



European Capital
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Krakow 2019

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*Heritage
and modernity*

Krakow's gastronomy

Krakow is celebrating the title of the European Capital of Gastronomic Culture 2019, awarded by the European Academy of Gastronomy. A city for centuries appreciated for its culture heritage now has become also a European centre of gastronomic heritage, as well as just a place where you can eat really tasty.



No wonder why – what gives greatest delight is that Krakow's gastronomy is growing and expanding with verve outside of the strict city centre and popular tourist routes. It is finding havens among blocks of flats in housing estates or the rising-like-yeast office blocks and shopping centres. It hosts the visitors, feeds the workers, invites the neighbours to get to know each other more. After all, more and more of us decide to visit restaurants – according to A.T. Kearney's data, in 2017, the Poles spent 36 PLN billion on eating out. That is 9 per cent more than the year before. And with a wave of new restaurant guests, there are many changes to come.

Krakow's restaurants feature more and more inventive interiors, offer better and better service, and serve more and more interesting dishes. Chefs come back from their overseas internships, but do not reproduce what they cooked in other countries. Instead, use their skills to propose new interpretations of the classic Polish dishes. They will not opt for anonymous products supplied by large networks but buy from small local producers. They patiently explain that a meal can in itself become a story – the one about emotions, memories, or a place. And the story they serve you on the plate is getting fuller and fuller thanks to, among other reasons, conscious selection of wines accompanying the dishes, which include the wines made from grapes grown in the vicinity of Krakow.

Culinary

(and not only) History of Krakow

In the Middle Ages, Krakow was the capital of Poland. Located on important trade routes, it was one of the richest cities in Europe. Its cuisine has been shaped over the centuries not only by Polish tradition, but also by German, Italian, Middle-Eastern (Jewish and Muslim) and later on French and Austro-Hungarian influences. Unfortunately, no recipes from the old days have survived, but it is known that members of the households ate a fatty and unvarying diet and observed numerous fasting rules. Prosperity and monasteries that were being established in the city contributed to the enrichment of the Cracovians' diet, as the friars brought new ingredients and herbs with them.

The German cuisine influenced Krakow's cuisine since the city's incorporation in 1257. In the Middle Ages, many of the townspeople were from Germany, and German was the most common language heard on Krakow's cobblestone streets. It would be impossible, however, not to notice other influences coming to the city for example from Nuremberg, the Hanseatic City involved in international trade. The city saw precious roots and spices that began to be used for manufacture of gingerbread biscuits – a symbol of wealth and... a cure for many ailments.

In Krakow, a cake called "miodownik" (honey cake) was baked, and its taste was gradually strengthened and enriched with a variety of different additives, including pepper (Polish: "pieprz"), from which Polish word for gingerbread ("piernik") derives. In the 17th century's Krakow, where the first gingerbread makers' guild was created after it had been separated from the bakers' guild, gingerbread biscuits were sold by pharmacies and consumed as hors d'oeuvres or snacks following a shot of vodka, because, as everyone knows, he who stays off the booze will have their sweet gingerbread refused!



Today, the bagel has returned to Krakow's culinary scene after years of exile, mainly in New York.



Contrary to what may be believed, the Italian influences in culinary art did not begin when the Princess Bona of the Sforza family, enthroned at the Wawel Castle alongside her husband, Sigismund I the Old, arrived in Poland in 1518. The earliest inspirations with Italian cuisine had their source in religious orders founded in Poland, but rooted in Italy. These included the Poor Clares, Dominicans and Franciscans, and later the Capuchins and Fatebenefratelli. And that is not all, as the trade and financial contacts resulted in the second wave of Italians arriving in the city. The banking houses of Siena, Florence, Genoa or Venice operated in Krakow already in the 14th century, which also confirmed the economic power of Krakow, then the capital of Poland. The fact is, however, that it was with the Queen Bona that Italian cheeses, with Parmesan in the forefront, began to arrive in Krakow, along with the previously unknown vegetables such as broccoli, cauliflower or cabbage, the last-mentioned known ever since in Poland as “kapusta włoska”, meaning “Italian cabbage”, and on the king’s and magnates’ tables, once commonly consumed beer gave way to wine.

