafood, all of which are deeply rooted in the local ecosystems.

The use of seasonal and locally sourced produce encourages the preservation of native plant species and traditional crop varieties. From ancient grains like farro and barley to unique regional vegetables like artichokes, eggplants, and peppers, the Mediterranean Diet celebrates the diversity of its agricultural landscape.

Efforts to sustain this biodiversity are seen in the protection of traditional foodways, where farmers, chefs, and food producers prioritize heirloom varieties, wild plants, and locally adapted species. Initiatives such as slow food movements, organic farming cooperatives, and biodiversity reserves work together to safeguard these precious resources, ensuring that they continue to flourish and remain part of the regional cuisine.

While rooted in tradition, the Mediterranean Diet is also a source of constant culinary innovation. Chefs, food producers, and restaurateurs are finding new ways to use local ingredients, creating modern dishes that still honor Mediterranean values. By drawing on the region's vast biodiversity, these innovators are crafting unique meals that highlight the flavors, textures, and nutritional benefits of local produce.

For example, chefs may experiment with ancient grains like spelt or einkorn to create innovative recipes that blend traditional techniques with modern culinary trends. Similarly, food producers are finding creative ways to transform local legumes or herbs into contemporary gourmet products, while still respecting the integrity of the original ingredients.

By doing so, they not only keep local food traditions alive but also contribute to the sustainability of the food system. Innovation based on local diversity supports small-scale farmers and protects the environment, as it encourages the use of resources that are less harmful to the planet and more resilient to changing climatic conditions.



## CHAPTER 8

# Mediterranean Diet in Modern Gastronomy

The Mediterranean Diet, while deeply rooted in tradition, has seamlessly adapted to modern culinary trends without losing its core values. Its timeless principles of sustainability, health, and local food culture have inspired chefs and food enthusiasts around the world. This section explores how the Mediterranean Diet has evolved in today's gastronomic landscape.

One of the key ways the Mediterranean Diet has adapted to contemporary gastronomy is through its fusion with modern food trends. Chefs are reinterpreting traditional Mediterranean dishes to align with new tastes, dietary preferences, and lifestyle choices, while still honoring the essence of the diet.

- **Plant-based dining:** With the growing popularity of plant-based diets, the Mediterranean Diet's focus on vegetables, legumes, grains, and nuts makes it highly adaptable to vegetarian and vegan variations. Modern chefs are creating innovative dishes that emphasize the diet's plant-forward nature, substituting or reducing animal-based ingredients while maintaining bold flavors and nutritional integrity.
- **Gluten-free options:** Traditional Mediterranean dishes often use gluten-containing grains like wheat (e.g., bread, pasta). However, chefs are now incorporating ancient gluten-free grains like quinoa or buckwheat to cater to gluten-sensitive consumers, preserving the authenticity of the dishes while making them more accessible.
- **Health-conscious adaptations:** Many Mediterranean dishes are naturally nutrient-dense, but modern interpretations focus even more on health-conscious choices. For example, chefs may use less salt or swap out refined sugars for natural sweeteners like honey or dates. These adjustments appeal to a health-focused audience while retaining the Mediterranean Diet's wholesome character.
- **Minimalist and slow food movements:** The Mediterranean Diet's emphasis on simplicity and seasonal ingredients aligns perfectly with contemporary culinary trends like minimalism and the slow food movement. Chefs are returning to basics, using fewer ingredients but ensuring that they are of the highest quality, locally sourced, and prepared with care—principles that have always been part of Mediterranean cuisine.

Over the past few decades, the Mediterranean Diet has gained immense global recognition, influencing food culture far beyond the Mediterranean region.

From North America to Asia, the principles of the Mediterranean Diet have been embraced by chefs, nutritionists, and home cooks alike. Mediterranean-inspired restaurants have sprung up in cities across the globe, offering dishes that showcase the richness of Mediterranean flavors, such as grilled fish, fresh salads, and olive oil-based dishes. This global spread has helped promote the diet's values of health and sustainability.