Krakow’s cuisine would not exist if it wasn’t for the Jews. Part of the Jewish merchants were arriving at Krakow from across the Black Sea after getting through Lviv. They brought spices such as nutmeg, almonds and poppy, which found a place on Cracovian tables. That is one of the reasons why the Krakow’s version of gefiltefish is, unlike the other versions, served sweet: with the addition of almonds and cinnamon. In Krakow’s neighbourhood, famed for the carp from Zator town (“karp zatorski”) or the fish from Staniątki village, carp is the main ingredient of the dish. And it is a similar story with tsimmes, a sweet dish made from carrots and spiced with a generous amount of cinnamon. What is more, the variation of gefiltefish, a Jewish-style carp (carp



fish slices in jelly spiced with almonds and cinnamon), has become a popular Catholic Christmas Eve dish in Krakow.

Political and economic constraints have contributed to the popularity of herring on Jewish tables. These days, the Jewish restaurants in Kazimierz serve this fish in at least several different ways. Popular versions are served with raisins, or combine sweet and sour flavours. It was a similar story with cholent, a dish whose main ingredients are cheap cereal grains or beans, with the addition of kosher meat.

When discussing Jewish culinary influences in Krakow, you cannot forget about the bagel. The first printed mention of the word “bagel” is in the Krakow city documents of 1610. The word itself is most likely of German origin (probably a result of a large number of visitors from Germany, arriving in Krakow after the city’s 1257 incorporation under the German law; it may also be rooted in Yiddish – the language said to be “German, but with a sense of humour”), and means a round loaf of bread. This bread product was originally given to women in the puerperal period as a symbol of the cyclic nature of life, and has been present in the majority of Ashkenazi Jewish communities in Krakow since the 17th century. Today, the bagel has returned to Krakow’s culinary scene after years of exile, mainly in New York.

Krakow also received strong influences from other corners of the Middle East; it has enriched Polish cuisine with buckwheat, poppy, sorbets (frozen fruit juices), dried fruit, preserves (Polish: “konfitura”), i.e. fruit fried in honey, nougat, makagigi (biscuits made of honey, poppy, nuts, almonds), or halva. Eastern methods of meat preparation also became rooted in Polish cuisine, and included marination, chopping; preparation of meat in the form of shashliks (skewered meat), tartare, preparation of meat (mainly mutton) with dried fruit and marinated greens.

In the Middle Ages, the city owed the novelties from the Orient to two Italian leading traders of that time. Spheres of influence of Venice and Genoa, powerful naval republics, stretched far beyond the Mediterranean basin. Already in the 13th century, under the auspices of the Tatar Khans, the Genoese renamed the old Greek harbour Theodosia to Caffa and started trading with Western Europe not only by sea, but also through a land route running at that time through Lviv and Krakow – the so-called Tatar trail. That way, the first precious spices and roots reached the city along with Armenian and sometimes Jewish merchants. Of course, these specialities-were put mainly on the king's table – because of their high price.

Much later, from the 17th until the 19th century, the capital of the Lesser Poland was subject to strong influences from Austria. Brought straight from Vienna, potatoes arrived in Poland – as a gift to the Polish King Jan Sobieski by Leopold I. They were initially distrusted and had yet to wait before their turn in the kitchen came. First used as ornamental plants, potatoes finally won the hearts and stomachs of the Poles. Coffee has come to Krakow from the same part of the world. Although coffee seeds arrived in Krakow from Vienna, the drink, having its roots in Arabia, was originally considered to be a piece of Satan's work. The first cafés were established in Krakow already at the end of the 17th century.

Towards the end of the 18th century, as a result of the partitions of Poland, Krakow came under Austrian rule. When the Poles were ousted from power, it became necessary to bring Austrian officials, who would be able to replace their predecessors, to Krakow. The officials brought typical Austrian dishes with them, one of the many examples being wiener schnitzel (the custom of breading came to Poland through the House of Habsburg), or headcheese with mustard sauce and a potato salad. The soups also show borrowings from Austrian cuisine.





The image of *obwarzanek* is used for promotion of the City of Krakow and its restaurants. At Stary Kleparz, the Museum of Obwarzanek operates.