The Mediterranean Diet is also becoming a core part of culinary education, with cooking schools around the world teaching Mediterranean techniques and recipes. This has led to greater awareness of traditional Mediterranean ingredients and cooking methods, helping to spread the diet's values to future generations of chefs and food professionals.



## CHAPTER 8

# Cultural Significance of the Mediterranean Diet

In Mediterranean culture, meals are much more than an occasion to nourish the body; they are social events that bring people together, reflecting a strong communal spirit. The Mediterranean Diet emphasizes the joy of sharing food with family and friends, making meals a daily opportunity to strengthen social bonds.

- **Gathering around the table:** Meals, especially lunch and dinner, are traditionally seen as times when family members come together, often spanning multiple generations. Sharing food is a way to connect with loved ones, exchange stories, and enjoy the pleasures of life. This tradition of communal eating fosters a sense of togetherness and reinforces the importance of family in Mediterranean culture.
- **Social celebrations:** Beyond daily meals, larger gatherings and feasts often take place for festivals, weddings, and religious celebrations. These events typically center around the table, with food playing a central role in the festivities. Whether it's a small family dinner or a large community feast, the act of sharing meals embodies the core Mediterranean values of hospitality, generosity, and community.
- **Pace of meals:** The Mediterranean lifestyle promotes a slow and relaxed pace during meals. In contrast to fast food culture, Mediterranean dining traditions encourage people to take their time, savoring each bite and enjoying meaningful conversations. This unhurried approach to eating highlights the importance of appreciating both food and company, reinforcing the idea that meals are a moment of relaxation and connection, not just sustenance.



## CHAPTER 8

# Cultural Significance of the Mediterranean Diet

### Festivities and Traditions

The Mediterranean Diet is also closely linked to cultural celebrations and festivals, where food becomes a powerful expression of heritage, faith, and local identity. Traditional dishes take center stage during these events, often passed down through generations, preserving the region's rich culinary heritage.

- **Holiday feasts:** Throughout the Mediterranean, certain holidays are celebrated with special dishes that vary from region to region but share the same emphasis on tradition and cultural pride. For example:
  - In Greece, Easter is celebrated with lamb roasted on a spit, a symbol of rebirth, while the breaking of tsoureki, a sweet braided bread, is a beloved tradition.
  - In Italy, Christmas meals often feature seafood dishes, particularly in southern regions, such as the famous Feast of the Seven Fishes.
  - In Spain, the tradition of Roscon de Reyes, a sweet ring-shaped bread eaten during Epiphany, brings families together to celebrate the arrival of the Three Kings.
- Many regions have their own local festivals that showcase unique dishes, tying food to cultural and religious events. In the Mediterranean, food is often at the heart of religious festivals like Saint's Day feasts, harvest festivals, and seasonal celebrations. These events not only honor spiritual and historical milestones but also serve to preserve local food traditions, reinforcing the connection between food, faith, and community.
- Traditional Mediterranean recipes are often passed down through families as a form of culinary inheritance. Grandparents teach their grandchildren how to prepare specific dishes for holidays, weddings, or even everyday meals, ensuring that the flavors and techniques of their ancestors remain alive. These recipes are not just about the food itself but about the stories, memories, and cultural pride associated with them.

The diet reflects the geographical and cultural diversity of the Mediterranean, with each community taking pride in its unique contributions to the region's food culture.

Rituals surrounding the preparation, serving, and consumption of food are deeply symbolic in the Mediterranean. The process of cooking itself is often a shared activity, further emphasizing the social role of food in this region. Whether it's kneading dough for bread, preparing a family recipe for a holiday meal, or simply gathering herbs from a home garden, these actions help maintain a close connection to local food traditions.



# Get to know the locals !



## CHAPTER 9

# Objectives

- Introduce readers to the richness of local traditions, including unique recipes and culinary customs

# Requirements

- Understand the importance of gastronomy in European cultural heritage





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Christmas recipe:



# Postni sarmi

## Ingredients

- ½ tsp. rice
- 2 heads of onion
- 1 stalk of leek onion; leaves of sauerkraut
- ½ tsp. oil
- 1 teaspoon sauerkraut juice
- red pepper
- salt
- dry savoury

## Instructions

- Chopping the two onion & the leek into very small pieces and then mix them with a pinch or two of salt. Stir them in the oil till they become golden.
- Then add the rice, which you previously cleaned and washed. Add the spices and some hot water. Leave to simmer - until the rice is almost ready.
- In the meantime, prepare of the cabbage leaves - you need to remove the hard zippers that are located in the middle. When you do this, the cabbage rolls will be much more delicate and pleasant to eat.
- When the rice is ready, let it cool down a bit. Then, put a spoonful of the rice stuffing in each cabbage leaf and wrap it up. Take a pot, on the bottom of which cabbage leaves or vine branches are arranged.
- The wrapped sarmi are placed on top of them and covered with a plate on top so that they do not float. Add the cabbage juice and 2 tsp. hot water. This delicacy must be boiled over low heat for about an hour OR you can put the pot with the sarmi in a pre-heated oven for an hour at 180°C. Check the rice before you take the pot from the oven.





## Easter recipe:

### The Easter Oven-roasted Lamb

#### Ingredients

- lamb shoulder - 1 piece
- fresh onion - 1 bunch
- Jojen - 5 stalks
- red pepper
- 1 teaspoon
- black pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon



#### Instructions

- The first step in the oven roasted lamb recipe is to prepare the lamb. You wash the leg of lamb well, then sprinkle it with salt, which you rub into the meat with your hands
- Sprinkle with red and black pepper, which also rubs well into the leg of lamb. You leave the meat for about 15 minutes to absorb the spices.
- Meanwhile, finely chop the onion and garlic. You place the lamb in a large tray, according to the size of the leg/meat, pour 1 teacup of warm water into which you add the chopped onions and garlic.
- You place the tray in a preheated oven at 200 degrees for about 15 minutes so that the lamb gets a light crust, then remove the tray, cover it tightly with aluminum foil and bake for about 3 hours at 180 degrees.
- Although this is usually the time needed to roast the lamb, after about 2 hours spent in the oven you can look to see if the meat has run out of water or if it is already ready.

# Christmas recipe



## The chestnuts turkey

### Ingredients (for 8 people)

- 1 free-range turkey weighing 3.5kg
- 400 g chestnuts in a jar
- 80 g butter
- 25 cl chicken stock
- Stuffing :
  - 150g breadcrumbs + 15 cl milk
  - 2 shallots, chopped
  - 20 g butter
  - Diced turkey liver
  - 350g butcher's stuffing
- 1 egg
- 100 g jarred chestnuts, crumbled
- 1 tbsp. cognac
- Salt and freshly ground pepper



### Instructions

- Prepare the stuffing. Soak the breadcrumbs in the milk. Sweat the shallots with 20g of butter, add the liver and cook for 1 min. Mix the drained bread, shallot and liver mixture, stuffing, egg, chestnuts (100g each) and cognac in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper. Stuff the turkey.
- Preheat the oven to 180°C. Coat the turkey with 30g of soft butter. Season with salt and pepper. Place a rack on the drip tray and place the turkey on it. Place in the oven. Allow to cook for 18 minutes for 500g of stuffed turkey, i.e. 2 hours 20 minutes, basting the turkey regularly (every 30 minutes) with the cooking juices.
- Wrap the turkey in aluminium foil and leave it to rest in the oven for 15 minutes. Meanwhile, brown the chestnuts in the remaining butter, then pour in the chicken stock. Cook over a low heat until the stock has almost evaporated. Carve the turkey and serve hot with the chestnuts.