Food on the marketplace and in the street

Krakow has been a city of trade for centuries. In the Middle Ages, the rhythm of Krakow's life was driven by, among other things, fairs called "jarmarki". There was one small fair around St. Vitus' Day (June 11–17) and two fortnight-long large fairs: one around St. Stanisław's Day (May 3–14), and one around St. Michael's Day at the end of September. At that time, the city gathered the merchants from all over Europe, and trading agreements were concluded. The Main Market was a centre of Krakow's trade that supplied not only the merchants, but also the townspeople.

Krakow's trading tradition has continued to this day. Throughout the city, several dozens of smaller and larger marketplaces are run, the oldest of them being Stary Kleparz, where merchants have been meeting their customers uninterruptedly since 1335, as well as Plac Nowy, established in the heart of the Jewish town at the beginning of the 17th century. Success has been seen by Targ Pietruszkowy ("parsley marketplace") started in Podgórze, where you can buy products directly from the local farmers and producers who have passed through the sieve of selection used by the marketplace's organiser. *Targ Pietruszkowy* is one of only 69 marketplaces around the world assembled within the Earth Markets network established by the Slow Food movement.

Krakow – a city of students, artists and tourists – boasts very rich street food traditions. Already in the Middle Ages, the cheapest form of street food in Krakow was the one served at "open-air kitchens" (Polish: "faryna") run on market squares by *faryna* women. Signs are that *faryny* (plural of *faryna*) were run throughout the centuries in an almost unchanged way. Apart from sausages,



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headcheese or livers, the *faryna* women served borscht based on stock made up of boiled bones, pea soup, potato soup and barley soup, as well as the cheapest Rumford's soup. Tripe and black pudding with buckwheat, bigos, potatoes, groats and peas, as well as Celtuce from Czarna Wieś (known also as Krakow Celettuce) were also served in them. Their lower shoots were pickled.

It is said that the most famous *faryna* was run at the crossing between the Main Market and the Small Market, and it was famed for its goose meat served in winter. At Kleparz, food used to be served in clay bowls. Kleparz's specialities included Ordynsky guts with fat cut in pieces, and quite similar, but less fatty, bloody headcheese called "kadryl", to which pieces of pork ears or nose were added. It is said that the best *maczanka* was served at the corner of Grodzka and Poselska streets. Rumour has it that the dish, being one of the most Cracovian of all the Krakow's specialities, was first made at the end of the 17th century as a fast hot snack for the city's coachmen. *Maczanka* is a long-baked porkneck with caraway and onion served in a thick gravy, in which a water roll was dipped. Later, the meat began to be served in a bread roll. Nowadays, this version of *maczanka*, among other goodies, goes down a treat at Krakow's food trucks.

Obwarzanek

a round “king” of Krakow

Krakow's most distinctive baked product is an inconspicuous round obwarzanek. It is traditionally sprinkled with salt, poppy seeds or sesame seeds, and recently also with cheese, fennel seed, or herbs. The production of *obwarzanki* (plural of *obwarzanek*), just like 600 years ago, is done manually, and it is the baker who shapes a ball of dough into a “sulka” – a roll having a thickness of a finger, and twists two or three *sulka*s together to join their ends and form a neat circle. After the dough grows, it is dropped into a hot bath, i.e. it is parboiled (the process called “obwarzanie” in Polish). The rings, once boiled, are sprinkled with salt, poppy seeds or sesame seeds, and baked.

The first mentions of *obwarzanek krakowski* (Latin: “*circinellos*”) date back to 1394. From the financial books of the court, we learn that they were served at Queen Hedwig's table. At first, they had been baked only during Lent. In the course of time, the bakers' guild decided that *obwarzanki* may be baked all year round, but only on Fridays and fast days: the information about this arrangement appears in the documents of the bakers' guild session of 8 January 1720. Baking of *obwarzanki* was also limited to only a number of Krakow's bakeries. Those who baked them without permission, or outside the permitted time limits, were punished. The bakers resorted to different explanations. In 1771, a baker Izdebski, who baked *obwarzanki* in spite of the guild's prohibition, explained that although he indeed baked them, he did not sell them in Krakow.

In the Middle Ages and centuries to come, *obwarzanki* were sold at bakery stalls on the Main Market, later from wicker baskets, and finally from mobile street carts. In 2000, there were 180 points of sale of *obwarzanki* in Krakow. Today, the average production of *obwarzanki* is 150 000 a day.



Krakow's most distinctive baked Product – an inconspicuous round obwarzanek, is also used for promotion of the City of Krakow and its restaurants. At Stary Kleparz, the Museum of Obwarzanek operates.