Easter recipe:

## The berrichon pâté

### Ingredients (for 6 people)

- 2 rolls of puff pastry (or shortcrust pastry if you prefer)
- 6 eggs
- 300g minced pork
- 200g minced veal
- 1 shallot
- 50g breadcrumbs
- 1 tablespoon Cognac
- 0.5 teaspoon nutmeg
- 0.5 bunch parsley
- Salt
- Pepper



### Instructions

- Scald 4 boiled eggs (10 minutes cooking time). Chop a shallot. Wash and chop the parsley.
- In a salad bowl, mix the 2 meats, 1 egg beaten into an omelette, the parsley, shallot, breadcrumbs, cognac and nutmeg. Season with salt and pepper.
- Unroll 1 of the puff pastry rolls. Place it in a special "pâté en croûte" mould (lined with greaseproof paper). Spread half the mincemeat over the pastry. Make indentations at regular intervals. Place the 4 hard-boiled eggs in the filling, pressing them in slightly. Cover with the remaining minced meat.
- Separate the white from the yolk of the last egg. Brush the edge of the pastry with the yolk diluted in a little water. Seal with the second roll of puff pastry, sealing the edges and browning with egg.
- Using the tip of a knife, make 3 chimneys in the puff pastry to let the steam escape during cooking. Bake for 20 mins at 180°C (gas mark 6) and 30 mins at 150°C (gas mark 5).



# Christmas recipe

## Melomakarona – Greek Christmas honey cookies

### Ingredients

#### For the syrup

- 250 g water
- 400 g granulated sugar
- 70 g honey
- 2 sticks cinnamon
- 2 whole cloves
- 1 orange, cut in half

#### 2nd mixture

- ½ kilo all-purpose flour
- 100 g semolina, fine

#### To serve

- Honey
- Walnuts

#### 1st mixture

- 200 g orange juice
- 200 g seed oil
- 90 g olive oil
- 30 g icing sugar
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- 2 teaspoons cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- Orange zest, of 2 oranges



### Instructions

- Preheat the oven to 190\* C (370\*F) set to fan. To make the cookies, you need to prepare 2 separate mixtures. For the first mixture, add all the ingredients in a large bowl. Mix, using a hand whisk.
- In a separate bowl, add all the ingredients for the second mixture. Combine the first and second mixture. Mix by hand, very gently and for a very short time (10 seconds at the most). Mold cookie dough into oval shapes, 3-4 cm in length, 30 g each.
- Bake for about 20-25 minutes, until they are crunchy and golden brown. As soon as you remove them from the oven, soak the hot cookies in the syrup for 10 seconds. Allow them to drain on a wire rack. Drizzle with honey and chopped walnuts.



## Easter recipe:

# Magritsa

## Ingredients (for 6-8 people)

- 1 kilo lamb pluck
- 2 slices lemon
- 2 bay leaves
- salt
- 4-5 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 medium dry onions
- 2 lettuces, coarsely chopped
- 50 g white wine
- 1.5 liter water
- 5-6 spring onions
- 1 bunch dill
- 100 g round grain rice (optional)

### For the egg lemon sauce

- Lemon juice of 2 lemons
- 1 egg
- salt
- Pepper



## Instructions

- Place a pot with water over high heat until it boils. Add the lamb pluck, lemon slices, bay leaves, salt, and boil for 10-15 minutes. Regularly skim the foam. Drain and throw the water away.
- Place the pot over high heat again and add the olive oil. Finely chop the onion and add it to the pot. Cut the lamb pluck into small pieces, add them to the pot, and sauté for 8-10 minutes.
- Deglaze with the wine, add the water and the lettuces and boil at medium heat for 30-40 minutes.
- Then, cut the spring onions into rounds, and the dill into large pieces, and add them to the pot. Keep the green part of the spring onions and 1 tablespoon of the dill. Add the rice, seal with the lid and boil at medium heat for 15-20 minutes.

Christmas recipe:



## Panettone

### Ingredients

- Flour
- sugar
- eggs
- butter
- yeast
- candied fruits
- raisins
- vanilla extract
- lemon zest
- orange zest



### Instructions

- 1. Prepare a dough with flour, sugar, eggs, and butter, then let it rise.
- 2. Incorporate the yeast and allow the dough to rise again.
- 3. Add candied fruits and raisins to the dough.
- 4. Shape the dough into a dome and bake until golden brown and fully cooked.