Modernity

restaurants and gastronomy events

The Lesser Poland is a leader of changes in the gastronomy and culinary landscape, and Krakow, as a gastronomic centre, is second only to Warsaw in terms of size. Echoing a renowned chef Adam Chrząstowski from the Ed Red restaurant distinguished by Michelin, Gault&Millau and Slow Food Poland, factors such as attachment to tradition, large number of tourists interested in Polish cuisine and access to unique products make this city one of the most important culinary destinations in Poland. It is worth noting that the Lesser Poland region and cuisine have not been industrialised, contrary to many places in Western Europe. The traditional methods of food treatment and preservation still survive here: pickling, smoking and smoke-drying – these three methods allow to determine the flavour characteristics of the Lesser Poland cuisine that are appreciated by the top chefs.

Out of all the Polish regions, it is the Lesser Poland that boasts the greatest number of regional products registered in the EU. Moreover, there are 203 traditional products placed on the list of the Ministry of Agriculture that come from the Lesser Poland (including dairy products, meat products, fishery products, vegetable and fruit products; bakery products; oils and fats; honeys, prepared meals and products, or beverages).

Regional products of the Lesser Poland include: *kielbasa liseicka* (sausage), *karp zatorski*, *obwarzanek*, *redykołka* (cheese), *suska sechłońska* (plum), *Bryndza Podhalańska* (cheese), *Piękny Jaś* beans, *oscypek* (cheese), *jagnięcina podhalańska* (lamb).

Rafał Targosz (ZaKładka Food&Wine) or Marcin Filipkiewicz (Copernicus), who was awarded a distinction from the International





Academy of Gastronomy and received the Chef of the Future (Chef de L'avenir) award. The chefs are also distinguished by the guides Michelin and Gault&Millau (Grzegorz Fic from Albertina, Tomasz Dziura from Andromeda Alfa, Łukasz Cichy from Biała Róża, Piotr Regucki from Corse, Dawid Macheta from Nolio, and Daniel Myśliwiec from Karakter among them).

Krakow is one of only two Polish cities whose restaurants are distinguished by the Michelin culinary guide. So far, 25 restaurants have been recognised by the guide. Krakow's restaurants have also been recommended by: Gault & Millau and Slow Food Polska. Furthermore, as part of the Krakow's Restaurants' Recommendation Action, which has been organised for 11 years by the City Hall and Krakowska Kongregacja Kupiecka (Krakow Congregation of Merchants), a total of 86 restaurants received awards and recommendations in 2017. The restaurants are promoted in a special *Krakow na widelcu* ("Krakow on the fork") guide.

At the new marketplaces in Krakow, small producers from the city and the surrounding areas are often encountered. Another place where you can find them is at any of a large number of culinary festivals. Since the 90s., there have been quite a lot of them organised, and they include the Pierogi Festival (Polish: "festiwal pierogów") or the Bread Celebration Day (Polish: "święto chleba") attended by a group of long-time participants. For several years, smaller-scale festivals have also been organised (former Foodstock, today's Najedzeni Fest!, Art & Food Bazar, or the Young Wine Festival – Polish: "Festiwal Młodego Wina"), along with the restaurants' festivals (Restaurant Week, Fine Dining Week). Culinary activities are

accompanied by a number of urban cultural festivals. In recent years, open picnics have started to be organised again, generating a lot of interest of both the residents and guests. There is also a new initiative for this year concerned with holding the second *Krakowskie Zapusty* (“Krakow’s Shrovetide”) event, i.e. *Wielkie Smażenie Chrustu* (“the First Great Frying of Angel Wings”). The event relates to the tradition of meetings on *Ostatki* day (the last day to party before the Lent), but also gives the Cracovians a glimpse into the food and dishes characteristic of the place and period, including, first and foremost, angel wings (Polish: “chrust”) and other sweet treats typical of the Polish Carnival season.

Krakow is also the centre of culinary journalism: alongside the greatest Polish TV personalities with Krakow origins (Robert Makłowicz, Ewa Wachowicz, Anna Starmach), a huge group of journalists and bloggers can be found publishing their works in the media and on the Internet. The most famous blogs include: *Dania kontra Ania*, *Krakow na widelcu*, *Życie od kuchni*. A startup dedicated to culinary art – Haveabite website, has also been launched in Krakow.