Christmas recipe:



## Torrone

### Ingredients

- Honey
- sugar
- egg whites
- toasted almonds or hazelnuts
- vanilla extract
- wafer paper.



### Instructions



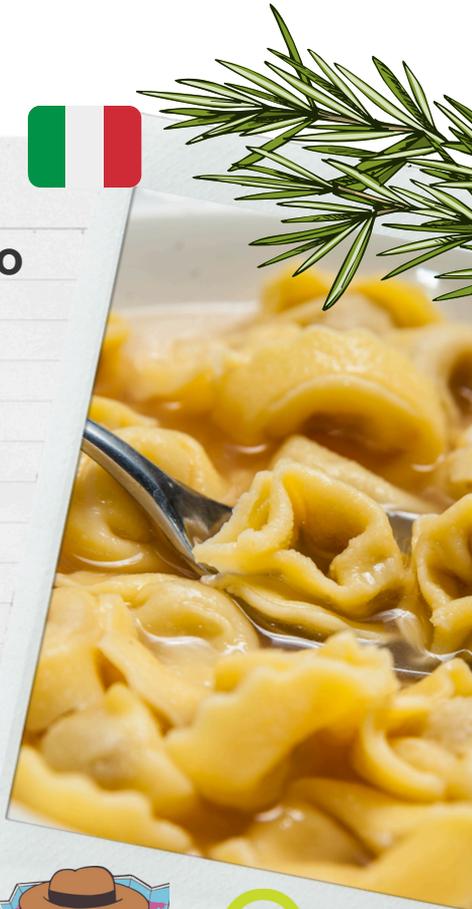
- 1. Cook honey and sugar together until it reaches a caramel consistency.
- 2. Beat egg whites until stiff peaks form and slowly incorporate them into the honey-sugar mixture.
- 3. Stir in the toasted nuts.
- 4. Spread the mixture onto wafer paper, cover with another layer of wafer paper, and let it cool before cutting into pieces.

Christmas recipe:

## Cappelletti in Brodo

### Ingredients

- Flour
- eggs
- ground meat (pork, beef, or a mixture)
- Parmesan cheese
- nutmeg, broth (chicken or beef)
- salt
- pepper.



### Instructions

- 1. Prepare the pasta dough with flour and eggs, then roll it out thinly.
- 2. Make a filling with ground meat, Parmesan cheese, nutmeg, salt, and pepper.
- 3. Cut the pasta into small squares, place a small amount of filling in the center of each, and fold into a cap-shaped pasta.
- 4. Cook the cappelletti in simmering broth until they float to the surface.



Easter recipe:

## Colomba Pasquale

### Ingredients

- Flour
- sugar
- eggs
- butter
- yeast
- candied orange peel, almonds
- pearl sugar
- vanilla extract.



### Instructions



1. Prepare a dough with flour, sugar, eggs, butter, and yeast, and let it rise.
2. Incorporate candied orange peel into the dough.
3. Shape the dough into a dove shape and let it rise again.
4. Top with almond icing and pearl sugar, then bake until golden.



Easter recipe:

# Torta Pasqualina

## Ingredients

- Puff pastry
- ricotta cheese
- spinach or chard
- eggs
- Parmesan cheese
- nutmeg
- salt
- pepper.



## Instructions

1. Roll out the puff pastry and line a pie dish.
2. Prepare the filling with ricotta cheese, cooked spinach or chard, Parmesan cheese, nutmeg, salt, and pepper.
3. Pour the filling into the pastry and make indentations to crack whole eggs into.
4. Cover with another layer of puff pastry, seal the edges, and bake until golden brown.

Easter recipe:

## Agnello al Forno

### Ingredients

- Lamb (leg or shoulder)
- garlic, rosemary
- olive oil
- white wine
- salt
- pepper.



### Instructions



- 1. Marinate the lamb with garlic, rosemary, olive oil, salt, and pepper.
- 2. Roast in the oven, occasionally basting with white wine, until the meat is tender and cooked through.
- 3. Serve with roasted potatoes or seasonal vegetables.