Today, just like centuries ago, Krakow remains open to flavours from around the world. You can try different cuisines at the restaurants, buy the ingredients and experiment in the comfort of your own kitchen, or attend culinary workshops. And because it is Krakow – you will surely have a delicious time!



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Krakow

the place to meet (not only at the table)

Every year, Krakow is visited by nearly 13 million tourists from around the world. They are attracted by a unique heritage of culture, history, monuments and museums, as well as the offer of cultural festivals, sports events, congresses and conferences.

The MICE industry is one of the most dynamically developing tourism sectors, which influences not only the market of conferences and congresses, but also the hotel and catering industry. It supports strategic development of the business tourism and MICE industry, including by shaping the own conference brands, e.g. Open Eyes Economy Summit, or Miasta Historyczne 3.0.

The "MICE Industry" report shows that in 2017 Krakow hosted more than 6 thousand conference events attended by nearly 600 thousand participants, who left up to PLN 1.3 billion (EUR 300 million) in the city's businesses. Importantly, there has been an increase in the number of participants of international events. This proves that Krakow has already become a truly international conference destination.

At the end of 2017, meeting organisers were able to choose from 168 facilities offering approximately 690 rooms for holding various types of events. The rooms had a total capacity of almost 100,00 people and more than 33 thousand square metres of exhibition area. Profiles of such conference facilities vary greatly, ranging from rooms available at museums, historical monuments, religious buildings, sports venues or underground rooms in mines.

Because of the powerful academic centre of Krakow, the city is frequently opted for as the host of scientific congresses, particularly medical ones. Just in 2018, the city will host, among other events, the WCO 2018 World Congress on Osteoporosis and Osteoarthritis,



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Krakow – the place to meet (not only at the table)

the congress of the European Wound Management Association EWMA, the European Conference of Family Physicians – WONCA Europe, and the International Congress of the Polish Cardiac Society PT Kardio. There are also plenty of economic and local government events, such as the European Congress of Local Governments, Aspire Conference, Digital Dragons 2018, Open Eyes Economy Summit.

Krakow

easy access

Undoubtedly, an increase in the number of business travellers arriving from abroad is largely driven by the expansion of the Krakow Airport infrastructure. It is the second largest airport in Poland in terms of the number of passengers and the number of air operations. In 2018, it handled almost 7 million passengers who can use any of over 100 connections to four continents. In winter season, flight connections to the capital of the Lesser Poland are offered by 22 airlines, including Austrian Airlines, British Airways, Brussels Airlines, easyJet, EL-AL Israel Airlines, Eurowings, Finnair, Jet2.com, KLM, Lufthansa, Norwegian, PLL LOT, Ryanair or SWISS International Air Lines.

Krakow offers tourists diverse accommodation opportunities ranging from cheaper rooms in guest houses to luxury hotels. Everyone will find accommodation suited to their needs. In 2019, there are 175 hotels in the city with over 11.3 thousand rooms.



Obwarzanek – let's eat it slow

Krakow, along with Venice, Dubrovnik, Brno and Kecskemet, are participating in the international SlowFood-CE project coordinated by the Slow Food organization (Interreg Central Europe). The aim of the project is to draw attention to culinary heritage: traditions related to food, local specificity and customs, including those disappearing or almost completely forgotten.

The Krakow "Obwarzanek", as a culinary symbol of Krakow, perfectly fits the ideas of the Slow Food-CE project. The Obwarzanek itself, which is the most popular snack in the city, does not need special promotion. It is important, however, that the consciousness of both tourists and residents included an image of a bagel, as a product that makes up the culinary heritage of Krakow, with an extremely rich history and traditional recipe. Therefore, the Slow Food-CE project will include the promotion of the "Obwarzanek – let's eat it slow" concept.

At the same time, attempts will be made to get Krakow Celettuce - a long-forgotten vegetable – back to Krakow's tables (as well as to vegetable markets). It was once popular, especially in the pickled version. Perhaps the Krakow Celettuce will become the culinary hit of Krakow next to the Obwarzanek thanks to the Slow Food-CE project.



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Welcome to Krakow – the European Capital of Gastronomic Culture 2019.

For more information please visit:

www.culinary.krakow.pl



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