Christmas recipe:

## Bacalhau de Consoada (Christmas Eve Codfish)

### Ingredients

- 4 pieces of salted codfish
- 8 potatoes
- 4 onions
- 4 carrots
- 4 hard-boiled eggs
- Olive oil
- Garlic
- Bay leaves
- Black olives (for garnish)



### Instructions

Soak the codfish in water for 24-48 hours, changing the water several times to remove the salt.

1. Boil the codfish, potatoes, onions, and carrots separately until cooked. Slice the potatoes, onions, and carrots.
2. Arrange the codfish, potatoes, onions, and carrots on a serving platter.
3. Drizzle with plenty of olive oil and garnish with garlic, bay leaves, and black olives.

Serve with hard-boiled eggs sliced in halves or quarters.



Christmas recipe:

## Peru Recheado (Stuffed Turkey)

### Ingredients

- 1 turkey (about 5 kg)
- 200g ground pork
- 100g chorizo, diced
- 2 onions, finely chopped
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 100g breadcrumbs
- 2 eggs
- Olive oil
- White wine
- Salt and pepper
- Herbs (parsley, thyme, bay leaves)

### Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F).
2. In a large bowl, mix the ground pork, chorizo, onions, garlic, bread crumbs, and eggs.
3. Season with salt, pepper, and herbs.
4. Stuff the turkey with the mixture and secure the opening with kitchen string.
5. Rub the turkey with olive oil, salt, and pepper.
6. Place the turkey in a roasting pan, add a splash of white wine, and roast for about 3-4 hours, basting occasionally with the pan juices.

Let the turkey rest for 15-20 minutes before carving.





Dessert:

## Rabanadas (Portuguese French Toast)

### Ingredients

- 1 loaf of stale bread (preferably baguette)
- 1 liter of milk
- 200g sugar
- 1 cinnamon stick
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 4 eggs
- Olive oil (for frying)
- Ground cinnamon (for dusting)



### Instructions

1. Slice the bread into thick slices.
2. In a saucepan, heat the milk with sugar, cinnamon stick, and lemon zest until it just starts to boil.
3. Remove from heat and let it cool slightly.
4. Dip the bread slices in the milk mixture until well soaked.
5. Beat the eggs in a bowl.
6. Heat olive oil in a large frying pan.
7. Dip the soaked bread slices in the beaten eggs, then fry until golden brown on both sides.
8. Drain on paper towels and sprinkle with ground cinnamon and sugar.







Easter recipe:

## Borrego Assado (Roast Lamb)

### Ingredients

- 1 leg of lamb (about 2 kg)
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 lemons, juiced
- 100 ml olive oil
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 2 sprigs fresh thyme
- Salt and pepper
- 200 ml white wine
- 1 kg potatoes, peeled and cut into wedges



### Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F).
2. In a bowl, mix the minced garlic, lemon juice, olive oil, salt, and pepper to create a marinade.
3. Rub the lamb leg with the marinade, ensuring it is well coated. Place the rosemary and thyme sprigs on top.
4. Place the lamb in a roasting pan and pour the white wine around it.
5. Add the potato wedges to the pan, surrounding the lamb.
6. Roast in the oven for about 1.5 to 2 hours, basting occasionally with the pan juices, until the lamb is tender and the potatoes are golden.
7. Let the lamb rest for 10-15 minutes before carving and serving with the roasted potatoes.





Easter dessert:

## Pão-de-Ló (Portuguese Sponge Cake)

### Ingredients

- 6 eggs
- 250 g sugar
- 150 g flour
- Zest of 1 lemon
- 1 tsp baking powder



### Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C (350°F). Grease a round cake pan and line it with parchment paper.
2. Beat the eggs with the sugar until light and fluffy.
3. Add the lemon zest and gradually fold in the flour and baking powder, mixing gently until well combined.
4. Pour the batter into the prepared cake pan.
5. Bake for 25-30 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Let the cake cool in the pan before transferring it to a wire rack to cool completely.





Christmas recipe:

## Cardoons with almonds

### Ingredients

- 1 kg of cardoon clean and chopped
- 100gr of peeled raw almonds
- 50gr of pine nuts
- 2 garlic cloves
- 4 tablespoons of olive oil
- 2 tablespoons of flour
- 500ml of vegetable broth
- 100ml of milk
- Salt and pepper to taste
- A pinch of nutmeg



### Instructions

- Boil the chopped cardoon in salted water for about 15 minutes until tender. Drain, chill and set aside.
- Grind almonds and pine nuts in a mortar and set aside. Simultaneously, in a frying pan, heat the olive oil and sauté the garlic until starting to brown. Add the flour and stir to form a roux.
- Gradually add the vegetable broth and milk, stirring constantly to avoid lumps. Add the almonds and pine nuts and let the sauce thicken.
- Add the drained cardoon to the almond sauce and simmer for an additional 10 minutes. Season with salt, pepper and a pinch of nutmeg. Serve warm.



## Easter recipe: Torrijas (Spanish-style French Toast)

### Ingredients

- 1 loaf of stale bread (preferably brioche or butter enriched)
- 1 liter of milk
- 200g sugar
- 1 cinnamon stick
- Zest of 1 lemon and 1 orange
- 1cl rhum
- 4 eggs
- Olive oil for frying
- Ground cinnamon for sprinkling
- Honey or sugar syrup (optional)



### Instructions

- Heat the milk in a saucepan with 100g of sugar, the cinnamon stick, the rhum and the lemon and orange zest. Bring to a gentle boil, then remove from heat, cover and let infuse and chill.
- Slice the stale bread into thick slices. Dip each slice in the warm milk mixture, allowing the bread to soak up the liquid but not fall apart. Let drain any excess liquid.
- Beat the eggs and heat a generous amount of olive oil in a frying pan. Dip the soaked bread slices in the beaten eggs and fry until golden brown on each side.
- Drain the fried torrijas on paper towels to remove excess oil. Sprinkle with a mixture of sugar and ground cinnamon. Serve warm or cold.



## CHAPTER 9

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# Conclusions





## CHAPTER 10

# Conclusions

Gastronomy is far more than the art of preparing and enjoying food. It represents the essence of cultural identity, tradition, and shared history.

As explored throughout this guide, the gastronomic heritage of Europe is deeply intertwined with the region's cultural and historical fabric. From ancient practices to modern innovations, European gastronomy continues to evolve while maintaining a strong connection to its roots. One of the key takeaways from this guide is the critical role the European Union plays in safeguarding this legacy. Through policies aimed at preserving traditional practices, protecting local products, and promoting sustainable development, the EU ensures that future generations can continue to benefit from this rich culinary heritage.

Furthermore, the connection between gastronomy, tourism, and local economies has proven to be a driving force in promoting cultural exchange and regional development. By leveraging their unique culinary traditions, local communities have the opportunity to attract tourism, strengthen their economies, and foster pride in their cultural identity.

However, this preservation effort requires active participation from multiple stakeholders, including governments, local businesses, and the public. As such, this guide emphasizes the need for continued collaboration and education to ensure that European gastronomic heritage is not only preserved but celebrated.

Some practical recommendations include:

1. Strengthen local initiatives – Encourage local food festivals, culinary workshops, and gastronomy-focused tourism as means to both promote and protect traditional foods and culinary practices.
2. Support sustainable practices – Integrate sustainability into gastronomic tourism and local food production, ensuring that environmental impacts are minimized.
3. Promote education and awareness – Educate younger generations on the importance of gastronomic heritage, both as a cultural treasure and as an economic asset.
4. Leverage EU protections – Make full use of the EU's food protection labels, such as Protected Designation of Origin (PDO) and Protected Geographical Indication (PGI), to ensure that local foods and traditions remain authentic and protected.

In conclusion, the future of Europe's gastronomic heritage is bright but requires ongoing dedication and innovation. By recognizing the value of culinary traditions and embracing modern approaches to preservation, Europe can continue to serve as a beacon of gastronomic excellence for generations to come.

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